

BENCHES, OTTOMANS PROVIDE FORM AND FUNCTION

By Cathy Hobbs

Tribune News Service

ooking for a way to add both form and function to a space? Consider a bench or ottoman. Not only do these smaller scale furniture pieces provide functionality, in many cases they can be the best fit and furniture solution in size and scale. Need ideas on the best way to incorporate benches and ottomans into your home? Here are some top tips!

Dos

1 Do consider ottomans in entry areas. They can serve as an alternative to a case good such as a console while still helping to convey a point of entry.

Do use benches or ottomans as additional seating in social areas such as living and family rooms.

3Do use benches and ottomans as a way to infuse color and texture into

Do use ottomans and benches in areas in which small-scale furniture selections are appropriate.

5Do use benches and ottomans to make a design statement.

Don'ts

1 Don't ignore opportunities to use benches and ottomans as a finishing touch in a space such as at the foot of a bed.

Opon't use ottomans and benches in overly large rooms. They may

appear too small in large spaces.

Don't use ottomans and benches in ways that don't provide function. Avoid using them in a purely decorative way. Function is best.

Don't ignore opportunities to tuse benches and ottomans in unexpected ways such as a coffee

Don't forget that ottomans and benches are modular and versatile and can be used in pairs or groupings if needed.

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Smaller kitchen sink needed for downsized home

By Ed Del Grande Tribune News Service

Q: Ed: We're planning to build a downsized home and I need some ideas for a small kitchen. This won't be a "tiny" home, but it looks like counter width is tight for a full-size kitchen sink. Counter depth is fine, so what do you suggest?

– Tiná, Washington state A: I can relate to building a smaller home as well, since we plan to downsize

in a few years. The good news is I have given this question some thought over recent years, and I recommend a versatile or universal-style sink.

A generous size single-bowl universal sink is not as wide as a standard double-bowl kitchen sink. But like the name says, it can actually be used as a primary kitchen sink, secondary kitchen sink, utility sink or even a bar sink. It's also large enough for four faucet holes, so most standard kitchen faucets should easily

fit this sink. I also recommend going with a enameled cast-iron model for strength, durability and color choices.

Other options to consider are a sloped sink bottom and an offset drain to help open up the workspace area.

Finally, some universal sinks even include custom sink racks. That's a bigtime feature for a small-space kitchen sink.

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How to go green in 2022

By Paul F. P. Pogue Ask Angi

Whether you're thinking about a full-scale remodel or just basic maintenance, make 2022 the year you go green for good.

When you're wrapped up in the excitement of flashier changes like picking out paint colors and flooring, it's easy to not want to dive deep into the VOC rating of that gallon of paint you just bought or find out if that new hardwood is from ethically sourced materials.

But the truth is, just like that perfect shade of greige, going green can greatly improve your everyday life at home. Renewable resources and alternative energy are part and parcel of an entire approach to your home that can increase your comfort, lower your energy bills, and protect the environment all at once.

Sustainable living isn't just about the energy sources and materials you use -

seven tips for incorpohome decisions:

1. Don't overlook energy-saving steps

Go through your home and identify points where you're leaking air. Door and window edges are common culprits. Weather stripping, caulking and minimizing leaks can increase your home's energy efficiency at a minimal

2. Repurpose what you have

Be mindful of what you're using when you renovate, and look for ways to upcycle or repurpose what you already own. For example, do you really need new cabinets, or will refacing them get the results you want while using fewer materials?

3. Put a premium

on lifespan When it's time to Safer Choice logo when

you can incorporate replace things, think these elements into about the next replaceevery aspect of home ment down the road. improvement. Here are The longer a material or appliance lasts, the rating Earth-friend- longer it takes before ly strategies into your it reaches the landfill, which lowers your project's potential negative environmental impact. A metal roof, for instance, will last longer than almost any other material.

4. Go for lower flow

Your water fixtures make a big difference. For instance, nearly a third of your water usage comes from toilet flushing. Install lowflow faucets, showers and toilets to bring down your water consumption — and your bill.

5. Pick alternative materials

With many home services, you can specifically request eco-friendly materials. For example, household cleaning solutions can use plantbased cleaning supplies that gently break down stains. Look for the EPA

goods.

saving steps.

6. Protect the south

side of your house The south side of your home gets the most direct and harsh sunlight. Heavy drapes and

high-efficiency win-

dows can help deal with

this extra load. Planting

that area will also help create a shady oasis.

Weather stripping your windows is one of the easiest and most effective energy-

7. Plan for green replacements

Sooner or later, you'll be making big-ticket purchases such as new heating, roofing or appliances. Start planning now for renewable options when you make

shopping for your own trees and large shrubs in these bigger investments. You probably won't install a geothermal HVAC system on a whim, but you might do

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so if you're replacing

your system anyway.



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