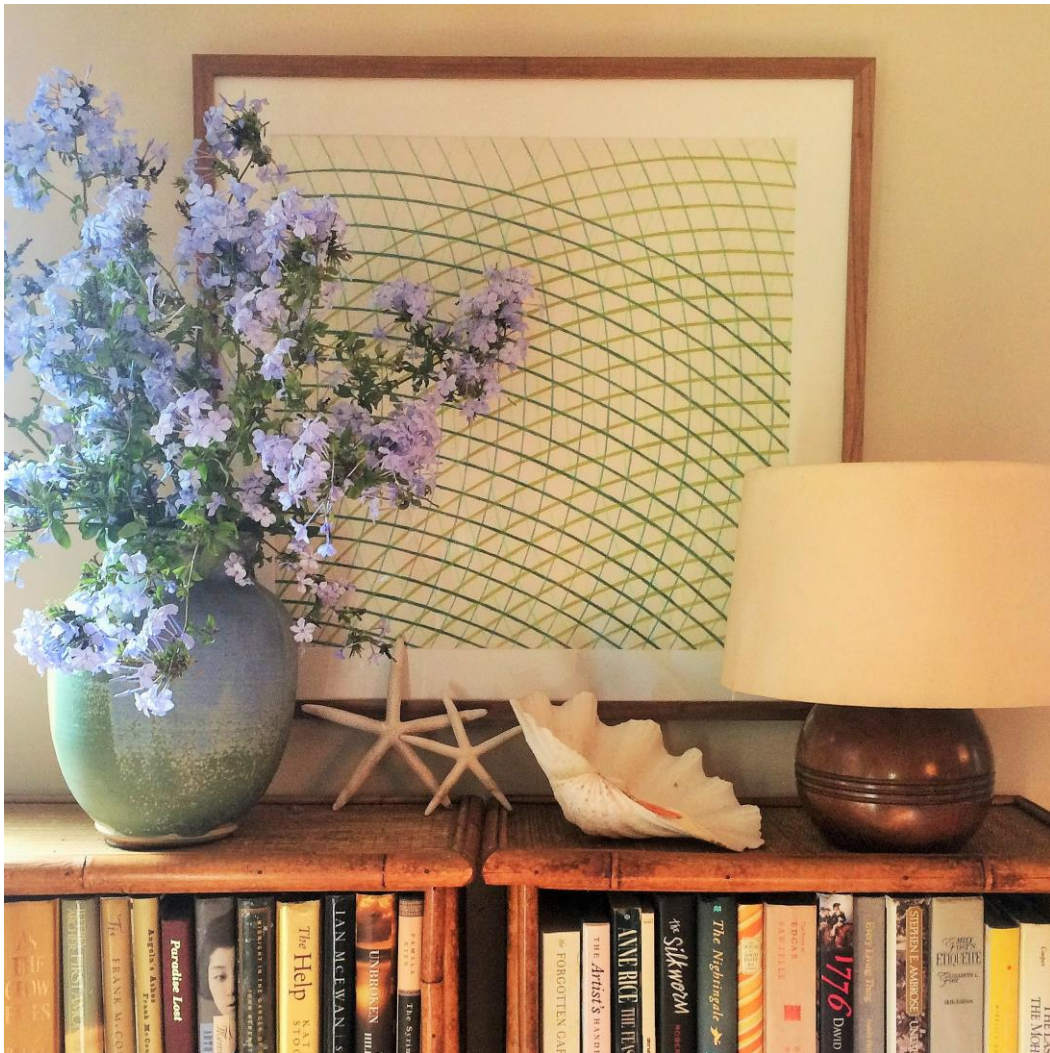


ARTS & HOMES



**YOUR GUIDE TO START MAKING YOUR HOUSE
LOOK MORE POLISHED AND PUT TOGETHER**

WELCOME. Here is a quick action plan to jump-start your interior design project. I know it can be a paralyzing feeling of not knowing where to begin. Quite often, all a client needs is the last layer of finishing touches that can completely transform the whole room. She has many of the basics, which often consist of something like a white room with a seagrass rug, a neutral sofa and club chairs, and fairly simple wood coffee tables and side tables. Regardless of your own personal style or color preferences, when you add in the 6 key finishing elements of **ART, ACCESSORIES, BOOKS, LAMPS, PLANTS & PILLOWS** it can totally refresh your house.

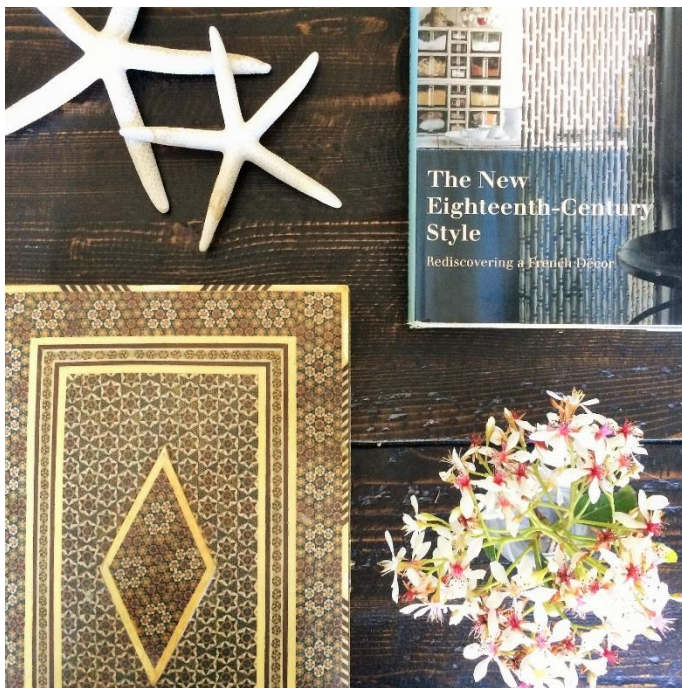
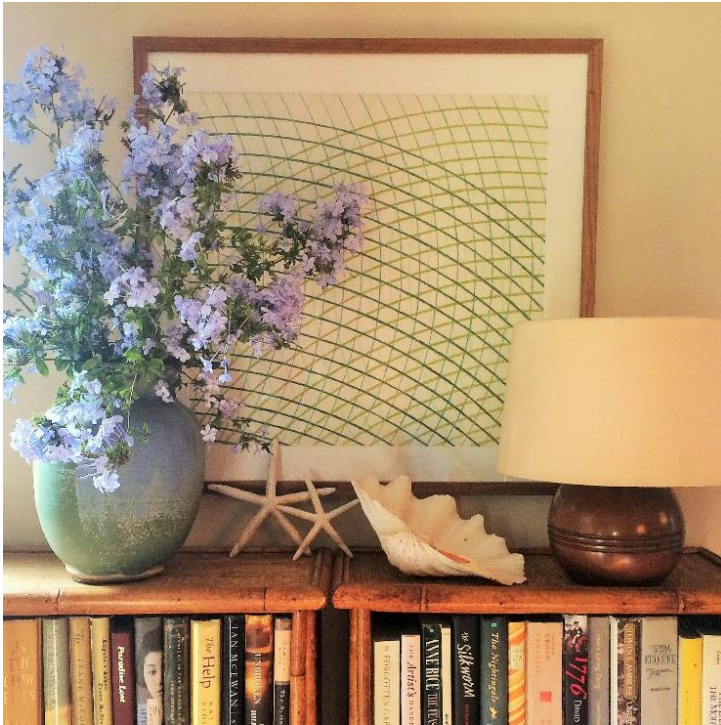
But first.....**EDIT, EDIT, EDIT.** Almost every client I meet needs to do this to some degree. This goes for accessories, extra misc furniture, and too many framed family photos on every single surface. We all have the clutter of daily life lying around. It helps if you can consolidate this into a couple of designated locations. Trays on flat surfaces can work wonders at making things look neater than they are. Make sure that in your HONEST opinion with yourself, each and every item you own is either very beautiful, very functional, or very sentimental. Just because you spent money on something 10 years ago doesn't mean you have to feel guilty about letting it go if it no longer serves a purpose.

ART: This is a personal passion of mine. Most houses I see either don't have enough on the walls, have pieces that are too small in scale, or have pieces that are hung too high. This seems to be one of the hardest things for people to buy on their own, but is the best way to make your house unique. I have many blog posts on the subject, and have listed them here at the end.



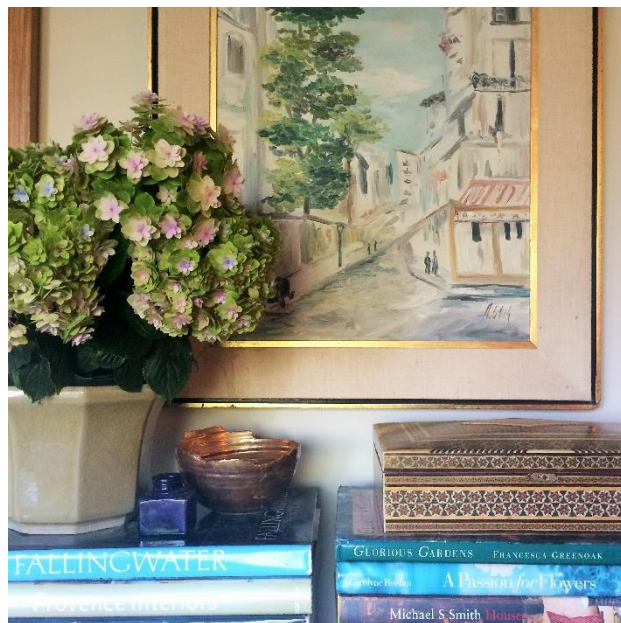
ACCESSORIES

Layering is very important. Try to find some of the following items in various finishes, widths and heights for variation: bowls, vases, statues/figures, boxes, shells, coral, sets of coasters, trays, paper weights, etc. Materials could be glass, ceramic, woven, inlaid wood, stone. Play around with them on coffee tables, side tables, console tables.



BOOKS

This is one of the most overlooked items in so many houses. Buy some pretty coffee table books on ANY subject that you and your family like. Cars, travel, cooking, sports, art, etc. Put stacks of 2 or more on tabletops next to lamps or plants. You can put two or more stacks next to each other if it's a large surface. Put a little accessory on top of the stack, and put another accessory next to the stack of books on the table. You can't go wrong. Books add height variation to a tablescape, and a lot of useful color and lived-in texture to any style of room.



LAMPS

This is an important item even if you think you already have enough light in the room from recessed ceiling lights. Lamp light is far more beautiful and flattering, and having table lamps on side tables, consoles and buffets throughout a room makes it feel more finished. It also lends some height variation which adds visual interest. I think most people tend to omit them, or buy ones that are far too short and/or skinny. Look for something with a substantial shade and base, like a big ceramic vase shape or similar.



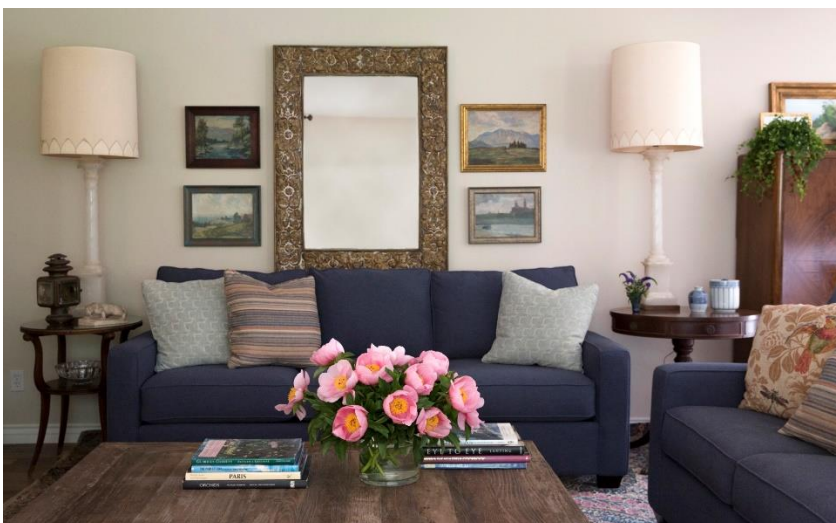
PLANTS : Adding a tall tree is SUCH a good way to add life to a room and to anchor an empty corner. I like to have the top of the tree about 1'-2' from the ceiling. If they are shorter than that they could look odd in some places, but it's one of those things that people tend to buy too short. I also love small plants on tables: coffee, side, console, buffet, dining. Succulents are an easy choice if you don't think you have a green thumb. If you need help, contact a local nursery and find a good point person to discuss:

- the light exposure in your space, and have them make recommendations of plant types
- what supplies you'll need to properly "plant" it in your container, such as a plastic pot liner, a foam collar, and moss to make the top look finished
- the best watering plan for the plants you purchase, then get in touch with them if a few weeks later if it looks like the plant is becoming unhealthy. Do this well before it actually dies!

Regarding containers, they can be simple and inexpensive terra cotta, glazed ceramic, or a simple basket. You might find something perfect at Home Depot, World Market, or Pier One. Best to confirm a plant's grow pot size with nursery first before buying the decorative pot to put it in.



PILLOWS : This is one of the most fun items in terms of setting the tone for your room. Just choose colors and patterns that make you happy. I usually use the range of 18-21" square depending on sofa size. Sometimes I throw in a rectangle. A good recipe is two pillows in one pattern, one on each side of sofa, and one pillow in a second pattern layered on one side. There are SO many great resources online.



PLAN BEFORE YOU START SHOPPING

It seems that no one has enough time for anything these days but if you spend a few hours planning and researching it will be well worth it.

- 1) Take some time to browse on Pinterest, etc, and narrow down a small amount of inspirational photos for the look you would like to achieve. (Feel free to check out my Pinterest boards – I have over 100 boards of my favorite photos from all over the web.)
- 2) It's OK to COPY a photo as much as possible. Even the best designers borrow ideas from each other.
- 3) Make a list of what you need to buy, and put in order of priority, if necessary, for your budget, so you can chip away at it over time. Include notes such as dimensions and possible sources on this list so you have it all in one place.
- 4) Shop online or in stores and save images of all the things you like that could work, then narrow it down. It often feels like a big puzzle and can take a few tries to get the right mix before you start purchasing. I like to pin everything to one Pinterest board while shopping, and then I keep dividing them into smaller boards like "option 1" "option 2" "backup choices" etc, until I'm done playing around with it and can see a clear plan forming. Sometimes if you just pick one thing first that you KNOW you want, the rest fall into place and it's easy to eliminate choices from there.
- 5) Sometimes it's easiest to order more than you think you need if the items are easily returnable, so that you can see all of the choices together in person. Play around with them, keep some, and return the rest. This can save a lot of time in the long run.

GOOD LUCK! Stay tuned for more detailed guides on each of these categories, including paint, window treatments, putting it all together, and where to shop – still a work in progress!

IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL HELP : Feel free to contact me! I do hourly consultation in Los Angeles or virtually worldwide. For more info: <https://artsandhomes.com/interior-design-services>.

BLOG POSTS ON HANGING ART : each one has different tips for selecting and/or hanging

<https://artsandhomes.com/art-gallery-wall-2415>

<https://artsandhomes.com/guide-to-hanging-a-gallery-wall-1321>

<https://artsandhomes.com/gallery-walls-1634>

<https://artsandhomes.com/rue-magazine-selecting-vintage-art-2150>

<https://artsandhomes.com/guide-to-placing-art-1200>

<https://artsandhomes.com/gallery-wall-installation-2044>

PINTEREST BOARDS FOR ART INSPIRATION : there are many more on my main Pinterest page too

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-gallery-walls/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-bedrooms/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-vertically-stacked/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-in-a-series/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-large-scale/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-abstract/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-photo-walls/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-with-fireplaces/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-kids-rooms/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-bathrooms/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ArtsandHomes/art-cool-installations/>