



Eco-Chick

Robin Wilson, Interior Decorator to the Kennedys and Clintons, Shares Her Secrets

by [Lindsay](#) · 01/25/11

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We'd all like to think of ourselves as informed, happy and healthy consumers. We've made changes to our diets accordingly by avoiding genetically-modified foods, aspartame-laced beverages and some of us have even transitioned to the wonders of a [meat-free world](#). We shop with reusable bags, fill up our water bottles, avoid plastic like the plague, purchase beauty products made free of chemicals and we're now filling up our closets with [American designers](#) that are making affordable and sustainable fashion their mantra.

Somehow though, many of us have neglected our homes along the way. We've failed to apply those same beliefs to the very place where we spend most of our time. We pull together a vegetarian dinner in a toxic kitchen. We put a new pair of eco-friendly shoes in a room with painted with harmful toxins. We place our new, [Bobble water bottle](#) on a counter recently cleaned with chemicals. We take showers with natural products while we're surrounded by toxic materials. It's nonsensical! Many of our homes are simply not reflecting our beliefs and world views.



In an effort to cleanse our eco-systems, I headed straight to the one and only, Robin Wilson, founder of [Robin Wilson Home](#), for both simple and bigger-budgeted tips on how to make all of our homes healthy and non-toxic . She's a nationally recognized eco-friendly interior designer, who creates beautiful, healthy spaces for residential and commercial clients. Robin boasts a client list which includes the Kennedys and the Clintons, and she is the author of [Kennedy Green House](#). She is also the first woman to license her name to eco-friendly kitchen cabinetry, which is sold at 500 [Holiday Kitchen dealers nationwide](#). I'd say she's qualified to help de-toxify our homes. Wouldn't you?

Robin insists that an eco-friendly home is all about wellness and our overall health in our homes. Her firm lives by these four principles: [re-usable, sustainable, non-toxic, and recyclable](#). As Robin and I chat, I can't help but envision what her own space must look like—an eco-sanctuary, of sorts, I'm certain. Robin is very centered and when you speak with her, you get the sense that her internal state is a true reflection of her outside world. She's a dedicated yogi and a successful eco-design guru, and it all adds up. But I digress.



Here are Robin's simple suggestions for making your home healthier and toxin-free on a shoestring budget.

- **Buy hypoallergenic pillows and mattress covers.** We sleep one third of our life so our bedding is a vital part of our overall health.
- **Take off your shoes in the entry area.** When you walk into your home with your shoes, you allow dirt and pesticides into your living space. Leave them by the door!
- **Close the toilet lid when you flush.** Flushing creates a two to four foot spray of particles in your bathroom (gross!) These particles could land near your toothbrushes and natural soaps, so be sure to put down the lid!
- **Get a nylon shower curtain.** Most shower curtains are made with vinyl which releases [volatile organic compounds](#). Such chemicals are linked to developmental damage as well as damage to the liver and central nervous, respiratory, and reproductive systems.
- **Clean with affordable, non-toxic products.** Robin recommends [Ecover](#) as they make an array of phosphate-free products for all your needs that are made with plant-based and mineral ingredients.
- **Use energy-efficient light bulbs.** Change the bulbs in your house to LED or CFL lights and save money.
- **Get low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators.** These items will reduce your home's water consumption and reduce the energy cost of heating the water. Plus, they're easy to install.
- **Dust your home regularly.** Doing so will better your home's indoor air quality and prevent allergies, wheezing and sneezing. Dust can be microscopic so even if you can't actually see the dust, wipe the surfaces of your home with a cloth at least twice a week.
- **Avoid "phantom power" and save money.** Un-plug electronic appliances

when not in use like cell phone chargers, computer chords, toasters, coffee pots, etc. Put all of your electronics on a power cord and simply turn off the circuit when not in use.

- **Re-use old furniture.** If you have a couch or chair that's looking a bit weathered and you're on the verge of tossing, simply purchase an eco-friendly slipcover in a great color and pattern and it will feel like it's brand-spanking new!

Now, for those of you who might be looking to remodel or revamp your home in the near future, consider a few of Robin's top recommendations.

- **Paint your home with no-VOC paint.** Improve the indoor air quality of your home and paint with [Benjamin Moore's Aura](#). If the paint on the walls of your home is toxic, that is what everyone in your home is breathing in.
- **Get an eco-friendly mattress.** Most mattresses are manufactured with chemicals that include flame retardants, petroleum based foams, plastics, vinyls, fungicides and pesticides. Say goodbye to that toxic mattress of yours!
- **Purchase a dual-flush toilet.** Save water and money with these [eco-friendly toilets](#).
- **Switch from carcinogenic cabinets to healthy ones.** [Robin Wilson Home Custom Cabinetry Collection](#) by Holiday Kitchens are made with low to no-VOC paint and make a lasting impression without leaving a negative impact on your home. Many cabinets out there are glued together with formaldehyde based adhesives, which are carcinogenic.
- **Opt for recycled countertops in your home.** [IceStone](#) is a durable surface made of 100% recycled glass in a cement matrix. Each slab is VOC-free, made in the USA, and holds Cradle to Cradle Gold Certification. Imagine how good it will feel to cook an organic meal in an organic kitchen!
- **Re-floor your home with Bamboo.** [Mohawk Strand Woven Bamboo](#) flooring is made with 100% of the bamboo stalk, creating no environmental waste as a byproduct and utilizes environmentally-friendly adhesives. So, you don't have to contribute to the degradation of forests when it's time for new floors!
- **Outfit your home with furniture that is good for you and our earth.** [Environment Furniture](#) uses sustainably harvested wood and reuses materials which would have otherwise been discarded.

It's a new year and the perfect time to make positive changes to your environment. Whether you decide to cleanse the home with some of Robin's simple steps or opt for a [massive eco remodel](#), you and your family's well-being will be better because of it. Oh, and while you're working on your outside world, drink gallons and gallons of water. That's Robin's No. 1 beauty tip for all you eco chicks.