



## **Home Sweet Home - Making It Lovely**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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I remember when my father-in law would say that he kissed the step when he returned home from a holiday. Well I didn't do that this month but after returning from two trips in a matter of weeks I felt good to get back to my condo.

Most of us know the expression "There's No Place Like Home" but not everyone thinks that this applies to them. Here are some ideas that might help you to enjoy your home more:

1. Keep it Simple - Having too many things in your environment can lead to feelings of overwhelm. Do you really need to have that many dishes, or books, or papers? One good guideline to consider is that if you haven't used or worn something for a year, then you probably won't use it next year. Don't think of getting rid of things, think of offering them to someone who has greater need than you do. It is easier to let go if you think gift or recycle rather than garbage..
2. Think Efficiency - Are you always looking for things or wasting steps because your environment isn't organized? You can save both time and energy by setting up each room in a way that will facilitate projects. Everything in life is easier if you have a system and follow it. I remember my high school home economics teacher telling us "Have a place for everything and keep everything in its place". It only takes minutes to put things away but if you don't do it, you will be facing hours' worth of work a few days from now. This also applies to the paperwork that can easily pile up on your counter or desk. Opening your mail near the shredder greatly reduces clutter and filing bills as you pay them will make life so much easier.
3. Incorporate your interests - Make sure that your home reflects your personality and allows you to enjoy your hobbies. Do you have a comfortable place to sit while listening to your favourite music? Is there good lighting and a quiet, comfortable spot where you can read or do needlework? Could you find all the necessary sporting equipment you need if a friend challenged you to a game that starts in twenty minutes?
4. Add beauty - Instead of hiding your good dishes in a cupboard, start using them. Consider painting a room in your favourite colour. Use plants or cushions to add interest. Display gifts that you have been "saving". Frame a family recipe. Download pictures of your vacation on a digital photo frame so you can enjoy them all year.
5. Do repairs - "A stitch in time saves nine". Mend items before hanging them in a closet. Keep all your manuals together in a binder so that you can order parts when necessary. Make sure that your tools are stored together and easy to find? You don't have to spend a lot of money to maintain your home. Call for a quote until you get one that is reasonable. And always remember that YouTube can help you with almost any problem.
6. Learn to Relax - I am always amazed when people travel several hours to far-off locations because they state that they need a break and then return home tired and poorer.

There is no better time to begin turning your home into a wonderful retreat center! Start with one room and before you know it, the results will motivate you move on to the next room!