

Makeovers on any budget

Small home improvement efforts can refresh the look of your home just as effectively



Budget breakdown

Mr Wong gives his take on what you can expect with makeover budgets of \$25,000, \$75,000 and \$100,000, based on a two-plus-one-bedroom condominium unit



What to expect: A new kitchen and flooring, a new wardrobe, new bathroom pipes.

- Hacking of existing kitchen wall and floor finishes;
- Waterproofing the floor;
- Laying of floor and wall tiles;
- Construction of cabinet and fridge base;
- Installation of kitchen cabinets with a worktop, kitchen sink and tap with concealed copper piping;
- Installation of a full-height wardrobe with laminate finish and sliding doors;
- Painting of all interior walls, ceilings and sewer piping;
- Installation of electrical points;
- Acid chemical wash clean-up;
- Furnishing consultation;
- Design, space planning and materials proposal; and
- Project management and site supervision.

HAFIZ RASID

YOU would not think twice about buying a blouse or pair of pants to jazz up your wardrobe, so why not give your home a mini makeover to transform its vibe?

Start the ball rolling by making small changes over a period of time.

Mr Don Wong, a designer at Lush Interior Design, says that homeowners should not feel shy or intimidated to approach an interior design firm for projects that may seem small.

"Share what you have in mind with interior designers. They can come up with cost-effective suggestions to meet your renovation goals," he says.

If your finances allow it, consider changing your decor every three to five years.

But Mr Wong says it is best to spend prudently.

"There is no point in financing something you cannot afford," he says. "When you feel that it is time for a new look and you have the budget for it, go for a renovation."

ENGAGE AN EXPERT

A smaller budget need not mean a smaller impact. According to Mr Wong, an experienced interior designer should be able to highlight key elements in your home that need attention, such as the lighting and wall colour, to maximise its visual appeal.

"Interior designers know how to use materials, furnishings and fixtures to create a coordinated look. They are also trained in managing costings and timelines to ensure that your home is finished to your liking without hiccups down the road," he says.

CREATING IMPACTFUL CHANGES

Mr Wong recommends making changes to your wall colour, lighting, as well as furniture and home accessories to refresh the look of your home quickly and impactfully.

Repainting the walls of your room with a new colour scheme is a good way to give it a new lease of life.

For lighting, work with what you have. Interior designers can recommend design options to complement or augment your current lighting. Replace existing lighting fixtures only if you have a bigger budget.

Furniture and home accessories would also provide great design accents. Mr Wong recommends adding items such as a beanbag, ottoman, stool or armchairs in bold hues.

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Before you commit to a design package, ask your interior designer:

1 Do you have a speciality?

Are you after a home that is all industrial chic? Some firms may not specialise in that style. Mr Wong advises checking the design firm's portfolio to ensure that its design aesthetic matches your vision.

2 How much will it cost?

Different decor styles come at various prices. It is best to discuss the budget in advance with your design consultant.

3 Will the decor suit my lifestyle?

Aesthetics are important, but so are practical matters. For instance, homeowners with young kids will want to think about buying child-friendly furniture



PHOTOS: ISTOCK

such as those with no sharp corners.

For homeowners living with the elderly, non-slip floor surfaces and support handles in the bathroom would make good safety measures.

4 How long will the makeover take to complete?

Revamping your home may not take as long as renovating it, but it is best to have an estimate of the time required for it. Procedures such as wall painting and retro-fitting would take much longer compared to the moving of furniture.

5 What are the after-sales services provided?

Check with design consultants if they offer after-sales warranties for their products and services. Some replacement costs could be charged even within the warranty period.

小预算装修，也能为主家带来大改变

你家里的布置10年来都一成不变？其实无论是大装修或小改动，都能让家里焕发新光彩。Lush Interior Design设计师Don Wong表示，低预算不代表不能带来大改变，有经验的室内设计师应该能突出顾客家中的特色——如灯光或墙壁颜色，以少少的预算为室内环境带来最大的视觉变化。“设计师知道如何使用材质、摆设及装置品来创造视觉上的效果。设计师也受过成本和工程进度控制的训练，以确保装修过程顺利。”

装修三大焦点

墙壁颜色：墙壁是最显著的，重新粉刷可以让住家立刻产生不同的感觉，采用新色系如同赋予住家新的生命。

灯饰：灯饰可以保留，设计师会建议补助或增强原有的灯光设计。如果有更充裕的预算，才考虑更换灯饰吧！

家具与装饰：家具与装饰能提高设计品味，可加入用色大胆的物件，如豆袋、长椅、凳子或扶手椅。

选择装修商五大考量

1 装修公司的专长

每家装修公司的专长各不同，例如你要工业风的设计，可是某些装修公司可能不擅长这种风格，所以，在选择装修商和设计师之前，应该充分参考他们的作品档案。

2 装修价格

不同装修风格费用各异，最好和设计师先把所有收费问清楚。

3 装修风格是否符合全家人的生活习惯

美观虽重要，实用更实在。有幼儿的家长不应买会对幼儿造成危害的家具（如有锐利边角等）。有年长者同住者，浴室内有防滑地板和扶手就不可或缺了。

4 装修耗时多久？

装修的时间不好捉摸，因此最好腾出比预算更长的时间，油漆及客制化的装修比直接搬家具进来更耗时。

5 售后服务如何？

坚持索取产品及服务的售后服务，有些物件就算在保用期，如果要更换可能也需要缴费哦，所以最好是问清楚并写下来。



\$75,000

What to expect: New flooring for the living room, dining area, kitchen and bathrooms; carpentry for a television console, shoe cabinet and wardrobes; revamped master bedroom with carpentry; revamped bedrooms with carpentry; new bathrooms with fixtures and fittings.

The \$25,000 offerings plus:

- Dismantling existing cabinets and doors;
- Cement waterproofing of kitchen and bathroom floors;
- Carpentry for laminated kitchen cabinets;
- Installation of quartz worktop on cabinets and tall unit cabinet; full-height sliding wardrobe, dressing table, levered doors; and
- Installation of a study table, cabinet with swing door and open shelves, and swing doors with levered locks in bedrooms; custom single bed frame with pull-out bed, false ceilings, frameless tempered glass shower screens, suspended vanity cabinets with quartz worktops.

\$100,000
and above

What to expect: New flooring and fixtures for the living room, dining area, kitchen and bathrooms; carpentry for a television console, shoe and settee cabinet, wardrobes; revamped master bedroom with carpentry; revamped bedrooms with carpentry; new bathrooms with fixtures and fittings.

The \$25,000 and \$75,000 offerings plus:

- Installation of full-length wall mounts with storage cabinets and mirrors, toilet bowls, taps and sinks, bidet sprays and shower bath mixer and handsets, concrete shampoo shelf with tiling, partition wall from sink to shower area and false ceilings in bathrooms;
- Supply and painting of whole house interior walls, ceilings and sewer piping with Nippon; and
- Installation of 8ft Island at dining area, quartz worktop on island, low height dining table, thick frameless tempered glass shower screen.