

The
**NESTING
PLACE**

It Doesn't Have to Be Perfect to *Be Beautiful*

MYQUILLYN SMITH

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR



"Brilliant . . . this is one wise, real,
winsome book you can't put down."

ANN VOSKAMP

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

ZONDERVAN BOOKS

The Nesting Place

Copyright © 2014 by Myquillyn Smith

Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan, 3900 Sparks Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546

Zondervan titles may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fundraising, or sales promotional use.

For information, please email SpecialMarkets@Zondervan.com.

ISBN 978-0-310-36095-7 (hardcover)

ISBN 978-0-310-36215-9 (audio)

The Library of Congress has cataloged the original edition as follows:

Smith, Myquillyn.

The nesting place : your home doesn't have to be perfect to be beautiful / Myquillyn Smith.

pages cm

ISBN 978-0-310-33790-4 (hardcover) — ISBN 978-0-310-33791-1 (ebook)

1. Home — Religious aspects — Christianity. 2. Home economics. 3. Rental housing. I. Title.

BR115.H56S65 2014

248.4'6 — dc23

2013034145

Scripture quotations are taken from the Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition), Copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society. All rights reserved.

Any internet addresses (websites, blogs, etc.) and telephone numbers in this book are offered as a resource. They are not intended in any way to be or imply an endorsement by Zondervan, nor does Zondervan vouch for the content of these sites and numbers for the life of this book.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Published in association with the literary agency of The Fedd Agency, Post Office Box 341973, Austin, TX 78734.

Cover design: Curt Diepenhorst

Photography: Myquillyn Smith

Interior design: Jody Langley

Printed in Malaysia

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. A large, white, circular area is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the chapter title.

CHAPTER 1



The Before



A LOVED-ON AND LIVED-IN
twelve-dollar thrifted chair with
a broken leg and a homemade
slipcover. Coziness at its finest.



As a renter, I've always felt like the unreachable people group of the design world.

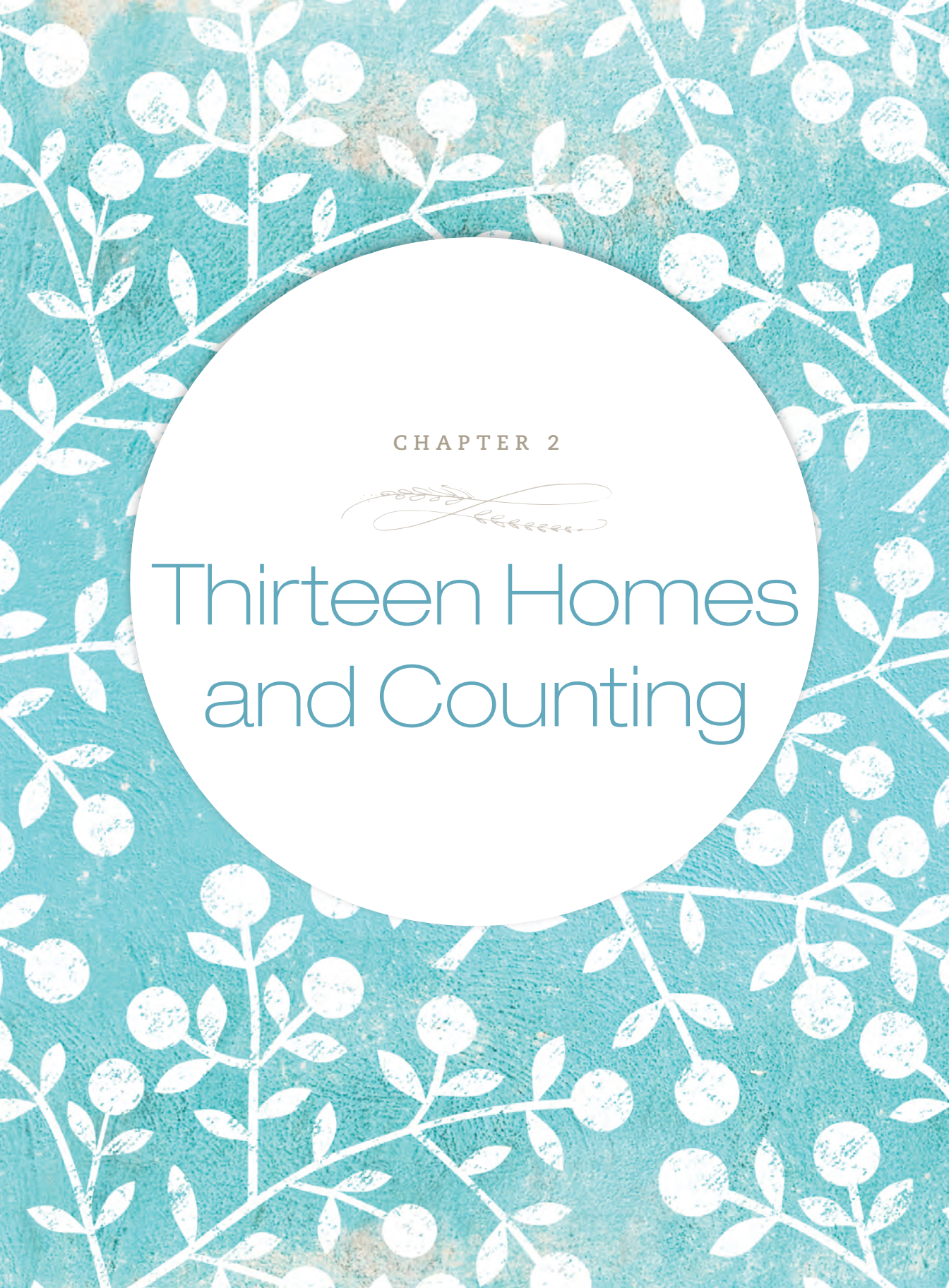
FOR YEARS I wanted a cuckoo clock. One day this turned up on my porch, a gift from a friend. She found it at a yard sale for ten dollars.



CANVAS with all of our
past street names



While I was writing this book in my bed (don't judge), I got up and noticed the beauty in the midst of the everyday. Pink straws, blue polish, and earbuds can be beautiful too.

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. These motifs are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner, creating a textured, wallpaper-like effect. A large, white, circular area is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the chapter title and decorative elements.

CHAPTER 2



Thirteen Homes and Counting



A GALLERY WALL full of inexpensive, handmade, and secondhand art hangs over a slipcovered six-year-old sofa and two thrifted tables.



3

This house was so tiny we had to remove the posters from our four-poster bed.



4

This house was so gigantic there were entire rooms that sat empty. I think God was just showing off with this place, making sure we knew he could provide whatever he wanted for us.



5

We brought our first baby boy home to this house. It was charming, but falling apart.



5

My mom helped me paint everything in this kitchen. Even the countertops. I'm sure the owners were thrilled.



6

We brought our second baby boy home to an apartment.



7

Finally, we bought our second house, where Baby Boy Number Three was born.



9

Our imperfect average dream house before.



9

Our imperfect average dream house after. I was sure we'd live here forever. I was wrong.



11

The big rental house that was so not my style. We lived here for one year.



12

The rental that got foreclosed on. This was the move that broke the camel's back. I had enough.



13

Home. Because really, home is wherever you live with your people.



Come thou Fount
OF Every
Blessing
tune my Heart
to sing thy Grace

HAND-LETTERED

canvas by artist Lindsay Sherbondy, with a ceramic-boot umbrella stand turned into a vase, and a paperweight found for five dollars at a thrift store

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. These motifs are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner, creating a textured and decorative effect. A large, white, circular area is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the chapter title and decorative elements.

CHAPTER 3



Behind the Pretty Pictures



THE WORLD'S least expensive laundry-room makeover. We spent \$175 on shelves, a counter, a quart of black paint, and a light fixture. And when we move, the light and counter can move with us.



BEFORE My office, cleaned up for its photo shoot



AFTER My office the way it usually looks



A GALLERY WALL
of random items looks great because it's all wood and black and white. But what really makes this space cozy is the dog on the sofa.



FOCUS on the beauty that's there,
not the imperfect and undone

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. These motifs are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner, creating a textured, wallpaper-like effect. A large, white, circular area is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the chapter title and decorative elements.

CHAPTER 4



Signs of Life



HOMES are happiest when they are being used.



IMPERFECTIONS put people at ease.



CHAPTER 5

A Place of Peace



FEET ON THE TABLE, pillows spread around—this room was created to be lived in.



A pair of velvet chairs I lovingly call "the copper twins," picked up at the Salvation Army for forty dollars each

CHAPTER 6



Risk



SAILFISH I was a nervous wreck the day I bought my sailfish, but it was so worth the risk.



ABOVE Bedroom painted gray with white duct tape creating a patterned wall

BELOW One of the many phases of our gallery wall.





FIVE-DOLLAR yard-sale ottoman, plus twelve dollars' worth of pretend fur secured with hot glue equals one sassy footstool. You can't ruin something you didn't like in the first place.



THIS HUTCH started out black. I painted over it and then made a book page garland for a temporary party decoration. I loved it so much it has stayed up for two years.

Dried out stumps from the
yard, used as tables



The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. A large, white, circular area is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the chapter title.

CHAPTER 7



Well-Intentioned Voices



In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different.

- Coco Chanel

"IN ORDER to be irreplaceable one must always be different."
—Coco Chanel



The good news is you can have a big impact on each of these objections if you have a little patience.

A **CHEAP**, lightweight grandfather clock that I painted white. I removed the clock face, painted it with chalkboard paint, and painted the word whenever over and over again.



OUR BOYS LEARNED to paint walls in this, our bonus room. We started them off with an easy room using the same color for the walls, ceiling, and trim.

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral branches. Each branch has small, oval leaves and round, berry-like flowers. A large, white circle is centered on the page, containing the chapter title and decorative elements.

CHAPTER 8



Lovely Limitations



THIS COZY AREA was completed on a budget with a twenty-dollar thrifted chair, free stumps for tables, book page wreath I made myself from less than ten dollars' worth of supplies, eighty dollar Ikea Expedit Shelf, and a sixteen-dollar pillow from HomeGoods. The splurge was the room-sized, 8-by-10 herringbone cowhide rug that I purchased online at a flash sale site for \$600 dollars.



THIS RAMSHACKLE, hate-at-first-sight renters fireplace has been featured in *Better Homes and Gardens' Do It Yourself Magazine*, *Better Homes and Gardens' Christmas Ideas* magazine, and *Cottages and Bungalows* — all because I hated it so much that I had to change it within my limitations. The black part with white bricks is chalkboard contact paper with drawn-on bricks.



GALLERY WALL, a renter's best friend for instant personality



THIS UNORTHODOX USE of white duct tape on the wall got the attention of the *Baltimore Sun* and *Better Homes and Gardens' Christmas Ideas* magazine.

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral branches. Each branch has small, oval leaves and round, berry-like flowers. A large, white circle is centered on the page, containing the chapter title and decorative elements.

CHAPTER 9



One Room at a Time



My office consists of a seventy-five-dollar yard-sale armoire (a Spanish wood Rooms to Go piece that everyone in America has had at some point, painted with Behr paint plus primer); an eighty-five-dollar dresser that I took a door off of, put baskets in, and painted the same as the armoire; a fifteen-dollar yard-sale kitchen table; and an upholstered chair I've had for years. None of it came from an office-supply store, and each piece can be used in a different way in a different room if the need arises.



OUR FAMILY ROOM
has evolved over the years. White slipcovers and walls have turned out to be a great canvas for a room full of meaningful beauty.



GETTING STARTED Our rental family room before starting fresh



MY HOLDING AREA while quieting the family room

TOP The Cottage: my muse

CENTER Ceilings that melt
your heart.

BOTTOM Windows and floors
that make you drool.





TIP: when using white, use eggshell finish and paint the trim and walls all out of the same can of paint.

CHAPTER 10



Have a Seat



BEFORE



THIS ROOM was a junk room until we had a surprise overnight guest coming. I used a thrifted chair and dresser, layered a few small rugs, brought in a stump for a table, threw in a plant for some green, tacked up some white streamers for fun, and put a mattress on the floor with mixed neutral-colored patterned linens to create an instant guest room.

My Favorite Makeovers in My House

Copper twin chairs that simply needed their arms and feet painted white, blue armoire that went from wood to blue, white TV dresser from French Provincial Little Girl to Glam, slipcovers that changed the whole sofa with \$200 of fabric.



TOP Before: a pair of armchairs from the Salvation Army (forty dollars each)

ABOVE Before: eighteen-dollar yard-sale dresser

RIGHT After: much better after painting the wood on the chairs and the dresser with white paint and cleaning up a pair of thrifted glass lamps





SUNBURST mirror made out of poster board



ONCE AGAIN, the twenty-dollar thrifted chair, free stump table, and a pair of glass lamps I found for eight dollars each at a thrift store. I rewired one of the lamps and replaced the shades.

TOP Thirty-dollar West Elm desk in our bedroom, after I scrubbed off most of the marker and nail polish

BOTTOM Before





VINTAGE SAILFISH: a \$350 splurge of all splurges found on Craigslist



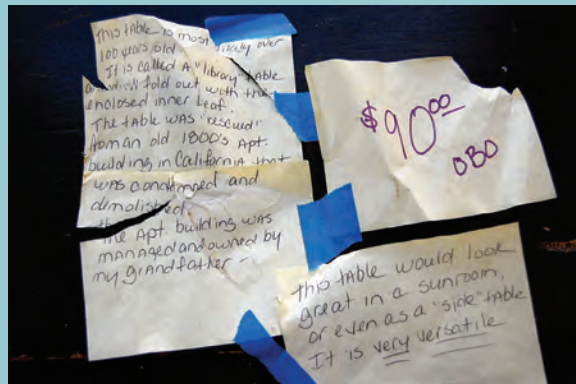
THE EVER-CHANGING family room



A BIFOLD DOOR
hung sideways under
the bar to protect the
wall from three boys'
dirty bare feet



THIRTY-DOLLAR library table
from a yard sale



NOTE taped to the yard-sale library table



TOP I took this photo and knew I didn't like the clock right there, so I moved it back where it was.

BOTTOM One of these garden stools was \$150, and one was \$25. Can you tell which is which?





RAW FABRIC folded and clipped onto drapery clip rings that hang on a curtain rod. No sewing!



DRAPERY clip rings. Look for them in the drapery hardware aisle.



HEM TAPE



MUCH-LOVED glue gun



IKEA DRAPES embellished with rough-cut fabric secured with fabric glue



A PAIR of poufs



ANGELA'S FOYER



BEFORE



AFTER Small chest and tall mirror bought at two different times from two different stores are now united as one with a little white paint.

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. These motifs consist of small circles (possibly representing berries or flowers) and elongated, pointed leaves connected by thin, curving stems. The pattern is dense and covers the entire surface.

CHAPTER 11



When a Room Doesn't Look Quite Right



TOP A two-foot-tall owl that I found in a thrift store for ten dollars and spray-painted white. He went from creepy 1970s to glossy and on-trend.

BOTTOM An eighty-dollar thrift-store dresser painted blue and paired with a fifteen-dollar farmhouse table used as a desk.





ANGELA'S thrifted painting collection

The background of the entire page is a teal color with a repeating pattern of white, stylized floral and leaf motifs. A large, white, circular area is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the chapter title and decorative elements.

CHAPTER 12



House to Home



IT'S A SICKNESS.
I cannot leave this wall alone. It's too fun to play with it and change it up!



My favorite opposites to work with:

- Straight and curvy lines
- Masculine and feminine
- Black and white
- Rustic and glitzy
- Matte and glossy
- Vintage and modern
- Large and small
- Geometric and organic
- Patterned and solid

OPPOSITES I even used the idea of opposites in my Christmas decorating this year: shiny copper metals and matte paper snowflakes, white doilies on black paper, geometric boxes with curvy finger-knitted garland.



ABOVE Every so often I paint over some old canvases with craft paint in the colors I'm currently crushing on.

RIGHT Friends often comment on the accessories that our head planter is wearing. They tend to change every few weeks.





THIS PLATE WALL grew over time. Old plates, dollar-store plates, and second-hand plates are hung with wire plate-hangers and layered simply by using some longer nails.



HANDMADE GARLAND
made from cutting book
pages into leaf shapes
and gluing them together.



TOP Laurel wreath created by hot-gluing plastic spoons together

BOTTOM Removable gold vinyl polka dots created especially for walls. A great idea for renters. I found these at Walls Need Love.



TOP I created this “balloon-dalier” by tying balloons onto a little chandelier. (I taped the light switch off while they were up.) I was hosting a girls’ weekend, and these inexpensive balloons made a huge impact in the space.

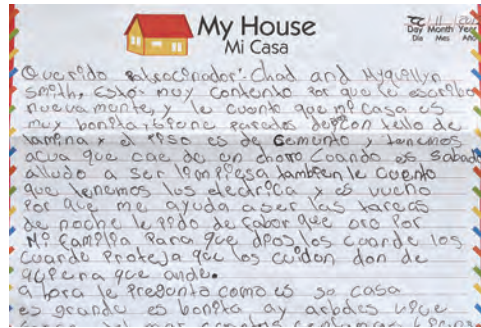
BOTTOM A bust planter sporting a pair of pink shades



CHAPTER 13



Contentment



Dear sponsor Chad and Myquillyn Smith:

I'm happy to write to you again. I want to tell you that my house is very beautiful. The walls of my house are made of concrete blocks, the roof is made of tin sheets, and the floor is made of cement. We have water that we get from pipes. On Saturdays I help to clean the house. I also want to tell you that we have electricity, and it is good to have it because it helps me to do my homework at night. I ask you to please pray for my family, pray that God takes care of us and protects us, pray that God keeps us wherever we go. I would like to know: How is your house like? Is your house big? Is your house beautiful? Are there trees close to where you live? Do you live close to the sea? How many windows does your house have? How many doors does your house have? Do you have pets? Do you play soccer? How many people live with you? What is your house made of? What is the roof of your house made of? I want to tell you that I live close to a cemetery. I send you greetings with love and I wish you blessings from God.

Jose

TOP LEFT A drawing Jose made of his own house

BOTTOM Translation of Jose's letter

TOP RIGHT Jose's letter



TOP LEFT Topiwo with his friends, who are also in the Compassion program

BOTTOM LEFT Topiwo with his family outside their home

TOP RIGHT Me hugging Topiwo entirely too tightly

BOTTOM RIGHT Topiwo proudly standing next to the words he painted on the outside of his home



ARTWORK created by Colette at Raw Art Letterpress

CONCLUSION



Enjoying the Journey



MYQUILLYN AND CHAD
and their boys, Landis,
Cademon, and Gavin, with
their dog, Jack

APPENDIX 3

An Invitation

You are invited to join me and the beautiful community of imperfectionists daily at Nesting Place (thenester.com), where no one laughs at your mistakes and we embrace risk and talk about decorating without taking ourselves too seriously. There you'll find several years' worth of simple ideas for your home — easy changes that anyone (even people who hate to sew) can make. And now that you know perfection isn't the goal, you can better enjoy all of those DIY projects. Welcome home.

Here are a few other inspiring and creative home blogs you may want to check out:

http://allthingsthirty.com	http://www.lifeingraceblog.com
http://www.ana-white.com	http://www.makelyhome.com
http://www.beneathmyheart.net	http://missmustardseed.com
http://buttonbirddesigns.com	http://myblessedlife.net
http://www.centsationalgirl.com	http://www.thenester.com
http://creativehomebody.com	http://www.notjustahousewife.net
http://decorchick.com	http://www.perfectlyimperfectblog.com
http://diyshowoff.com	http://www.prettyhandygirl.com
http://emilyaclark.blogspot.com	http://www.remodelaholic.com
http://www.funkyjunkinteriors.net	http://roadkillrescue.net
http://www.thehandmadehome.net	http://www.sawdustgirl.com
http://www.homestoriesatoz.com	http://www.theshabbycreekcottage.com
http://www.thehouseofsmiths.com	http://shabbynest.blogspot.com
http://www.huntedinterior.com	http://www.songbirdblog.com
http://www.infarrantlycreative.net	http://southernhospitalityblog.com
http://theinspiredroom.net	http://tatertotsandjello.com
http://www.justagirlblog.com	http://www.thriftydecorchick.blogspot.com
http://knockoffdecor.com	http://www.vintagerevivals.com
http://theletteredcottage.net	http://www.younghouselove.com

