

PENNY-WISE PERSONALITY

BRIGHT IDEAS ON A BUDGET

By Michael Walsh



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This living space gets its charm from 1950s family "heirlooms" and a crisp color palette.

Never underestimate the element of surprise for creating a highly personal environment. When money is tight, imagination is the best budget stretcher of all.

Keep it simple

Brimming with cottage charm, this room is a textbook case of mind-over-money design. Here's what it teaches:

- **Splash on** bright colors. A red, white, and green palette enlivens the milieu. The walls, once dowdy in earth tones, are spunky in wake-it-up white.
- **Limit** the use of pattern. A single pattern—the lifesize peonies on the pillows—looks as fresh as the real thing.
- **Remove** heavy fabric. Privacy isn't an issue here, but letting light in is.



An untailed, lipstick-red slipcover and playful pillows give this 1950s sectional love seat a 1980s attitude.

Don't replace it, renew it

Make the most of what you have, and more money can go for indulgences—such as a hand-painted folding screen. You'd never guess it to look at them, but most of these pieces are family hand-me-downs. The legacy includes:

- **A big red "chair."** Think you recognize the bones of a '50s love seat under that blousy slipcover? You're right.
- **A swivel chair.** Another Eisenhower-era seat looks chic in white canvas.
- **A vintage rattan sofa.** Once front-porch white, this one is warmed with a coat of taupe. White canvas and floral chintz retain the sofa's sunny outlook.
- **A traditional desk.** Because it's not a valuable antique, this desk could be revved up with white paint. ☞