

Collect and group to decorative effect...

The decorative trick is to group things for best effect:

- a selection of vintage hand-mirrors might be hung together on a bathroom, dressing room or bedroom wall
- shiny metal or silver-plated platters or plates make an unusual display (*see below*)
- a series of similarly-shaped or contrasting glass or ceramics jugs arranged on open shelves



- cluster natural *objets trouvés*, such as intriguingly-shaped driftwood 'sculptures' mixed with antique corals, fossils, large shells and cut quartz rocks (*see above*)
- a collection of antique brass or iron door-knockers, with their variety of architectural or animal shapes, could work
- old hand-made metal hooks of varying decorative shapes and sizes make an unusual addition to a hall or boot-room; hang some vintage hats too for added texture & dimension
- using colour to unify a group display allows you to mix mediums (glass, metal, pottery together) and periods
- toys work well as decoration; pick a theme (horses, dogs, birds) and you can look for these to make a display
- starburst mirrors are always popular, and a group of these can be incredibly dramatic; you might find a small metal 1960s example for under £100, although period carved and gilded wood or gesso examples in good condition can fetch much higher prices. (Circular or oval mirrors of all sizes also work well together.)
- antique 'empty' picture frames can be grouped and hung; gilded or silvered ones are pretty, but you could select by wood type, such as bird's eye maple or walnut



- a large number of small antique or vintage glass bottles or ceramic pots serve as an effective centrepiece down a dining table filled with individual flowers
- collect Victorian or vintage terracotta plant pots and use in clusters to display spring bulbs, auriculas or primroses

- antique books have attractive bindings or gilt-edged pages; think of them in terms of decoration and you have a whole new story...
- mix and match silver candlesticks and candelabra; or all clear glass using coloured candles, very effective on a glass or Perspex coffee table
- instead of slightly old-fashioned circular painted plates, try a group of over-sized and differently-shaped blue & white meat platters, painted tôle or lacquer trays, antique carved bread boards or a group of patterned wooden butter pats
- over-sized 'industrial' letters, usually painted or gilded wood or metal, can be collected to spell a name or interesting words

Below are some visual examples of ingenious and effective grouped displays created by dealers on their stands at past Decorative Fairs. (Pictures 8, 9 & 10 not available at hi-res.)



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And these are some ideas of items (that won't break the bank) that look great collected together to use decoratively...!



28. Silver platters and white ceramics make a chic displayed in a glazed cabinet with painted interior shelves



29. Cabbage plates & kitchenalia displayed in an industrial style metal cabinet



30. Vintage leather riding boots lined up in an umbrella rack



31. Tribal & ethnic artefacts grouped on modern shelves



32. A collection of mounted antlers...



33. Hat stands (for your own hats?!)...



34. Plaster and stone sculptures...