

Ace It: 5 Easy Finishing Touches

When your outdated interior needs an update, but you're crunched for time or money – here are 5 interior updates with instant gratification.

Refresh Cabinets

Update your cabinet knobs, hinges and drawer pulls.

- *A new finish or a new style can immediately transform your kitchen or bathroom.*
- *Simply unscrew the old ones and install replacements in the existing drill holes.*
- *If you choose a different style, you'll need to patch and sand the old holes and measure and drill new ones.*
- *Look for an installation kit. The templates are like a cheat sheet to make measuring and installing the new hardware easier.*
- *Now if the new hardware won't cover the patch and you want a high impact update, paint your cabinets. Lightly sand the surface to scuff it up so paint will adhere.*
- *To save time, use a paint and primer in one. Or, apply a primer and use a paint that has self-leveling properties so brush marks won't show.*

Update Door Hardware

Replacing your door knobs and hinges can have a dramatic and transformative effect.

- *Swap the existing hardware out for a new style or finish.*
- *Or, use spray paint to update existing hardware with the look of oiled bronze, chrome, copper, satin nickel or pretty much any finish.*

Replace outlet covers and receptacles

Light switches, receptacles and outlet covers are often overlooked but they can complete a look or completely change one.

- *Change the switches and receptacles to a different color or shape.*
- *Swap out discolored or marred ones for a fresh, clean finish.*
- *If you'd like an alternative to the stark contrast of bright white plastic against your paint and décor, swap out the switch and outlet plates to a style that complements your interior.*
- *Paint switch plates to blend in with your wall color.*

Revive Your Wood Floor

You can brighten up a wood or laminate floor that's lost its luster from foot traffic, fine scratches or residue from improper cleaners.

- *Clean the floor with a product that's pH balanced for the surface and won't leave behind a residue.*
- *Then apply two coats of polish – waiting 24 hours in between. Look for a product that will fill in small scratches, dry quickly and won't leave build-up or residue behind.*

Bring in Light

Set a new mood for a dreary room by enhancing the lighting scheme.

- *As a rule, a room should have 3 layers of lighting. Ambient, Task and Accent.*
- *Ambient lighting is the base layer. It comes in from windows, chandeliers, ceiling fixtures or wall lights. You could replace a light fixture with a more modern design – it's usually a simple project for even a beginner.*
- *Task lighting is for “close-up” work. Take a look at the spots you tend to curl up in, or work in. Add a floor lamp, swing arm lamp, table lamp, desk lamp or even under cabinet lighting to make sure you're not working, reading or cooking in shadows.*
- *Add a layer of accent lighting with wall sconces, up lights, spotlights or puck lights. Place them where they'll direct attention to architectural features, décor, artwork or just brighten up a dark nook.*
- *Most light bulbs indicate whether they give off warm or cool light. Try switching from one type to the other. The change in color temperature can alter the appearance of fabrics, paint and floor coverings. You just may get a whole new look.*

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NOTE:

Always follow manufacturer's recommended safety precautions and instructions for the products you use.