Southern Living

8 Home Upgrades Designers Wish Homeowners Would Stop Paying For

By Sarah Lyon | Published on August 23, 2026



Credit: HECTOR MANUEL SANCHEZ STYLING BY: HOLLY SMITH

Sometimes, less is more when shopping for pieces for your home. There are many types of furniture items and accessories that interior designers would rather that you simply leave behind altogether.

Here, Southern designers are sharing eight things that they believe are a waste of money and will not serve you well in your home for long.

Overly Trendy Pieces

Multiple designers encourage people to think twice before purchasing items that are ultra-trendy.

"Styles that feel current today can quickly appear dated," says Whitney Ray, the founder of Wyeth Ray Interiors in Atlanta, Georgia.

Tracy Morris, the founder of Tracy Morris Design in McLean, Virginia, shares similar views.

“Overly trendy decor pieces—like fast-fading color schemes or gimmicky wall art—can quickly feel outdated, requiring frequent (and costly) replacements,” she says.

If you really can’t resist embracing a particular trend, Ray recommends doing so cautiously.

“Incorporating a few smaller, trend-forward accents is fine, but I recommend exercising caution when it comes to larger investment pieces like sofas or dining tables,” she adds.

Mass-Produced Pieces

Do not plan to decorate your entire space with mass-produced decor items from big box stores, cautions Alex Kober, junior interior designer at TriVistaUSA Design + Build in Arlington, Virginia.

“Home decor accessories should bring life into space and reflect the people that live in them,” he says. “If you take the time to shop around and invest in pieces that you really love, you can add a whole lot more richness and visual interest to your space.”

Arianne Bellizaire, the founder of Arianne Bellizaire Interiors in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, agrees.

“I always tell my clients: your home should tell your story, and every item you bring into it should earn its place—whether by offering comfort, function, or a meaningful connection,” she says.

Too Much Holiday Decor

Kober advises against going all in with holiday decorations, keeping things relatively subtle instead.

“We all love putting our velvet pumpkins out in the fall and our bunnies out in spring, but those pieces should not overwhelm your home,” he says. “Instead it’s better to accentuate your home during the holiday season with a few accessories that give a nod to the holiday but still mesh well with your everyday decor.”

Low Quality Pieces

Designers believe that it’s better to spend a little more money upfront on a piece of furniture than settle for something poorly made that will not last you long.

“Whether you buy a chair, bed sheets, or a sofa, cheaper items are usually lower quality and will wear out and need to be replaced sooner,” says Molly Kunselman, the founder of Molly Kunselman Design in Washington, D.C. “You will end up spending more money on cheaper stuff over the long term instead of investing in quality items that last and are often more attractive.”

Poorly Made Rugs

Be mindful about the type of rug that you’re spending money on and bringing into your home, pros say.

“Wait until you can invest in the best quality you can afford,” says Jessica Bandstra, the founder of Dogwood Proper, which operates in both Houston, Texas, and Nashville, Tennessee. “Choosing inexpensive, low-quality rugs may seem like a budget-friendly option, but they wear out quickly, shed excessively, and don’t withstand foot traffic.”

Ray is particularly averse to viscose rugs and encourages people to steer clear of this material.

“Viscose is highly prone to staining, and even with the utmost care, spills are nearly impossible to remove completely.” she says, noting that those with pets and young children will definitely want to opt for another type of floor covering.

Kunselman advises skipping synthetic rugs as well.

“Synthetic rugs can develop unattractive wear patterns and look tired and worn when the fibers break down,” she says. “Wool rugs are resilient and beautiful, lasting for generations.”

Poufs

While poufs aren’t as ubiquitous as they were in the 2010s, they’re still making an appearance here and there, and Thea Bloch-Neal, the founder of Curated by Thea in Durham, North Carolina, isn’t a proponent of decorating with them.

“Let’s be real—no one actually wants to sit in them, and you can’t even set a drink down,” she says. “While they do fill a space visually, you’re better off with a stylish vintage stool or a unique side table—something that’s both functional and beautiful.”

Tons of Knick-Knacks

Do not weave knick-knacks into your home just to fill the space when you can opt for a limited number of more special pieces instead, notes Danielle Domingues.

"In my opinion, knick-knacks cheapen a space and overall design when a home is over-decorated with them," says the founder of Collins & Co. Interiors in Orlando, Florida. "Clients should instead invest in a few beautifully curated pieces that not only reflect their families personality, but elevate the overall feel of their home."

Ultra-Fake Looking Faux Florals

Fake flowers and plants come in all shapes and sizes, with some being poorly made than others.

Kober recommends avoiding any options that are too cheap looking. "They are fooling no one and all they are doing is catching dust," he says, noting that ultimately, real flowers are always the best option. "For those who don't have a green thumb, though, it's better to invest in high quality faux floral arrangements and greenery that look a little more realistic and will last a lot longer."