



HOUSE | *and Garden*

Commonsense Steps to Successful Decoration

Good interior design and decoration requires some simple no-nonsense steps which are flexible enough to apply to all kinds of creative home project.

Firstly, allow yourself the luxury of dreaming about a project, mulling it over in your mind for as long as you like before you actually undertake it.

Consider your lifestyle – Consider how you and your family actually live on a daily basis. There is no point having a minimalist environment if you are a real slob & don't hang things up and don't shut cupboards. You need to be very strict with yourself to live in that orderly type of space.

Consider how you enjoy living. If you like to cook and entertain at home you will need a big, open-plan kitchen/living/dining room all opening onto a balcony, deck & spa.

How much time do you spend inside & outside? Do you enjoy a lot of clean, empty space or do you prefer a more cluttered style of decoration?

The needs of the whole family should be considered if domestic harmony is to reign. If there are teenagers in the house – or if there will be in the foreseeable future – they are going to need living spaces of their own to be with their friends & music & make plenty of noise in the process.

It is also a good idea for parents to give their children some sort of say in & responsibility for how their rooms are going to look, because then it puts the onus on the kids to look after them.

Study the rooms themselves. How much light does each room receive at different parts of the day?

This will influence your decoration and probably the priority of your budgeting. The important thing is to see your house as a whole, rather than as a series of disjointed parts.

Be well advised to seek the advice of a professional when it comes to interiors. Their advice can save you a lot of time, money and frustration. They will have a plethora of knowledge of what is available and where to find it.

Don't be afraid to ask for samples, especially fabric samples. If you're investing some serious money in upholstery, you need to be sure it will look right in the room. For a small fee and a small, returnable deposit, give your address and ask to be lent sample books if you will return them by the afternoon of the same day. This can save a lot of time and money in the end. A decorator will also be able to obtain cutting of fabrics and samples of wallpapers to use at home and during your selections.

Write it down. Write all your ideas down on paper. This way others can see what you are planning – even if they are vague ideas. This will help you form your choices into concrete decisions.

Beg, borrow and steal every decorating magazine you can lay your hands on. If something makes you stop on a certain page – pull it out or mark it. You still will have to operate within the constraints of your budget, but this type of sourcing is a very inspirational place to begin and will help you to formulate your own decorating direction & style.

- Maryanne Galley, Eliza Furniture & Interiors
(This article will be continued in the next Edition)

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