

aged in place

A young designer and her husband bought a turnkey flip outside Chicago—then painted, tiled and decorated their way to cottage character.

dark energy

Maggie Getz splashed black paint on window frames, French doors and even dated fireplace tiles. “I love black accents,” she says. “A little contrast is huge.”



floor square

Maggie scored this \$7 per square-foot tile at The Home Depot to replace her porch’s brown carpet. The weathered finish feels timeworn—and is much better suited to winter slush.



AS SHE WALKS THROUGH her 1947 cottage in the Chicago suburbs, Maggie Getz can’t help but name check: The rattan armchair? “My mom found it at a house sale.” The art camouflaging the TV? “Some of it’s by my grandma and great-grandma.” The too-cool boho wall hanging? “My husband’s aunt made it for my in-laws.” “I never want something to feel too new and too fresh,” says Maggie, who got her design start at a powerhouse local design firm and recently launched her own biz, Maggie Getz Studio. “I love walking into spaces that feel like they’ve always been there.” So after buying a flipped 1,200-square-foot home for its big-ticket updates, she and her husband, Dan, backtracked its look. They traded characterless satin nickel fixtures and ceiling fans for antique-ish brass finishes, chandeliers and sconces. They chose creamy greige and crisp black paint that feel in sync with the home’s age. And they took their time filling in the details. “That’s what makes a great home,” Maggie says. “Pieces collected over the years.”

shoe in

Maggie describes this wall-mounted shoe storage as “the best thing ever from Ikea.” She gave the space-saver cachet with leather pulls from Etsy and a vintage mirror from her grandmother.



screen limits

“I didn’t want our main living space to feel like a TV room,” Maggie says. “At the same time, we do watch TV!” So she hung artwork around the screen for a “nothing to see here” distraction.



small world

“If you can walk around a room, it feels larger,” Maggie says, so she chose petite armchairs that left space for a perimeter around the sitting area and the big coffee table she and Dan craved. (A glass top and open base keep it airy.)





the light stuff

Maggie chose a mod brass chandelier and ditched the shades. “Anytime you have exposed light bulbs, do round rather than tipped,” she advises. “It’s a cooler look.”



take it easy

When the couple moved in, ottomans pinch-hit temporarily for pricey dining chairs—then Maggie came to love their casual tone. They scooch under the table to save space.

“I have artists on both sides of my family—my grandmas and my mom. Their beautiful, loved, lived-in homes made me want to be an interior designer.”

maggie getz
HOMEOWNER + DESIGNER



designer’s notebook

Maggie Getz (above, with husband Dan) explains how to make new look old and classic feel fresh. Find more of her work at maggiegetzstudio.com.

WARM YOUR WALLS

Don’t be afraid of a yellow undertone—that’s what makes paint not feel too new. Benjamin Moore’s Classic Gray 1548 is a just-right neutral with some beige tones, light enough to work in any space.

TRIM IT UP

Black paint went so far in my house. Never underestimate its power. Benjamin Moore’s Jet Black 2120-10 is a true hue with no blue, purple or gray undertones. If you favor white, choose a soft one like White Dove OC-17, also by Benjamin Moore. It brings a lived-in, vintage touch to original millwork.

NAIL ECLECTIC

My English roll-arm sofa (opposite) is such a classic look, but livable and comfy. Pair those antique or traditional foundation pieces with pillows in organic textures such as tie-dye or washed indigos. I know indigo had a hot moment there, but to me it’s like a well-loved pair of vintage Levi’s that goes with everything and anything.

CHEAT YOUR RUGS

If vintage or wool is out of reach, go ahead and get a printed polyester rug that captures the look for a lot less. Loloi Rugs is one of my first stops.



hang time

Salmon pink mats add a dash of color to the sliver of wall near the sunroom door. Unembellished contemporary frames are a constant across Maggie’s art collection—a unifying element no matter the age or subject of the piece.

curtain call

“Clients often think drapery will make a room feel smaller, but it’s the opposite,” Maggie says. “Curtains draw the eye upward, making our 8-foot ceilings seem higher.” Hang drapes as high as you can and match the fabric to the walls to keep the eye moving.



arms’ length

Low-profile arms on the sofa don’t cut off space in a small living room—all the better for peeping the wall niche behind, lined with treasures. “Fill your home with pieces you love rather than fillers,” Maggie says, and be patient with the process.



true blue

Benjamin Moore’s Hale Navy HC-154 gives this pass-through hall an identity and highlights a collection of subtle Edgar Degas art prints that would have gotten lost on a light wall.



GET THE LOOK

Hover your phone’s camera for a resources guide to the Getz home.