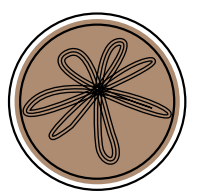


HOMEGRADE



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Wise words from interior designers that will no doubt inspire your decorating endeavors

Photography by mohamed sadeq

Interview Lisa Erdmann

**tips for being a successful
interior designer**

8 Basic Styles in In- terior Design

**Modern Design: Discover the Joy of
Simple, Clean, Uncluttered Space**

Interview: Interior Design Success story With Lisa Erdmann

10 Must-Have Home Decorating

**7 Legendary
Interior Designers Everyone
Should Know**



10

From Marketing to Interior Design

Differences
Between Interior Design &
Decorating

8

10 Must-Have Home
Decorating Apps for
Android & iOS

9



Top 10 tips for
being a
successful interior
designer

3



10 Mistakes That
(Almost) Everyone
Makes in Interior
Design

12

11 Beautiful
Home Interior
Design Styles

7



6

THE 5 BIGGEST THREATS FACING INTERIOR DESIGNERS IN 2015

Top 10 tips for being a successful interior designer

Practise your maths, it's not all choosing lovely curtains I think it is very competitive now.

Photography by mohamed sadeq

Start young and see what excites you I had a dolls' house as a child. I decorated it, furnished it and even put wallpaper up, so I sort of started interior design at quite a young age for some small, inanimate clients!

We moved home when I was about eight years old. My parents bought a dilapidated old school and then spent the next few years doing it up. We basically lived on a building site, and I got to see the whole thing stripped back to the bare bones. I found it really exciting and I think that experience probably sparked my initial interest in interior design.

Believe in yourself I left school after my O-levels, and then I did a year of retakes because I did so badly. It is so important to believe in yourself, and tell yourself that it is going to be ok.

I failed at school and not going to university meant that I wasn't particularly confident when I started out and I didn't feel great about myself then. I was quite badly dyslexic and everything was a bit of a struggle, apart from the arts. Reading, writing and spelling were all a bit tricky.

I always loved designing things. With anything in life that you want to do, if it interests you and you spend enough time doing it, you will learn it. You just have to care enough about it to try.

Practise your maths, it's not all choosing lovely curtains

I think it is very competitive now. I would always encourage people to stay in education for as long as they can, really. I think it shows staying power, demonstrates a certain seriousness

about things and allows you to get your thoughts in order. Even though I didn't do it, I do think it's a good thing.

Getting some sort of grounding in architectural interior design is a very good thing to do. You need to learn to do things like scale drawings and maths is very important too. It's not all choosing lovely curtains and fabrics!

Consider an internship When I left school, I became an apprentice milliner - I really wanted to make hats at the time. Looking back, it was a great thing to do because it is so important to learn a skill, to work with a team and to understand seasonality. I would totally encourage people to go for internships. They give you an experience of the industry that you want to be in and allow you to find out if it is the right one for you. It means that you start from the bottom and you get access to amazing talent in the real world. I'm very lucky to work in a field that I really enjoy, but I wouldn't take on a job that I felt was going to be unpleasant or difficult. I think it's important to work with people that you get on with and that you can see eye to eye with.

Don't blow the budget You don't need to spend a lot of money to make a room look and feel good. Time frames and budget constraints are probably the most difficult thing to manage about the job. People don't want to spend too much money and if you go over budget, then people understandably get upset.

I'll make suggestions and put together a mood board using images from books and magazines. Try and get

all your ideas in one place visually, from bits of fabric to tiles to floor finishes, put all the bits you might want to use together and see if they work together on paper, that is always a good place to start.

A long time ago, when I first had my flat in London, I painted my sitting room yellow and blue. I thought it would be a good idea, but it wasn't and it was hideous! I was 20 years old, I was brave and I thought this could work, this could be fabulous.

It didn't and it wasn't, but some of the other things I tried did - and I think it's important to be brave. When you're spending someone else's money steer clear of something you think might be a mistake, but do try and be brave. Otherwise we'd all live in a very grey world, wouldn't we!

Don't aim for perfection Things don't have to be perfect to be beautiful. If you go into a room and it's all perfect, you don't feel comfortable. A home interior is not an abstract thing, it is about people, it's about the way you feel, the way you interact. It's about family and friends, it's the backdrop to your life.

We used to drive down to France every summer when we were kids and my Mum would stop off in Limoges, which is famous for porcelain. She would always insist on buying seconds from the factory shop. They were all wobbly and bent because they had been misfired, but to me they were beautiful and filled with character.

That was a big part of what inspired me to create the Portmeirion collection. If things are too perfect then it is without character, it's

not good to be too precious about something. The more you strive for perfection, the more it disappears. Don't aim for perfection, try to create a relaxed environment, that's what I think is important.

Look for inspiration in everything and get to know your clients I get my inspiration from all over the place; books, magazines, the internet, shops and my relatives of course! It is like being in a family of doctors sometimes, we spend a lot of time together and are inspired by similar things so we do talk about our work with each other.

Our enthusiasm can be slightly contagious I think, and it sometimes feels like design has sort of become part of our DNA, but everyone in the family has been incredibly supportive of me and encouraging and it's lovely.

Thinking about how a room is going to make you feel is essential. That is what good interior design does. It's about creating an atmosphere. You absolutely have to know something about the people you are designing a space for. You need to find out about the way they lead their life, which rooms they use the most and you must always consider form and function.

Take your time with colour and lighting When it comes to making decisions about colour, my advice is to do it slowly. Try colours on a small area of the walls you want to paint and look at them at different times of day. It's about instinct and how it makes you feel again. Always try things before you make any final decisions.

Lighting is also essential because it's all to do with mood. I like to have lots of different light sources, low level lighting as well as ceiling lights and I like to have quite a lot of control over them as well, with lots of different switches and dimmers.

The functionality and the atmosphere are the most important things to get right. The fabrics, the floor coverings, the furniture the lighting are the tools that you use to create that. Don't make rushed decisions if you can help it, apply a process of elimination approach if you can. The more you do it, the more confident you will become in your decision making.

Be empathetic and think about how a room makes you feel You've got to be able to empathise with your client. Being an interior designer can mean lots of things, there's a little bit of being a nanny in there, a little bit of psychology and lots of empathy.

When you have designed a space or an object or anything really and the client loves it, that is why I do what I do. That is the best feeling and the best thing about the job. If you create something and you put it out there and you know that somebody else is genuinely thrilled with it, then that is your reward and there is no better feeling!

“ I get my inspiration from all over the place; books, magazines, the internet, shops and my relatives of course! ”

8 Basic Styles in Interior Design

I emphasize the main characteristics for each one of them

Photography by mohamed sadeq

At the start of any interior design project, we wonder in what style should create our interior home in order to feel good in that environment. While I emphasize the main characteristics for each one of them, I will try to join some interiors or products that illustrate each style separately. If someone likes classic lines, you can't suggest something modern because she believes that what is proposed isn't represented for her taste, devoid of atmosphere, simple and will not transmit anything.

1. Modern Minimalist Style

This style is a form of extreme accuracy, nothing is too much, without heavy backgrounds. The emphasis is on simplicity, the colors may be dull

or bright, in any case flashy colors. Pieces are either geometric shapes – square, rectangular, round, but the surfaces are clean, no scenery, no details. Minimalist modern style by its name, illustrates the simplified forms.

2. Classic Style

It is a refined style, developed, rich in details, which are found both in the structure of furniture, lighting, etc. as well as in sets, prints. The furniture is the “art” type, carved or inlaid details and apply. Decorated with floral elements, vegetable, various leitmotif or scenes drawn from legends.

3. Rustic Style

Style structure is a crude, rough details, structure elements of furniture / lighting can be in tree

ISSUE, 08 September 2016

trunks, logs, branches, jute. Style is found in mountain vacation homes, rural.

4. Classic Reinterpreted Style

It is a refined style, elegant, where classic forms details are found in a new approach. The forms preserves the structure of old forms or parts in general updating them sometimes, or some elements of a furniture style combined with modern elements, creating that fusion between old and new. Finishing parts are in a new approach-painted and varnished, with different and innovative colors, surface gold, silver, finished with patina or serigraphic.

5. Retro Style

It is the style of '50s, '60s or '70s. In that period it is anticipated design pieces to come. The songs have a playful approach, funny structure, their form and the play of colors and prints that we find in each piece. We find for the first time new approaches to design forms, yet they

remain air-old began the design lines. Prints with geometric shapes, lines, plaid or printed with illustrations belonging to the Pop Art style.

6. Maverick Style

It is part of modern style, his approach is very inventive, unusual and unconventional. Young, explosive, inventive not respect the rules. Structure can be obtained by joining pieces, overlapping volumes and volumes twisting colors can be randomly chosen even for the same room, seemingly nothing happens, only part of the excentricity of this style.

7. Contemporary Style

The style is contemporary-modern style but maintains a hot line through selected finishes and color range used. The songs do not seem very new, modern, cool. Colors are balanced, warm, bright tones and pastel can be out of the question when it comes to these style. Finishes warm, wood-veneer, solid wood doors with frames



or appearance to look more polished and panels upholstered with leather or sometimes, may be characteristic of this style. Textile materials, velvet, plush, upholstered pieces ptr skin are often used in shaping the ambience characteristic of this style. Printed plates, vegetable or floral color stains can not be used to amaze complete certain parts of decorated cushions, carpets, etc. Scandinavian modern style can be defined as a contemporary style.

8. Hightech Style

Hightech style is an innovative modern style, the emphasis being on furniture structure where every detail of combination is not random and it is part of that structure. Screws, rivets, wheels apparent booms, rough metal finishes, appearances bulbs are specific to this style.

Modern Design: Discover the Joy of Simple, Clean, Uncluttered Space

If you love clean lines, accessory-free space, and neutrals with primary colors, then modern design may be the style for you.

Photography by mohamed sadeq



The essence of modern interior design includes basic shapes, functional lines and curves, materials like metal, chrome, and glass – and furnishings without decorative parts. If you want clean, simple and serene interiors, here are 5 questions to help you determine if modern design is right for you:

1. What is Modern Interior Design Style?

Modern interiors are sleek, spacious, simple, and focus on function and organization. No clutter or chaos allowed.

Modern design uses basic geometry (simple edges, curves and angles) and clean lines in furniture, architecture and sculpture.

This style grew from the idea to build for function, to do without traditional decoration, and to embrace industrial materials like chrome, glass and concrete, which new technologies make available.

If you hate to dust around knick-knacks or polish detailed carvings, sleek modern design makes your life easier. Less is more. If you enjoy open space, and don't need to fill it in with furniture and accessories, you will enjoy the openness of modern interiors.

2. What Makes

Modern Furniture Modern?

Modern furniture is streamlined with polished, smooth and sleek surfaces. Pieces are simple, uncluttered, built for economy of form, and to serve a purpose. Furniture pieces are kept to a bare minimum. The driving design concept is honesty: keeping structure and building material in plain view. Sustainability is gaining importance. More designers are reclaiming materials for use in modern design, and building from renewable resources.

3. What about Accessories in Modern Design?

Art, rather than accessories, has a firm place in modern interiors. No cute little trinkets or blankets

tossed over the furniture. Rather, art pieces are carefully chosen for their unique appeal, and to serve as a focal point in a space. Geometric-patterned or plain area rugs provide accent colors and accentuate the bold look of modern interiors.

4. What about Color?

From its beginnings, modern designers embraced pure color — black, white, and neutrals with vibrant primary colors. Today, color schemes still use white and neutrals, with colorful accents. Too many different colors will overpower the balance of your modern room. Colors enhance the overall impact of your space. Bold contrast using reds, greens, or black, for example, can provide a visual back drop on a wall, for large pieces; bold color can emphasize the lines of furniture pieces.

5. Who is Modern Design For?

Modern design is a fab-

ulous choice for apartment dwellers because it increases space and creates the illusion of a larger room. Young, busy professionals particularly love this decorating style since the space is easily kept clean without knick knacks or ornate decorative furniture to dust. Spur of the moment entertaining is simple and quick.

Families with young children may find this style more challenging to adopt. Hard edges, breakable glass and clutter-intolerance may not work for the very young. However, a skilled designer with an eye for child-safe furniture and storage can help you and your children enjoy modern design and a safe, happy life together. Famous families that make modern design work for them include: Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher, Ellen Degeneres and Portia di Rossis, and Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin.



LACK

TV bench,
black

SR 59

It's that affordable.



THE 5 BIGGEST THREATS FACING INTERIOR DESIGNERS IN 2015

Whether you’re looking for you’re first job as an interior designer or planning to take your business further, you should do all you can to avoid falling prey to the 5 biggest threats listed below.

Photography by mohamed sadeq

Interior design has always been a challenging career choice, but the digital age brings a few new obstacles that you will have to overcome if you want to succeed. Although the road to becoming one of the UK’s top interior designers in 2015 is certainly not easy, it can also be incredibly rewarding if you are willing to put in the extra effort required to stand out from the competition.

1. Fussy clients

Fussy clients have always been an issue in the interior design industry, but 2015 brings a brand new type of client. Popular sites, such as freshome and houzz, have brought interest in the subject to a new high and many clients now not only know what they’re talking about, but are also very demanding. You might well find your patience tested and your professionalism undermined more frequently.

Solution

The increase in people that have an interest in interior design in 2015 is a great thing for the industry. It may frustrate you to have to take lessons from clients who don’t have the knowledge of the industry that they think they do, or that you do, but always remember that you’re a professional and act like one. Give the client whatever they want, even if it’s not what

you would recommend. By all means, draw on your wealth of knowledge of design and guide the client to the right decision, but at the end of the day, the client’s word should always be final.

2. Increased competition for jobs

The growth in popularity of interior design has also led to there being more interior designers, meaning more competition for jobs. This can be incredibly frustrating if you’re just starting out in the industry and are attempting to establish yourself. For more experienced designers, the increased competition is a challenge too. Inevitably, average prices have dropped and many feel that they are now being forced to charge less for their services than they should.

Solution

The competition is always of varying quality, so you need to make sure that you’re one of the best out there if you want to attract potential employers or clients. This means marketing. If all your customers are on the internet, get on there and meet them. Set up a good website and be active on social media to demonstrate your expertise. Remember that you’re the kind of person that interior design enthusiasts are wanting to hear from online. You will have to offer some of your expert advice for

ISSUE, **08** September 2016

free, but this will eventually be what brings you a following that leads to your success.

3. Online reviews

Some interior designers shy away from engaging with their customers online for fear of criticism. They’re frightened that the interior design community is going to bad-mouth them online, damaging their reputation. It is true that unhappy clients can now easily relay their experience of your services among a community of potential future clients, but is that really a bad thing?

Solution

If you always provide an excellent standard of customer service you will have nothing to hide. If you perform to the best of your abilities you’ll be as likely to get good recommendations as poor ones. Don’t argue with those that are disappointed with your service, but do contact them to apologise or enquire further about what you can do to help. Even if you feel angry at what they’re saying about you, don’t lash out, just apologise and move on.

4. Confusion about what interior design actually is

The advancement of interior design education in the UK has brought about a little confusion over what interior design in 2015 actually is. Many top university courses teach interior design to an advanced level of understanding, including issues such as structural design, history of design, ergonomics, spatial concepts, ethics, psychology, computer aided design, and more. The new advanced group of interior designers that this type of education produces lean more towards the architectural side of the industry and are more likely to deal with architects, builders, government officials, and businesses on high profile projects. At the other end of the spectrum, interior designers that lean more towards decoration are likely to deal with home-

owners and offer a more personalised service.

Solution

We have cleared up the confusion about the difference between interior architecture, interior design, and interior decoration in a previous blog post, which concluded that:

Interior architecture is the balancing of the art and science of designing an interior space taking into account all elements of the build. However, a designer with training in interior architecture cannot call themselves as such unless they have the professional accreditation from an architectural body.

Interior design is a broad ranging profession taking into account all aspects of planning and designing interior spaces in the built environment. The role of any two interior designers can vary greatly. Interior decoration is concerned solely with the decoration or ‘art’ of a space including soft furnishings and colour schemes.

The main thing to take away from this is that interior design is not the same as interior decoration. It’s a far more technical profession that requires specific knowledge and skills as well as creativity. The best way to gain the knowledge and skills you need to become an interior designer in 2015 is by gaining an accredited qualification.

5. Getting educated

With so many courses out there offering various interior design qualifications, it can be incredibly difficult to choose the appropriate one for your situation. Many established interior decorators and interior designers feel that to keep up with the competition they need to up-skill, but this can be difficult to do at the same time as running a business. With too much to consider it can be very easy to put of getting educated at all which can be a big mistake in the current climate.

SOLUTION

If you’re going to get ed-

ucated, make sure you do it properly. An accredited BA (Hons) degree will not only help you stand out from the competition, but will also give you the knowledge and skills to perform to the best of your abilities. Keep an eye out for courses advertised as “interior architecture” as these tend to equip you with advanced knowledge of the industry as well as skills such as computer aided design (CAD) that are invaluable to the professional interior design industry today. A master’s degree is another fantastic way to give yourself an advantage over the competition and advance your career.

If you’re keen to carry on working while advancing your skills on an interior design course, maybe you should consider online study. There are many degree courses available to study online that offer accredited interior design qualifications from respected institutions that allow you to study around your job at times that suit you.

Get ahead of the game before it’s too late Although there are a lot of threats to interior designers in 2015, there are also a lot of opportunities. Consider the increased competition as a challenge and do all you can to stand out from the pack. Get online and communicate with the interior design community, demonstrating your expertise and showing that you’re an authority on the subject. Most importantly: never stop learning. The next generation of interior designers are going to be highly skilled and you need to make sure that you’re educated to a high standard in order to stay ahead of the game and advance your career.



11 Beautiful Home Interior Design Styles

Decorating styles have evolved over the centuries in response to the changing tastes of various groups of people.

Every style has benefits to the people who will enjoy the home for many years to come. Many styles were born out of previous styles and have evolved into a distinct type of decorating for a certain feel. Each of the following designs expresses personality and taste specific to an era.

1. Shabby Chic

British look that incorporates all-white interior walls, floors, and ceilings accented with vintage items resting on distressed furniture. Soft pastels bring focus and offer a more feminine feel to the design.

2. Swedish Style

An eclectic look is created through a trendy approach called maximalism, which means to make the most of a small space. What may appear to be a hodgepodge of colour is actually a collection of interesting objects arranged for maximum

visual appeal. Vibrant colours are used to create focal points throughout the room that beg the visitor to examine each piece more closely.

3. Contemporary

Noticeable design features include solid colours with contrasting properties against a blank slate of walls and floor. Furniture has sleek, straight lines with sharp corners. Few accent pieces are used, which leaves a clean and open look for visual appeal.

4. Classic Contemporary

Softer colour contrasts highlight the art on the walls as the visual emphasis. Rounded furniture lines offer an appealing and warm setting that draws the visitor to sit and rest awhile. Colours are complementary instead of contrasting to draw the entire room into focus without an abrupt focus on one element.

5. Funky

Bulky, comfortable chairs set against the stark lines of tables with metal legs. The visitor is invited to investigate the cubbies and sit for a spell. Every element is clean and visibly interesting. Colours are in the chairs while the rest of the room creates a palette to be accented for visual interest.

6. New York

Wide open rooms are accented with neutral paint colours accented by contrasting furniture. Edges of the room are lined with furniture that allows for easy traffic flow through the main corridors. Eye-catching accents are used as light fixtures, and storage is hidden in beautiful pieces of furniture made of intriguing materials.

7. Traditional

A formal home setting is the most appropriate choice for this style. Choices between many

time periods create a sense of timeless tradition in a home that is decorated in the traditional sense. Colours include the jewel tones in coordinating hues. Silks, brocades and satin are the prevalent fabrics used in this style of decorating.

8. Eclectic

As the term conveys, the Eclectic decorating style is varied and can develop into a room that resembles any number of the other decorating styles. Colours are strictly up to the taste of the person who will live with the interior décor. Most people who choose this style do so because they enjoy certain aspects of all the other styles.

9. Garden

Most homes decorated in the Garden style will have a sun room full of plants built onto an exterior wall. The use of live plants inside the house is accompanied

Photography by mohamed sadeq
by landscape pictures. Large windows allow for sweeping views of the exterior landscape. Interior and outdoor furniture are used inside the home and patio doors are in more than one room. Colours are vibrant and natural to bring the outdoors into each living space.

10. Tuscan

Originating in Italy, the Tuscan style was developed by the tradesmen and farmers that lived throughout Italy's countryside. As Italians came to this country, their decorating style took hold. Colours include natural hues accented with rich reds and ochers found in the landscape.



INTERIOR DESIGN STYLES: POPULAR TYPES EXPLAINED

In this article, we are covering some popular interior design styles in modern homes.

Photography by mohamed sadeq

Practitioners, in reality, blend together different elements from several decorating styles, but what's very important is to identify the core aspects of each one. Where it's possible, collections were made in stores in order to simplify the client's shopping.

Mid-Century-Modern is one of the popular interior design styles. The middle of the 20th century made some of the most representative pieces in the modern design. Chic minimalism and elegant design are the main characteristics, with the frequent use of the natural wood, aluminum, and molded plastic. Its pieces, besides being versatile, can also complement other interior design styles.

The industrial modern look is one that catches back to the turn-of-the-century industrial era. It put the accent on the frequent use of raw steel with exposed elements. Also, it heavily relies on rust wood pieces. Copper-tone décor is commonly included by the modern variant.

Cottage/Nautical/Costal (relaxing, warm, and positive). The New England beachside cottage spirit is reflected by the nautical look where blue, white, and sand colors are used. The unfinished wood pieces, the ropes, and the seashells in clear jars are the traditional decorative accents. The Nautical décor collection includes examples of coastal furniture from Froy. Great sources for pieces that fit this design are Pier 1 and Pottery Barn.

Scandinavian design (a product of the mid-century movement) brings a populist, minimalist look. Even if the majority of people associate it with IKEA, there is a lot more to it. Featuring warm colors and rounded, gentle contours, the Scandinavian design often molds and bends various materials. Just like IKEA though, Scandinavian designs carry many original Scandinavian products.

Boho or, the Bohemian design, captures the experimental and carefree essence of the namesake lifestyle. Heavy use of vibrant colors is featured, specifically those with purple or red tones. The main objective is to present, in a careful manner, a purposefully messy look. In order to obtain a warm feeling, it focuses on textiles (rugs, pillows, tapestry, throws). The bad news is that this type of décor and furniture are rather expensive and rare.

The contemporary and transitional design styles are distinct but related and they share many commonalities. Balance is the main focus, meaning that it shouldn't be too formal or too cold. Being more fluid than the modern design, the contemporary chic aesthetic is also cleaner than the traditional look. West Elm, Crate&Barrel, and almost all design stores focus on this style.

A design that is both refreshing and therapeutic, the Japanese Zen décor puts the accent on the natural stone and wood elements, open breathable spacing, and low ground level furniture. It is one of the most favorite styles and has a covered acclaimed NYC penthouse and how to guide in the past.

Apparently a soft cross of traditional, industrial, and Boho elements, the vintage design style remakes the rustic flea market look. It relies on the use of wooden furniture that has a little peeled off color to expose the wood underneath.



Differences Between Interior Design & Decorating

The terms interior designer and interior decorator sometimes are used synonymously, but each has its own job description and function.
Photography by mohamed sadeq

Designers study people’s needs to create functional, structural living or work spaces to satisfy those demands. Decorators furnish interior spaces with furniture and accessories, creating an aesthetic environment. An interior designer must obtain a license to practice, but an interior decorator isn’t required to do so. As a result, interior designers may decorate, but decorators are not permitted to design.

Designer

An interior designer creates interior living or work spaces to accommodate people’s needs. A designer problem-solves difficult structural living arrangements to create spaces that enhance residents’ qualities of life. According to the Patty and Rusty Rueff School of Performing and Visual Arts at Purdue University, interior designers must adhere to code and regulatory requirements, encouraging environmental sustainability. An interior designer researches, analyzes and plans interior layouts to make them physically, socially and aesthetically functional. Students in Purdue’s interior design program develop analytical skills to plan commercial, institutional, health-care, retail, and residential interiors. Modern technology and advanced computer programs allow interior designers to create virtual living areas before finalizing them for development or construction.

Decorator

Interior decorators don’t create interior spaces; they embellish interior spaces that already exist. The National Council for Interior Design Qualifications, NCIDQ, states, “Decoration is the furnishing or adorning of a space with fashionable or beautiful things.” An interior decorator often paints walls, hangs wallpaper, selects and places furniture, installs window treatments, and adds accessories such as throw rugs, lamps, throw pillows and wall art to a room. An interior decorator doesn’t knock out walls or structurally change the layout of an interior space. An interior decorator often uses her skills to adorn a living space once an interior designer has made necessary structural or functional changes.



An advertisement for the FINNBY bookcase by Ikea. The background is a solid bright yellow. In the center, a light turquoise bookcase is shown, which is a simple cube-shaped unit with three horizontal shelves. The bookcase is presented in two ways: a top-down view showing the interior shelves and a side view showing the exterior. The word "PIZZA" is printed in red on the top and bottom edges of the side view. In the bottom right corner, there is a white rectangular box containing the product name "FINNBY", the description "Bookcase, light turquoise", the price "SR 149", the slogan "It's that affordable.", and the Ikea logo at the bottom.

10 Must-Have Home Decorating Apps for Android & iOS

Amateur interior designers, rejoice! (Professionals, you have reason to celebrate, too.)

Photography by mohamed sadeq

There is now a wealth of home improvement and decorating wisdom in the palm of your hand, thanks to the rising number of design apps available for your smartphone. From digital moodboards to virtual consultants, they inspire. They source. They even measure the height of your ceiling. We've picked 10 of the best home decoration apps on the market right now.

1. ColorSnap

Paint brand and household name Sherman-Williams has solved your desire to splash the palette of your favorite landscape—or textile, or work of art, or any other source of inspiration—onto your interior. The app can analyze the colors of any photo on your smartphone and let you know which shade of Sherman-Williams paint it matches. Peruse the contents of its 1,500-shade inventory and apply it to virtual sample rooms.

2. Zillow Digs

Zillow, the searchable online database that has an estimate for (almost) every real estate address in America, now offers the same service for home improvement and design. The Zillow Digs app gives estimates on the array of interior projects in its database, then directs you to retailers to help source your products. Overall, it allows you to choose the project that matches your price point. The app also provides advice from real interior designers, and a social media platform that allows you to share, like, and follow other users.

3. Houzz

Houzz is, arguably, the mother of all design apps—CNN once called it the “Wikipedia of

interior and exterior design.” Its database contains more than 5 million high-res home images tagged and organized according to style, room, and location. Browse, search, and save favorites to your “Ideabook,” which both stores your ideas and gives the app’s real-life, professional design consultants an idea of what you’re into.

4. Homestyler Interior Design

HomeStyler bills itself as a “virtual fitting room,” and rightly so. Try out different looks for your space by superimposing real products—3-D models of various furniture, fixtures, and so on—onto an actual snapshot of your living room. Share your ideas in the Design Gallery, and take a look at what everyone else is doing. Also browse profiles and portfolios of actual designers in your area to ask questions and make connections.

5. Curate

Art lovers everywhere: you owe the good people behind Curate a big thank-you. Gone are the days when you have to intensely squint at a painting, drawing or lithograph and puzzle over how it will look in the context of your home. Instead, Curate allows you to virtually display the piece simply upload a photo of any blank wall in order to give you a concrete idea as to how it will look in situ.

6. LikeThat Décor and Furniture

Identifying individual pieces of furniture is now as easy as snapping a photo. LikeThat can “read” an image and cross-check its features with its own digital inventory, a collection of

more than 25 million products. It finds not only the model that you’re looking at, but also others similar in style. Compare prices and save items to refer to later. What Shazam is for music, LikeThat is for furniture.

7. MagicPlan

MagicPlan transforms the painstaking ordeal of taking measurements and drawing up floor plans into an effortless process. This idiot savant of interior design can compute distances within a space simply by analyzing a snapshot. Annotate photos of your space with the height of the ceiling or the width of the hallway, and never get stuck outside with a piece of furniture that won’t fit through the front door again.

8. MyPantone

Unequivocally, Pantone is the ultimate color arbiter — when it comes to disputes on whether a shade is turquoise or teal, they have the final say. The historic company put its standardized library of colors into a convenient app that allows you to accurately communicate your color choices to decorating professionals, designers and manufacturers alike. It also identifies the colors in your photographs and expertly generates complementary palettes.

9. BrightNest

Two major components of interior design are staying organized during the process, then maintaining your vision once it’s complete. Wired refers to BrightNest as the “Lifehacker for your home,” a digital personal assistant that helps you to more efficiently do both. Line up your necessary household tasks into an orderly,

regular schedule with friendly reminders for when they’re due. Plus, get advice on better methods of what you’re already doing. Accomplish fabulous home improvement missions and DIY projects you hadn’t thought of. It’s all about upgrades.

10. Home Design 3D

Gold

A new interior or exterior design plan is as easy to devise as dragging and dropping. This architectural app lets you import floorplans and change the space itself; visualize new openings, raise ceilings, or take out entire walls, then add in the furniture and other amenities of your choice. Work in either 2-D or 3-D, and share projects with collaborators who can make modifications with you in real time.

Of course, we’d be remiss if we didn’t also mention the lovely 1st-dibs apps it’s the 21st-century way to browse the most beautiful things on Earth.



From Marketing to Interior Design

Louise Keane had status and success in her PR role, but also a creeping sense that something was missing.

Photography by mohamed sadeq

She made the choice to step into more creative work and scratch the entrepreneurial itch she'd had for years. Here's how she made her shift.

What work were you doing previously?

I had a career in marketing and PR, which I'd been doing for over 15 years, working mainly for large organisations.

What are you doing now?

I'm now an interior designer running my own business called Amalfi White Living, where I specialise in domestic interiors.

Why did you change?

Design was something I'd always wanted to do – the classic 'path not taken'. Although I'd been successful by traditional standards in my marketing and PR career, I felt compelled to do something more creative; interior design was where my passion lay. Running my own business was also something that I'd wanted to do for a long time.

When was the moment you decided to make the change?

There wasn't any one particular moment; it was more a slow dawning that if I didn't make a change, I would seriously regret never having given it a go.

Are you happy with the change?

I still pinch myself when I think how much I enjoy spending my time now, doing the creative things that I love and getting paid for it!

It's also opened up a huge avenue for me in that I've discovered how much I love illustration, so I've been able to weave this into the work I do for clients.

What do you miss and

what don't you miss? I definitely miss the camaraderie of an office environment. I currently work on my own a lot. Although I love being at my drawing board and allowing myself to be creative in a way that wasn't possible before, I do sometimes miss the company and the structure of a traditional 'job'.

How did you go about making the shift?

For me, it was the 'jump off the cliff' approach, in that I resigned from my job and took some time out to retrain before setting up the company.

It's not an approach I would necessarily endorse, but I had a job that was quite senior and extremely demanding. My initial idea to transition into the business gradually (by retraining and then starting the company on the side while I kept working) just wasn't a viable option for me.

What didn't go well? What 'wrong turns' did you take?

I can't think of any major wrong turns exactly, but one thing I did (which, in hindsight, I wish I hadn't done) was to listen to too many people and give their opinions more weight than my own instincts. When I was starting out in business, it was really hard to have faith in myself, especially when there was so much I didn't know. I found myself seeking out opinions on things that I wasn't sure of; I also got loads of unsolicited advice from well-meaning friends and family. But I had to learn to listen to my own wisdom and my own instincts. I still took on board other people's advice, for sure, but I learnt not to act on it until I was confident that it chimed with what I instinctively knew was right for me and my business.

How did you handle your finances to make your change possible?

I was lucky in that I'd worked for a long time and had built up a buffer of savings to see me through. This is where I had to think really hard, be very practical and work out how to make it happen. I had to believe that there was a way to do it – I just needed to find it.

What was the most difficult thing about changing?

For me, it has been leaving the certainty, structure, and built-in daily companionship of a traditional job. Starting out in my own business has felt lonely and scary at times. It's not the sort of thing I could have done without support around me, to make sure that the transition didn't end up being so painful that it cancelled out the joy of doing the thing that I wanted to do.

I knew that whatever I ended up doing would involve some kind of downside or sacrifice. The key, I think, was in knowing what I really wanted to do, and using that to pull me forward when things got tough. And they did!

What help did you get?

Looking back, it's clear that I didn't actually have enough help. I tried to do

a lot of things on my own that would have been far easier if I'd asked for help. I have had a great accountant from the outset who has been a solid adviser on the practical aspects of the business. That has been invaluable. I'd definitely advise anyone setting out on the path of entrepreneurship to surround themselves with people who can advise or at least act as sounding boards. I'm a believer in the fact that you will instinctively know what's best for your own company (i.e. you don't necessarily need to 'ask' anyone else), but you often need others to help you sift through choices and gain perspective.

What do you wish you'd done differently?

I wish I'd been able to transition more gradually into running the business, rather than the 'jumping off the cliff' scenario. For some people, just 'going for it' might suit their personalities, but I was used to a structured way of working and a steady pay cheque; the shock of suddenly being responsible for everything, while my savings were dwindling, was at times overwhelming.

There's enough to deal with at the start of building a business without having to worry constantly about lack of funds. If I could've eased this, that would've been a better

way to start out. What would you advise others to do in the same situation?

Really work out the money angle in terms of exactly what you need to live on. Don't add constantly worrying about paying your bills to the pressures you're already under trying to get a business off the ground.

What resources would you recommend to others?

For me, having a good accountant has been a godsend. I've been lucky enough to find one who's interested in small businesses and who I can talk to about the business in more general terms as well the financial specifics.

I would also advise having someone (or a small group of people) whom you trust implicitly, to act as a sounding board. There'll be times when you need to make decisions or you feel stuck; just having the right people to bounce ideas off is invaluable. You need to learn to have faith in your own decisions, but being able to discuss the options can make things clearer. Just don't let anyone sway your thinking. It may be clichéd but it's a powerful thing to learn to trust yourself and your gut instincts.



Interview: Interior Design Success Story With Lisa Erdmann

Photography by mohamed sadeq

Lisa Erdmann is an interior designer with a career that bloomed in fast steps. We challenged her for an interview to find out her success story, which is based, as she states, on WORK, WORK ,WORK. Enjoy her portfolio, as well as the enlightening answers and in the end, feel free to leave you opinions in the comments section below.

Collect this idea
Interview: Interior Design Success Story With Lisa Erdmann
Freshome: Tell us about the moment when you decided to follow a career in the field of interior design. Did you have other options in mind at the time?
Lisa Erdmann: I graduated from college, moved to New York City and was looking for a job in the fashion industry when I took a position as a receptionist at a furni-

ture and textile firm. In a week I was promoted, within six months I was managing a department and after a few years became the youngest director of the company in the company’s history. They manufactured the furniture in the building which was so interesting and traveling to mills and seeing the textiles made and working on colorations and the development was inspirational. I absolutely fell in love with textiles because of this job.
Collect this idea
Interview: Interior Design Success Story With Lisa Erdmann
Collect this idea
Freshome: Can you remember your first design project?
Lisa Erdmann:My mother is a designer, so as a child I redesigned my bedroom almost every year or two, with mom’s guidance, of course.
Collect this idea

Freshome: Where do you find inspiration?
Lisa Erdmann: Reading, traveling and in nature
Freshome: How would you describe your line of work? How about your work process?
Lisa Erdmann: Organization is imperative. Interior Design is like the opening night for a Broadway production. The goal is to have everything ready for the installation. Plan to be early so any glitches can be worked out before the clients move in.
Collect this idea
Collect this idea
Freshome: What is the most frustrating aspect of your job as a designer? And the most rewarding one?
Lisa Erdmann: The most frustrating occurs when a vendor or tradesperson does not deliver and lets me down. The most rewarding is the installation – When it all comes

together and looks FABULOUS.
Freshome: Tell us something unusual that happened in your career.
Lisa Erdmann: I spent many of my younger years traveling the world. It allowed me to see many beautiful sites, products and experience many different cultures and types of people.
It taught me that it is helpful to research and understand people especially of they are from a different culture so you can work with and respect them in the most productive manner.
Freshome: Share something you would like our readers to know about you or your ideas.
Lisa Erdmann: I am constantly inspired by my clients. Each project brings something new – a client’s particular col-

lection of accessories, travel, pets (I designed a horse barn once for a polo pony team), artwork collection ... It makes each project interesting and unique.
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Collect this idea
Freshome: Do you have any advice for the young designers reading this interview?
Lisa Erdmann: I always relay this piece of advice to my new young designers out of school — Only about 10 – 15% of the job is picking out the beautiful fabrics and furniture, the balance is WORK, WORK ,WORK. Whether it’s following up on the design, orders, samples or maintain relationships with vendors, clients, contractors, architects or working through the setbacks or unforeseen items that arise on projects and especially construction you are constantly working when projects are in progress.



10 Mistakes That (Almost) Everyone Makes in Interior Design

It happens to everyone

Photography by mohamed sadeq

You are shopping and see the perfect home decor accessory. Immediately you think, Oh! this will look perfect in my TV room!

Of course, you give in to the impulse buy and excitedly bring home your new-found treasure only to discover that what looked liked the ideal accessory looks hideous when put in place, and you are left saying, What was I thinking? Where did I go wrong?

What most of us don't understand is that interior design takes a very keen and knowledgeable eye. We may be out shopping and see something we love, but that doesn't necessarily mean that it will look perfect in our home.

Interior designers understand how color, lighting, room size, scale, and placement all affect how items look in a room and dictates whether they will make or break a room design.

There are a lot of common mistakes that almost everyone makes when designing their interiors. Here we look at the 10 most common mistakes and how to avoid making them:

1) Scale in Interior Design

We love how Linda Floyd explains scale and proportion in design, she says, "When you enter into a room, it should

be like a city scape... a combination of different heights. You never want everything in a room to be a the same level or the same size. Accomplish this with different heights/sizes in your furnishings, art placement and window treatments."

Scale is the number one mistake that almost everyone makes when it comes to interior design. This is probably the case because it takes a talented eye to decorate a room with impeccable scale. Some people put too many small things in a room, thereby cluttering the room and not giving the eye a place to land.

While others put too many large, bulky items in one room, making it look stuffed and small. The secret to proper scale is a mixture of different shapes, heights and sizes. If there is only one thing that you hire an interior designer for, it is help with proportion and scale. With the right scale your room is well on its way towards a successful design.

2) Shop Around and Budget Before Buying

We are all prone to impulse buys. It's not to say that you shouldn't buy something that you fall immediately in love with, but maybe just keep the receipt in case it doesn't work the

way you had originally thought.

Before heading to the furniture showroom, it's best to have a plan and a budget well-established. First, your rooms need to be measured. The furniture placement and size need be planned properly. Luckily, there are a lot of online room arrangement tools that are free and easy to use.

Go into a showroom with a plan in place, helping you know what you want and making sure you stick within your budget. Buyers remorse is an awful feeling, so plan first and shop later.

3) Ask for Help and Interior Design Advice

Even the most skilled designers make mistakes. It can be difficult to spot our mistakes when we have been muddling over the same room design for months sometimes a room needs a fresh set of eyes to spot the problems.

Ask a friend for an honest opinion on color choice, fabrics, or room arrangement. If it is feasible, hire an interior designer for guidance you don't have to hire one for an entire design project, as there are plenty of designers who charge by the hour. Interior designers are full of clever design tips and tricks that can transform your home.

If you disagree with the second opinion, then get a third. Listening to advice, doesn't mean we have to take it—your home design is uniquely yours and if you love it, then that's all that really matters, right?

4) Arrangement of Accessories and Collections

We all have them collections. Somehow it started with one little ceramic bird and now you have a collection of birds in various shapes sizes and colors that you have amassed over the years. What is the proper way to display a collection such as this?

Well, let's start with the improper way, and the mistake that most of us make— scattering pieces of the collection throughout your home. One little bird may tweet from a fireplace mantle, while another little bird somehow flew all the way over to perch on the coffee table.

No matter what the accessory is, it is best to display them in arrangements and groupings. There are some steadfast rules to arranging items into groups called the rule of three. So, gather what you love into groupings and display them proudly and properly.

5) Hanging Art

You can literally turn any wall of your home into your own personal art gallery. Everyone should display some form of art in their home—whether it is a rare oil painting or a cherished drawing from your child's pre-school days. The road block that most encounter is how to properly hang art.

The best way to ensure there are no mistakes, and nasty nail holes to fill, is to trace and cut-out the frames outline on paper. Simply tape the paper cut-outs onto your wall, trying numerous placement options until you have the desired outcome. Have fun with your arrangements, playing with size, color, and texture, remembering to avoid the number one mistake that most people make—scale (see number 1 above).

6) Buy Fabrics and Textiles First

A common mistake that most of us are guilty of—painting first. Put that paint brush down! First, you need to pick out the rooms fabrics and main textiles, such as rugs and curtains.

Why is this? Because it is simply much easier to find fabrics that we love and then pick out paint to match. While it is much harder to find a fabric that we love, that also just so happens to match the paint we have





already put on our walls.

So, with budget and room size in mind, go for a shopping excursion. Look through samples of fabrics, rugs, pillows etc... Find what you love and then once you are happy with your design choices, pick out a paint shade or shades from the chosen textiles. Now you can pick up the paint brush.

7) Add Character

While it is really fun to look through show-rooms that are full of brand-new modern furnishings, don't get carried away and buy everything at one time and one place.

Doing this results in a common interior design mistake—buying everything matchy-matchy, resulting in a home that lacks character. How do we add character? Slowly, over time. It can take years to have your home fully complete and fully designed.

Character is built within your interior design by adding that odd chair you found at the flea market or the amazing painting that a street vendor was selling.

Try a small shopping excursion on the weekend, slowly over time you will find things you love and build your homes character.

8) Add a Focal Point

Every room needs a focal point—it offers a place for the eye to rest and assigns a room with a function (Note: Larger rooms can have more than one focal point). This is a very common mistake—forgetting to give each room a purpose or point to focus on. Some rooms are simple in a TV room the focal point usually ends up being the TV and the unit it is placed on, while all the other main objects in the room (i.e. couches/chairs) are focused and pointing towards the TV.

Other rooms are a bit more difficult, such as sitting rooms or dens. Don't just scatter furnishings about the room— first, find a focus or purpose for the room, and then place the furnishings around that focal point. For example a fireplace, a gaming table, a large painting, or even a coffee table that encourages guests to sit and converse.

9) Don't Keep Grandma's Antique if you Dislike it

We all have hand-me-down furniture. Some are prized possessions, while others are weighing us down with distaste and guilt.

Do you have one of those “guilty” objects in your home? You know, that piece that was handed down to you, you hate it, you want to hide it in the basement, but you can't because it was a gift from Grandma? Why make this dec-

orating mistake? Why have something in your home that doesn't bring you joy and happiness?

We suggest you find a new purpose for all those hand-me-downs that you hate. Whether you paint it, hand it off to another relative or give yourself permission to sell it and buy something you love in its place. Set yourself free and make your home full of things that make you happy.

10) Show Your Personality

Your home should speak to who you are; it should be like a personal memoir of your trips, your loves, your life. There is nothing worse than walking into someones home to be greeted by beige walls, brown furniture and one mass-produced print on the wall, pretending to be art.

The above-mentioned room just screams BORING! and we know our readers are far from

boring. So, don't be shy when it comes to your home decor.

Bring in all the things you love, making your home a unique oasis that welcomes you at the end of a hard day, and also tells an intriguing story to your visitors.

As you have read, there are a lot of common mistakes that can be easily made when it comes to interior design.

Luckily, there are also plenty of easy solutions to fix these mistakes—sometimes it's as easy as getting rid of a hand-me-down that you hate but felt obligated to keep, while other times you may need to enlist the help and keen eye of a friend.If all else fails and you are too frustrated with all the decorating decisions and obstacles that you face, then hire a professional interior designer—they are knowledgeable and can help you achieve your dream home—without all the mistakes.

7 Legendary Interior Designers Everyone Should Know

These seven interiors icons are the most influential masters of the 20th century—the true founders of the profession today—and they’re the names every lover of design should know.

Photography by mohamed sadeq



Elsie de Wolfe

Known as “America’s first decorator,” De Wolfe boasted a lifestyle as glamorous as her decor.

Born in New York City in 1865, her history reads not just as one wild romance and adventure novel, but several different ones. In her youth, she was educated in Scotland and was presented at court to Queen Victoria, but soon after returned to the U.S. and became a professional actress. By around 1887 she shared a “Boston marriage” with successful literary agent Elisabeth “Bessie” Marbury.

And later in life, she even gained the title of Lady when she married British diplomat Sir Charles Mendl, at the age of 61. But early on in De Wolfe’s life, it was her onstage style and wardrobe—couture ensembles from Paris—that caught people’s eyes more than her acting chops.

She successfully restyled the house on Irving Place that she shared with Marbury, eschewing the stuffy Victorian decorating approach of her day by decluttering, simplifying, and warming up its gloomy and too-busy interiors. That led to a commission to decorate the Colony Club the city’s first elite social club exclusively for women which could list members with surnames like Whitney, Morgan, Harriman, and Astor.

De Wolfe blazed a trail as she became the most popular decorator of her time, handing out business cards emblazoned with her signature wolf and nosegay motif.



Albert Hadley

Marrying glamour and functionality can be a difficult task for any designer, but it's a relationship that Albert Hadley mastered. "The dean of American decorators," who died in 2012 at the age of 91, boasted high society names like Rockefeller, Astor, Getty, and Mellon on his client roster, but always honored a democratic decorating spirit: "Names really are not the point," he told *New York* magazine in 2004. "It's what you can achieve for the simplest person. Glamour is part of it, but glamour is not the essence. Design is about discipline and reality, not about fantasy beyond reality."

Tennessee-born Hadley became known for his modern style, which deftly incorporated a mix of design styles thanks to his seemingly innate sense of balance and what worked together. "Nevertheless, never more," was his overarching design philosophy.

Hadley joined forces with Sister Parish in 1962. Parish-Hadley Associates styled the homes of America's elite for decades, but is probably best known for redecorating the Kennedy White House, as well as the Kennedy family's own homes. But Hadley didn't slow down after Parish's death, or with age. In honor of his 85th birthday, *The New York Times* interviewed one of his clients, Diana Quasha, about why she'd just chosen him for her project. "He's still the hippest thing out there," she said. "I don't want it to be modern, and I don't want it to be traditional. I want it to look interesting. Who else would I ask?"



Dorothy Draper

Boldly colorful, elegant, cheerful, and full of life: These are the hallmarks of the "Draper touch." If you're ever feeling intimidated or overwhelmed by the world of interior design, take a page out of her 1939 book, *Decorating Is Fun!*:

"Almost everyone believes that there is something deep and mysterious about [interior decoration] or that you have to know all sorts of complicated details about periods before you can lift a finger. Well, you don't. Decorating is just sheer fun: a delight in color, an awareness of balance, a feeling for lighting, a sense of style, a zest for life, and an amused enjoyment of the smart accessories of the moment."

Draper—a cousin of Sister Parish—opened what is arguably the first official interior design business, Architectural Clearing House, in 1925. She extended her elegant "modern Baroque" style to many public buildings, including the cafeteria at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Fairmont and Mark Hopkins hotels in San Francisco, and, most famously, a total redesign of the Greenbrier in West Virginia. Some of her rooms have a restrained color palette of classic black and white, while others showcase a wild Technicolor mash-up of pinks with greens, turquoise, and orange. Draper protégé Carleton Varney may have said it best of the decorating legend: "Dorothy Draper was to decorating what Chanel was to fashion."



Sister parish

Well-heeled, well-connected Dorothy May Kinnicutt (the childhood nickname "Sister" eventually replaced her given name) was born in 1910 to parents with homes in Manhattan, New Jersey, Maine, and Paris. She attended the Chapin School in Manhattan, and married Henry Parish in 1930, in a wedding that *The New York Times* reported at the time boasted "a representative gathering of old New York families on hand."

When in the Wall Street crash of 1929 both Parish's stockbroker husband's and father's fortunes took hits, she opened her own interior design shop in Far Hills, New Jersey. Her style was a counterpoint to her antiques collector father's heavy, dark, brown furniture she favored ticking stripe, glazed chintz, quilts, hooked rugs, and overstuffed armchairs instead of formal antiques and is credited with popularizing that American country aesthetic in the 1960s.

Her designs for clients such as Brooke Astor were romantic, warm, and elegant, but her tactics were precise and exacting: Her unforgiving assessment of a client's space before she started any design project involved rolling a tea cart around the room, editing out any items that didn't meet with her approval.

Parish's design relationship with Albert Hadley lasted 30-plus years—until her death in 1994 at the age of 84—and is widely considered one of the most successful partnerships in the world of interiors.



Billy Baldwin

Don't refer to Billy Baldwin as an "interior designer." He detested the term. Which is odd, considering that his comprehensive approach to the home went far beyond his role as a "decorator," his preferred title. Comfort and quality were Baldwin's top tenets, but he considered a space's "good bones" to be a higher priority: "I've always believed that architecture is more important than decoration. Scale and proportion give everlasting satisfaction that cannot be achieved by only icing the cake," he said.

Baldwin was named to the International Best-Dressed List in 1974, and his interiors were as immaculate and crisp as his perfectly tailored suits and polished ensembles. And while many important decorators of his time insisted on throwing out everything the client owned and starting a project from scratch, Baldwin worked with pieces his clients already owned.

Whether Baldwin was reworking the interiors of Cole Porter's Waldorf Towers apartment, Jackie O's home on the Greek island of Skorpios, or overhauling Diana Vreeland's Park Avenue living room, scale and proportion remained his top priorities. Furniture upholstered down to the floor (he considered the look of naked chair legs to be "restless"); dark, bold wall colors; and curated, built-in bookshelves are other Baldwin design staples that are still relevant today. His 1972 book, *Billy Baldwin Decorates*, is still considered a must-read for practical decorating advice.

Jean-Michel Frank

Artists inevitably take inspiration from the world around them, and it's hard to imagine a richer environment than Paris in the 1930s, when Jean-Michel Frank was the most celebrated decorator and designer of the era. His projects were often to decorate rooms with Picassos and Braques hanging on the walls, and his circles included everyone from Parisian artists to socialites, Man Ray to the Rockefellers.

But Frank's style is hard to describe. He's known as a minimalist, but it's his layer of maximalism that makes his work so interesting and complex. He was understated and restrained in the shapes of furniture he designed, but often dressed them in opulent materials: ornate mica screens, bronze doors, lamps made of quartz, as well as the shagreen-covered vanity and cubic sheepskin club chair he created for Hermès. Frank's favorite color was white, which he made appear both spare and rich. And he's credited with designing one of the most iconic minimalist pieces of furniture in history—the Parsons table—but would often cover the tables with the most luxe finishes. Despite his keen eye for design and quality, Frank found the elements of daily life key to any space, and believed "perfect taste" to be a recipe for a soulless room.

A distant cousin of the famed diarist Anne Frank, he fled France around 1940 to escape Nazi occupation, and worked and traveled in South America and the United States.



What are the Pros & cons of becoming an interior designer?

Photography by mohamed sadeq



What are the Pros & cons of becoming an interior designer? 5 advantages & disadvantages of becoming a designer. The pros and cons, or advantages and disadvantages of becoming an interior designer are endless of course, but I'll cover the top few here. I'm not just speaking from experience, (I have been an interior designer for many years), I'm also listing what I hear others in the industry say. Step one is understanding what we actually do everyday, which helps me explain the pros and cons.

First let me say that every single day people tell me they want to become an interior designer, saying things like "that's my dream job, I love picking out pretty items!" So here's the main advantage of becoming an interior designer, we'll call it PRO # 1 - It's very rewarding to hear good comments from clients, and I must admit, after years of experience I do get to hear these statements every week! It's so rewarding to be told you've affected their life, by creating a home environment they love coming home to! We hear things like.....

"I LOVE coming home now!!!"

"Even my husband loves it, and he used to think it would be a waste of money!"

"I love the way you were able to use our existing things, and make it look fresh."

"It's like you read my

mind, how did you nail my taste so well?!"

"It's even better than I imagined"

"My friends can't get over the change! We actually want to have people over now."

Interior design room

PRO # 2, or Advantage #2 of becoming an interior designer. Flexible hours, you can set your own hours. Now, don't get me wrong, that doesn't mean you'll work less hours, you'll probably work MANY more than a normal 40 hour work week, probably up to 55 or 65 hours, or more. Your busiest time of year will be August through Christmas, when people want their home to look amazing for the holidays, (and when kids are back in school).

Advantage # 3 of becoming an interior designer: You can often work out of your home, that is, if you are very disciplined, and if you have assistance for child care. Now instead of a pro, lets state the #1 disadvantage of becoming an interior designer:wouldn't you rather know what you're really getting into?

It's not just creative artistic work, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but picking out nice looking things is only about 20% of what you'll actually do. Below I listed what you'll really spend your time doing.

- 1) Communication**

You must be efficient and prompt to follow up with installers, seamstresses, upholsterers, electricians, painters, builders, the tile store, the light fixture store, etc.
- 2) Scheduling**

It's tough to narrow down the people listed above, to get realistic answers about delivery times, then even more so to schedule the two professionals (the husband & wife or people who hired you).
- 3) Budgeting**

Trying to get the homeowners or office manager to be realistic, so they don't make impulse purchases!
- 4) Encouraging cooperation**

Between the husband and wife, the homeowner and the builder, the supplier and the homeowner, since they normally have opposite views regarding taste, price, timelines, & what is a "necessity".
- 5) Computer work**

Such as Web development - writing blogs, editing before & after photos for files, status reports, for each client with paper trails & emails. Creating files for measurements, rug sizes, architectural details, etc etc.
- Disadvantage number 2 of becoming an interior designer:
- Unless you are willing to spend money on expensive advertising (I've

never advertised). You probably can't dive into it as your main source of income until you've paid your dues by working for someone else. You could start by working at a high end furniture store, fabric store, or perhaps an art gallery? During this time, you could do interior design part time so you can create a web site or portfolio of your work. I learned a great deal by working at a very high end furniture store for many years before going out on my own! After all, you'll need to be able to understand furniture size & scale, durability & fabric content, architectural specifications, rug qualities, color tones, terms of styles, etc. Disadvantage number 3 of becoming an interior designer:

Tough clients, I don't mean rude clients, most of them are very nice!! What I'm referring to is clients who hire you, but don't listen, they continue to make impulse buys.

There's times when I tell people a furniture piece is the wrong size, to later hear them say "you were right, I just hate it now that it's in the room, it looked so different in the store". Or, I explain things about sofa cushion content, or fabric durability (lack of) and they still make an impulse buy - to later say they wish they hadn't. Or there's clients that say "look what I bought, can you find a place for it? I can't seem to find a place for it". They admit

it wasn't a wise choice, but now that they've paid for it, they aren't able to return it - perhaps from that local art gallery that gave them several glasses of wine? :) Or perhaps from that commission sales person who insisted it would be perfect! It's the wrong size and scale, or style, but we're stuck with it.

Advantage number 3 of becoming an interior designer.

Unlike many fields such as accounting, computer work, etc. your degree doesn't have to be in interior design. I highly recommend a bachelor degree in business or some field, but I believe that you either have a gift for interior design or you don't.

You can either spot what's wrong with a room or you can't! You either have amazing attention to detail or you don't! You can either pick a perfect wall paint color every time, or you can't.

You either have a strong work ethic and are willing to study architecture, period design, etc. or you're not. If you have all these traits, then you have a major advantage over the competition.

If you are willing to find a mentor, you can learn a great deal. Every week I have someone offer to work for our design team "for free so I can learn" but each time I tried it, they weren't willing to really listen and learn.