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LIGHTING TRENDS: Pull the plug on dated light fixtures

Part 1

“Eeeeeek!” My husband heard my scream from two rooms away.

“What’s wrong?” he says, finding me in the dining room, where I had locked my eyes on the ceiling.

“A huge tarantula is hanging over our table!”

He rolls his eyes. “I am well aware you want new light fixtures,” he drones, then goes back to his laptop.

“And one over here!” I point to the entryway, where a similar oversized, oil-rubbed bronze, Mediterranean-style fixture dangled from a heavy metal chain like something out of a Medieval torture chamber. “How have we lived with these!?”

“Has anyone ever told you that you are prone to hyperbole?”

I did not have time to look that up. “We must act,” I said.

To which he said nothing, which I took to mean go ahead.

In fairness to me, I had been saying for months, as we sheltered in place staring at (and climbing) the walls, that next up on the home project hit parade was replacing the outdated light fixtures that came with (and weighed down) the house.

I do not blame the prior owners, who built the home in 2003. Back then, heavy, oil-rubbed bronze light fixtures were what you did. I built a home that same year in Colorado and picked out almost the same light fixtures.

That. Was. Then.

The builder-owners of this house did what many builders do. They put in a default “lighting package,” a matching set of fixtures for the dining room, entryway, kitchen, hallways, and bathrooms. So contrived you can



AT HOME WITH
Marni Jameson

imagine them all holding hands and singing “I’d Like to Teach the World to Sing” in smarmy unison.

However, the problem hanging over my head was this. Whenever I thought about updating them, I hit a snag, which I call the stocking problem. Replace one fixture, say, the dining room chandelier, and that change trips a snag, which starts a run, and soon the whole house is involved. You have to change the light in the entryway, then in the kitchen, then down the hall, and, and And you freeze.

Because I had been around this mental racetrack a few times, and because making any more than three design decisions at once causes my brain to jam, I called interior designer Tina Crossley.

What I like about working with Crossley, who has helped me update my home décor before, is she works with what you have. Not all designers are so benevolent.

“Oil-rubbed bronze was popular for long time,” she said, looking around at the black spiders on my ceiling. “It still works in Mediterranean- or Venetian-style homes, but not in your light, bright Colonial.”

“So these need to go?” I said,

which was all the affirmation I needed.

She nodded.

Two weeks later, she comes back with pictures of fixture candidates. The options she proposes are transitional, a bridge between traditional and modern that fits my décor. The candidates have cleaner lines, and a lighter feel, and fit my home’s architecture. The change can’t happen soon enough.

“Changing light fixtures is one of the simpler home improvements you can make to get a big difference,” said Crossley, who offered these tips for those looking to pull the plug on dated or boring fixtures:

- **Avoid the matched set.** Like a matching bedroom suite of furniture, light fixtures that come as a package are safe and do the job, but don’t look custom. Fixtures shouldn’t all match, but they should get along, especially if you can see them from one vantage point. Aim for fixtures that relate to each other in style and feel.

- **Don’t fixate on finishes.** People get stuck when they feel they need to match finishes. You can mix metals, so long as the tones work together. For instance, we chose champagne gold fixtures for the dining room and entry, and polished nickel for the master bath.

- **Where to start.** In most homes, the fixture in the dining room or the foyer makes the biggest statement. Find one you love that fits your home’s décor and architecture and build from there. Do the public areas first—the dining room, entryway, and kitchen—then phase in bedrooms and bathrooms.

- **Beware of novelty.** While you want to avoid the matched package, don’t get fixtures that are too unique. An overly artistic fixture

might satisfy your immediate need for change, but might fall out of vogue faster, and could hurt your home’s resale value.

- **Fit the furniture.** Consider what the fixture will hang over and make sure the styles work together. While it’s fine and often desirable to pair a modern fixture with an old, distressed table, be intentional.

- **Keep up.** Homeowners today want fixtures that are airy and light in color and weight, said Crossley, as opposed to dark and heavy. Although dark tones are out, the exception is black, which is popular today in white and gray interiors, where they add welcome contrast.

SEE MARNI, 4H

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Open Houses Sunday, January 24, 2021

HD-44583

R&G Open HOUSES



1508 Barbary Lane, Charleston
\$409,000
 2:00-4:00 PM

Beautiful South Hills home that is truly a treasure! Offering 5 bedrooms, including 2 on main level! New addition with great room. Updated kitchen & baths. Full house generator with new hot water heater. Security system & hardwood floors throughout! Great for entertaining guests and relaxing out on the incredible all brick terrace! This home is a MUST SEE!

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CENTRAL
 Josh McGarth - Broker

Josie Moore
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1578 Quarrier Street, Charleston
\$315,000
 2:00-4:00 PM

This two-story home located in historic East End features gorgeous wood floors, outstanding crown molding & baseboards, charming pocket doors & lovely fireplace mantles. The huge primary bedroom suite located on second floor is spectacular. The finished basement offers a family room, workshop & a full bath. You can walk to work in town or to the State Capital. A must-see home! DIRECTIONS: Kanawha Blvd to Elizabeth St. Drive two blocks and turn left onto Quarrier Street. House on right.

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CENTRAL
 Josh McGarth - Broker

Scott Jones
 304-415-4275



825 Carroll Road, Charleston
\$219,900
 2:00-4:00 PM

South Hills location. Beautiful all brick, 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath home. Beautiful hardwood floors and woodwork. Kitchen with Corian countertops and stainless steel appliances newly installed. Painted throughout. Beautiful new bathrooms, lighting, permanent fixtures, windows, flooring and roof. Rec room and bonus room or bedroom. Over 2,600 sq ft. One car garage. Professionally landscaped. Blue Ribbon South Hills schools. Convenient 5-minute drive to Charleston / Corder G approx.

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 1556 Kanawha Blvd., E • Charleston, WV 25311

Don Stover
 (304) 546-8941



728 Glenridge Road, Charleston
\$499,900
 2:00-4:00 PM

Wow! Beautifully updated home in Kanawha City. Open floor plan with soaring ceilings. Stately living with an artist's touch. Oversized 3-car garage with extra work area and storage. Large bonus room on third floor, great for a studio. Updated HVAC, water tanks, and whole house generator plus so much more! Come see it today! DIRECTIONS: MacCorkle Avenue SE. Turn on 39th Street and cross the railroad tracks. Left on Chesterfield. Right on Glenridge.

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David Bailey
 304-415-4999

D.C. Bailey, Broker



106 E Reynolds Ave, Belle
\$119,000
 2:00-4:00 PM

Move in Ready. This house has been well maintained with updated bathroom on main floor, 3 bedrooms, one car garage, and fenced yard. House is much bigger than it looks with great space in the basement. Outstanding service in town police and fire protection. DIRECTIONS: From Charleston, Rt 60 East take Belle exit, turn left at bottom of ramp, turn right, turn onto Kanawha St, turn left onto East Reynolds. House is second on right.

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HD-44580

MARNI

FROM PAGE 2H

• **Matching your architecture is always in style.** Though styles come and go, light fixtures that fit your home's architecture have staying power. A fancy, traditional crystal chandelier will always be at home in a French chateau. Iron scones will always fit in a rustic farmhouse, and an antler fixture will forever feel right in a Wyoming hunting lodge.

Join me next week for more enlightening light fixture tips.

Marni Jameson is the author of five home and lifestyle books, including "Downsizing the Family Home – What to Save, What to Let Go" and "Downsizing the Blended Home – When Two Households Become One." Reach her at www.marnijameson.com.



Pretty isn't enough. When selecting a dining room chandelier, like this new Arabesque model just out from Schonbek, consider not only its size, but also how it works with the room's architecture, with other light fixtures nearby, and with the style of the table it will hang above. Photo courtesy of Schonbek

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3 questions to determine if it's best to renovate on your own

SHOULD I DIY?

A do-it-yourself mentality has taken hold in millions of households across the globe. Popular television channels like HGTV and DIY Network as well as accessible home improvement content on apps like YouTube has inspired many homeowners to tackle renovation projects around their homes.

Taking such initiative is admirable, though it also can prove costly if homeowners end up biting off more than they can chew.

Home improvement videos and television shows have a tendency to oversimplify renovation projects, potentially giving homeowners a false sense of confidence in their DIY abilities. A concerted effort on the part of homeowners to determine if it's best to renovate on their own or hire a professional should always be the first step of any renovation project.

No two homeowners are the same, but the following three questions can help homeowners determine if DIY is their best option.

1. Can I afford to DIY?

Professional home improvement projects are costly for a variety of reasons. Materials can be costly, but so are the tools and labor necessary to do the job right. Homeowners may not have the tools necessary to complete complicated projects. Specialty tools can be expensive to purchase or even rent, and the cost of acquiring such tools should be included in any DIY project cost estimates. Labor also factors heavily into

professional projects, and for good reason. Talented contractors have unique skills that have been developed and perfected over many years. Those skills can ensure projects are completed quickly and correctly. Labor may seem costly, but such costs may ultimately prove to be a bargain compared to the cost of fixing DIY mistakes. Projects that are minor in scope and don't require the use of potentially costly specialty tools may be better suited for weekend warriors than more complicated renovations.

2. Do I have the time?

Homeowners must determine how much time they have to complete a project before deciding to do it themselves. No one wants to spend months staring at an unfinished renovation project. Homeowners who are already pressed for time may not be able to complete projects in a timely fashion, which can make homes less comfortable and even less safe.

3. Can I pull this off?

DIY projects can instill homeowners with a sense of pride in their homes, but it's imperative that homeowners considering the DIY option conduct an honest assessment of their skills. A lack of renovation experience does not necessarily mean a homeowner cannot successfully complete a DIY project. But in such instances, it may be best to start with small, straightforward projects and then gradually move up to bigger,



more complicated projects as skills are fine tuned. And homeowners who have never been at their best with a hammer in hand should not be ashamed to leave

the work to the professionals.

Television shows and online tutorials can make renovations appear easier than they actually are. Homeowners considering DIY

renovations can ask themselves a handful of questions to determine if they're ready for the challenge of renovating their homes on their own.

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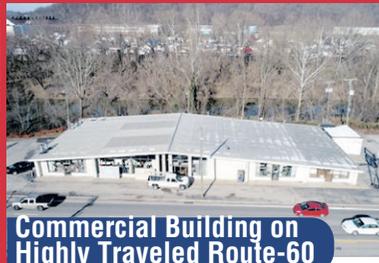
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 Duplex – 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath Units

Subject 3: 514 Nancy Street
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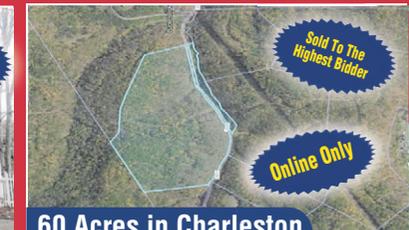
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- Tue. January 26th – Griffithsville – 90+/- Acres
- Thu. January 28th – Huntington - Commercial Building on Highly Traveled Route-60
- Tue. February 2nd – Clendenin - NEW 3-Bedroom on the River
- Tue. February 2nd – Charlton Heights – Commercial Building on 0.63+/- Acres
- Tue. February 9th – Huntington – 6,068+/- sqft Commercial Building
- Wed. February 10th – Charleston – 3 Income Generating Properties
- Tue. February 16th – Midkiff - 25+/- Wooded Acres with Clayton Mobile Home
- Thu. February 18th – Charleston – 240 Acre Farm with Home
- Wed. February 24th – Ravenswood - 3 Bedroom Home in Great Neighborhood
- Wed. February 24th – Parkersburg - Duplex Sold to the Highest Bidder
- Thu. February 25th – Charleston - 4 Bedroom Sold to the Highest Bidder
- Thu. March 4th – Beaver - 10,000 sqft Building in the Raleigh County Airport Industrial Park – Live Bidding Only
- Thu. March 4th – Cedar Grove - The Historic Tompkins House – Sells to the Highest Bidder

ONLINE ONLY AUCTIONS

- Tue. January 26th – Poca - Vehicles Shop Equipment, Tools, & more
- Wed. January 27th – Summersville - Farm Equipment & Implements, Home Furnishings, & more
- Thu. February 4th – St. Albans - Coin, Jewelry and Knives Auction
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House of the Week

THE ABIGAIL

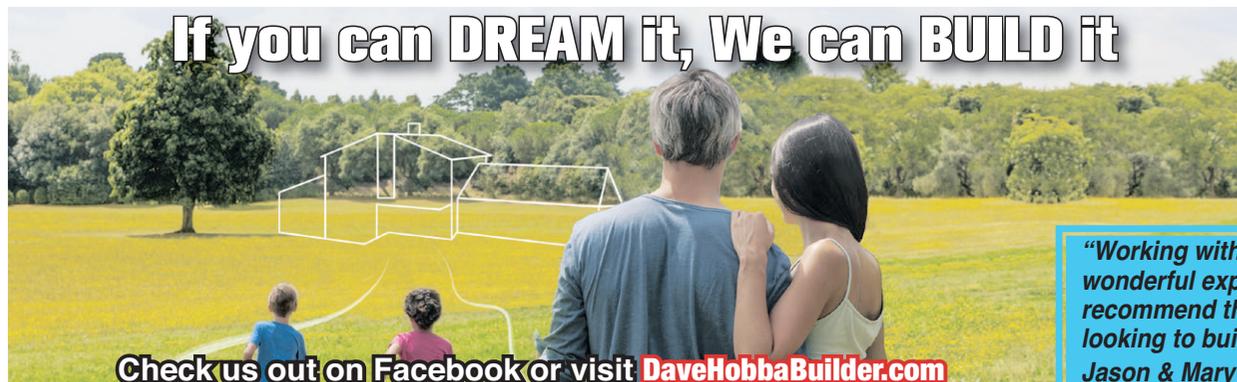
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HD-448968



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