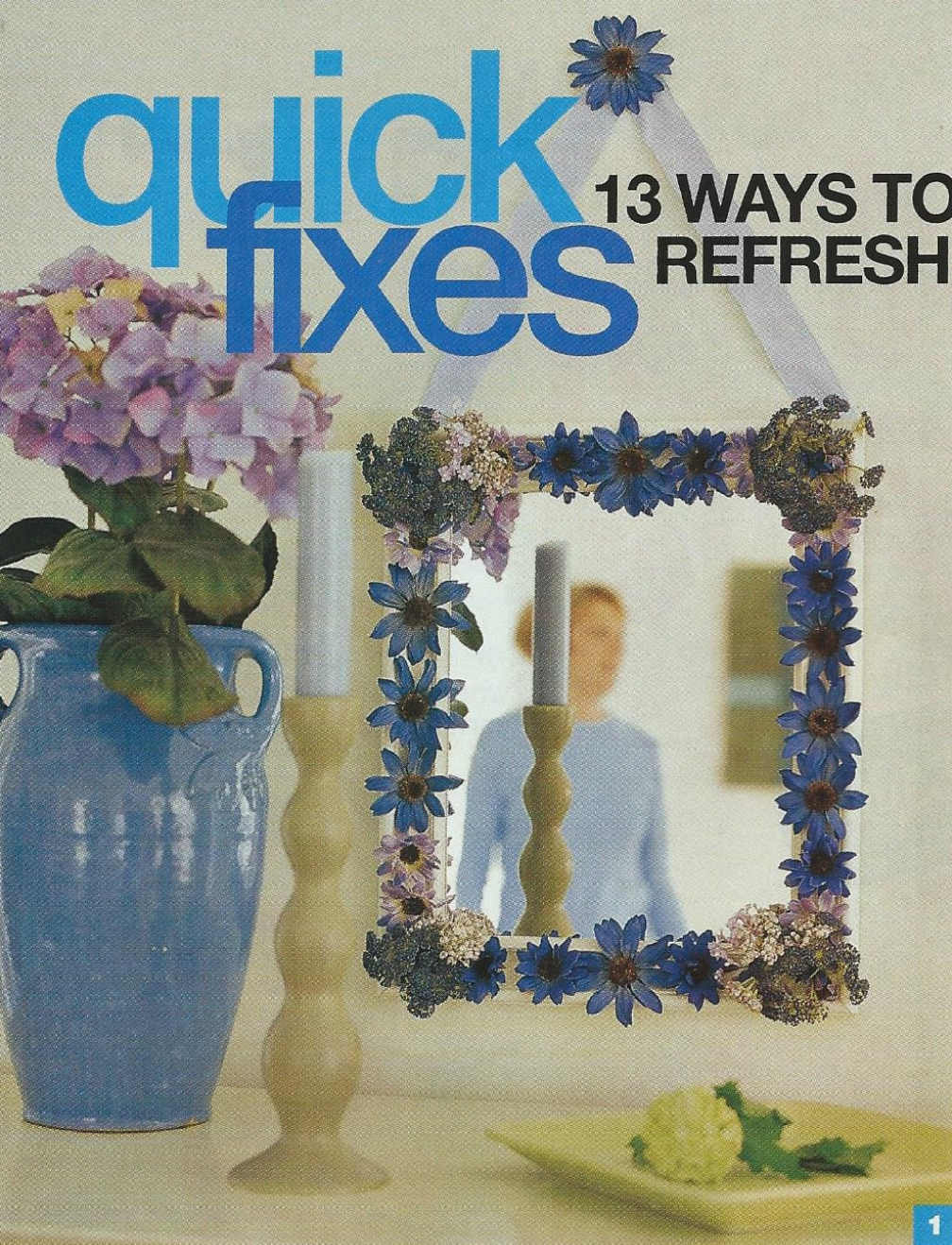


quick fixes

13 WAYS TO REFRESH A ROOM

BY LISA YAKOMIN

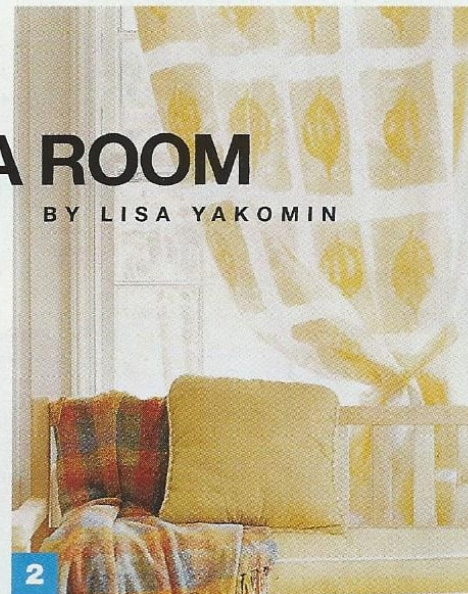


1. FANCIFUL FRAMES. Reflect your unique sense of style and give new life to an old mirror or picture frame. Pick a favorite motif—artificial flowers, old buttons, beads, pennies—then use a hot-glue gun to secure the decorative items around the perimeter. Attach a length of 2-inch-wide satin ribbon to the back for easy hanging in a special spot.

2. FRESH SCENE. Bring the outdoors in and transform a small, stark seating area into a cozy nook using brilliant splashes of yellow and green. Created from an inexpensive white cotton sheet, this hand-painted

curtain sports a charming leaf pattern set against a background of simple rectangles. Before you start, wash and dry the sheet, but don't use fabric softener or the paint will not adhere properly. Whether using a homemade leaf stencil or one purchased, mix latex paint with a textile medium, before sponging it on to ensure smooth, lasting coverage. Let dry before hanging.

3. METALLIC MAKEOVER. Transform that garage-sale chest into a treasure with a faux-metal finish. Remove old hardware and sand rough edges smooth. Brush on a coat of latex primer to hide the wood grain, then



smooth on two coats of sleek silver paint. Complete the makeover with updated drawer pulls in polished nickel or shiny chrome.

4. PILLOW PIZZAZZ. Perk up an old throw pillow with a new cover in an eye-catching fabric. Using the pillow as a guide, cut two squares of fabric and add bright ribbon ties along the four edges for closure, giving a couch or an easy chair an instant burst of color and a stylish update.

5. FLOWER POWER. Infuse any shady spot with life and color: Dried flower bouquets mounted in chic



6

fabric sconces offer a long-lasting, no-maintenance alternative to real flowers. When choosing faux blossoms for bathrooms, kitchens, and other high-moisture areas, check to make sure the dyes will not run when exposed to humid conditions.

6. SOPHISTICATED SHADE.

Enliven an ordinary lamp in minutes with a custom shade treatment that can be updated whenever the mood strikes you. First, glue fabric pockets in a cheery gingham fabric around the middle of the shade. When dry, insert your favorite seasonal accent, such as flower sprigs or colorful leaves.

7. STERLING SERVICE.

Guests will never guess that this regal server started out as a simple wooden tray. Apply a coat of primer first to all surfaces; follow by a coat of metallic silver paint. When completely dry, cut



7

silver foil into squares of equal size and apply them carefully to the inside of the tray. Complete the project with two coats of sealer to ensure water-resistance and avoid peeling.

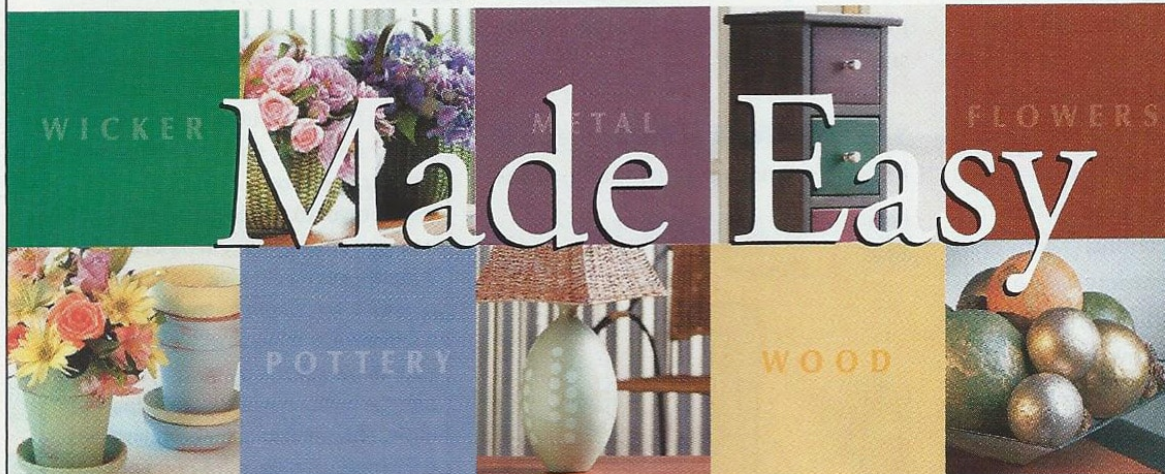
8. PICTURE PERFECT.

Display your favorite family photos while adding instant charm to a table or a sideboard. Photocopy in black-and-white any color photos you like onto high-quality photo paper. Check your local art-supply store for watercolor pencils that you can use to tint and highlight portions of your photos for an even more upscale presentation. Glue matching or contrasting ribbons that work with your decor around the edges of unadorned frames.

9. STORAGE SOLUTIONS.

A great way to showcase photos, letters, postcards and other cherished items is by decoupage copies of your

Changing Colors



Made Easy

Quick-Drying, Versatile Color For *Creative* Applications



Choose
from over 75
color sprays
to customize
your project.

Find Us At Your
Favorite Craft Store



For project ideas visit
www.dmcOLOR.com

P.O. Box 601 • Boulder, CO 80306
©2002 DESIGN MASTER color tool, inc.

favorites onto papier-mâché boxes. Once you've primed the boxes and allowed them to dry thoroughly, brush an even coat of decoupage medium (such as Mod Podge) on the back of each item. Arrange the papers carefully, smoothing out any air bubbles with a soft foam brush. Finish with a top coat of decoupage medium to seal and protect your handiwork. Add a length of fancy ribbon to enhance the top, and affix a matching bow at each end to conceal glued edges. Use the decorated boxes to stylishly stow other memorabilia.

10. CLEVER CHANDELIER.

It didn't take a fairy godmother to transform this hanging wire planter into a dazzling light fixture—just a little imagination. Drape the wire frame with strings of glass beads (available in a rainbow of colors) and attach hanging prisms (new or flea-market finds) to accent the bottom and top edges. Carefully set a votive candle on a small plate in the center and your new chandelier is ready to light up the night with style and flair.

11. SHORE THING. Use those shells you picked up at the beach to create a beautiful souvenir. Start with a 10-inch styrofoam wreath form. If there's a particular color scheme you'd like, clean the shells well and dye them using food coloring, following manufacturer's directions. (Many craft stores also carry a variety of seashells year-round for landlubbers without a collection of their own.) Wrap the wreath form with strips of muslin fabric dyed to match the shells. Then, hot glue the shells to the fabric, working out from the inside and outside edges towards the middle, overlapping the shells to cover any gaps. Use two lengths of thin, grosgrain ribbon to add a coordinating bow to the front, then tie another strand, knotted tightly, to create a sturdy hanger.



12. CLUTTER KEEPERS. Rein in those piles taking over your workspace with a handy tabletop organizer and stacked pencil caddy. A small, unfinished wooden tabletop chest is quickly jazzed up with a little paint and the addition of charming drawer pulls. A pair of painted-metal shelf brackets, glued securely to the top, create built-in bookends. For the pencil caddy, terracotta flowerpots in five graduated sizes were painted and stacked (the two smallest pots were placed upside down inside the largest pots as stands) to provide instant storage for pens, pencils, paintbrushes, and other small useful tools.

13. VINTAGE CHIC. Get the look of a priceless antique without



spending a fortune. Here, a crackle-finish was used to create an old-fashioned accent to a contemporary side table. First, sketch out on paper a beveled drawer and tabletop design. Then etch it onto an unfinished wood table, using a craft knife. Stain the entire piece with a cherry finish, then paint the center top and drawer-front bevels with two coats of white acrylic paint, followed by a coat of off-white. Brush on a crackle-medium quickly followed by a layer of black paint. When the paint is dry and the crackle effect complete, apply several coats of protective varnish. ■



More Ideas

- **Use** baskets of all shapes and sizes to help conquer clutter—to store mail, magazines, toys, sporting equipment, knitting, and more.
- **Add** color to the ceiling to make a room come alive . . . inexpensively.
- **Hang** a mirror to give the illusion of space and depth to small areas.
- **Introduce** a touch of whimsy to your throw pillows by sewing on some colorful buttons or trims. Vary the sizes, shapes and color combinations.
- **Embellish** plain terra-cotta or ceramic pots with fast-drying acrylic paint, easy-to-do faux finishes, stamps, stencils, or cover with fabric remnants and to be filled with flowers or used as decorative containers.
- **Dress-up** curtain tie-backs with colorful scarves, braided beads, dried flowers, or a cluster of ivy.