

lighten up!

Get your home ready for **summer**



WILLIAM MACDONALD
WillMac Design

As soon as the last snowflake melts, I start to lighten up and so do my clients! Our design office is abuzz with questions, queries and calls. The big question on their minds is: What can I do to freshen the house up for summer?

When working with clients I always start with these tried and true, never-fail tips and tricks that always amaze and delight. It's easy and simple, and the results have real impact. They will take your home from the doldrums of winter to the sun-dappled shores of the Hamptons in a matter of minutes.

Lamp shades Switch out darker lamp shades for lighter ones. If you can find pink light bulbs (try online), swapping those with your usual white it makes a big difference.

Slip covers Invest in a pair of sturdy, well made light coloured slipcovers. A set in white, tan or a pastel shade made of linen, cotton, or sail cloth will not only make it seem as if you have bought all new furniture, but will help lift the mood of any room.

Drapes If you can, remove your drapes completely and let the sunshine in. If that's not an option, swap out your winter drapes for lighter sheers or cottons with a beautiful floral or nautical design, or even a French ticking stripe. This will add a softness and airy feel to your space.

Bed linens A very easy change to make is your bed linens. Pale blues, cool mauves or mint green, this season's hot colours, will add lightness and freshness to all your summer dreams.

Carpets If you have hardwood, concrete or tile floor and usually cover them with area carpets, roll them up for the season. This one thing will make a huge impact on your space. Give it try!

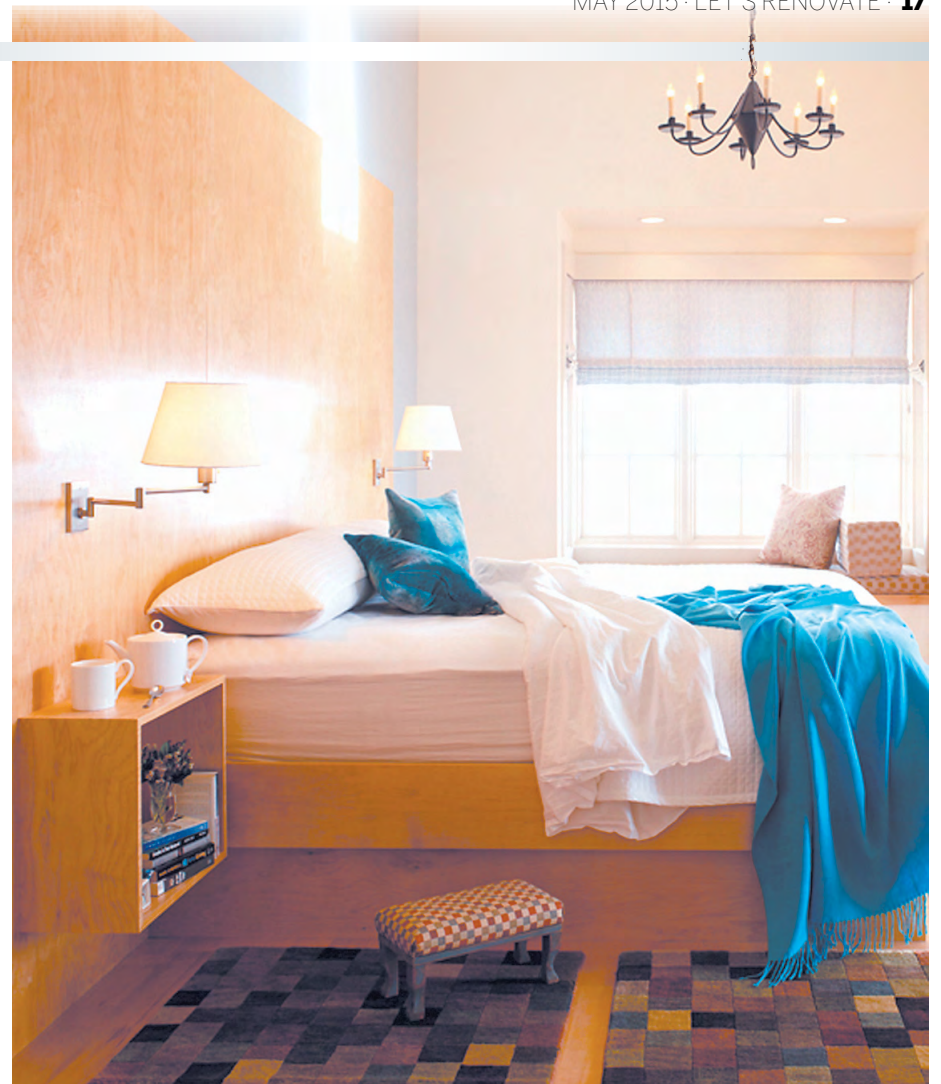
Clear the decks If you can only do one thing this spring, be sure to edit your space. Be ruthless. Get rid of junk, clear all surfaces; your counter top, your coffee table, your nightstands and vanity. It makes a huge difference.

Rearrange Rearrange your furniture. It costs nothing and can make your home feel fresh and brand new. Same with art. I like picture rails or shelves that allow you to easily move your favourite pieces of art and pictures around the house so that it allows fresh new looks.

Outdoor space If you are lucky and have a garden, terrace or even a little city balcony, don't forget about it. There are so many options to make these spaces more attractive and useful. Outdoor furniture has come a long way. Outdoor carpets, too, have advanced to the point where I use them indoors. Plant pots with herbs and colourful annuals such as geraniums for the immediate French feel, or succulents to evoke that Palm Springs vibe.

Whatever you do to welcome summer into your home, remember to have fun and enjoy yourself. It's far too short a season, so make it look good!

Toronto-based designer William MacDonald is the Principal of WillMac Design. His firm is best known for creating stylish, approachable spaces that evoke a simple, timeless elegance for clientele internationally. willmacdesign.ca, @willmacdesign



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