

How to start your Decorating Project

The decorating process starts with the person:

You are the only one who can decide what kind of home you want, how much you are willing or able to pay for it... making sure that your lifestyle, personality and other family members are all taken into consideration.

Try to imagine your ideal home, look at it in its environment. As yourself some questions like:

- What architectural style is it?
- How does it sit in its environment?
- What are some styles you like: French Country, Italian, English, Exotic, Contemporary, Retro, and Period Style?
- What's your lifestyle? Are you a casual person or more formal, do you like to entertain, think about the mood you want to create?
- Do you want it child friendly? Or perhaps you are updating now that the children are older?
- What colours are you drawn to? Do they lift you up, make you feel good or leave you cold?

Getting Started:

All schemes have to start somewhere; you may want to focus on what you already have, like a rug, a special piece of furniture, and define your priorities, list the things you need and set yourself a budget.

Successful interior decorating depends on careful planning. Before you start look around for inspiration, and try to find your own decorating style. Look through magazines, books and make a point to visit Display homes. Take notice of rooms you see on television or in films identifying not only what you like but also what you don't like....

A fabric pattern, a piece of furniture, colours - all will help you to identify your own particular style. Tear out relevant pages of magazines and catalogues; once you find these, file them away. Slowly you will begin to absorb all this and a picture will start to emerge, you will notice some may be more light and pale (neutral) with texture, or cosy and warm filled with books and

photographs, others may be more militaristic, which some people will perceive as cold and uninviting.

The best houses are the ones that have evolved over time. Don't be in a rush to have it all now, living in a home for a while can inspire your imagination, and help you to evaluate areas better than earlier on, as they may have been overlooked...such as how much light does a particular room receive; that will determine what colour should be used on the walls and furnishings.

Its all about symmetry and balance which leads to a comfortable interior. Our eyes find comfort in things that are aligned and centered. Distinctive accessories and personal details often give a house its personality, a home that fulfils your practical needs and reflects your personality recharges your batteries and soothes your spirit...a place you call 'home'.

Colour:

Colour is the most important single ingredient in preparing a scheme for your house, and costs very little.

Colours in your home will give out messages about your personality and who you are.

They also have a huge impact on you well being.

Skillful use of colour improves the proportions of rooms. Pale colours reflect the light, and therefore created the illusion of a larger space.

Dark colours have the opposite effect.

I suggest paint large test strips in the space before choosing colours and leave it over a few days so you can take note of how the colour changes in different levels of light.

Cool colours work well in warm rooms that receive a lot of sun, colours like blue, turquoise, violets, Warm colours are pinks, reds, oranges, yellow; these create a welcoming mood and are good to use in rooms that are quite cold. These colours are physically stimulating and have an energizing effect on us. They create an intimate feel and make the room warm. . Dark saturated and warm colours enclose a space and make it more intimate, cool colours have the opposite effect.

Neutrals are easy to live with and provide a great backdrop for furnishings and decorative accessories works well with texture. Or, with an accent colour, giving it a lift.

To create a feeling of harmony in the home you should be able to move between the main living areas without loud colour changes or styles. Adjoining rooms look best when seen to be in harmony with

the rest of the house. Adding similar pieces and different shades and tints of one or two colours work best.

Halls, passageways and stairs often look cold, large and long. Try painting these areas with a rich or vibrant colour. In areas where reflection and quietness is required, use softer, lighter colours. Try not to use more than three different colours.