

## ANIMAL-INSPIRED

NO ANIMALS WERE HARMED IN THE DESIGN OF THIS ROOM

**Talie Jane**  
Special to the Tribune

As a designer, I like to use at least one “animal-inspired” piece in each room. This could be in the form of a leopard-print pillow, cowhide rug or wall-hanging trophy animal. But, as an animal lover, I can’t image using the real thing. Oh the guilt!

Luckily, this “animal revival” is all the rage. Big-box retailers are stocking faux alternatives to taxidermy in creative and interesting ways. Plus, it’s guilt-free.

### Animal prints

■ Animal-inspired prints and pieces are popular for all design genres — rustic, modern, traditional and mid-century modern alike. The exoticism and texture these elements bring truly add life to a room (pardon the pun).

■ Cheetah prints and zebra rugs are bold statement pieces. So, use these sparingly. Remember, a little goes a long way when it comes to animal prints.

■ Not fond of cheetah print? Try something a little more subtle like a faux snakeskin-printed leather or a dark, leopard print.

■ Accent chairs and ottomans are great places to start with animal prints. Start small and see how you like it before upholstering an oversized sectional in tiger stripes, for example. Yikes!

■ As with anything, quality is important. This is especially true when it comes to faux animal prints. A cheap faux fabric can be seen from a mile away. There is no camouflaging that mistake.

### Animal heads

Similarly, animal heads are growing in popularity. Not the real trophy-wall kind but those made from wood, metal, silver and gold, paper mache, cardboard, felt or even topiary.

I’ve recently completed two design projects using alternative animal heads — one with a ceramic bullhead and the other with a series of three white, wooden deer heads. Living rooms, kitchens, bedrooms, even nurseries — the sky is the limit when it comes to placing these alternatives.

■ Faux animal heads come in all shapes and sizes and replicate everything from elephants and deer to hippopotamuses and rhinoceroses. In fact, there are even some made-up creatures.





**ANIMAL DECOR**

From page 11

■ Try painting the horns (if there are any) a bright, fun color while leaving the head natural wood. Or, decoupage the head to create a fun, colorful art piece.

**ANIMAL RUGS**

Animal hides make a statement in any room and are great as rugs for layering over carpeting or wood floors. But they, too, do not need to be real.

■ Faux rugs are easier to clean, less expensive and come guilt-free.

■ Like the real deal, faux cowhides come in a variety of color combinations and sizes. And, it's fun to mix and match using more than one.

■ Try a faux zebra, bear or cheetah rug for even more of a statement.

**ANIMAL ACCESSORIES**

Pillows and throw blankets are a nice way to accessorize with faux animal prints. And, smaller accent pieces offer a great way to dip a toe into the animal-inspired design world without jumping in headfirst.

■ A single zebra pillow or a faux fur blanket draped over the back of a chair really add depth, interest and texture to your room without being over-the-top.

■ Mixing and matching prints is OK but don't go overboard. One or two animal print pillows are plenty.



COURTESY PHOTO

Animal heads are growing in popularity — but not the real, trophy kind.

*Talie Jane is the owner and principal designer of Talie Jane Interiors. Call 855-TALIEJANE today for help bringing animal-inspired design into your home.*



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