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CHEAP TRICKS 9 Tips to Refresh Rooms



Kathia placed the bed against the long wall in front of a window, which she covered with a Shirred Headboard Panel,* for a more practical use of the space. "I also installed a block-out blind to prevent the light from seeping through," Kathia says. She discovered the silk coverlet at a nearby close-out store and purchased the silk remnant at the end of the bed for show only.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP CLAYTON-THOMPSON
STYLED BY DONNA PIZZI



Kathia Emery turned the fabric sample that kick-started her palette into a pillow (behind her).

For years, Portland, Oregon, interior designer Kathia Emery kept her favorite furniture in storage. "It didn't suit my decor," Kathia explains. "I wanted an English country manor house, but I lived in a '50s-style ranch," she says.

But everything changed when she reunited, recently, with her husband James Kahan. Originally wed in 1964, the couple divorced two years later. Decades rolled by and then a year and a half ago, life brought them together again. Newly wed for the second time, Kathia and Jim purchased a 1940 colonial in Eastmorland, Oregon, close by the college where they first met. "It's a classic white house with green shutters," says Kathia happily. Although the new house was a great backdrop for the furniture she'd stowed away, its rooms called for an update—particularly the master bedroom, where busy wallpaper, fussy window treatments and a hodgepodge of furniture left the rectangular space feeling disjointed and overcrowded. "I envisioned

ROOM SERVICE

A dated bedroom gets an elegant new look



LEFT: In the old days, window treatments had the same pattern as the wallpaper. The result? An overload of flowers. A queen-size bed resigned along the long, skinny room's narrowest wall. Furniture styles were a bit of this and that, which, together with the flowery wallpaper, made the large bedroom feel cramped and uncomfortable.

SEE BUYING GUIDE FOR DETAILS *FOR DIRECTIONS, SEE INDEX ON PAGE 103

ROOM SERVICE

RIGHT:

For continuity, Kathia fashioned a chic table skirt from the same silk fabric used to make the curtain behind the bed. The vase-turned-lamp was awarded a budget-friendly cinnabar finial—a nod to the persimmon-colored pillow—for a custom finish. A grouping of genteel but penny-wise accoutrements—old leather-bound books, white roses and a decorative clock (a gift from Kathia's son)—conjure up the gracious country-house atmosphere Kathia long dreamed about.



a traditional-style bedroom," says Kathia, who runs her own firm, Emery & Associates, in Portland. "But, at the same time, I didn't want it to look like my grandmother's house."

Kathia stripped away the wallpaper and created a warm backdrop by painting the walls deep beige and the trim creamy white. A discounted fabric sample with a host of beguiling orange, yellow, blue and green blossoms inspired her accent colors. Fortunately, all these colors tied in with striped silk drapes she'd brought from her old living room.

Kathia recruited a friend to rework the drapes to frame two bedroom windows and designed a third fabric panel of complementary green silk to conceal a window behind the bed. The drapery gives the sleeping area a grand presence as does an affordable silk coverlet and a cache of silk pillows Kathia's friend sewed. A local antique store yielded a generous scrap of additional leaf-strewn silk, which Kathia hemmed and displays at the bed's foot for added visual interest.

All the furnishings, including the handsome four-poster, the stately highboy and bow-front chest, were

consignment-store finds Kathia had stowed away. Nightstands include an antique chest passed down from her husband's family and an inexpensive round table hidden beneath a new silk skirt. "It's more interesting when things don't match," the designer claims. The bedside lamps were each \$15 vases. Kathia had the vases wired and topped them with ready-made shades. In place of the room's utilitarian light fixture, she installed a romantic chandelier. Although the chandelier was a "mini-splurge," Kathia admits, the reproduction ceiling medallion that adds to its stature was purchased for under \$10.

Most of the accessories—the armchairs, pretty botanical prints, Picasso reproduction and antique-looking table clock—were pieces Kathia and Jim already owned, too. Delighted at not having to spend money on furnishings, the couple decided to invest their remaining funds in a sumptuous rug. A kind of mutual wedding present, the rug augments the elegant ambience that Kathia finally had the opportunity to create for her furnishings after so many years. ■

Time Line

Design planning, including looking for fabric and furnishings not already owned.....	15 hours
Stripping the wallpaper.....	1 day
Painting.....	1 day
Fabricating the draperies.....	4 days
Sewing the back-of-the-bed drapery.....	3 hours
Sewing the table skirt.....	2½ hours
Sewing the pillows.....	4 hours
Installing furnishings, hanging window treatments, pictures and chandelier.....	1 day

The Tab

Rug.....	\$4,374
Fabrics for drapery, table skirt and pillows.....	1,059
Chandelier.....	500
Painting walls.....	350
Fabrication of drapery, table skirt and pillows (including lining and pillow fill).....	343
Stripping wallpaper.....	250
TOTAL.....	\$6,876



ABOVE: Before Kathia transformed the room, the much-too-formal dressing area at the windows blocked light and garden vistas. Colorful art was lost against the blooming background and a collection of mismatched linens and blankets heightened the confusion.



ABOVE: By reworking drapery panels that once graced the living room in her old house, Kathia was able to stretch her decorating budget. Installed just below the molding, the Colorful Curtains® enhance the windows and frame the outdoor view. "I like the drama of the fabric puddling on the floor," Kathia says. A fresh pillow gives the owner's reproduction Ming-dynasty chair—relocated from the dining room—personality.

What they Loved

- ✓ The room's scale, which afforded space for large pieces of furniture.
- ✓ The pristine hardwood floor.
- ✓ The generous windows providing natural light.

What they Hated

- ✗ The busy wallpaper strewn with zigzags and flowers.
- ✗ The odd layout in which the bed of the previous owners had been squished at one of the rectangular room's narrow ends.
- ✗ The elaborate window treatments complete with swags and café curtains.