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Savvy looks increase bookshelf interest

By Amanda Eck



Photos provided

One of the questions I often get asked is how to style bookshelves without making them look cluttered. For the most part bookshelves are meant for books, right? But lately we are seeing a trend of having shelves look a little more stylish and less like a library. Don't get me wrong, I am all for a beautiful built-in lined with dusty old books beckoning me to curl up with a cup of tea, but in today's tech savvy world our books are now collected on our electronic devices. So what's one to do with all those empty shelves? Here are some easy tips for creating a stylish bookshelf.

1. Go big or go home: Start with your largest items first. I love using pottery, vases, sculpture, or other unique objects. If you have floor to ceiling bookshelves I prefer to place only one large piece in the top shelf. Visually it helps bring the eye up and it's also less to dust. Because let's face it, anything higher than six feet may often not see the feathers of a duster (at least that is the case in my house). Less is definitely more.

2. Try a tray: For your smaller items try placing them on a decorative tray. Small tchotchkes scattered about can clutter up a bookshelf, but corralling them on a tray will look better visually and keep things tidy. Grouping like items together even without a tray will look better than individually scattering them about.

3. Stack 'em up: Stacking books horizontally instead of upright does two things: one, they take up more shelf space eliminating the need for more "clutter" and two,

they create a riser to display a decorative item (i.e. coral, decorative boxes, orbs).

4. Family time: Now that you have filled in your shelves with the biggies and corralled your littles, it's time to display your treasured family photos. I try and stay away from chunky ornate frames and go for simple frames - either brass, chrome or even frameless. Keeping all the frames the same will also help create a more cohesive and stylish feel.

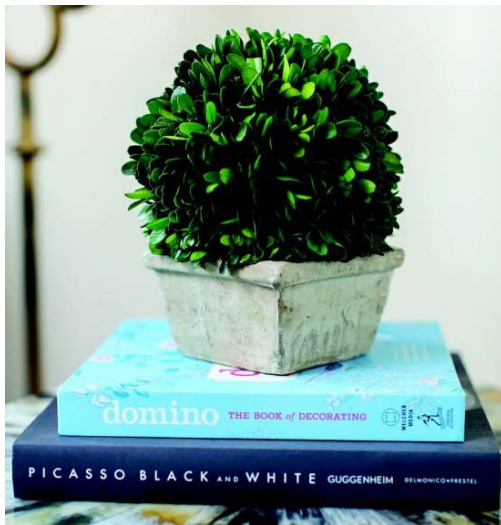
5. Go green: Add some natural elements to your bookshelves. If you have a black thumb like me, go faux. Gone are the days of the dusty, musty fake ivy. Succulents, boxwood, and other greenery that look incredibly real are replacing those dated silk plants. Pottery Barn even now has an entire botanical shop filled with realistic faux foliage. So go green without the worry of weekly watering. Another designer's secret - add real potting soil to the top of your faux plant to fool your friends. I also like to use moss or pebbles for added texture.

Decorating your bookshelves can feel daunting but hopefully with these easy tips you will be able to tackle those shelves with ease.

Happy styling!



Here we grouped our client's brass candlesticks to create a fun vignette. Photos provided



As the Owner and Principal Designer of Lamorinda-based Amanda Carol Interiors, Amanda Eck believes your home's interior should be both approachable and well- appointed. She often asserts, "Beauty is a necessity." With a distinct sense of style that mixes contemporary and classic design she fashions spaces that are both elegant and inviting. Her design aesthetic is inspired by anything visual but especially fashion, architecture and art. Visit <http://amandacarolinteriors.com> for more design ideas.

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