Rugs to Riches
Old rugs with frayed edges are more affordable than their mint-condition counterparts, and they can look just as good. Simply fold the offending edges under and secure them with double-sided carpet tape, as Beverly has done with her $80 estate-sale find. "I just eyeballed it, and turned over about five inches all around," she says. Carpet tape is available in the flooring department of most hardware stores.

Easy Aging
Treat a new piece of painted furniture to several coats of dark-tinted Briwax, and you’ll give it the patina of a genuine antique. “I bought this at a craft store for $38,” says Beverly Corte of her rose-painted end table. “It was bright white, so I just toned it down.”

Cost-Cutting Cushion
A prettily printed laundry bag slipped over a standard-size pillow insert creates a cushion worth displaying. Beverly bought her Carol Little laundry bag at Marshall’s.
When Beverly Corte turned the 1927 cottage that she and her husband inhabited for 12 years into a guest house, she had one goal: Make it girly. “While we lived here, I had to ‘man it up,’” she says of the four-room dwelling that she bought in New Mexico in the ’80s and later moved to her Round Top, Texas, land. “Most of my friends live in city lofts that have a minimalist feel,” notes Beverly, who now resides in a newly built home that’s a stone’s throw from the cottage. “When they visit me, I want to offer them a space that’s warm and enveloping.” To that end, an assortment of vintage, rose-themed linens and accessories—and a color scheme of faded pinks, muted greens and varying shades of cream—fit the bill.

Given her decorating ideas and interests, Beverly was perfectly suited for creating the shabby-chic retreat. “Don’t bypass a piece just because it’s damaged,” says the savvy shopper, citing some of her biggest flaw-hiding coups. Masking the missing chunks of a painted cupboard behind an old “yard of roses” print was one, but the list is long. “If a problem can be disguised,” she asserts, “make the purchase.”

Beverly also takes pride in the carpentry tasks she’s tackled. “Get to know the guys at the hardware store,” she says. “They’ll give you loads of helpful advice.” Case in point: the smart, simple shelving in her master bedroom. “I call that my 30-minute project,” says Beverly, whose step-by-step instructions appear on page 41.

If her efforts can seem a bit labor intensive, Beverly takes them in stride. “It’s all been a labor of love,” she says. —B.H.

### Double-Duty Beauty
Create a cool table with storage room inside by topping an old hamper with a cut-to-fit sheet of glass. Beverly, who’s always on the lookout for Depression-era greens, found this jadeite-colored hamper “as is” at a flea market. She paid $28 for the hamper and had the glass cut for $10.

### Obscure the Flaws
A damaged quilt’s flaws disappear when it’s hung high and partially fronted by a hefty piece of furniture. Beverly—who calls her vintage, star-patterned find “one step away from a cutter”—doubled the quilt’s edge over a 1” x 4” plywood board, and then secured it from the back with three screws: one in the center and one on each end. She bought the quilt at an estate sale for $30.

Beverly Corte and Harry, her two-year-old Labradoodle.
**Curtains for You**

Cut in half, a king-sized, ruffle-edged comforter makes two extra-long drapery panels. Beverly sewed a casing into the back of each panel so she could run a rod through it, and then hung the panels from swing-arm brackets. Since the panels weren’t wide enough to meet in the middle, she filled the empty wall space with a small, color-coordinated print.

**Tea-Stain Tutorial**

Give new sheets the look of vintage linens by staining them with tea. To age her twin sheet sets, Beverly brewed 48 tea bags in a pot, removed the bags and dumped the tea into her washing machine. She soaked the sheets in the tea until they took on the tint she wanted, and then drained the machine and laundered the sheets with detergent.

**Mix It Up**

Vintage dishtowels camouflage broken rungs on an old wooden ladder. A $69 locker from a used office supply store creates an eclectic storage cabinet.
Remains of the Day

The divinely distressed doors of an ancient cupboard—in this case, a $28 flea market find—can easily become a hip headboard. Since these doors were extremely heavy, Beverly screwed them directly into the wall’s studs.

30-Minute Miracle

Elevated, plate-holding shelving draws the eye upward and makes ceilings seem higher. Beverly made hers with two eight-foot, 1” x 6” medium-density fiberboards; metal brackets; and two eight-foot strips of screen molding (to hold plates in place). First, she laid out the boards and tacked the screen molding to each: 1 ½” from the edge of the board that would abut the wall. Using ¾” screws, she screwed in brackets where each window-side would be, and midway down the remaining part of the board. Then she simply screwed the brackets into the wall. “It was so easy,” says Beverly. “I call it my 30-minute project.” (Fiberboard, brackets and screen molding can be found at most hardware stores.)
Fill in the Blanks

Liven an empty over-the-sink space with an old, paneled window. Before putting this one up, Beverly screwed in a few cup hangers; later, she went to town with her prettiest porcelain pieces.

Cut Corners & Costs

To get the look of a corner cupboard, you don’t need one that’s cut to fit the space. Anything that’s not too deep—like the $85 vintage piece pictured here—will do the trick. After deciding on her floral theme, Beverly scoured yard sales, flea markets and eBay for leafy-green pottery and patterned vintage drapes.