

# How to Make an Apartment Feel Like Home

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Moving into your own apartment is exciting, but it can sometimes take a little while to really feel settled in. Fortunately, there are plenty of things you can do to warm up your space, and many of them are inexpensive and easy to do! Whether you're just moving in or you've been in your apartment for years, even just a few simple touches can do wonders for helping your new place feel a little cozier.

## Method 1

### Method 1 of 3: Arranging Your Furniture



**1** **Work on unpacking one room at a time if you're just moving in.** <sup>[1]</sup> As you start to unpack boxes, work on one room at a time so you won't be scattered. Arrange each room neatly, making it feel lived in before you move on to the next one. For instance, you might set up your bedroom first, then the living room, then the kitchen, and finally the bathroom.<sup>[2]</sup>

- When you're packing, label each box clearly with the room it goes in. Then, as you unload boxes, move each one to the room where it goes.
- Break down boxes and recycle them as you go. If you leave empty boxes piled around, your apartment will feel cluttered and temporary.

**Tip:** To make unpacking feel more fun, try putting on upbeat music while you work!



**2 Place your furniture so it defines different spaces.** Many apartments are short on space, so you may find that you have to be very deliberate when you're planning your furniture layout. Think about how you want to use each space, then arrange the furniture to maximize the functionality of that area.<sup>[3]</sup>

- For instance, if you love to have people over, you might arrange the seating in your living room so all the chairs face each other. If you spend a lot of time watching your favorite shows, your layout might be a sofa and an easy chair in front of the TV.
- You can also use rugs to help create a visual break between different areas. For instance, if you have an open floor plan, you might create the look of a dining room by placing a rug under your table and chairs.



**3 Leave at least 3 ft (0.91 m) along walking paths.** As you're planning where your furniture will go, make sure that there's at least a 3 ft (0.91 m) path through the room. Not only will you be more comfortable with wider walkways, but creating narrow paths through your home can be a safety hazard.<sup>[4]</sup>

- For instance, in your bedroom, you would need to make sure you had 3 ft (0.91 m) of space from the door to your bed, dresser, and closet.



**4 Make use of any vertical wall space that's available.** When you're trying to figure out where to store all your stuff, don't forget to look up! You can use tall shelving, pegboards, and hooks on the walls to get things off the floor. That will help reduce clutter, making your apartment feel more permanent and homey.<sup>[5]</sup>

- Don't be afraid to get creative—try hanging folding chairs if you need extra seating for guests, or hang your bicycle on the wall if you like to bike to work.



**5 Opt for furniture that serves more than one purpose.** To make the most of the space in your apartment, try to find pieces that can double as storage, seating, or another functional purpose. That way, you'll have more open space, but you'll also be able to cut down on the clutter in your apartment.<sup>[6]</sup>

- For instance, you might choose a bed that has built-in drawers to hold your sweaters or extra blankets, or you might opt for an ottoman with a removable top that can double as seating or a table.





**6 Hide clutter in drawers, boxes, and bowls.** Take a look around your apartment and try to spot anywhere that clutter is congregating, like a tabletop where your mail always piles up, or a spot where you tend to drop your keys. Then, think about creative ways you can organize those areas, like putting a small tray right inside your entryway for your keys and coins, or having a box where you put your mail until you can sort through it.<sup>[7]</sup>

- Power cords can also create a cluttered look in your home. Try running cords behind your furniture, if possible, or buy cord covers that adhere to the wall for any that you can't hide.

## Method 2 of 3: Creating a Cozy Atmosphere



**1 Stock up the kitchen with your favorites.** Once you get settled into your new apartment, make a trip to the grocery store and buy your favorite snacks and drinks, plus a few condiments, spices, and the ingredients for 3-4 meals. You might not be able to buy everything you'll need for the kitchen all at once, but once your cabinets and fridge have a few things in them, your place should feel a little more like home.<sup>[8]</sup>

- Each week when you shop for groceries, think of a few extra condiments, spices, or kitchen supplies that you would like to have. That way, you don't have to worry about spending a lot of money to stock up all at once.



**2 Light scented candles to make your apartment smell more like home.** Don't underestimate the power of a comforting scent. Lighting a candle in your apartment can change the feel almost instantly, especially if you choose a candle that smells like baked goods, warm vanilla, sandalwood, or leather. Or, if there was a certain candle you loved at your last place, you could light that, instead.<sup>[9]</sup>

- If your lease doesn't allow you to burn candles in your apartment, set up a time-release air freshener in a scent you love!



**3 Switch out the light fixtures to warm up the apartment.** To add personality and style to your rooms, talk to your landlord about whether it's okay to temporarily **switch out the light fixtures**. For instance, you might place a pendant light over your dining table to create a cozy, intimate feel, or you could put a funky secondhand fixture in your entryway to create a focal point and draw the eye upwards.<sup>[10]</sup>

- Keep in mind that you will probably need to replace the original fixtures when you move out, so pack them carefully and store them somewhere safe.
- If you can't change the light fixtures, add extra lighting like table lamps, floor lamps, and even string lights to help your apartment feel more like home.





**4 Hang sheer curtains to let in natural light.** To help your apartment feel bright and cheerful, opt for curtains that are mostly sheer on each of your windows. The curtains should provide you with some privacy, but they'll still let in plenty of natural light, which will help the rooms feel more open.<sup>[11]</sup>

- If you need a little more privacy, try hanging blinds that you can open and close.



**5 Add in comfort items throughout the apartment.** Little touches can really add up when you're trying to make a place feel like home. Something as simple as replacing your hand towels or adding a new doormat in your entryway can make your apartment feel less temporary.<sup>[12]</sup>

- For instance, you might put a pretty bowl filled with fresh fruit on your kitchen counter, or you might get a new set of matching bathroom accessories to make your guest bath feel more luxurious.
- Try upgrading your mesh or plastic laundry basket for one made of wicker, canvas, or metal to make any room feel more sophisticated.



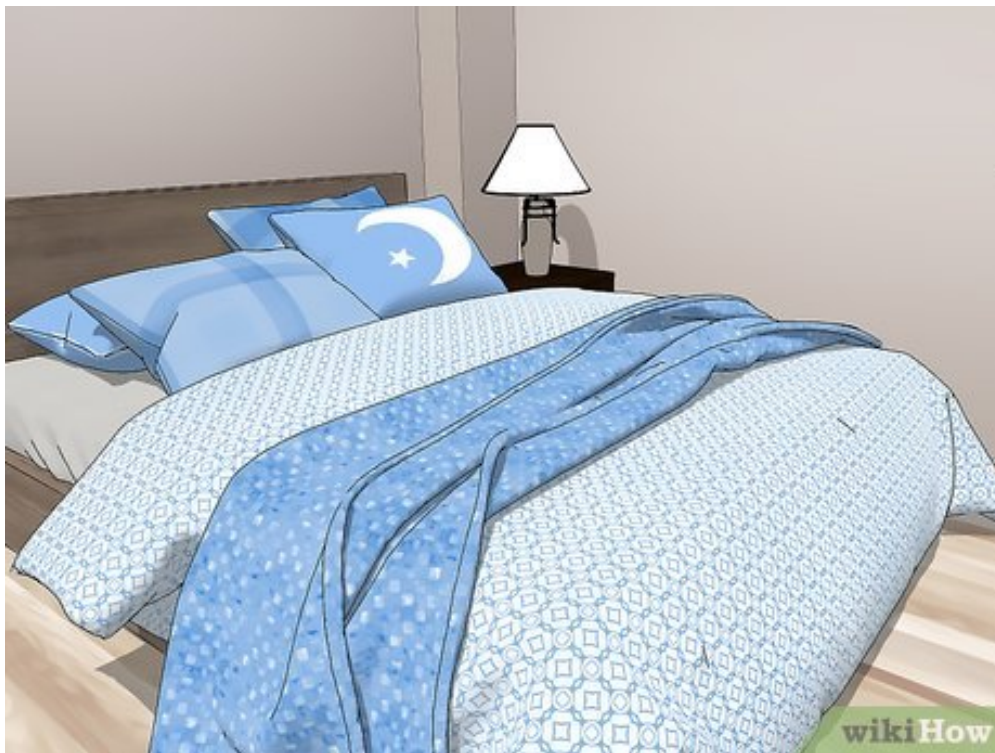
**6 Display sentimental items where you can see them.** If there's anything that you own that is really special to you, like a keepsake that was given to you as a gift, or a special photo of someone you love, don't hide it away in a drawer! Instead, put it in a spot where you'll see it often, like your kitchen counter, a shelf in your living room, or the nightstand beside your bed.<sup>[13]</sup>

- Try spreading your sentimental pieces throughout the apartment. That way, no matter what room you're in, you'll have something special to look at.



**7 Bring life into your apartment by adding houseplants.** There's something cheerful and homey about having live plants in your home. Fortunately, even if you don't have a green thumb, there are plenty of low-maintenance plants out there that will thrive indoors.<sup>[14]</sup>

- For instance, plants like rubber trees, spider plants, peace lilies, and pothos will all do well with minimal watering and thrive in indirect sunlight.<sup>[15]</sup>



**8 Splurge on cozy bedding and make your bed every day.** When you walk into your bedroom, you want to feel instantly welcomed and relaxed. One way to do that is to choose comfortable, soft bedding in colors you love. Each morning when you get up, smooth out your blankets and fluff your pillows, so when you're ready to sleep that evening, all you'll have to do is hop into bed!<sup>[16]</sup>

- Tie your room together by choosing a rug that complements your bedding.

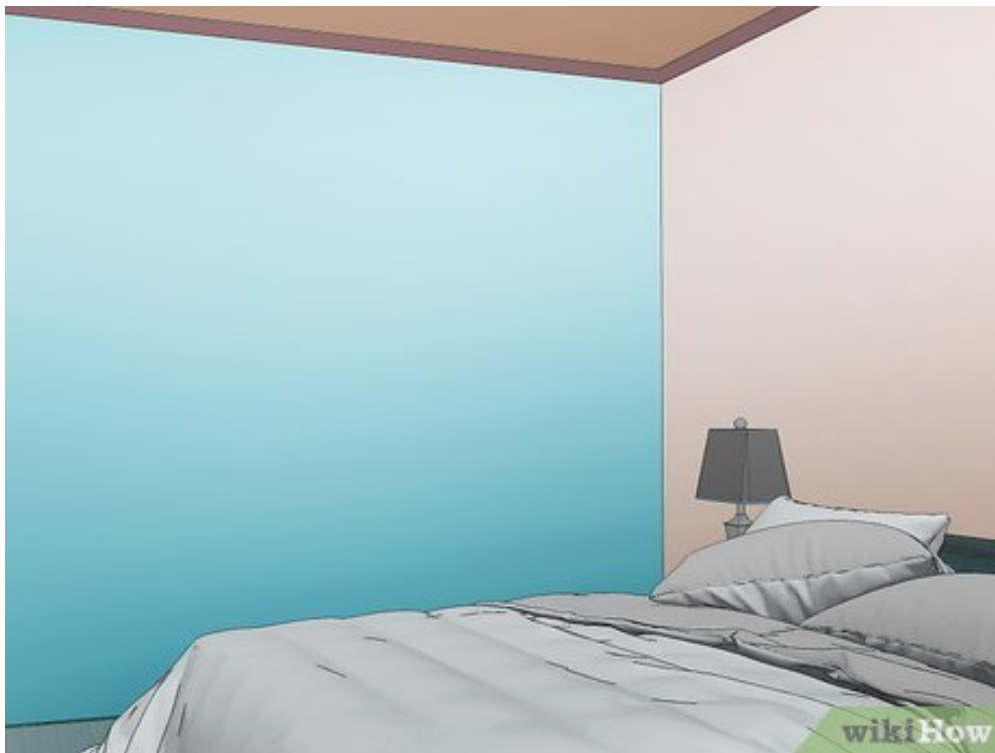
### Method 3 of 3: Showing Your Personality



**1** **Paint the walls a color you love if you're allowed.** Most apartments are painted a neutral shade like white, grey, or beige, and every room is typically the same color. If you'd like to change things up, ask your landlord or check your lease to see if painting is allowed. If it is, pick a color that will make you feel at home and use it to [paint one of your rooms](#).<sup>[17]</sup>

- For instance, you might use your favorite color to paint an accent wall in your bedroom, or you could paint your living room a warmer neutral that matches your decor.
- If you can't paint, try using vinyl decals or removable wallpaper to dress up your walls, instead.





**2 Incorporate the same color scheme throughout common areas.** Make your apartment feel more cohesive and personal by choosing 2 or 3 complementary colors that you really like together. Then, look for ways to decorate the different living areas in your home with those colors, including your kitchen, living room, entryway, and even your hallway or bathrooms. You don't have to go overboard—even just a few touches of each color will help pull the space together.<sup>[18]</sup>

- For instance, you might choose teal, coral, and copper. You could decorate your walls with art featuring those colors, then toss a couple of teal and coral pillows on the couch, add a rug that's mostly neutral with a few pops of coral, and hang copper pots on your kitchen wall.
- Don't feel like everything in your home has to follow this color scheme! In fact, that can start to feel overwhelming!



**3 Hang art and photos that reflect your style throughout your place.** Art is the perfect way to express your personal style, so scour thrift stores, secondhand shops, and online stores for deals on art pieces that make you feel good. You can also display pictures of your family and friends, since that will give you an instant feeling of comfort when you look at them.<sup>[19]</sup>

- If you can't use nails to hang your art, try using removable adhesive hooks, or just lean the pictures against the wall!
- Paint all of your picture frames the same color to give your art a cohesive feeling.
- Add mirrors to the walls across from your windows to make your space feel brighter and more open.<sup>[20]</sup>



**4 Scour secondhand shops if you're decorating on a budget.** If you're just getting started living on your own, you might not have many decorative items to make your apartment feel more like home. That's okay—you don't necessarily need a lot of money to get started! Check thrift shops, flea markets, and yard sales in your area for inexpensive art that fits your style and personality, as well as more practical items like baskets, bowls, and vases that you can use for displaying items around your home. You may even be able to find furniture for a great price!

- To prevent bringing bedbugs into your apartment, be cautious of buying items like mattresses, clothing, bedding, or upholstered furniture secondhand.<sup>[21]</sup>



## Expert Q&A

### Question

How do you unpack effectively?



**Marty Stevens-Heebner, SMM-C, CPO®**  
Certified Professional Organizer & Senior Move  
Manager  
Expert Answer

Unpack one room of your new home at a time so you can put your items into the proper place. Don't try to unpack everything at once.

Helpful 1 Not Helpful 0



## Tips

- Have a housewarming party once you're settled in to celebrate your new place.

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## About This Article



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This article was co-authored by **Marty Stevens-Heebner, SMM-C, CPO®** and by wikiHow staff writer, **Amy Bobinger**. Marty Stevens-Heebner is a Certified Professional Organizer (CPO) and Founder of Clear Home Solutions, a home organizing and senior moving management company based in southern California. Marty is the first Certified Senior Move Manager (SMM-C) in the United States and is a Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) through the National Association of Home Builders. She is the President-Elect and is on the board of directors of the National Association for Senior Move Managers, a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers, and has been acknowledged as a Hoarding Specialist and ADHD Specialist through the Institute for Challenging Disorganization. This article has been viewed 11,768 times.

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