

## 12 \*\* excerpt from Amy Maryon Large Family Mothering Book LIVING ROOM/FAMILY ROOM

This room is used for day to day living as well as a place to entertain visitors. It must be fresh and lively but also cozy and peaceful in the evenings. One of the key components is flexible lighting that can be altered to suit the rooms different uses. Look around your room and notice the color schemes. How well does the curtains, flooring, and furniture blend together? Does it follow a common color scheme? Can you add accented colors to help add character to the room? A painted floral vase, pillows, or candles are all ways to add spices of color in this room. How are the traffic routes in this room? Are the seating arrangements flexible? Are there areas to place things on, like a book or a cup of tea? Does all your storage work well with the room? Can everyone who is seated see the television? Maybe you need a quieter seat or two that does not see it.

If you are a new bride setting up a home for the first time, this is going to be a room that you are going to want to see before you buy things. Being able to see where the furniture is going to go, what it looks like as a whole, and if there is room for other things is important. Keep your eye out for some good deals on furniture. It may be worth investing in a carpet shampooer and buying your items used and cleaning them. You can always use the carpet shampooer in your home for many years to come. We clean ours every 4 months with a lot of foot traffic. You should do it at least every spring and fall.

### **Things you can buy:**

- Pick out a couple of your favorite scented candles to have in your home. Think vanilla or woody smell for a nice calm atmosphere.
- Vacuum. You don't need a top of the line brand, something mid-priced, with a washable canister and Hepa-allergen filters is important

If you are just trying to cut down on clutter and weed things out in this room, then do so. Start in one area and work your way around in a clock pattern in this room going through everything. Keep only what you need and get rid of things you don't.

Cut down on clutter from knickknacks keeping them on a single shelf. It sounds great having a collection of things, but if they are stored in a box because you have too many, what good are they? Keep a few of your favorites and display them creatively.

Don't let stacks of newspaper and magazines take over, cut out what you want and pitch the rest. When looking through magazines and you see something you want to try later, rip out the recipe and place it in your home binder as a reminder when making your menus.

If you entertain little ones, keep a closed container or basket with some toys in it. You can also keep a couple of books to read to them.

Save your tabletops and use coasters for drinks---you can make inexpensive ones from Modge Podge, photos, and a tile square. For instructions visit [www.plainandnotsoplain.com](http://www.plainandnotsoplain.com) under DIY.

Window treatments, blinds, and curtains. Every home varies and what you do is your decision. Keep them simple and easy to clean. If you need to have blinds, cleaning them can be tough, but just takes some time to

do it. Close them and use your dusting attachment from your vacuum to clean them. If they get really grimy, take a rag and wipe every individual blind. Yes, I know painstakingly hard, but necessity. You can also soak the plastic ones in a bathtub or kiddie pool with cleaner to help remove grime. Wipe after soaking for awhile.

Dust items regularly in this room and vacuum every few days. At least once every week or two, move the furniture and vacuum underneath to remove any accumulation of dust and dirt. Look around and see what attracts your attention? Is there an area that is messy constantly, change the way you have it.

Cleaning your game cupboard. Take everything out and go through all of your games. Place pieces in plastic zippered bags. Throw away boxes if not needed. Secure card games with rubber bands. Place all the games back neatly into your designated cupboard.

Any books, dust the shelves off and place books neatly back on the shelves. Go through and see if there are any that you can get rid of to free up some space.