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# JOHN AMERICAN HOME



# SPRING MAKEOVER

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*Pillows are a perfect way to freshen up a room, as shown in a recent Josh Hildreth Interiors-designed family room where they incorporate custom pillows based on the season.*

# Josh HILDRETH

By Sherry Moeller  
Photos by Kip Dawkins

## Shares His Favorite Decorating Tips

Josh Hildreth, interior designer and principal of Josh Hildreth Interiors, [www.joshhildrethinteriors.com](http://www.joshhildrethinteriors.com), loves to incorporate found items into his designs, and he's thankful he has clients who appreciate unique elements as much as he does. Hildreth shares some of favorite go-to decorating tips from repurposing antiques into new pieces to adding seasonal pillows to never forgetting the ceiling.

**What is the best interior decorating advice you've ever given or received? And why do you love that bit of advice so much?**

I just read somewhere that "you should never be the oldest thing in a room!" I love both the wit and the wisdom of this advice. For too long the design world and consumers have favored a catalog-fueled contemporary look that is comfortable enough but has a facsimile sort of dullness. Once upon a time people actually left the house to shop for interesting things and pride of place was given to inherited things. Thankfully I am delighted to have clients who appreciate the uniqueness that antiques bring to projects. We also have a great time making new furniture out of old things and reclaimed materials.

For instance, in a dining room in a Maryland home, we added ogee feet to the base of an antique Welsh dresser, then painted it and topped it off with an antique piece of crimson marble that had to be re-cut into a new top to create a stunning sideboard.

In a family room project, we were fortunate to find a pair of Jean Royere bronze handles that one belonged to former Washington Post owner Katharine Graham. Even more fortunate was that our client agreed without seeing a design or room presentation to let us buy these cabinet handles! Lucky us and client because they were the genesis for a spectacular Royere-inspired custom cabinet that we designed featuring stitched leather doors that conceal a treasure trove of audio equipment including a pullout record player and album storage.





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*A closeup of the custom media console featuring the Royere bronze handles that once belonged to Katharine Graham.*



*In this guest suite that Josh Hildreth designed for a local show house, Josh added a soft finish to the ceiling.*

**What is one small decor choice that can make a big difference in a home? And why is that choice so transformative?**

Pillows are a small decor choice that always freshens up a room. When I feel the urge to redo a room at home after I have seen a luscious room in a magazine, I have found success in switching up pillows. In a recent family room project, we made Fall/Winter pillows and Spring/Summer pillows, which is a great way to enhance the appeal of a room. When it's 90 degrees outside, who really wants a cashmere pillow?

**Are there any decorating tips that you don't think people pay enough attention to? If so, what are they? And why do they deserve more attention than they get?**

Mario Buatta said that ceilings are the forgotten surface, and I could not agree more. A bedroom ceiling should never be ceiling white; I prefer bedroom ceilings to have a restful quality. Favorite designs for bedroom ceilings are soft patterns, such as stencils or wallcoverings. Another go-to idea is to have a decorative painter apply a sheer wash of color to a ceiling in a soft color, which is a perfect touch for a ceiling.