

Earth Day is coming up on April 22nd, and Justine Wilson, Director and Principal Stylist at Vault Interiors claims that Australian interiors are becoming increasingly sustainable at a rapid rate. More homeowners want to make a real difference, choosing to be sustainable in as many ways as possible to protect our planet, before it's too late. Justine Wilson says, "We are seeing the biggest shift to sustainable interior styling in history, and it's something to get excited about. It's great to see everyone being so eco-conscious and caring so much about our beautiful planet earth. After all, greener homes and happier homes! I truly believe that. Our earth is so beautiful and the footprint we make in our day to day lives and home habits is so impactful." Justine's top 9 sustainable interiors styling trends and must-haves include:

1. **BYE-BYE PLASTIC PACKAGING FOR DÉCOR ITEMS** Interior items, furniture and décor is now coming in recycled boxes rather than bubble wrap. You can also buy recycled plastic furniture which is a great way to ensure your furniture is environmentally friendly. Recycling laws have changed, now businesses can no longer recycle plastic. Support those businesses that are being sustainable and say goodbye to plastic packaging for interior items.
2. **RECYCLED GLASS BOTTLE WINDOWS AND COUNTER TOPS** Glass bottle buildings have always been popular but try recycling glass to make new windows or even compacting the glass to make beautiful counter tops. You can create pretty stain glass windows too with recycle glass.
3. **RE-USING EARTH MATERIALS TO BUILD HOMES** If you're building a home, build with free earth materials. People are increasingly looking to make houses out of straw bricks and mud render, and even recycled glass bottles. Completely eco-friendly housing using old methods like straw roofs and dirt floors is becoming a big trend, especially in remote or rural areas.
4. **REPURPOSED STONE** Stone is another material that people should consider repurposing. Sandstone offcuts are being used for retaining walls, feature fireplaces or to create garden bed designs. Designers are also introducing interesting elements into laid concrete floors, such as glass offcuts, pebbles and other interesting items such as bottle tops or found objects to create funky eclectic floors.
5. **SECOND HAND, RE-LOVED WOODEN FURNITURE** It's amazing what a lick of paint can do to a piece of furniture, and it's so easy! The biggest trend is to pick up a second-hand wooden item, give it a gentle sand, and then spray paint or paint in a neutral or bold colour. This will give the piece a new lease on life, rather than sending it to waste. Another easy trick is to paint old frames and candle stocks – choose a pop trend colour like blush or plum and refinish these dated items for a trendy new look.
6. **A GOOD OL' LOUNGE CAN BE AS GOOD AS NEW** You can also recover lounges pretty easily these days. A lot of online retailers sell fab sofa or armchair covers that are fairly universal. Recovering a large item such as a sofa, or a headboard is a great way to be sustainable and have a new look for every season, if you wish.
7. **TRENDING VINTAGE DÉCOR ITEMS** There has been a surge in the popularity of op-shopping! You need to jump on the trend, it's a way of reducing wastage. People love looking at Salvos or red cross for decor items. Hot vintage items at the moment are coloured glassware, pottery vases and bowls, and travertine or marble 80's style furniture. Other scores are rattan and cane furniture.
8. **LAYERS, LAYERS, LAYERS** Bring warmth into your interiors with layers instead of electricity! Invest in some good quality, ethically made heavy bed linen, throws, rugs and thick curtains. For cost effective curtains, use painters drop sheets and hang up on cheap Ikea curtain rods with the clip hooks. These sheets are natural linen and have long drops – they are actually really pretty and don't even need hemming.
9. **KEEP THE HEAT IN** As we approach the cooler months of the year, installing shutters can help keep the heat in rather than using the heater. They don't have to cost the earth anymore, you can order recycled plantation shutters these days versus buying new, or you can look on Gumtree and eBay, or buy left over window shutters from big builds. [www.vaultinteriors.com.au](http://www.vaultinteriors.com.au)

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