

Published August 24th, 2016

Stylish Solutions

By Ann McDonald



Don't neglect the view from your desk. If it's OK to work from home pick a space where you are looking onto something beautiful as it helps with planning. Photos courtesy of Couture Chateau

daily living.

What does that mean as we transition? A few things.

First, realize there is a shift taking place. Kids are heading back to school, perhaps you are taking a new class or that book club is back in swing. From a design standpoint that means our living patterns are changing. Where we place our purses or backpacks, where our shoes land, how the papers fall on the desk - all this changes simply because life is shifting seasons. Once we see these things as normal cycles of life and not bad messes to be mad at, we can design solutions to accommodate our new patterns.

One of the reasons we plan so early for the holiday season in our homes and in the lives of our clients is that this same transition happens in and around October, but seems to come in with the brute force of a hurricane. And that transition comes just after we've finally figured out where to store the backpacks and purses from the fall.

Second, identify the places in your homes that were clean and orderly during the summer that are now bustling with papers and things, and make a concentrated focus to fix them. What does this look like? A big basket for backpacks, a tray for shoes, a stand for sports equipment, a pretty file box for your book club notes.

As part of this I strongly encourage you to take steps to plan for the upcoming seasons as well. My team and I have been posting helpful tip videos on our Facebook page Couture Chateau with daily short helps. These are encouraging reminders about what you can do today, so the next transition will be easy and seamless. It's about building habits of lifestyle and planning so everyone is at peace within the home, no matter the time of year.

Finally, be okay letting some things go. There are times we just simply work out of an old design schematic. Think of children's rooms as an example. There comes a time to put away the princess wall decals as they transition into something else. Sometimes we forget to design and decorate with a "Present-Future Mindset."

A Present-Future Mindset is one where we design spaces and places to make us what we want

Welcome to transition season, Stylish Suburbanite. Yes, it's that time of year again, as we are heading headlong into fall. This month I'm sharing helpful design and decorating tips you, as Stylish Suburbanites, can use as the summer to fall transition enters full swing.

There are small items that pop up when designing and decorating during transition periods and seasonal changes, that if we don't acknowledge, can feel stressful or out of place, but in fact are a very normal part of the process of change.

For the next few weeks, embrace the bit of chaos as you are working towards order, and understand, even professional designers deal with these short seasons of upheaval. Just like leaves form a mess on the lawn until we rake them into piles we can jump into for fun, the "pop ups" in our homes happening as part of season changes are a very normal part of life. They aren't bad in and of themselves; in fact, they are actually opportunities to bring in fresh design and decorating solutions to

to be in the future, instead of building proverbial altars to the past.

It could mean a computer room becomes a library when the children leave, or an office becomes a guest room when parents move in with us. Embracing the change of seasons in design as an opportunity for fresh aesthetic is always fun. Take time to shop at new stores, look for inspiration and schedule some time to just examine how you really live in your space.

May these tips be an encouragement to us in Lamorinda, as we see colors change and fall routines start to gel. These should relieve stress from your decorating and design "pop-ups." Give yourself the gift of time to shop for some inspiring home décor pieces to hold those backpacks and books, and set aside time to plan for the holidays. Even an hour a week, every week for the next month, would be sufficient to alleviate the panic that comes from expectation of a perfect home. (Hint: there is no such thing). It's about creating your own environment and stewarding your home so the people inhabiting it can become something in the future.

For more information on our encouraging Facebook Live videos, visit www.facebook.com/couturechateau and consider joining us for www.stressfreeholidayhome.com workshop online. When a licensed psychologist says the course relieves stress, you know it's a good sign.

Until next month, stay stylish!



Use a stylish rolling rack just inside the garage door if you don't have a large mudroom like this one from Pottery Barn.



Set up a planning station with an inspirational item that could work in the next season in your home. It helps you to take on the changes to be made.



These clear display boxes from Pottery Barn are great for small items like keys or flash drives that can be easily lost.



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