

# The Seattle Times

## Make your bedroom feel more inviting

BY LIZ SEYMOUR  
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I hate to admit it, but I have no love for my bedroom.

The furniture is dreary and mismatched. The room lacks light, organization and even a headboard for the bed. It's so uninviting that I use it only for sleeping and paying bills.

My husband and I bought our house seven years ago. Since then, we've gutted the kitchen, screened in a porch, renovated a basement playroom and decorated bedrooms for our two children. But our own room — why bother? No one sees it but us, so it ranks dead last on the list of home-improvement priorities.

"Everyone always seems to put it off," says Karen Bengel, a Washington, D.C., area designer. It's a mistake, she and others say, to give short shrift to a space intended for relaxation and comfort.

So why not give some thought to the room in the house that, really, should inspire affection?

We asked designers, color pros, organizers and others for quick ways to perk up a bedroom. Here are some of their ideas:

- Place a bud vase with a single rose on a nightstand.

- A breakfast tray can brighten much more than breakfast. A sturdy one will hold your laptop, the newspaper and a mid-night snack. They're especially handy if the tray lifts off.

- Clear off the nightstand, leaving just a lamp, clock radio, water and something to read on top. Stow tissues and other necessities in a drawer or basket.

- Wall-mounted swing-arm lamps foster reading in bed but take up zero table space.

- Rearrange your furniture. Consider, for example, the sensible advice that a shared bed should not be pushed against a wall but positioned so it can be approached from each side. This makes for a "nourishing relationship," according to "The Feng Shui Doctor" (Duncan Baird, 2007) by Paul Darby.

- Keep a water carafe by the bed so you don't have to stumble to the kitchen late at night.

- Fresh paint makes the most impact for the money.

- A headboard makes a room look and feel more pulled together. An upholstered headboard goes even further, adding warmth, softness and comfort for reading in bed.

- A throw blanket adds color and an instant sense of cozy.

- Simple drapery panels framing a window can soften light and hard angles, even when used with blinds or shades.

- Light dimmers are a sure and simple way to set the mood. They also save energy, which further lifts the spirit.

- Keep paper and pencil handy for jotting down thoughts in the middle of the night.

- Ultimate indulgence: an armoire turned into a bedside kitchenette. In her home, designer and author Chris Madden outfitted a JCPenney armoire of her own design with a small fridge, microwave and coffee maker.



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### Tidy up

You don't have to buy a thing to make your bedroom more inviting. You don't even need to invest much time. Just try these simple (Mom-endorsed) routines:

- Make your bed.
- Hang up clothes.
- Toss old newspapers and magazines.
- Pick up laundry.
- Empty the waste basket.