



Decorating Your House: How to Choose an Interior Designer That You Absolutely Love

Is your house becoming an interior design **flop**?

Are your rugs looking shaggier than they are supposed to be?

Is that fading mellow-yellow paint on the walls more disturbing than calming?

Are you living in the “design of the month” from decade-old magazines?

Perhaps it is time to hire an interior designer to redecorate your rooms. But beware; randomly picking an interior design firm from the Yellow Pages can bring disaster. You can get rooms that will literally and figuratively make your stomach turn. Not to mention, you can lose a lot of money by not hiring the right interior designer.

Follow these steps below and you'll be *in the pink*, or whatever color you like.

Seven Easy Steps to Hiring an Interior Designer

Who Will Meet Your Home Design Needs:

Step 1: Researching an Interior Designer.

Ask family and friends for names of decorators & designers they appreciated using. Don't be shy about asking local design magazine staff for opinions. Reporters love to share insights.

You may hear a lot of horror stories, **but put them on the back burner.** Zoom in on the person who says, “I love my designer.”

Step 2: Make sure your designer's style matches your personality.

Interior designers are human and they will run the gambit from spontaneous to methodical. Home décor and is very personal and you need to feel comfortable with the interior design professional you choose.



Look at the interior designer portfolio showing recent work and get an overall feel for what suits your personality. When you want a contemporary design “put-your-feet-up and relax” style, do not hire a designer who only does traditional “sit-up-straight” designs. Trust your gut and rule out anyone who is not compatible with your personality.

Step 3: Deal with all money issues/costs in advance.

Interior designers will also differ in their financial approaches. We charge my clients an hourly fee to cover the time expected for the project. The client pays the cost of the materials with no markup and we look for the most reasonable prices. We bill every two weeks, so there are no bottom-line surprises that are common with many interior designers.

Once we confirm my responsibilities, we spell everything out in my contract. I stress that if any changes arise that alter the firm’s hours or the price of materials, the client will be notified immediately.

Each time we order new materials, we have my client sign off on the cost. If need be, we can discuss different options so that they know how much money to put aside for the next billing period.

All of these things should be discussed with your interior designer before starting a project in order to ensure that you are on the same page. This may prevent unforeseen costs or a disastrous bill at the end of a job.

Step 4: Demand to know when the project will be finished in advance.

If your interior designer cannot give you an estimated time of delivery, run, and run fast. You don’t want to be placed in a position where you have spent thousands of dollars and six months into the home-design project, you still see very little progress.

That’s why we give an approximate time for delivery. We do, however, point out that this relies largely on everything moving along smoothly without any delays from contractors or the client’s personal time constraints.

Step 5: Communicate and collaborate with your designer.

To get the room of your dreams, you need to be able to provide a lot of input on personal likes and dislikes. As we tell our clients, the point is not what we would like to see in a room, but what my client wants. We make suggestions, but most of my time is spent on managing the project to suit the needs of each client.

Step 6: Ask how the interior designing process will be managed.



You need to know how your interior designer will keep you informed on your project's progress. The best interior designers will hold your hand throughout the entire process. They should also know how to manage different subcontractors. We carefully watch the subcontractors' work. If we are not happy with the job, we make sure they correct it at no extra cost to the client.

Step 7: Check those references.

Your main questions should be:

- Did you get the design you wanted?
- Did the interior designer finish the project on time?
- Was the price higher than what you were quoted in the beginning?
- Were there any hitches?

If you follow these **Seven** simple steps to choosing an interior designer, you will absolutely love and enjoy all of the “new” rooms in your house. With this time-tested advice, you won't have to worry about wasting your time, money and efforts on an interior design nightmare.