

21 Clever Tricks to Make Your Home Look Bigger and Brighter

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Clean the Windows

1/22



This may seem like an obvious solution, but it's one that's often overlooked: Cleaning the windows can make a noticeable

improvement in the brightness of a room. To get your windows sparkling, you can [make a simple cleaner](#) by mixing one part white vinegar with two parts water in a spray bottle.

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Use Mirrors Strategically

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Position mirrors opposite windows to reflect more light around the house. If your walls are spacious, you can add an eclectic touch by assembling a gallery wall using mirrors of various sizes. Another smart trick: Place a mirror strategically at the [end of a cramped hallway](#) to make the corridor seem more spacious.

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Rearrange Furniture

3/22

If your furniture is obstructing any of the light streaming in through the windows, [rearrange the layout](#) so the sun can really shine in.

Related: [10 Ways Your Furniture Can Make You Healthier](#)

Streamline Your Shelves

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It may be tempting to pack your built-ins full of books and decorative objects, but be sure to leave a little empty space on the shelves. Too much clutter on display makes it look like your home is starved for [storage space](#).

Related: [10 Novel DIYs for a Better Bookshelf](#)

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Cut Back on Clutter

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The [fewer objects in a room, the airier it will feel](#). In smaller rooms, scale back on bulky decor, tchotchkes, and other unnecessary items. Either get rid of them or move them to larger rooms with more natural light.

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Hang Sheer Window Treatments

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Ditch heavy window treatments in favor of lighter ones. Choose sheers, if possible, which will let in the most light while still [offering some privacy](#).

Related: [Lose the Drapes: 12 Better Ways to Dress a Window](#)

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Cut Back Foliage

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Look out your windows. If there are low-hanging tree branches or [overgrown hedges](#) preventing light from coming in, trim them back to restore your view of the outdoors. As well, whenever you change up the landscaping around the exterior of your home, consider what the new plantings will look like when they're fully grown, not just what they look like at the nursery.

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Choose the Right Fabrics

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[Heavy fabrics like wool](#), velvet, and fur have a big presence and

can make a room feel overdecorated. Lighter picks, such as cotton, linen, and lace, draw less attention to themselves, which can help a small room feel more open and bright.

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Hang Curtains Strategically

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When you install a curtain rod, make sure it extends beyond either side of the window casing. Not only will the [windows look bigger](#), but when the curtains are open they won't block the glass or the incoming light. Likewise, mounting the curtain rod several inches above the top of a window will make it look taller.

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Use Natural Materials

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Furniture, upholstery, and decorative accents made of natural materials can help a room feel open and airy, provided they're not too dark and heavy. Focus on lighter colors like those found in jute rugs and blond woods, and add [plenty of plants](#).

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Swap Out Doors

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Replace solid doors with French doors in rooms that don't require complete privacy. The transparent glass panels will [make a room feel more spacious](#), as will installing transoms over doors.

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Lighten Up Floors

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Dark colors on floors, walls, and ceilings can make a room feel smaller and more closed off. While it's easy to paint the walls, changing out dark floors is an expensive proposition. For a quick fix at a fraction of the cost of replacing the floor, try laying down [lighter area rugs](#) or carpet tiles over a darker floor to set a brighter color palette for the space.

Related: [The 9 Rules for Rugs That Everyone Should Know](#)

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Layer Your Lighting

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[Use multiple light sources](#) in each room so no matter how much or how little natural light is coming in from the outside, you can always add a little more. Start with a primary light source—for example, overhead lighting—then mix in secondary sources, such as accent lamps or task lighting.

Related: [8 Common Lighting Mistakes Almost Everyone Makes](#)

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Scale Down Furniture

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If you can, swap out heavy furniture for pieces with slimmer profiles. Opt for sofas with exposed legs and [low tables made of materials like wrought iron](#), glass, and acrylic to make a space feel roomier.

Related: [7 Mistakes Everyone Makes When Shopping for Furniture](#)

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Check Light Bulb Labels

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Light bulbs are now required to have a lighting facts label on the packaging. It looks much like the nutritional facts label you see on packaged food at the grocery store, and it tells you [how bright the bulb is](#) (measured in lumens) and whether the light appears more warm or cool (measured on the Kelvin temperature scale). Cool light makes a room look whiter and brighter and is a good choice for a small bathroom or kitchen.

Related: [Your Guide to Navigating the New World of Light Bulbs](#)

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Use Dimmer Switches

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Put primary light sources on dimmer switches so you can [brighten a room](#) as the light changes throughout the day.

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Don't Forget Utility Spaces

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Utility spaces like [laundry rooms](#) or closets are easy to neglect, but these are often the places that feel the most cramped. Use solutions like undercabinet lighting or spotlights to illuminate every nook and cranny.

Related: [20 Instant Updates for a Laundry Room You Can Love](#)

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Be a Minimalist on the Walls

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A cluster of gallery-style artwork may not be the best choice for a [small space](#). Choose a few pieces of art and make sure there's plenty of space around each one to make the walls feel more expansive.

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Raise the Ceiling Height

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Make standard ceilings feel higher by incorporating vertical lines into your room design. [Painted lines](#) aren't your only option—

adding beadboard or board-and-batten wainscoting will draw the eye up just as well.

Related: [9 Clever Ways to Counteract Low Ceilings](#)

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Carve Out Hidden Storage Space

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Tuck nonessentials out of sight with [dual-purpose pieces](#) like storage ottomans or benches. Less visual clutter on shelves and other surfaces translates into an airier interior.

Related: [15 Sneaky Tricks to Double Your Storage Space](#)

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Use Paint to Your Advantage

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Nothing will [brighten up a room as quickly](#) as painting it in a light, neutral color palette. Make your bold statements with pops of brighter colors for furnishings and accessories.

Related: [The Only Colors You Should Use in a Small Space](#)

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Happy Home

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What are you waiting for? Give a few of these tricks a try to [transform a dark, small room](#) into a light and spacious place.

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