

House Beautiful



THE HOME BOOK

CREATING A BEAUTIFUL HOME OF YOUR OWN



RIGHT, TOP: If crisp, classic, and fresh is what you have in mind, you can't go wrong with blue and white. Here a Chinese-lattice wallpaper gives a fun 1950s resort look to a large dressing area where time can be idled away in correspondence or reading. (Meg Braff)



RIGHT, BELOW: Color is fun and uplifting when raspberry, fuchsia, orange, and golden yellow play in front of pale lilac walls. Blocks of mostly solid color keep the effect simple, warm, and comfortable—this combination has inherent energy and does not need much pattern. (Angie Hranowsky)

OPPOSITE: Color is pretty when deep purple, warm blues, and touches of green mix with soft white, straw, and gold. (Robert Goodwin)



ENVELOPE OR ACCENT? Proportioning Color.

Chances are one color on your palette will play a dominant role in your décor. Which color stars is up to you, but it's helpful to think about the impact of light and volume (the amount of color used) on the overall effect.

Colors change under different kinds of light. That's one reason why it's always smart to look at samples of materials in your room at different times of day and under artificial light. But you should also bear in mind that indirect bright sunlight will intensify colors, while direct rays will lighten them and even wash out very pale hues. Yellow hues in particular become more yellow in sunlight. Evening light, candlelight, and dimmed artificial light subdue color, blurring subtle distinctions between hues and making light colors quieter and deep colors darker.

Easier to visualize is the influence of volume. The more there is of a color, the more impact it has. A pale color you barely perceive on a paint chip may not have sufficient contrast to use on moldings against white walls, but it will appear darker if it covers the walls themselves. A dark or bright hue that adds a wonderful highlight to a patterned fabric or



ABOVE: Soft white walls and lots of natural daylight keep this breakfast/family room open to the cityscape beyond the window wall; blocks of red and purple bring the chairs and velvet-covered sofa into focus. (Faye Cone)

LEFT: Stripes in two tones of periwinkle surround this sitting room with mysterious depth; the sconce shades, flowers, and throw pop against them and bring up the bright red that travels through the carpet and upholstery. The whites are softened by the richer blues and reds. (Meg Braff)





DESIGNER'S TOP TEN

Designer Ernest de la Torre offers these ten rules for using paintings, prints, and photographs to transform a room.

1. Art can create the mood for a room, or serve as an exclamation point in a neutral setting.
2. Play with size. For dramatic effect, try hanging a large piece of art in a small space such as a powder room or vestibule.
3. Don't try to conform to anyone else's taste. Your art should be a reflection of your personal style and interests.
4. If you are interested in collecting as an investment, do your homework and only buy from reputable galleries. You can keep tabs on auction results and current prices with Internet sites like www.artnet.com.
5. Regarding value, provenance can be more important for some pieces than others, and in the case of prints, condition is all-important.
6. Sculpture adds height and a touch of the unexpected. Don't be afraid to juxtapose two artworks from different periods, provided they have a common element.
7. Try using gallery-hanging rods. They allow you to rotate your collection effortlessly without ruining the walls.
8. Choose frames carefully, the wrong one can overwhelm a piece of art or fail to set it off. Mix frames that differ both stylistically and in color, this gives your collection a sense of having been assembled over time. But stick to one frame style for a single series of works by one artist.
9. Create a collage by grouping many small artworks together, linking them through visual forms, theme, or color. The pieces will play off one another to create a single graphic effect.
10. Keep track of the artists you are interested in, and learn about their work. A great collection evolves as you do.

LEFT: Stylized whimsy, saturated colors, and lots of chinoiserie mixed with traditional pieces set an expressive tone in this Newport summerhouse sitting room. It's snappy and fun, and can be dressed up or down. The Chinese screen over the sofa gives the room scale. (Meg Braff)