



**Interiors**  
Lifestyle Director Penny Lewis

# Be a reno QUEEN

*How to transform an unloved space*



**BONNIE**

**ERIN**

**LANA**

**N**eed reno inspiration? Aussie best friends and busy mums Erin Cayless, Bonnie Hindmarsh and Lana Taylor ditched corporate careers to renovate houses. Calling themselves The Three Birds, they share simple ways to DIY in a new book.

**WALL CANDY**  
If you're spending more time inside, you want something nice to look at, so invest in some wall candy. A blank wall is an opportunity to add some interest to your home and tell a story. You might go for a large statement mirror, a bold and bright artwork, or a special item like a juju hat or gorgeous wall hanging. The possibilities are endless when you have a blank space to fill!



**VANITY FAIR**  
If a wall-hung vanity is your preferred style, take note that it cannot be a last-minute decision. You need to plan for it in advance and communicate your intentions to your builder so they can put in the studwork behind the wall that the vanity will be attached to. Also, let your plumber know so they can rough in the pipes behind the wall to make them invisible.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**INSTALL A FIRE PIT**  
Portable backyard fire pits bring people together in a "round the campfire" kind of way and truly allow you to enjoy your outdoor space year round. For one of our renos, we constructed a sunken space for a fire pit using herringbone pavers and wraparound bench seating. With this type of design, it's important to think about drainage (so that it doesn't end up a swimming pool) and ensure there is enough space for you and the kids to safely sit around it without getting too close. And in the hotter months, you can convert it into a sun lounge by replacing the fire pit with a coffee table and umbrella, making this one of the most versatile entertaining spaces in your home.

**LIGHT IT UP**  
Lighting really can make a big difference to how your home feels, especially during darker winter months when the sun has waned. There are three main types of lighting to consider: ambient, task and accent lighting. Ambient lighting includes everything that brings general light to a room. This could be downlights, pendants, chandeliers, wall sconces and floor lamps. Our tip is to always choose warm white (rather than cool white) globes. Task lighting is for specific tasks like chopping food in the kitchen or reading

in the office. You'll want to be sure you have enough light to comfortably do those tasks. Accent lighting is where the drama comes in, so you might add a spotlight above a piece of art or lighting in a cabinet to illuminate the objects on display. Visit your local lighting shop to see different options in action!



For more renovation tips and tricks, pick up *Three Birds Renovations* by Erin Cayless, Bonnie Hindmarsh and Lana Taylor (Murdoch Books, \$45).



**CREATE A COSY NOOK**  
We love finding "dead space" and transforming it from sad and neglected to useful and fab. Dead space is an empty or unloved area you aren't using for anything, like a space under your stairs or a neglected area in your study or living room. By adding a reading lamp, bench seat or bed, a fresh coat of paint, some cushions and a throw, you can create a snug space for curling up on a rainy day.