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The 5 Japandi Principles

Five ideas from Japanese homes that make a room calmer. Each comes with one change you can make this weekend, rental-safe.

1 · Light is filtered, never bare

Shoji screens and paper shades turn harsh light into an even glow.

This weekend: put one paper floor lamp in the room and use it instead of the ceiling light in the evening.

2 · Furniture sits low

A lower eye line makes the same room feel taller and emptier.

This weekend: take one tall piece out of the room, or move it to a wall you don't face.

3 · Ma (間): the empty space is the point

The empty area around an object is where the room rests.

This weekend: clear one surface completely and keep it empty on purpose.

4 · Texture over color

Wood, paper, straw, clay, iron: few colors, many surfaces.

This weekend: before buying anything colorful, add one texture: a rough clay vase, a woven basket, an unglazed cup.

5 · The seasonal corner

One small display, changed when the season turns, keeps a minimal room from feeling frozen.

This weekend: pick one shelf and put one seasonal thing on it: a branch, a seed head, a small print.

Rental rules

- No holes: use picture rails, leaning frames or removable hooks rated for the weight.
- No paint: change texture with textiles instead.
- Move-out test: can it all leave in one afternoon?

Checklist

- ☐ One soft, low light source in the main room
- ☐ One tall piece removed or moved
- ☐ One surface kept empty
- ☐ One new texture, no new color
- ☐ One seasonal corner, with a date to change it

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