

# Decorating Mistakes Everyone Makes

(NAPSA)—Rachel Ashwell, designer of Simply Shabby Chic for Target, shares a few common home-decorating pitfalls and suggests easy ways to combat them.

**Find the Light:** Turn overhead lights off and purchase an array of lighting, such as table lamps, sconces and floor lamps. A trio of light sources, positioned at different heights, will create flattering pools of light. A mix of lighting styles will provide brighter wattage for reading and a softer glow for ambience. If you do choose an overhead light source, install dimmer switches so you have the flexibility to go from romantic to practical.

**Pack Rat Tendencies:** Once a year, make it a priority to edit the clutter. If you don't use it, lose it. If your heartstrings tug on an item, remind yourself that by donating to charity, someone else can enjoy and benefit. When editing your home, keep beauty, comfort and function as your criteria. Target, long considered the destination for decorating inspiration, has many attractive and affordable storage solutions that work within a budget. Items such as decorative boxes or storage ottomans serve double duty, adding to a room's décor and helping to keep the room organized.

**Measure It:** A tape measure is your best friend. Before heading to Target for decorative furnishings, measure the space that you are intending to place your purchase in, as well as doorways and halls, which will allow for easy move-in. Proportions are also an important consideration. A huge bed will overwhelm a small room, just as a little table against a vast wall can look lost. When you add measurements to your shopping list, you'll be happier with the end result.

**Furniture Flub:** One of the most common home-decorating blunders is to place furniture against walls. Leave some space between the wall and pieces of



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furniture so they can “breathe” and allow the room to look larger. Clustering chairs together creates an intimate setting.

**Simply Chic:** Less is always so much more. Invest in a few key pieces, but don't buy things just to fill space. It's always safe to purchase large furniture in solid colors. Variations of color, tone and texture are more interesting and soothing than jarring prints and loud, diverse colors. Let complementary hues on walls and neighboring textiles tie everything together. Add unique, personal touches with decorative pillows and colorful artwork.

**Look to the Windows:** Curtains or decorative window coverings are a beautiful way to define the tone, style and palette of a room. For example, whimsical lace panels create a different effect than silks or plush velvets, which evoke a warm, formal feel. If your windows are nonstandard sizes, place each curtain's tension rod at the same distance from the ceiling to create an illusion of windows at the same height. Details are also important. Rod pocket curtains, blinds, Roman shades and drapes help define a room's feeling. The color of the hardware adds the final touch, helping to bring the room together.