

EXPERTS SAY

**I will be moving into my in-laws' home. Their existing built-in wardrobe and study table in the bedroom are in good condition, but I would like them to have a new look by changing the colour of the surfaces. How do I go about doing so?**

In the buy-and-throw mentality of today, people are sometimes amazed at what a lick of paint or a new laminate can do.

Have fun with laminates: Make your wardrobe and table surfaces look like they have been clad in marble, exotic wood, metal or even fabric. Laminates with embossed textures provide that extra degree of realism.

For your wardrobe, as long as its internal structure is in good condition, you can simply resurface the doors with new laminate or make new doors.

But Mr Jansen Tan, director of product and brand at Lamitak, says: "If the condition of the wardrobe is worn out, it would be more cost-effective and easier to rebuild your wardrobe."

The construction of your study table will determine if you are able to change its top, he says.

For instance, if the tabletop is screwed onto the table legs or a support, you can get your contractor to build a new tabletop. However, for structures which are permanently fixed, replacement will be tough.

**I have a large space under my staircase next to my dining area which is not being utilised. How can I maximise this area and make the space look good? It is currently a holding area for my children's school bags.**

Building a proper storage area under your stairs will maximise the space to hold much more than your children's bags. Odd items can be hidden neatly and retrieving them will also be easy.

Take a leaf from this nifty design (right) by Artistroom - the tiered storage levels organise small and large items, while the slide-out function saves you the trouble of sticking your head in to look for stuff.

Raumpilus sliding doors and interior systems from The Ewins Home can also be customised to fit the area under a sloped ceiling. Made with aluminium components, the doors come in glass or laminate. You can customise the design motif for the glass option, so that it blends in with the aesthetics of your house.



PHOTO: DARREN CHANG; DESIGN: FREE SPACE INTENT



Turn the area under the stairs into tiered storage to keep things neat and tidy at home. PHOTO: ARTISTROOM

**How can we maintain the laminate flooring in our home? The sample piece we saw was bright, but our floor now looks quite dull. We did the flooring less than a year ago and now there are scratches and lines on it. Was the laminate of inferior quality? Some of them have started to "pop up" too.**

Although laminate flooring is more low maintenance and less prone to scratches than real wood flooring, it does have to be maintained so it still looks good in the long run.

Cleaning it is easy - just use a damp mop once or twice a week. Never use a wet, dripping mop.

Ms Nina Loh, sales manager of Wood Culture, says you can also consider using special cleaning agents available in the market.

She adds: "Scratches and lines are usually caused by dragging objects across the floor. Laminate wood flooring is only scratch-resistant, not scratch-proof."



To prevent laminate flooring from being scratched, move furniture pieces around with care. PHOTO: DARREN CHANG; DESIGN: SPACE SENSE

So take care when you move furniture around and consider using furniture protectors on the legs of your pieces.

But some laminate flooring types can take more abuse than others, and you can tell by their Abrasion Coefficient (AC) - the higher it is, the tougher the surface.

Generally, household-use laminate flooring has a grade of AC2 and AC3, and it increases to AC4 and AC5 for models

Out now



For more tips on stylish living, get the April issue of Home & Decor, published by SPH Magazines. In it, find out where to shop for furnishings for your home.

Experiment with different laminate surfaces to give old tables a fresh update.

made for commercial high-traffic locations.

When they start to "pop up", it means that there was not enough allowance given for expansion - the planks may push against the wall and warp. It can also be due to water damage as water seeping into the flooring causes the floorboards to swell.

This damage will have to be assessed by a flooring specialist, advises Ms Loh.

**Do you have a solution for hiding unsightly mops and pails at home? Currently, I store them in the spare toilet, but I am thinking of converting the toilet into another space.**

It is a frustrating problem - where to store house-keeping equipment in Singapore home owners' ever-shrinking spaces?

Mops and brooms do not have a large footprint in general, although you do need a tall space to house them. Hide them behind the cupboard door, next to the fridge or in the storeroom, says Ms Adeline Poh from Howards Storage World.

Keep them off the floor to prevent tripping over them and within easy reach with a wall-mounted holder.

In this home (above), design firm The Interarch Design carved out a tall but shallow sliding-door cabinet next to the laundry area, which can store tall and flat items.

For buckets, stack and store them under the sink. Or buy a pretty pail that would not be an eyesore if you leave it in your bathroom when not in use.



PHOTO: EDWARD HENDRICKS, O&A; DESIGN: THE INTERARCH DESIGN

This series by Home & Decor has the magazine's editor Rebecka Wong and experts in the renovation and home decoration fields answering queries from readers. It first appeared in the April issue of Home & Decor, published by SPH Magazines.

Get a decorating or home renovation issue? Write to Experts Say, Home & Decor, 82 Genting Lane, Media Centre, Level 7, Singapore 349567 or e-mail maghomedecor@sph.com.sg. Photos and layouts are non-returnable.

**GRAND OPENING SALE**  
at VERTEX today

**FREE**  
Designer's Storage Stool  
for any purchase above \$500  
(worth \$180)

Vertex 33 Ubi Avenue 3 #01-01 Tel: 6509 0406 (NEW)  
Cellini Home Gallery 53 Loyang Drive (Changi) S 509657  
Tel: 6545 8182. Opens Daily 10:30am - 7:30pm  
(15,000 sqft showrooms). Free Parking  
Furniture Mall 10 Ton Guan Road #01-35 Tel: 6296 9140, 6297 7922

Park Mall #03-03 Tel: 6837 2208  
Tradehub 21 8 Boon Lay Way #01-04/05 Tel: 6316 4048  
(Free Parking - Sat, Sun & PH)  
Suntec City Mall 3 Temasek Boulevard #02-700/701  
Tel: 6884 4880 (June 2014)

**SALE**  
TIMELESS CLASSICS TO MODERN CONTEMPORARY

**DREAM**  
456 RIVER VALLEY ROAD, SINGAPORE 248342  
T : +65 4235 0220 WWW.DREAM.COM.SG

**SCANTEAK Signature**  
**SCANTEAK LIANG COURT OPENING SALE**  
TILL 15 MAY 2014  
Only at Liang Court!

**TEAR OPEN**  
irresistible deals with our new showroom opening!

**UP TO 60% OFF\***  
15% OFF all things that open

**PROMO SET!**  
3ft Bed + 80cm Bookshelf  
**\$499\*** (U.P. \$984)

**FREE\*** HOUSE WARMING GIFT  
WORTH \$87  
Exclusive to Liang Court!

**3FT Single Bed \$359\*** (U.P. \$579) **STAR BUY!**

**Multi-purpose Nesting Bench \$299\*** (U.P. \$419) **STAR BUY!**

**LADDER Display Shelf \$399\*** (U.P. \$499) **STAR BUY!**

**PLANK Writing Table \$399\*** (U.P. \$750) **STAR BUY!**

**SFT VINKEL Bed \$1,099\*** (U.P. \$1,699)

**Chest of Drawers \$499\*** (U.P. \$970) **STAR BUY!**

**STELLAN TV Sideboard 1.8m \$499\*** (U.P. \$999)

**LINEAR 3-Seater Sofa \$1,099\*** (U.P. \$2,259)

**GRANS Dining Set (1 table + 1 bench + 2 Antiretic chairs) \$1,450\*** (U.P. \$2,684)

\*Limited to one per customer, per coupon redemption.  
\*Terms and conditions apply; while stock lasts. Delivery charges apply. Mattresses sold separately. Not all items available for cash & carry.

**SCANTEAK SIGNATURE**  
177 River Valley Road, Liang Court, #02-04/05/06, Singapore 179030 Tel: 6336 1741  
Operating hours: 10:00am to 10:00pm (Mon-Sun)

www.scanteak.com | SINGAPORE | TAIWAN | JAPAN | BRUNEI | CANADA | GERMANY | USA