

Understated Elegance

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This 1940s New Jersey home blends fresh-flower touches with modern grace, for a look that's sophisticated and timeless.

ENTERTAINING WITH ELEGANCE. Sarah says, "The living room is a representation of how I like to mix the old with the new. I have traditional upholstery with more modern end tables and lighting." The room puts symmetry first, and nearly all of the pieces have a matching double.

"The living room is a representation of how I like to mix the *old* with the *new*."

MIX AND MATCH. By sticking to neutral colors for her couches and armchairs, Sarah is able to use a variety of shades. She can incorporate brown, white, and beige without it ever feeling overwhelming because the colors are so subtle.

The pops of color are limited to *seasonal flowers*, which Sarah is always eager to pick up whenever she drives into town.

Transitioning to spring décor isn't hard when your home looks bright and fresh all year round.

Homeowner Sarah Quigley sticks to the basics when March rolls around, and instead of redesigning her entire New Jersey home, she makes small changes like switching out rugs and putting out her favorite seasonal plants, like myrtle topiaries. Sarah says "I have a clean palette. It's pretty edited." As an interior designer herself, it's easy to get caught up in other styles and trends. But after a few transitional years of experimenting with different décor, Sarah finally settled on the understated, yet elegant, style that her home displays today.

STRATEGIC RENOVATIONS

While Sarah didn't face many challenges renovating her home when she moved in 14 years ago, there was still much work to be done to transform it into her dream space. She added an upstairs office, and an entire wing off the master bedroom. One of the most crucial additions, and part of the reason her home looks so carefully curated, is the addition of closets. It's easy to acquire heaps of furniture, clothes or keepsakes over the years that we can't bear to part with, but how do you keep your space looking chic amid all the clutter? Storage and good organization are key.

But there was one storage area that had to go. When Sarah discovered that a closet was hiding a window with wonderful natural light behind its door, Sarah knew that she had to knock down the walls and redesign it as sunny window seat. She also uses this cozy reading nook to display a rare pop of pink, which she explains is her small act of feminine rebellion in a house full of men.

Sarah's bar wasn't always as stylish as it is now. When she bought the house, the bar area (which sits in the family room) seemed to be stuck in the 1970s. It was completely encased in mirrors, so Sarah took those out and opted for an off-white and slate-gray palette. She added brass accessories, a striking orbital light



[OPPOSITE TOP] COLONIAL CHARM. She kept the exterior renovations of her house minimal. With a fresh coat of paint, a cedar roof and a new overhang, she could focus her energy on redesigning the inside. The twin porch lights are an antique score and add to the colonial style of the house.

[OPPOSITE BOTTOM] FORMAL FUNCTION. Her family room is the perfect place to unwind with her family, with its open floor plan and plush armchairs. It's more than just a pretty space: She makes sure the lamps have swing arms for optimal reading light, and with bookcases on either side of the room, there's no chance of boredom.

GO WITH THE FLOW. Despite the small size of the entryway, the flow from the front door into the dining room makes the house feel open.

and antique books to give the space a classic look, and she proved that vintage doesn't have to look dated. The design is minimal and the alcove adds to the family room's décor instead of distracting from it. Sarah says, "I'm a simplistic person, so unless it has a lot of meaning, I'd rather not have the clutter."

A NEUTRAL BASE

Sarah's number one tip for keeping a home simple in its sophistication is to keep the larger pieces of furniture, like couches and armchairs, neutral. The one exception to this rule is her bedroom which has a romantic floral headboard. Usually, she brings patterns to the mix in smaller items, like throw pillows and vintage landscape paintings. With the flower patterns and pastoral art, the home has an undeniably fresh feel. Sarah's favorite color to decorate with is green, but you wouldn't immediately realize it. She finds subtle ways to incorporate it in her home, and almost all of her patterns have at least a hint of the color. The ferns in her home give it an earthy edge, but are all small and manicured so that they never distract from her chic style.

GLIMPSES OF GLAMOUR

While Sarah is all about keeping her home comfortable and functional, she doesn't shy away from glamour. Her upholstered chairs ensure her dining room is inviting, but the starburst mirror and gold lantern accent the formality of the room. The vases and lamps are all white to keep the glimmering gold pieces the stars of the show.



"I'm a simplistic person, so unless it has a lot of meaning, I'd rather *not* have the clutter."

Sarah wanted her family room to serve as a den, so she added two bookshelves. As with all of Sarah's design decisions, the bookshelves are kept minimal with just a few charming relics interspersed in between the books. If her home looks devoid of family pictures, it's not on accident. All of her personal photos sit atop on an end table in her living room. She says, "I like to confine them to one space." This way, she makes sure her home still feels representative of herself and family, but prevents it from looking cluttered by multiple frames on various coffee tables and mantles. Everything has a place and purpose in the Quigley home.

While her elegant style is consistent throughout the house, she does make certain changes depending on the type of room she's decorating. As for the curtains, she keeps it simple with bamboo shades, except for her living room which have formal looking drapes



[TOP] DINING COMFORTABLY. For less formal occasions, like eating breakfast with her two sons, Sarah skips the elegant dining room and favors her comfortable breakfast booth. The blue faux leather bench works well as a pop of color next to her muted kitchen.

[ABOVE] SIMPLE AND CLEAN. It was important to Sarah that her kitchen stay very understated. She sticks to all-white china, stainless steel appliances, and added a pop of earthy tones with her taupe-colored backsplash.



“I wouldn’t say I necessarily migrate to anything specific. Instead, I see it and know I like it.”



[ABOVE] SPA SIMPLICITY. Sarah’s master bath remains uncluttered and chic, the perfect place to soak and play spa.

[RIGHT] BOOKSHELF STYLE. Bookshelves are the perfect place to store and style. They keep novels organized, and you can break up the titles with figurines or picture frames.

[OPPOSITE] DINING DÉCOR. As in most of the home’s rooms, the art in the dining room is minimal. There is one Paul Lange photograph framed with gold to tie in with of the rest of the framed art. Sarah says, “I like clean lines mixed with the chipped antique gold of the light.” It’s this kind of juxtaposition that keeps her home from ever looking too contemporary or too classic.

to match the rest of the furniture. In smaller rooms, like the closet she converted into a bathroom, she feels freer to experiment with ornate wallpaper instead of her usual off-white paint.

Sarah certainly has a clear vision for her home, but she doesn’t allow that to restrict her from stepping out of her comfort zone; if it works, it works. Sometimes the design decision that seems the most out of character reaps the biggest reward. She designed her master bath with gray marble even though she typically shies away from gray. The cool colors make it feel calm and spa-like. “I wouldn’t say I necessarily migrate to anything specific,” Erin says. “Instead, I see it and know I like it.” **CB**



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the home has an undeniably *fresh feel*.

TOUCHES OF GLAMOUR.

The master bedroom is a cozy change from the rest of the home. However, the sunburst mirror and spring flowers in the bright white vases keep with Sarah's consistent style.

