

ESSENCE

**BOSS
UP!**
**YOUR 2017
CAREER
BIBLE**

**FIND A
MENTOR**

**LAUNCH A
BUSINESS**

**LEARN FROM
A MASTER OF
THE POWER
GAME**

Oprah & Renée

**ON HONORING
HENRIETTA LACKS—
THE WOMAN
HISTORY TRIED
TO ERASE**

SELF-CARE SPECIAL

43

**AHH-
WORTHY
ESCAPES**

**The
Year of
the Black
Woman
Mayor:
WHY
IT'S NOT
POLITICS
AS USUAL**

639
529
P734
07324

W

SC

|||

VISIT ESSENCE.COM
APRIL 2017



Consider refurbishing old items like these chairs by Robin Wilson.

SAVE THE PLANET AT HOME

USE THESE SIMPLE FIXES TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT WHILE UPGRADING YOUR DECOR **BY TANYA A. CHRISTIAN**

PRETTIFY WITH ECO-FRIENDLY PAINTS AND PLANTS

For leading interior designer Robin Wilson, a hard rule when designing is to use paints with low to no volatile organic compounds (VOC), to minimize toxins. She recommends the Aura and Natura lines of Benjamin Moore and Behr Marquee, respectively. "Both brands have great coverage and built-in primers, so it's a little less labor," notes Wilson. To help further keep toxins out of the air in your home, Wilson suggests decorating with plants. These natural air purifiers can do double duty as humidifiers (the Boston fern is a good example) and can minimize allergies (thanks, spider plants!). Many houseplants are also low-maintenance and tend to be smaller in size, so you can place several around your residence.

LET THERE BE (CONSERVING) LIGHT

One of the simplest ways to achieve greener living is by trading traditional light bulbs for LED alternatives. "You'll save about 42 to 43 watts per bulb and your lamp will emit the same amount of light," says lighting expert Linda Allen, creator of Live. Anywhere. luxury energy-efficient lamps, including the one pictured here. She also advises adding dimmers, like those sold by



Linda Allen



expense, according to the Department of Energy. While avoiding a monthly electric bill altogether isn't possible, interior designer Courtney

Sloane believes lowering

energy consumption is a powerful start. Decorating with insulated curtains (like those left) helps stop drafts during cold months and blocks the sun in the height of summer. Try Therm-logic Weathermate (walmart.com).

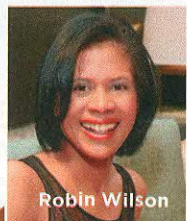
Smart thermostats like Nest, the Honeywell Lyric and Ecobee also drive down costs by allowing you to control temperatures remotely and automatically. "There's a smarter look to them that makes the space more interesting design-wise," Sloane adds.



Courtney Sloane

SHOP CONSCIOUSLY

A large part of a product's carbon footprint is determined by how far it has to travel to get to you. By buying locally and choosing products made in the USA, you lessen your impact on the environment exponentially. Also, purchasing goods from brands committed to creating a nontoxic living space such as Robin Wilson Home and Coyuchi, which provides ethically produced, 100 percent organic cotton bedding, makes staying green easier. Go to americansworking.com and sustainablefurnishings.org for a list of environmentally benign brands.



Robin Wilson

REUSE, REFURBISH, REINVENT

Reducing your carbon footprint can be as easy as recycling what is already present in your home before buying new items. •

Lutron (available at amazon.com and Home Depot), to help extend the life of your bulbs. "Add task lights or a table lamp to your work surface so you don't use all your lights while in one particular area," Allen adds.

TACKLE IN-DOOR TEMPERATURES

Heating and cooling can account for 48 percent of the energy we use at home and is often our largest energy

Embrace organic cotton bedding like these Coyuchi sheets.