

Reuse With Style

It's all about functional design with these eco-friendly items.

By Erica Christoffer

From salvaging antique floors to transforming denim into insulation, reusing items in new ways helps the environment as you spruce up a home. Repurposing personal or industrial objects offers both functionality and aesthetic appeal. Here are five ways to incorporate repurposed elements into a home:



GIVE A HOME SOME HISTORY Antique floors dating back decades—even centuries—can add historic charm to a new or remodeled home, while saving quality wood and tile from demolition. Tom Campbell, owner of Connecticut-based Old Wood Workshop, started salvaging floors, paneling, cabinetry, doors, and stone from buildings in his rural farming community in the early 1990s. Home owners have become increasingly interested in repurposing architectural elements, he says, and last year was his best in 20 years. "I love selling to clients who appreciate the products," says Campbell, who sees his job as saving pieces of history from a bulldozer. Salvaged flooring can be used in restoration projects and to create a one-of-a-kind look. **COST:** approximately \$12-\$16 per square foot. www.oldwoodworkshop.com

GET CREATIVE Every person has an attic, garage, or storage space filled with items that can serve a dual purpose, says Bob Eckstein, an interior design blogger in New York. Do you have old bottles or scientific beakers? Fill them with different flavors of mouthwash for a splash of color in the bathroom. Come across an antique bedpan? Use it to hold sponges or potpourri. How about that old wooden ladder in the garage? Turn it into an outdoor trellis. "No one should feel intimidated by interior design," Eckstein says. His philosophy costs nearly nothing—ideal for home owners feeling the economic crunch. It's about using what you already have in new and interesting ways. **COST:** free. www.smartassideasforthehome.blogspot.com >>>33



>>>31 **WARM UP TO COTTON** Old jeans are finding new life as home insulation material. Bonded Logic of Chandler, Ariz., manufactures UltraTouch Natural Cotton Fiber insulation, which is made from 85 percent recycled denim and cotton fibers. The Class A insulation contains no VOCs or formaldehydes and doesn't irritate skin. "It's very healthy and a great recycled product. Made from denim waste, it's given a second life," says Sean Desmond, director of sales and marketing at Bonded Logic. The insulation is treated with a 100 percent natural borate mineral solution that is mold and fire resistant. UltraTouch receives the maximum insulation performance rating and is sold at retailers nationwide. **COST:** \$0.50-\$1.50 per square foot. www.bondedlogic.com

WASH WHERE YOU FLUSH Toilets are one of the biggest water hogs in the home. Seattle-based ecohaus has addressed this environmental challenge by promoting the Caroma Profile, a bathroom fixture that is part sink and part toilet. Users wash their hands in the toilet tank (cleaner than you might think). That water is then repurposed for future flushes. Its dual flush component reduces water consumption by an additional 40 percent to 70 percent. The toilet and sink combo is a great space saver in smaller bathrooms. **COST:** \$499.99. www.ecohaus.com



BOTTLE THE LIGHT U.K.-based artist Sarah Turner turns plastic bottles into lampshades that are modern works of art. The shades are individually designed and handcrafted, and each is typically composed of 10 to 30 bottles. Turner started repurposing bottles as a university student a few years ago when it struck her that she and her housemates were discarding used bottles at an alarming rate. Turner's recycled ReDesign line includes shades for various lamp styles, from floor to ceiling. Her signature "Cola 10" shade is made from ten plastic Coca-Cola bottles. **COST:** \$420. www.sarahturner.co.uk

