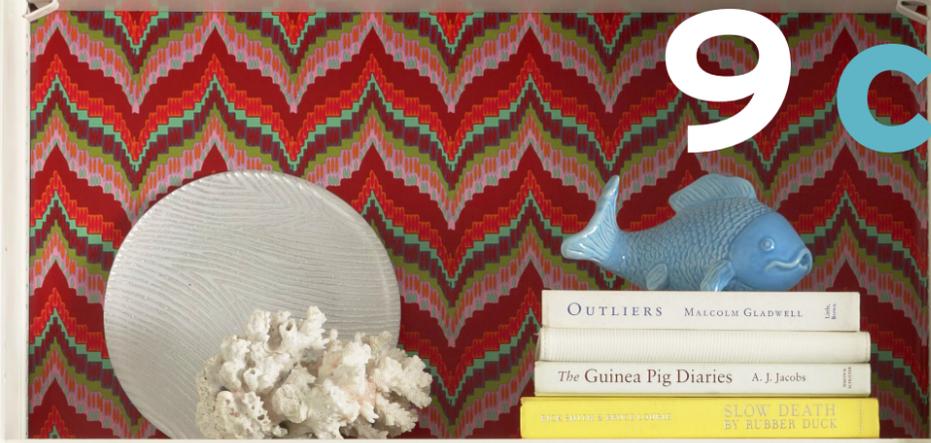


# 9 cheap



*For less than \$10...*  
**give your bookshelf a fashion moment**  
A patterned backdrop is gorgeous—and so easy. Just measure the space of each cubby and cut a piece of cardboard to those dimensions. (Check the fit before going further.) Using fabric, wallpaper, or even your favorite wrapping paper, tightly wrap the cardboard like a gift. Push it to the back of the shelf: done!

# and cheerful home ideas

The best D.I.Y. projects deliver a satisfying “I did it!” payoff in an afternoon, or better yet, an hour. The smarties from the home blog Young House Love are all about that—and sticking to a budget.



Allow us to introduce you to the king and queen of D.I.Y.: John and Sherry Petersik, the husband-and-wife team behind

younghouselove.com. The couple has spent the last five years drywalling, painting, stenciling, and blogging their way through two homes, while millions of readers followed along. Without any formal design training—they both worked at an advertising agency in New York City before moving to Richmond, VA—they’ve transformed badly dated homes from the ’50s and ’60s into sunny, modern spaces. And they’ve done it on the cheap. The Petersiks’ first book (on sale November 6) is jammed with more than 200 ideas—everything from rehabbing furniture to customizing a backsplash. Think of the ones we’ve chosen here as your D.I.Y. call to action: nine impressive projects you can pull off without huge amounts of sweat *or* cash. “For me, the zero-dollar projects, like hanging a mirror or rearranging furniture, can be the most rewarding,” Sherry says. “You get lots of change without spending money, which equals major decorating endorphins.”

### *In 30 minutes...* **chic up a pillowcase**

This no-sew idea gives a plain pillowcase a dreamy, pretty look. Start with a 100-percent-cotton pillow cover and fabric dye (wash the case first to help the dye set). Mix the dye, then fold the pillow cover into a square and dip the folded case halfway into the dye bath. Keep the fabric in the dye for about five minutes for the muted effect you see below.





*Their best reno secret:*  
Add a big dollop of **color** to your kitchen

This incredible kitchen makeover took John and Sherry four months and was one of their biggest design challenges, Sherry says. If you don't have the dough for a full gut, try painting cabinets white to lighten

the room (this space has no natural light, so bright cabinets were a must), then add a hit of vivid color for a transformative impact: "By using bright color as a focal point, you distract the eye from the so-so parts."



Make it a shelf!



For \$9.99...  
**transform an Ikea table into a shelf**

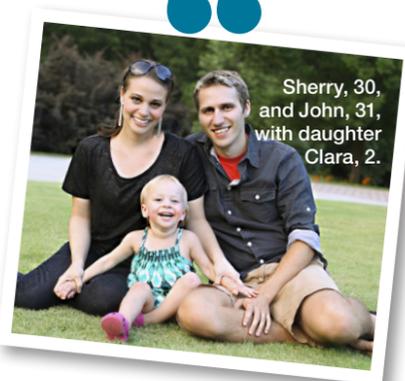
Major props to John for coming up with this so-simple idea. "I was trying to assemble a few Ikea Lack tables and was surrounded by loose table legs, parts, and screws," he says. "I was playing around, and then—*wham*—the idea for the shelf hit me." To make your own: Grab a partner to hold each leg in place while you screw the legs in from the back of the tabletop (you will need a few 3-inch screws). Be sure to check that each shelf is level as you go. Hang it using the existing holes on the back of the table; it's heavy, so use studs or heavy-duty anchors. Bonus: This is a paint-free project. "The table is available in nine colors," Sherry says.



For around \$20...  
**paint a statement door**

"I love how this project adds intrigue to a mundane object," says Sherry. Do it on a paneled door (use painter's tape for straight lines), or trompe l'oeil a flat one: Measure and mark four rectangle panels, and outline with tape. Paint a two-inch border inside the tape with a light gray paint. When dry, paint a darker gray 1/2-inch stripe on the outside edge of the light color. And don't spring for full pots of paint—use samples, which only run about \$5 each. Shown here: Benjamin Moore Moonshine and Silhouette.

The best feeling is looking at a finished project and knowing you did it all yourself.



Sherry, 30, and John, 31, with daughter Clara, 2.

In 10 minutes...  
**make bathroom lights special**



This is a snappy little way to personalize an uninspiring fixture. First, decide on a color. John and Sherry like metallic paints such as gold and silver, or grabby hues like navy, plum, or lime. (Use acrylic paint for glass shades.) Remove the light covers from the fixture. Pour a

small layer of paint, "as thick as a pencil," Sherry says, into a bowl. Dip each cover, holding it in your hand while any excess paint drips off before placing it upside down on a piece of old newspaper to dry. Screw in, turn on, and congratulate yourself.

TABLE: COURTESY OF IKEA.



*In a weekend...*  
**stencil your staircase**

Crack open a can of paint and give some personality to a hardworking area of your home. Use a semi-gloss color on the risers, and once that's dry, lay a stencil or freehand a pattern on top in white, black, or a contrasting color. If your staircase is heavily trafficked, finish the paint off with a layer of water-based polyurethane for durability. (John and Sherry like Minwax's Polycrylic Protective Finish in Clear Gloss.) "If you have to carry laundry up and down the stairs all day, they might as well look cute," Sherry says.

*Ready, set, paint!*

**Fail-safe (and gorgeous) color combos**

Putting together a palette for your home can be the most terrifying part of decorating—so let the Petersiks help. Dying for a clean white wall? Sherry's go-to is Decorators White from Benjamin Moore.



*From left: Bay Leaf, Persimmon Red, Crevecoeur, and Heath by Martha Stewart Living*



*Citron, Hibiscus, Baby Fern, and Dragonfly by Benjamin Moore*



*Hale Navy, Ashen Tan, Quiet Moments, and Milano Red by Benjamin Moore*



*Gobi Desert, Hazelnut Cream, Celery Ice, and Lime Light by Behr*

*For under \$75...*  
**create a custom headboard**



This project is a bit more involved but promises to make you happy every night. "A headboard looks so polished," Sherry says. Grab a partner (for extra hands and moral support), and take your bed's width measurement to an art store. Ask them to build a stretcher canvas—this will be the headboard's frame. Then, buy "extra loft thick" batting from a fabric store and cut a rectangle three inches bigger all around than the frame. Wrap and staple-gun it to the back of the canvas; then use the same technique to attach your favorite fabric, pulling it taut and making sure the pattern is straight. Hang it like a picture frame above your bed. Ta-da!

PAINT CANS: DAVID TURNER/STUDIO D. STAIRS: LOWE'S CREATIVE IDEAS.