



# Make a fresh start

*There comes a time when one really needs to de-clutter a room to attain an ambiance to marvel. As the festive season dawns, Shahin Rajwani shares some insights on how to decorate a family room where guests can as well be entertained.*



**H**ello again! As promised in the last issue, I will be showing you how to transform your home from dull and drab to warm and inviting space.

With Xmas around the corner and New Year right after, how about making a fresh start by de-cluttering your home? If this seems like a daunting task, then take one particular room in which you spend a lot of your time and start to work with that.

I assume the room you spend most of your time in is your Living/Sitting room, Lounge or whatever you wish to call it. It is the area of your home where you welcome guests or relax with family in the evenings watching TV or just lounging with a drink in hand listening to music of your choice. Therefore, for this issue I plan to discuss this area of your home; the room where you will be entertaining family and friends during the festive season.

## Little haven

Whatever the size of your Living Room, it is a little haven where you should like to come back to at the end of a busy day, a place to be with your

family and friends or just on your own enjoying the ambiance, relaxing with some music playing.

Usually our living room is also the place that most visitors see, and therefore should be very inviting and comfortable so that everybody will feel good right away. Now how do we achieve this? There are several simple steps that we can follow in Interior Design to achieve this, and be warned, I am going to be really radical with my advice:

**1** To start with, empty your room completely. Take everything out, including curtains and fixtures. Now stand back and look at the room with new eyes and you will be amazed what you see! By emptying out the whole room you have also allowed the old stagnant energy to move out of the room.

**2** Now take a pen and some graph paper and sketch out the shape including the window openings, doors or arches, fireplace etc. and their positions.

**3** On the side of the page jot down your requirements for your living room. Ask yourself questions like: Is it used every day by all members of the family? Or is it a formal place used only for entertaining? For instance if it is used as a family room you may need a television area with a particular type of seating plan for watching.

**4** Having decided the use of the room, list all the basic items that you require for the room to be comfortable; like a sofa or sofas, armchairs, coffee table, maybe side tables, a footstool or pouf. Once this is done,





try to place the items on your list onto your floor plan. Be brave and only put on your list things you need. Throw or give away anything that is unnecessary. You will never move on or change your design if you cling to useless items. Be tough with yourself and let things go!

Planning done, start by reorganizing your existing pieces of furniture. Consider changing the covers of your sofa(s) and armchairs (loose covers can revamp your sofa set straight away) or if buying a new set of furniture, choose a neutral

colour. Beige, cream or white will work best and allow you to play around with accent colours in items like cushions and throws throughout the year.

### Storage unit

If you still have a lot of items that you cannot part with, then consider investing in a storage unit with cupboards, which you can hide away the items not needed. This storage unit should also have shelves where you can display your

“precious” items. An old coffee table can be given a new lease of life with some new varnish or why not just paint it another colour?

Consider also having your existing rugs cleaned or move them around into another room and invest in a new one to match you new colour scheme. The same goes for the curtains. Have these cleaned or bin them and invest in new curtains or sheers. These days, sheers come in some fantastic shades and patterns and can make a real statement in a room. They can be combined with a set of blinds to create a fresh and modern look.

After this “spring cleaning” is done, it will be lots of fun to decorate this room for the festive season: bring in candles of your chosen colour. There will be enough space to place the Xmas tree in your de-cluttered room. But do not clutter again! Perhaps choose only one or two colours to be used in your decoration scheme. It will give your new room a more harmonious and sophisticated look.

Best wishes during this festive season and in more to come.

*The writer is the managing director of Spiegel Interiors, located Mobil Plaza in the city county of Nairobi.*

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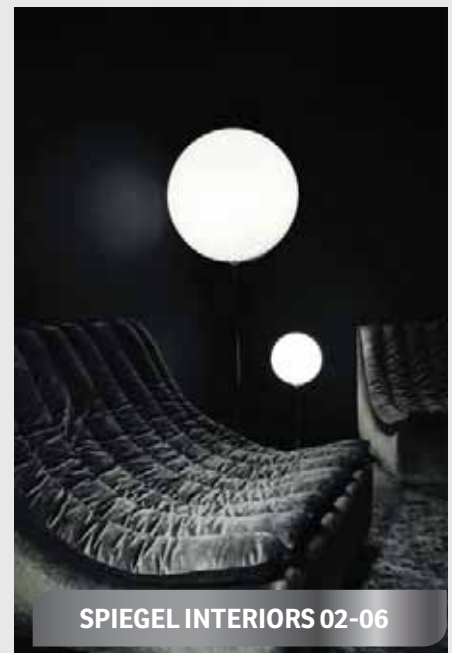
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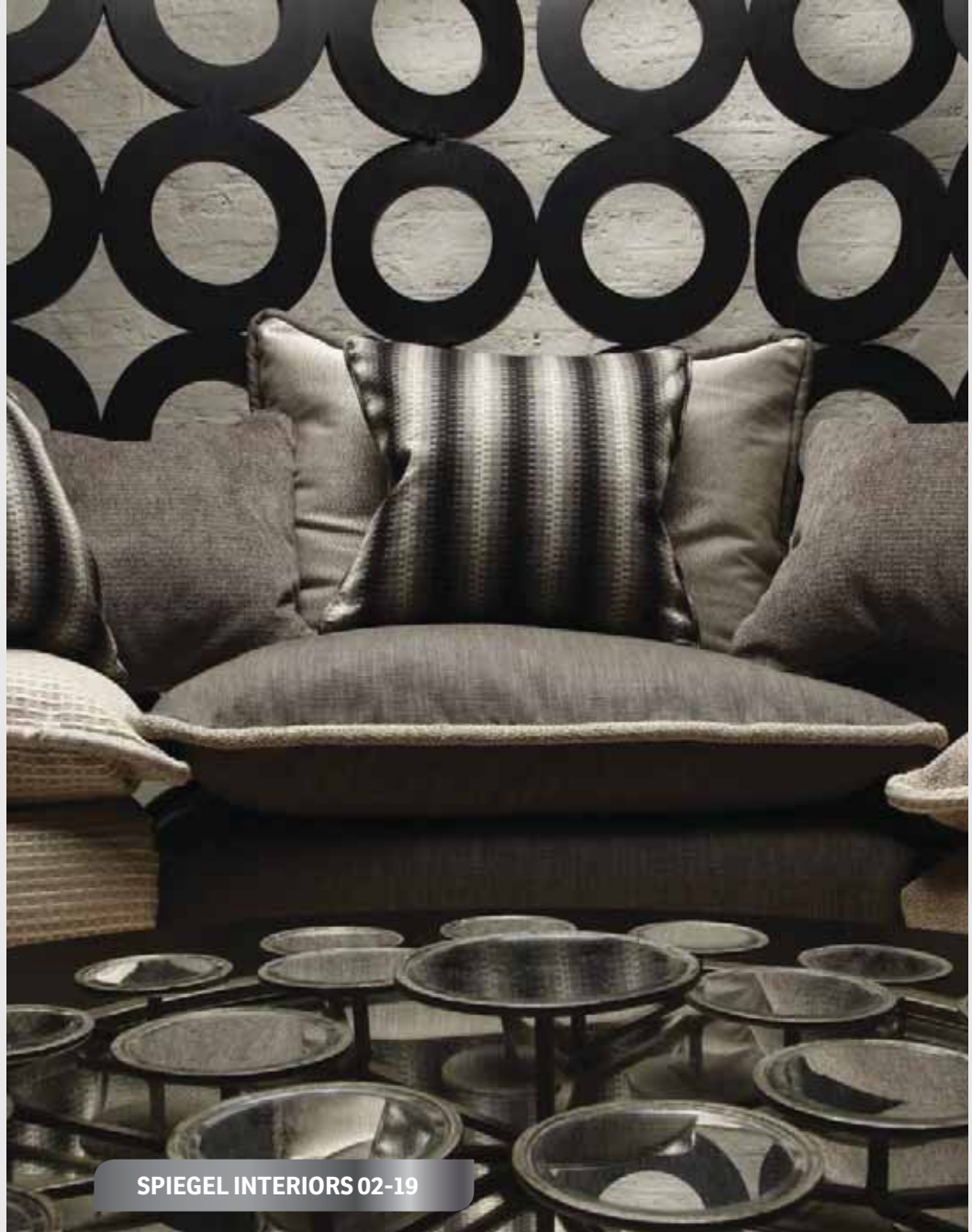
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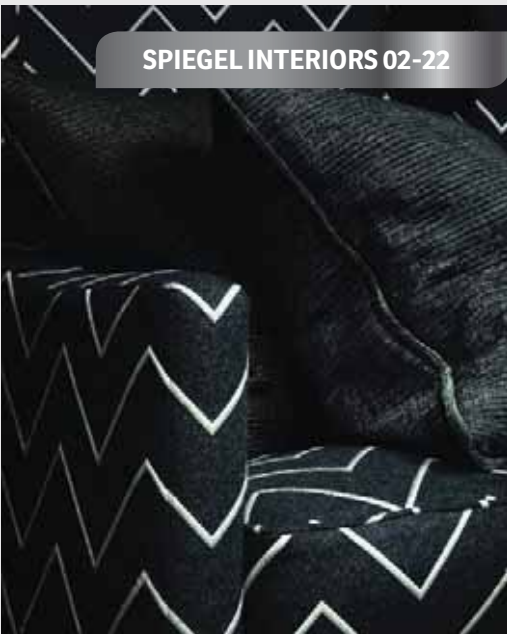
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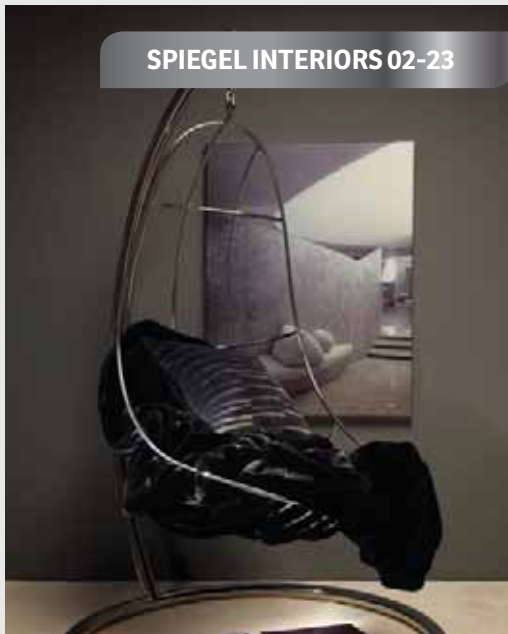
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