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**Redecorating after Divorce**  
**After the Split, 10 Tips to Reassert Your Style, Make Your Home Yours -- Again**  
**By CLAIRE BUSHEY**

It's a classic scene. In the movie "When Harry Met Sally," a man and woman who have just moved in together are decorating a room, and they're bickering over whether their home needs a coffee table shaped like a wagon wheel.

Finally, their divorced friend Harry shrieks that while everyone is in love now, "someday, believe it or not, you'll go 15 rounds over who's gonna get this coffee table. This stupid, wagon wheel, Roy Rogers, garage sale coffee table!" He storms off. The woman embraces her fiancé, gazes lovingly into his eyes and says, "I want you to know, that I will never want that wagon wheel coffee table."

As Harry knew, the psychological power of stuff often goes unnoticed until it's time to divvy it up. It hurts to watch the dissolution of a home as represented by the division of household goods. But at the same time, decorating a new space, or redecorating space you shared as a couple, can be a powerful exercise in moving on and reasserting your sense of self. So much of what married people do is a joint effort, said Seattle-based lifestyle expert Kelley L. Moore. A divorce represents an opportunity to redefine one's self. So, where do you start?

1. In general, if you're staying in the connubial home, change it.

If you're moving some place new, add stuff you really like it from your old home and to new things you've purchased for your new life to make your new home your own, advised Lauri Ward, founder of Use-What-You-Have Interiors, a company that teaches clients to rearrange their belongings more attractively.

2. Don't take things you don't use.

It sounds obvious, but a lot of people spend time and money lugging around furniture they don't really like, Ward said. If there's a wagon wheel coffee table in your home, metaphorically or God forbid, literally, don't take it with you – not for continuity, not for revenge, not to fill space.

3. Do research to develop a concept for how you want your space to look.

Do you prefer contemporary styles or something more traditional? What colors do you favor? Look for ideas in design and fashion magazines, said Peter Klick, an interior designer based in Barrington, Ill. and program coordinator at Harrington Institute of Interior Design in Chicago. Men, in particular, should spend some time considering their

personal tastes, since during a marriage their decorating preferences often are overshadowed by their wives.

4. Buy new bedding for the master bedroom.  
Enough said.

5. Don't be afraid to separate furniture and move it into a new room, Moore said.  
“(People) think, ‘We bought this for the living room.’ Well, so what? Put it in the bedroom.

6. Clean and reduce clutter.

Visual chaos adds to stress, Ward said, and the newly single have enough stress.  
Bonus: If you clean immediately, you're less likely in three months to find a stray button from your ex's shirt that prompts a crying jag that makes you late for work.

7. Painting a room can transform it immediately.

Designers don't always agree on how color choices can affect your mood, so choose a color scheme that makes you feel good, regardless of how others interpret it.

8. Light affects people psychologically, so if you're searching for a new apartment, look for apartments with western exposure.

Good lighting, both natural and artificial, makes a space more cheerful, and literal brightness can help sidestep mental gloom.

9. Show your personality by displaying collectibles or objects related to your interests.

If your spouse banished ceramic poodle or your model car collection to the basement, now is the time to bring it out and show it off with pride.

10. Surround yourself with memorabilia that makes you feel good.

Display photos of your family or from your childhood. And it should go without saying, but ... no photos of the ex. Not even ones with the head cut off.