

Classically Eclectic

After



A designer turns a rundown home into her own personal sanctuary.

BY TIFFANY JANSEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES CLARK
STYLING BY MAUREEN STEVENS

WHEN DESIGNER MAUREEN STEVENS AND HER HUSBAND WERE IN THE MARKET FOR SOMETHING ROOMIER, they didn't want to sacrifice their location in downtown Austin, Texas. So when they found a house in nearby Clarksville, they jumped at the chance to move in—despite the home having previously been lived-in by students.

"There were three college kids living here. So as you can imagine, it was a disaster," Maureen says. "But, I saw the beauty and the vision behind it."

With the green light from the landlord, Maureen set out to bring that beauty and vision to life. The result is a home with an eclectic mix of vintage and modern glamour, teeming with plenty of personality.

A DESIGNER'S SECRETS TO SUCCESS

The danger with mismatching is the tendency to wind up with more misses than matches. That's why Maureen recommends starting with a color palette in mind. For her home makeover, she chose brass, black and emerald green.

Though Maureen's eclectic collection of items fit her color palette, they didn't quite go with the modern, glamorous ambience beginning to take shape in her design. To create a sense of coherence, she went with a light gray on the walls. "Gray is very modern, but then it's classy and sophisticated as well," Maureen says.

Before





After



Before

How to Make a Statement

Maureen Stevens' simple tips for a drastic home makeover.

- **Make an impact:** Look to empty wall space first. This is the area that will create the most dramatic changes. Go for a color that will create lucidity between all the other elements of your décor, while still making a big impact.
- **Plan it out:** Think about how you want your rooms to function and what you want in each, starting with the biggest items first. "You don't have to know drafting or natural floor planning," Maureen says. "Just sketch [a floor plan] out, then measure each area."
- **Add a personal touch:** To set her home apart from the rest in her neighborhood, Maureen painted a white stripe through the center of the porch steps. "It gives the area a little quirk to it," she says. "People pass by and see a porch that's a little different."

She also created vignettes to tie specific sets of pieces together, which are displayed on shelves or tables, in clusters arranged on the floor or in a photo collage. These vignettes are great for giving any home character. The photo collage in Maureen's living room is a "fusion of me and my husband," she says. There are posters of her husband's favorite television shows, lanterns from a friend's restaurant, a graphic Maureen made herself and a host of other sentimental items that make her house feel more like home.

While a home makeover can be overwhelming at times, just think of it as putting together a well-dressed outfit. "You can't have too many accessories or you'll look like a clown," Maureen says. That's why the key to success is putting everything out there and editing as you go, she says.



For more information on Maureen Stevens, visit maureenstevens.com.