

Better Homes & Gardens®

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Free Meal
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*brighten
UP!*

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Up Your
Laundry
Game
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#BHG
FIRSTS

We help
you master
the basics.

make it yours UPDATE A RENTAL

Want your rental to feel more like a dream home? These affordable DIY upgrades let you personalize without a permanent commitment.

PROBLEM

There's no character.

QUICK FIXES

■ **Hardware**

Freshen bathroom and/or kitchen cabinets with modern knobs and pulls. (Save the originals for when you move out.) Check out ikea.com.

■ **Light-switch covers**

For a style boost, swap out old plastic light-switch covers for something different. Remove the covers when your lease is up, or check with your landlord about leaving them for the next tenant to enjoy. Try Nostalgic Warehouse plates at wayfair.com.

■ **Ceiling medallions**

Add prominence to a pretty light fixture by hanging a lightweight plastic medallion on the ceiling above it. Try the Westinghouse 16" Split Design White Finish Ceiling Medallion, \$16, homedepot.com.



PROBLEM

BLAH BATH

QUICK FIX

Don't underestimate the power of a new showerhead. Give your bathroom a spa upgrade for less than \$100. Bonus: If you buy one labeled WaterSense, you might trim your monthly water bill. (It uses 20 percent less water than the industry standard.) OK the swap with your landlord, or store the original to reinstall. Try Delta's In2ition Five-Spray Two-in-One Combo Kit, from \$68, homedepot.com.



THESE LAMPS
DIM AND ADJUST
FOR COMFY
READING IN BED.

PROBLEM

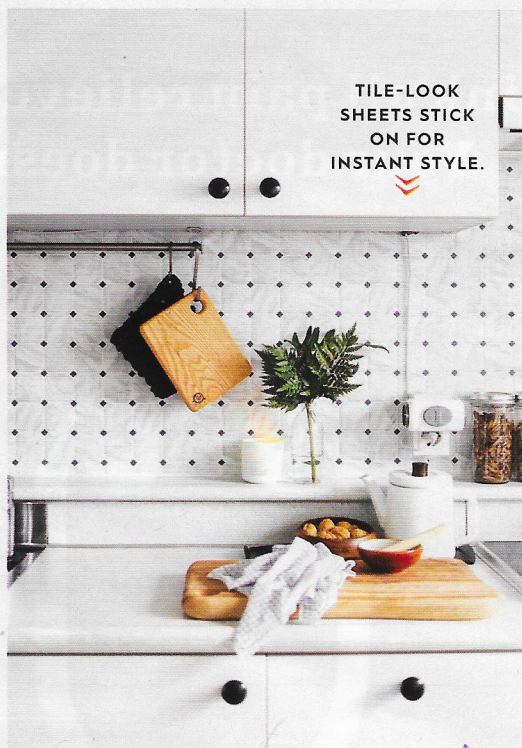
Your space feels perpetually dark.

QUICK FIXES

■ **Plug-in sconces** Sure, you could add another table lamp, but sconces also add architectural interest with no more hassle than drilling a couple of holes and turning a screwdriver. Shown at left: Wray Black and Antique Brass wall lamps, \$100 for two, lampsplus.com.

■ **Light conversion kits** Turn recessed lights into pendants for impact in the entry or above a kitchen sink. Try the Portfolio Polished Nickel Pendant Light Conversion Kit, \$20, lowes.com.

■ **Undercabinet lights** A length of dimmable LED tape light under cabinets supplies task lighting. Customize the Plug & Light LED Under Cabinet Tape Light Kit for your space. From \$35, aqlightinggroup.com.



TILE-LOOK
SHEETS STICK
ON FOR
INSTANT STYLE.

PROBLEM

Dated backsplash

QUICK FIX

When your Dream Kitchen Pinterest Board ambitions are out of reach, stick-on tiles are a frugal shortcut to a pretty backsplash. Sheets of Tic Tac Tiles (shown in Marmo White, above) come in a variety of colors and styles. The moisture-resistant sheets can be cut to fit using scissors or a utility knife then applied over paint, ceramic tiles, mirrors, or wallpaper. If you need to remove the sheets, peel them off after you warm them with a blow dryer to soften the adhesive backing. A nonabrasive cleanser removes any leftover glue. \$40 (ten 10"x10" sheets); tictactiles.com

PROBLEM

The mirror is naked.

QUICK FIX

Don't settle for an uninteresting, unfinished wall mirror in the bathroom. Frame it instead. MirrorMate builds a custom-size frame that sticks onto the mirror edge with heavy-duty tape. It's removable, but so good-looking that your landlord may ask you to leave it. mirrormate.com ■



TIPS FROM A SERIAL RENTER

Chelsea Coulston's military family has lived in seven homes in 10 years. Her blog, *Making Home Base*, chronicles their DIY adventures.

WORTH-IT UPDATE

So many rentals have beige or yellow-white walls. A fresh coat of paint will give your space a clean backdrop.

TALK TO YOUR LANDLORD

"If you're updating in a way that brings value, the majority of landlords will not only approve but be grateful for your work." She gives her landlord the plan details, including how it will improve the property.

REPURPOSE ROOMS

Rethink space to better serve your needs. Use a coat closet as a pantry or a linen closet to store toys.

Refresh, fast

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