

Simple Ways to Add Summer Style

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"Then followed that beautiful season... Summer..."

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape

Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood."

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Whether it's the long-awaited warmth that thaws us, the lazy afternoons that let us languish, or the longer days that give us more time to gather with loved ones, summer's gifts are plentiful. Here are a few DIY and downright easy ways to celebrate the summer and add summer style to the comfort of your home.

Put out fresh, white linens

There's nothing like sleeping on a bed of crisp white sheets—it's like sleeping on a cloud. White bed sheets and table linens give the look and feeling of "lightness" to your home, much like a summer day. They also help to balance out darker, heavier furniture, plus, they are easy to throw into the wash with some hot water, detergent, and bleach to keep them bright.



Add fresh and dried flowers

It's a given that fresh flowers brighten up a home, but dried plants can also be a delight for the senses. Tucked in a book, placed in a mason jar or vintage milk jug, hung from the kitchen window—fresh and dried herbs remind us of the season, and add a faint aroma to the air every time a summer breeze comes through. Of course, summer blooms like roses, marigolds, sunflowers, and peonies are also great ways to bring the color of season indoors.

"Capture fireflies" with faerie lights

Remember catching fireflies in your hands, cupping them and peeking through your fingers to see them glow? Many of us remember those magical days of childhood, but you can capture that sense of wonder again—and it's incredibly simple! Here's how: buy some battery-powered twinkling lights or faerie lights (they have smaller bulbs) and place them in a mason jar or glass jug. Some lights have a timer switch, so you can watch them glow as you fall asleep and they'll turn off on their own. What a fun little way to keep the joy of summer alive!

Create a summer reading nook

If you're like me, you have a stack of summer books you want to get to this year. Why not create a cozy summer getaway you can sneak off to when you're done with the day's events? It doesn't have to be a library or reading room—a small area inside or outside will do.

First, make sure you have a comfortable chair and side table large enough to hold your book, a beverage, and maybe a little jar of fresh flowers for ambience. You can even use a table or TV tray—a nice wooden one is inexpensive and works just as

well as a side table. Make sure you have a good reading light, or, if outside, place your new nook on the side of the house that gets the best sun during the time you're likely to be reading.

Grow a windowsill herb garden

There's a reason why fresh herbs were considered a luxury enjoyed only by the wealthy in Ancient Europe; cooking with fresh herbs brings flavor to dishes in a way that simple salt and pepper can't. It makes sense then, that the place you would want fresh herbs is in your kitchen, where you can cut a sprig or grab a leaf while cooking. A windowsill herb garden not only makes fresh herbs accessible, it's also natural summer décor.

For your garden container, you can use a window box, mason jars, pitchers—pretty much anything, so long as it has the proper drainage and aeration (which means drilling holes on the bottom and adding pebbles or rocks). If you have a lovely vintage pitcher or jug you want to use and you don't want to ruin it by drilling holes in it, place a smaller container inside of the jug, and make sure that container has drainage holes and rocks for aeration. You can also use your vintage container for a short period of time as décor before replanting to a more functional pot so that it doesn't get root rot.

Summer is in the Little Things. An early morning walk when the earth lay quiet and untouched. A child's sticky hands and smile. A burst of happy voices that fade with the sun as your family ends the day together. Little things? Yes. But summer has a way of putting them in a light that glows golden within you for the rest of the year, helping you to create more warm summer memories for both you and your family.