

HOW TO FIND MATERIALS TO RENOVATE FOR FREE

Embrace the season you're in

If you know our story: there hasn't always been money for expensive stoves. (And the only reason that's attainable even now is because we do all of the work ourselves). We spent many years making things, painting things, finding deals. It's a learning process and one that all of our children have grown up in. They can all paint, use the saw, hold the other end of the tape, and rinse sponges when we're grouting. If you want it bad enough: you'll make it happen.

Start with a plan.

Have a mood board for each room and a list of dream materials.

The first part of the plan is that you have to be willing to renovate with the materials that are available (which means your plan has to be flexible). If you find free tile... guess what you're doing. Tiling. But, don't take materials you don't like.

Just because they're designer for someone else, doesn't mean you have to like them.

I don't mean compromise on style... or even finish. I mean that, you're going to renovate in the order that things become available, or store the materials for when you're ready.

Marketplace.

Let's talk about marketplace. What are people listing there? Things they've ALREADY replaced and now this THING is taking up valuable room and living space. Remember that as you search. You're looking for "sellers" that are short on time but tall on STUFF. You are creating a CONVENIENCE for them to get rid of their stuff.

CARDINAL RULE Be honest and be kind and they will give you the world. In a world of ghosting buyers, be the buyer that isn't.

***Before you do ANYTHING on Facebook please check out our FREEBIE on how to get the stuff you want on Facebook without being murdered or kidnapped (comment SAFETY on any post and we'll send you the guide). PLEASE BE CAREFUL.

- **FREE GROUPS.** Sign up for every free group in your area. Bonus points: put out a "free stuff wanted" ad. Be specific about what you're looking for.
- **KEY WORDS & SAVED SEARCHES.** Save key words and searches for all of your room plans: These are some of the key words and searches we currently have saved: vintage rug, marble, stone, antique, vintage, hand-knotted rug, wool/cotton rug, vintage/antique door, designer curtains,
- **ESTATE SALES:** Watch for estate sales and reach out to people who are cleaning out their relative's houses. I mean it, send them a warm message: "hi, this is who I am. I see that you're cleaning out a place and I'm so sorry for your loss. I am Bertha, I have a young family, and we are looking for everyday items for our home. If there's anything that you don't sell or need help getting rid of, please let me know. We'd love to help." They're usually in a hurry and are willing to unload stuff for free just to get it gone. Especially if you're nice, responsive, and tell them it would be perfect in your daughter's room.
- **BE A STALKER:** Have a truck or large SUV ready to go at a moments notice. "I'm on my way right now, just need the address." People who have just renovated and have leftover materials just want it gone. Watch for the deals and be patient, but be QUICK when listings pop up.
- **WATCH FOR PEOPLE THAT ARE BUILDING:** Search listings and find people that are

building or renovating. FOLLOW THEM and sign up for alerts. They have “old” stuff coming out or MIS-ORDERS that never went in that they’ll want to unload. BONUS POINTS: reach out to them. Tell them your name. Who you are. What you’re doing. How limited your budget is. Tell them about little Tommy’s room that you’re redoing. They’ll be happy to help. And if they’re not... move on to the next person.

- YARD SALES. Specifically MOVING SALES. You can walk away with a whole new house for next to nothing. Watch for “MUST BE PICKED UP BY” verbiage. This is a desperate seller. Desperate seller=great deal. (I have been known to send these sellers a message that says, if you are unable to sell this, please let me know and I can come pick it up for you.)

***Expand your search area to 500 miles and save everything you love. This teaches your algorithm what to show you. It also saves things that are out of reach but might not sell. So when they cut the price by half or are just giving it away: you’ll be ready.

I want you to remember something as you’re searching: the worst thing they can say is NO. I know it stings, but it doesn’t hurt to ask.

Auction sites.

Auction sites have items that are underbid or go for next to nothing. You just have to know where to look.

Become an expert furniture flipper and pick up these pieces for next to nothing. When you find something better, sell this and upgrade. Keep upgrading until you get to your dream piece.

What auction site do we use? This is a trick question... if you’re using Liveauctioneers, you’re probably paying too much.

What you’re REALLY looking for is a NOT-YET-POPULAR auction house that sells really cool stuff that not that many people know about. The unicorn, right? How to find that depends on your area.

We found our unicorn auction house that we follow on HIBID. (just google it). They have the sites divided by state and you can pull up a map with auction houses that are nearest your location.

****You can find the best auction houses by searching the whole site at once. Find the cool pieces and then figure out WHICH auction house they’re coming from. Some auction houses are flea-market/junk stores. Don’t waste your time with those even if they’re close to you.

Almost everything we buy is from the same auction house.

Lean on friends and family

Help them out with projects. See if they’re ready to get rid of grandma’s old WWII era THING. Your mom is looking for an excuse to get rid of it and get something new. Trust me. A well timed, “boy I sure love that old hutch of grandma’s. It always makes me think of her.” Will get you a new-to-you furniture piece every time. How do I know? I am that mom. Take it. Take it all.

Talk about the plans you have for rooms and be kind.

Check the free bin

We have a great salvage place right up the road that ALWAYS has a “free” bin. Lumber, bricks, etc. Check it regularly. Take the free stuff.

Put a little elbow grease into it

Make sure one of your vehicles is a pickup truck and get that stuff off the side of the road. If you're broke and maybe home with young children, start a **FLIPPING BUSINESS**. Even if it's not something you want, you can put a little elbow grease in: flip it and sell it and save up for your next thing.

Don't get mad. Get creative.
Happy creating