





LEFT: Anthony Baratta recommends finding furniture at antique or vintage stores instead of going to a big-box store. The only items that aren't vintage or antique in this space he designed are the wooden rug, RUGART. Rug maker Merida sells a rug made of wool and linen that has a cotton backing, making it easier to recycle.

STYLING: JESSICA WILKINSON

To live a more eco-friendly life, try making some simple swaps

FROM THE GREEN PAGE

anchored with a lot of double-sided tape. It makes opening and organizing them more fun, she says, and if you're lucky, it might encourage kids to keep them neat.

Rugs

When you assess your household's carbon footprint, you might not initially think about rugs. But did you know you're in a job position, making them difficult to recycle.

When buying carpeting, ask about the materials and the company that makes it, says Catherine Connolly, chief executive and owner of Merida, a high-end rug maker based in Fall River, Mass. Merida has been all about natural fibers throughout its 40-year history. The company works with fibers from rapidly renewable materials like wool, steel, alpaca and linen. No toxic chemicals are used in coloring or dyeing.

When shopping for a rug, the Environmental Working Group suggests looking for rugs made of wool or other natural materials such as wool, jute or sisal grass, padding made of wool or felt, and no stain- or water-proofing treatments. Look for certification

labels such as Green Label Plus or GreenGuard low-VOC (reducing volatile organic compounds that can affect indoor air quality).

Julia Steuber, a senior scientist at the Environmental Working Group, also suggests choosing FFA-free rugs. Growths and Home Depot recently announced that they would no longer be selling carpeting with PFAS, a category of chemicals that do not break down in the environment and can cause health issues. Steuber recommends rugs with backings made of natural rubber and not PVC, a plastic that can off-gas and contains other harmful chemicals such as phthalates.

If you need to get rid of a rug, it can be hard to find eco-friendly solutions. Rug backing has to be removed for recycling, and it's expensive to do that. There also aren't many recycling facilities. Connolly suggests the Carpet America Recovery Report website for information.

You can also donate or give your old rug away, as Connolly says. "If you buy good-quality rugs, you'll probably be able to pass them down to the next generation." That's living green.

Furniture

Cheerily made plastic or particleboard furniture (not furniture) is likely to end up in a landfill before long. Instead of heading to the big-box store, consider giving an old piece of furniture a new life in your home. And when you're in the market for a new table or chair, check online or in your neighborhood for what's available in the previously owned marketplace.

"With old furniture, you get a lot of bang for your buck and you get your own signature look, instead of the same-style-everywhere else has these days," says New York designer Anthony Baratta. Baratta is a fan of antique and vintage stores and is always scrolling through online auctions such as www.ebay.com or modishfinds.com.

"Like giving something a third or fourth life in my house," says Julia Roman Johnston, president of Home as Home, a furniture company that recently published a sustainability issue. She shops Facebook Marketplace, Chairish and other consignment platforms.

Baratta also recommends his book on his upcoming book, "Decorate Happy: Build, Colorful Interiors," which comes out in February. It

covers a lot of the space, including an Colonial Williamsburg, where he was designer-in-residence last year. He shows examples of taking antique or vintage sofas and chairs and upholstering them in unexpected fabrics such as merino wool, jute, bright tartan and large-scale florals. Old wood end tables can be repurposed black for a classic look. Mid-century modern badonnie furniture sets can be broken up; the chairs look great in living rooms.

"You can look at your grandmother's dining table, a reproduction French colonial table from 1900, and say you love it and don't ever want to see it again," Baratta says. "Or you can cut it in half and make a pair of comfortable stools out of it."

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