

# HOUSES & LIFE

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## At home with Vickie

# Cheap ways to mix it up

Tax season always makes me want to stick to a budget, so designing on the cheap is the only way to go.

Or should I be re-designing? It's taking what you've got stored in your antique cedar chest or even that extra-large plastic bin in the garage and using it. Or mixing it up with something funky from your neighborhood thrift store or the garage sale you couldn't pass up last weekend.

But how do you do that and not make your house look like it's something out of a junk

yard? Irene Woodworth of One Day Redesigns Inc. in Boise gave about 30 women, including me, a refresher course at St. Vincent de Paul in using what we've got in a class.

Among other things, she told us to know ourselves — what styles we like, what colors we like. It doesn't mean you can't mix it up. I personally love contemporary looks. But my grandfather's bookcase from the early 1900s has a prominent spot next to my contemporary 9-foot sofa. And, if you think you're stuck with the style you've had for the last decade, think again. As you replace pieces, you can head in a different direction.

But you've got to have a focus. Irene suggested keeping a notebook with clips from magazines or catalogs of things that you like. If you've got fabric samples from your drapes or furniture, carry small swatches in your purse when you go shopping. Or, at the very least, find paint chips that match your color scheme and carry those to make sure the green lamp you're admiring will work with your green chair.



Vickie Ashwill / The Idaho Statesman

Irene Woodworth shows how mixing fashion trends can ruin the final effect.

# Vickie

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Also, take a measuring tape with you when you're out and about. You never know when you might find something that seems perfect for your foyer. Most garage sales won't take it back, so be sure it fits before you hand over the cash. Here are some other tips Irene offered for decorating on the cheap:

➤ Visit thrift or consignment stores or go to garage sales as often as you can. It's not like shopping at Macy's, where they can order what you want if it's out of stock. These are one-time items that you pretty much have to buy when you see them.

➤ If you're a collector, put your items together for impact. Oh, and

you might want to pare down how many collectibles you have on display. You can always rotate your favorites for a fresh look.

➤ A quick way to get a fresh look from your old or hand-me-down sofa is a slip cover. You can buy them new, but you can also find them in thrift stores.

➤ Keep your basics simple. A solid-colored sofa, for example. Look for trendy items as accent pieces. Trends will go away, says Irene, but your couch will likely be around for years.

➤ Hosting a garden party? Look for sheets or shower curtains with a spring or summer theme to use as table cloths. Irene says sheets are economical.

➤ Handy with a staple gun? You can recover simple chairs with fabric found at thrift stores.

➤ If you want new rather than gently used, shop clearances. Check out places like Tuesday Morning, Big Lots or Ross. I personally love clearance tables at Fred Meyer. Again, if you're not good at mixing and matching, carry your color chips with you as Irene suggests.

Irene says it doesn't take much to change how your home looks. And it's true. Different art, pillows, accessories or paint can give your home a fresh look.

And, the best part is that it doesn't have to cost a bundle.

**More classes at St. Vincent de Paul, 2110 S. Broadway, Boise**

➤ Ten Deadly Sins of Decorating, 10:30 a.m. May 6

➤ The Art of Accessorizing, 10:30 a.m. June 3

Call 333-8001 to register. Cost is \$12.

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## On the Web

[OneDayRedesignsInc.com](http://OneDayRedesignsInc.com)

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*Share your cleaning tips and decorating advice. E-mail: [vickieathome@idahostatesman.com](mailto:vickieathome@idahostatesman.com) or write to Vickie Ashwill, The Idaho Statesman, P.O. Box 40, Boise, ID 83707. Include your name and city. Or call 373-6569. Materials submitted to The Idaho Statesman may be published or distributed in print, electronic or other forms.*

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