

Fast, fun bathroom redos

Makeovers are cheaper and easier with these designer tricks

You don't need a sledgehammer and thousands of dollars to get a fresh new look for your bathroom. "Because it's a relatively small space, new accessories can make a big impact," says Toronto-based designer Vanessa Francis, who transformed the small bathroom pictured below.

"A new shower curtain, a striking mirror, maybe some lighting or art—

that's really all it takes," she says. And we're not talking about pricey high-end accessories, either. Francis achieved an elegant look on the cheap, buying the shower curtain shown below at Target, the mirror at Ikea, the light fixtures at Home Depot, and the framed art from Etsy. For more low-cost ideas that can give your bathroom a stylish update, turn the page.



BEFORE

AFTER

Oversized outdoor fixtures lend a modern edge.

QUICK UPGRADE
This redo includes a new vanity, but you can still get a fresh look with wallpaper, a shower curtain, and just a few other extras.

PHOTOS: LEAH KIRIN. DESIGN BY VANESSA FRANCIS. VANESSAFRANCIS.COM

A woven grass frame adds texture.



Eye-level sconces won't create harsh shadows.



Find deals on window treatments and even hardware at outlet sites such as Overstock.com.

Flea markets can be a good source for pieces you can repurpose—even a vanity.

Add personality

Unexpected design elements, such as a vanity created from a vintage cabinet or an antique mirror, will infuse the space with your own personality. And pale, soft colors create a soothing vibe. Blues and greens are perennial favorites for the bath, but gray is coming on strong as a sophisticated, serene alternative.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: PHOTO: LUCAS ALLEN; DESIGNER: ANDREW HOWARD; PHOTO: ROB KAROSIS; DESIGNER: CRISP ARCHITECTS WITH THE DESIGN; PHOTO: CATHERINE TIGHE; DESIGN: PAUL RICE ARCHITECTURE

Hang a statement mirror

The right mirror can make a strong style statement and visually expand your room. Avoid the common pitfall of the too-small mirror, Francis says: For a rectangular style over a single sink, choose one that's at least 30 inches wide and 36 inches tall; for a round mirror, pick one that's 30 inches in diameter. For larger vanities, use two mirrors—each centered above a sink—or a large one that spans the entire vanity. To find the right width, measure in 2 to 4 inches from either side of the vanity; anything narrower than that will look too tall and skinny. Hang the mirror high enough so that the top of the glass is about 2 inches above the head of the tallest user.

Perk up an all-white space with bold color. And don't forget the floor!



Look for photos or prints at Etsy or Art.com.



TOP LEFT: PHOTO: LEAH KIRIN. DESIGN BY VANESSA FRANCIS; VANESSAFRANCIS.COM

Have fun with art

Express your unique aesthetic and give your bath an elegant finish at the same time by hanging personally significant art. Your own photographs or inexpensive prints are perfect—just don't pick anything too valuable. "If you have good ventilation, moisture shouldn't be an issue," Francis says, "but I still wouldn't hang a fine painting or a rare art print in a bathroom." For frames, shop where the designers do: Ikea.



Shown: Stabekk mirror in green, \$99, ikea.com; Willow by Steven N. Meyers 14x12-inch art print, \$58, allposters.com; Sweet Jojo Stripes shower curtain, \$40, overstock.com.

WHERE TO SHOP

START HERE

- Overstock.com
- Bedbathandbeyond.com

Find discounted prices on hardware and everything else you need for a bathroom.

Shipping

At Overstock, it's free for orders of \$50 or more; returns within 30 days. At Bed Bath & Beyond, it's free for orders of \$49 and more; return to store or website.

COOL CURTAINS

- Target.com
- HM.com

Striking shower curtains start at just \$20.

Shipping At Target, it's free for orders of \$25 or more; return to store or website. At H&M, it's \$6 for any package; returns within 30 days.

ELEGANT ART

- Etsy.com
- AllPosters.com
- Littlepaperplanes.com

Etsy and AllPosters.com have unframed or framed art; Littlepaperplanes is unframed only.

Shipping At Etsy, shipping fees and return

policies vary by vendor. At AllPosters.com, shipping starts at \$4; returns within 30 days. At Littlepaperplanes, it starts at \$4; see site for return information.

STYLISH MIRRORS

- Ikea.com
- Wayfair.com

Simple, contemporary mirrors at Ikea start around \$30. Wayfair has higher prices, but daily sale items can be 70 percent off.

Shipping At Ikea, it starts at around \$10; returns within 90 days. At Wayfair, it's free on orders of \$49 and more; returns within 30 days.

BRIGHT LIGHTING

- Homedepot.com
- Lampsplus.com

Check out the cheap,

chic outdoor fixtures.

Shipping At Home Depot, it's free on orders of \$45 and more; returns within 90 days. At Lamps Plus, it's free on many items; returns within 60 days.

ACCESSORIES

- PBteen.com
- Worldmarket.com
- Knobdeals.com

Find fun, colorful accessories at PBteen and World Market; save on hardware and storage at KnobDeals.

Shipping At PBteen, it starts at \$5; returns within 30 days. At World Market, shipping starts at \$5; returns within 60 days. At KnobDeals, it's \$13.25 per order (free for orders of \$100 and more); returns within 45 days for credit only.

Make a tight bath feel larger with an oversized mirror.

Bring in more light

To brighten up a drab bathroom, try maximizing the existing light to reflect around the room. Add more reflective materials, including mirrors, polished metallic finishes, and a super-shiny semigloss wall paint. (The highly rated Valspar Reserve Semi-Gloss, \$45, is a good choice.) You can also liven up what you already have with a few bright accessories. Try adding small, intense bursts of color with a new window treatment and rug, as in the bath pictured at left. Throw in some fresh flowers for a luxe touch.



Shown: Pincher glass canister, \$10, and Marble bath accessories, \$10 to \$20, cb2.com.