

Home-decor, design fans share ideas on Pinterest

By **SARAH WOLFE**

For The Associated Press

Looking for new home design trends or fresh ways to brighten up your living space for spring?

These days, many designers and design enthusiasts are turning to the social media site Pinterest for inspiration.

A virtual pinboard or scrapbook, the website allows users to collect and organize their favorite images and ideas from around the Internet. “Pinner” can add their own images to their online profiles, or peruse others’ pinboards and “like” or “re-pin” their images for future use.

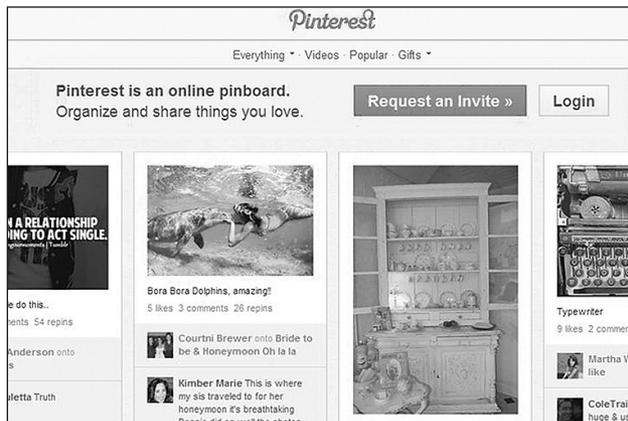
Each image links back to the website from which it was taken, and images can be organized by topic, color, design, event or any other category.

While there’s not yet a way to quantify pins, style and home decor are among Pinterest’s most popular pinning categories, says Lauren Indvik, an editor at the social media news blog Mashable.com.

Remodeling your kitchen? Create a “Kitchen Makeover” pinboard and scour Pinterest for ideas. Or go more specific: “Countertop Ideas” or “Kitchen Paint Colors.”

“Pinterest is like keeping an electronic clip file — that manila folder with tons of tear sheets from magazines. It’s how I renovated my first kitchen,” says Mary Leigh Howell, a free-lance public relations specialist in Greensboro, N.C.

Women make up most of Pinterest’s more than 10 million users, and are driving traffic to home magazines like Country Living and Elle Decor in record numbers, Indvik says. Last summer, Pinterest sent more traffic to marthastewart.com than



AP photo

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Facebook and Twitter combined, and House Beautiful magazine has seen triple-digit increases in referrals in the past six months, according to Indvik.

HOW TO START

You can join Pinterest by requesting an invite from someone already on the site, or by clicking “Request an Invite” on the home page. Once invited, register using your Facebook or Twitter account.

Once you create an account and install the “pin it plug-in” to your bookmarks bar, Pinterest automatically generates a few generic pinboards for you to begin pinning to. Either nix or rename these boards to something you actually care about so they don’t appear blank on your online profile, advises Brie Dyas, editor of Stylelist Home for the Huffington

Post.

Start pinning by searching in the upper-left corner for an item or project (keep it short), or look up brands, stores and TV personalities, browse their pinboards and share what you like, says Sabrina Soto, host of HGTV’s “The High Low Project.”

Click on the “Everything” tab in the middle of the home page to see all images being pinned at a certain time. Or scroll down to narrow what you’re seeing to categories such as art, design, DIY and crafts, gardening, or print and posters.

HOW TO THRIVE

You can turn your pinning up a notch by downloading the Pinterest app to your smartphone, letting you pin products or home-improvement ideas you see while out and about, Soto says. “This is so helpful for when I’m look-

ing for ideas on my upcoming products,” she says.

Search often if you’re looking for ideas for a specific room or project.

“Follow someone so that when they update their boards, you will be notified,” says Megan Meloy, design expert for the Norcross, Ga.-based children’s room retailer KooKoo Bear Kids. She says she uses Pinterest every day to showcase the company’s merchandise, at <http://pinterest.com/megankk>

bk. If you’re looking for more followers, Dyas recommends making yourself known by following, liking and commenting on other people’s pins, and not pinning everything you like at once.

WHAT TO AVOID

“Don’t limit yourself to creating a single board dedicated to one topic,” says

Soto. “Combine everything that you love and make several boards that cover a wide range of interests.”

She also recommends branching out to pin images from many different websites, not just one.

Blogger Amy Lynn Andrews, who penned a list of Pinterest tips at <http://bloggingwithamy.com/pinterest-tips>, advises against cutesy descriptions for pins (“Super cool!” “Love this!”). Instead, use keyword-rich entries (black concrete countertop) to make your pins and boards easier to find.

‘MUST-FOLLOW’ BOARDS AND PINNERS

Everyone has the ability to be a great pinner, Howell says.

“You don’t have to be famous or artistic,” she says. “You just have to recognize great visuals.”

Here are some popular boards and pinners as recommended by home-design pros and Pinterest fans. Search for them by their usernames:

Lonny Magazine: lonny-mag

HGTV: hgtv

Elle Decor: elledecor

Rue Magazine: ruemag

Real Simple: realsimple

Joy Cho: ohjoy

Etsy: etsy

Better Homes and Gardens: bhg

Rachel Halvorson: rachel-hdesign

DIY Network: diynetwork

Gray Livin’: graylivin

Martha Stewart Living:

ms — living

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On the Net:

<http://www.pinterest.com>

<http://www.stylelist.com/home>

<http://www.hgtv.com>

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