

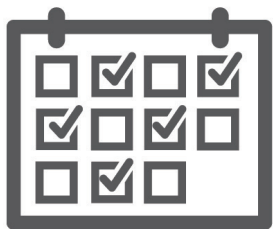
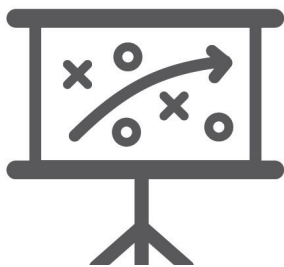


The Ultimate Guide for  
**DECORATING  
ON A DIME**



# ARMY FAMILY

## YOUR MONEY, YOUR FUTURE



Frequent moves to unknown places can make it difficult to design your dream home, and buying new items to fit each new space can be costly. What if you could put your perfectly-designed and decorated home on wheels? Here are 10 tips to cut corners, save money, and help you create spaces that feel like “home” no matter where the military sends you next.

### GO FOR THE GOAL

#### 1. Rearrange

You’d be surprised what just moving a piece of furniture from one side of the room to another can do to rejuvenate a space. Changing the layout of the room can make it feel completely new, giving you a new perspective on “that old couch” you’ve been carrying around. And here’s the best part: it’s free. Live with the new set-up for a few days, and even if you decide to change a few things back, you’ve likely gotten a better handle on the space and ideas for future “remodeling.”

#### 2. Reuse, Repair, and Recycle

Going to flea markets is a lot of fun, but you can also go thrifting right in your storage unit or basement. Taking a quick inventory, you might find a different purpose for furniture you already have—a hutch once used in the living room could make for a great cutting station in your new kitchen. You can also give something life again with simple, easy repairs. Before throwing something out for good consider what a little wood glue or a coat of paint might do. Recycle: look through the recycling bin for items to collect, like glass mason jars that you can double as vases or help display pantry items.

#### 3. Throw a Swap Party!

You know the old saying, “one man’s trash is another one’s treasure”? Put it to work by getting a few friends together for a swap party. Each person should bring a few items they no longer need (in good condition), and let the exchange begin!

#### 4. Check Online Marketplaces

You can find some collectible pieces and great deals through online resellers. Don’t just go with the list price—online marketplaces and vendors expect to negotiate prices and offer you some bidding flexibility.

#### 5. Shop by the Seasons

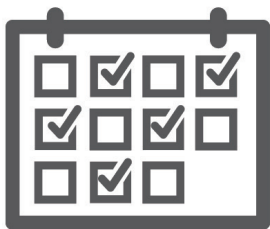
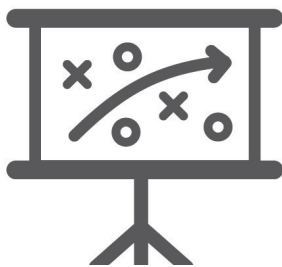
January and July are the best seasons for sales and negotiating lower prices for big-ticket items, as retailers are usually getting rid of stock and preparing for new inventory during these months. Major sales happen after the holiday season, and summer sales provide a great opportunity to stock up on home decor items. Many places also offer military discounts on top of these sales, so don’t forget to ask!

#### 6. Display What You Have

Take some time to make small “collections” of the pieces that you have, whether it be hangable baskets, decorative plates, or other collectibles

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you have and showcase them in small, neat displays. You can also cheaply make edible displays- arrange a bowl of citrus or apples on the center of your table for a splash of color (and on-the-go snacks).

### 7. Check the Remnant Tables for Fabrics and Carpet

Since your space changes frequently, it's not as cost effective to go for the big feature, full-priced items. Ask if there are any remnant swatches or pieces left over from a bigger sale to save money while making the design changes you need.

### 8. Optical Illusions and Making Spaces Look Bigger

Remember those rooms in carnival fun houses that tricked you into thinking the space went on forever? You can use mirrors to create a similar effect in your home. Place them perpendicular to the window, which will best reflect the light and brighten the room, making it appear larger. You also have a trick up your sleeve with how you hang curtains—placing them 4-6 inches from the ceiling naturally takes the eye up, instantly giving the appearance of greater height to the room.

### 9. Don't Forget the Greenery

You don't need big flower arrangements to create impressive decorations- clean up branches, leaves and flowers from the yard to arrange in your home. If you buy plants—choose ones that are sturdy enough to live in different climates, like succulents. Many plants work well between seasons and can be preserved for multiple decorative uses.

### 10. Declutter, Declutter, Declutter

Having a bunch of things laying around and in disarray can make a space look even smaller than it is. Try to streamline your belongings as much as possible, making for time spent cleaning up or organizing, and opening up every bit of available space. Think about what you need most and give away what doesn't fit your aesthetic or is not serving a function any longer.

## RESOURCES

[Moving with the Military](#)

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## THANKS FOR JOINING US.

Feel free to email us with any questions at [pbarron@ausa.org](mailto:pbarron@ausa.org). If we can't help, we'll find someone who will! Become an AUSA member for additional resources and support. Learn more at [ausa.org/membership](https://ausa.org/membership).



*Special thanks to Maria Reed, creator of "Moving with the Military," a home improvement and lifestyle web series, for her expertise and support in creating this guide.*