

Styling the Perfect Coffee Table

BY MOLLY HIRSCH INTERIORS



Let's talk coffee tables.

People always ask me—what do I put on there?—with a slightly horrified, I just don't know what to do kind of look on their face.



**HERE IS MY SIMPLE FORMULA THAT IS EASY TO FOLLOW.
YOU START WITH 4 THINGS:**

- 1 **Tray**—grounds the table
- 2 **Books**—everyone who knows me knows my love of books
- 3 **Greenery**—a plant, some flowers, etc
- 4 **An object** (or group of objects)—something of interest

**YES, THERE IS SCALE AND LAYERING INVOLVED,
BUT THOSE 4 THINGS WILL LEAD YOU TO
A SIMPLY STYLED COFFEE TABLE.**

The thing that is really fantastic about accessories is that they are an easy way to change the look of your whole room. Many times, people get paralyzed with “what is my style” and don’t move forward with designing their spaces because of those uncomfortable feelings or even worse, in my opinion, do something safe or not true to what they like because of fear of making a mistake. Accessories are the easiest way to start to learn to express your style, learn what you like or just plain have fun switching them out. They are available in a range of price points (hello Target and HomeGoods), so you are able to get a lot of design bang for your buck when styling your space.



I’ve taken one coffee table and styled it 5 different ways to demonstrate how accessories can change the whole look and feel of your space.

**NOTHING HAS CHANGED EXCEPT FOR THE ACCESSORIES ON THE
TABLE AND THE PILLOWS ON THE SOFA.**

Are you ready to be amazed?
Ok, that is a bit strong, *but it is kind of cool to see.*



Look 1: Coastal Vibe

FORMULA COMPONENTS: [SHOP THE LOOK HERE!](#)

(Note: The links below are affiliate links, and aren't the exact items I used in the photos, but they're close!)

- ✓ Tray—woven seagrass basket (\$14.99, IKEA) sets the tone and adds texture
- ✓ Stack of books on the tray grounds the look
- ✓ Green plant—small in this case, just for a touch of color and nature, but not a large component
- ✓ Decorative vases add interest—wood vase (\$30, Target) brings ties into the basket color and the white vase (\$29.99, Kirkland's) relates to the plant pot and coral (\$39.50, Pottery Barn)—and the coral finishes (\$49.50, Pottery Barn) the coastal vibe.



Look 2: Classically Traditional **FORMULA COMPONENTS: SHOP THE LOOK HERE!**

(Note: The links below are affiliate links, and aren't the exact items I used in the photos, but they're close!)

- ✓ Three stacks of books (\$19.29, Amazon)—we have combined the tray and book components by using all books in this look
- ✓ Beautiful hydrangeas (\$299, Pottery Barn)
- ✓ Decorative wooden box (\$150, Gracious Style) and mini white vases (\$12.95, CB2)



Look 3: Modern Luxe

FORMULA COMPONENTS: [SHOP THE LOOK HERE!](#)

(Note: The links below are affiliate links, and aren't the exact items I used in the photos, but they're close!)

- ✓ Tray—we've swapped out a traditional tray for this low black bowl (\$75, Amara) with decorative spheres (\$1.95 CB2)
- ✓ Stacks of books are bases for the decorative sculpture (\$45.99, Wayfair) and the orchid
- ✓ Green plant—beautiful white orchid (\$59, PB Teen)
- ✓ Object: black (\$25, West Elm) and white vases (\$29.99, Kirkland's) add graphic interest



Look 4: Bright & Bold

FORMULA COMPONENTS: [SHOP THE LOOK HERE!](#)

(Note: The links below are affiliate links, and aren't the exact items I used in the photos, but they're close!)

- ✓ Tray—this lucite tray (\$80.98, Amazon) adds color and pattern with an abstract painting as the bottom
- ✓ Stack of books is the base for a bright vase and metal sphere (\$36.99, Overstock)
- ✓ Green plant in a ceramic pot (\$16.20, Home Depot) in the same blue as the vase
- ✓ Objects: swirled bulb vase (\$295, Luxe Decor) and a large decorative candle (\$23.99, Candle Mart) finish the look



Look 5: Tried and True Blue & White

FORMULA COMPONENTS: [SHOP THE LOOK HERE!](#)

(Note: The links below are affiliate links, and aren't the exact items I used in the photos, but they're close!)

- ✓ Tray—white lacquer tray (\$45, [West Elm](#)) brings a bit of modern vibe in
- ✓ Stack of books adds color to the tray and holds the blue and white bowl (\$59.95, [Williams Sonoma](#))
- ✓ Beautiful magenta orchid (\$85.99, [Wayfair](#)) adds a new color to the palette
- ✓ Objects: blue and white vases (\$79, [Williams Sonoma](#)) and decorative coral (\$160, [Williams Sonoma](#))

Pro Tips: TRAYS



Trays come in many size and styles, but even with all the choices we have, sometimes we like to mix it up and use something that will visually ground the space like a tray does, but is a bit different. In this case, we used a large black bowl. We wanted a little interest in the bowl, but didn't want to distract from the overall look, so we used glass balls. They give it interest, add some texture and another layer, all without overpowering.

BOOKS



When choosing books, remember to look at the colors and patterns on the covers. This gives you the chance to bring in color on your table. In this coastal vibe table, we brought in a touch of blue with the books to add a pop of color.



Large coffee table books can be expensive! HomeGoods and Amazon have books that are discounted. For a real bargain, try your local library book sale, thrift shops and tag sales. The dust jacket (paper cover) may show age, but it can be removed and the plain book may be just perfect. We have done full bookcases with second hand books, jackets removed, that were in creamy whites and grays and the result was amazing. The blue book in this photo has its dust jacket removed and the pop of blue is perfect.

GREENERY & FLOWERS



If you like the idea of flowers on your table, consider fake (yes, I just said use fake flowers). These hydrangea are fake, but are so real looking that you would never be able to tell unless you touched them. Fake flowers allow you to get the look you desire, without having to change the flowers every week.

AN OBJECT(S)



The object or group of object can be any number of things. It could be a collection, a treasure you picked up on a trip or something that just brings you joy. In this case, we used a collection of antique blue and white vases to set the tone. When doing a grouping like this, remember the power of odds—an odd number of items are visually more appealing than even in most cases.



Hello, I'm Molly!



I help women founders, executives, and entrepreneurs translate your highly effective work approach to your home design, creating a space that rises up to meet your needs while enhancing the warmth and style of your family home.

Your home is the backdrop for the important moments and most cherished memories of your life.

Everything I do to create beautiful and efficient homes for clients starts with a deep dive into what matters most to you and your family and how you want to live in your space.

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