

By Haskell Matheny, ASID, CAPS

CUSTOMIZE FOR CHARACTER

4 Easy Ways to Customize Your Home

Many of us love the look of a custom-built home, but for practical reasons, aren't able to go the custom building route. If you're attached to your move-in ready home, but still want that stylized look, here are four easy ways you can upgrade its design to make it your own.



#1. Custom Hardware.

Think of hardware as jewelry for your cabinetry – nothing is better for dressing up a cabinet like an unusual or exquisite knob. Today, you can find hardware in an endless array of styles, shapes, and finishes.

Size it Right: The right size will depend on the look you're going for. However, a big trend now is oversized pulls or knobs for a bold statement.

Tip: Crystal and stones can make hardware a statement piece.



#2. Custom Moldings.

Beautiful moldings can give character and substance to a room that looks incomplete or inexpensive. If you have a traditional home, consider adding a dentil molding detail. For more transitional homes, a large cove crown is the ticket.

Size it Right: Your average 8-foot tall room can handle as much as a 5-inch crown and taller ceilings can handle even larger.

Tip: You can beef up an existing crown molding by adding a small 1- to 2-inch molding below it and painting them together to give the illusion of a bigger crown.

#3. Custom Window Treatments.

In my opinion, rooms usually look somewhat unfinished without window treatments. A popular trend today is to use a beautiful material in a simple, clean, tailored style. Unless you have a sheer drapery, all draperies should be lined, or for a deluxe look, interlined. You can also never go wrong with basic pinch pleats. Unusual rods and hardware, along with trims, can help turn a simple fabric into something special.

Size it Right: My rule is that draperies, in most cases, should hang right below the crown to give the window an elegant look and make the room appear taller.

Tip: If you like a clean, simple look, even just a roman shade or bamboo blinds can make a window look more complete.

#4. Custom Light Fixtures.

A beautiful hanging light fixture can set the tone for a whole room and give it its own unique style, whether that be rustic and casual or elegant and sophisticated. Both decorative hanging lights and sconces can layer a room with light and give it a finished, upscale, designer feel.

Size it Right: A basic rule of thumb is to add the width of the room to the length, so a 16-foot by 14-foot room would need at least a 30-inch chandelier. When in doubt, go slightly larger.

Haskell Matheny, ASID, CAPS is the owner and principal designer of Haskell Interiors, located in historic downtown Cleveland, Tenn. Visit online at haskellinteriors.com.