



Intro

COLOUR YOUR WORLD



There is something very satisfying about creating a space that is all your own. **Shelley Friesen** discovers that the little personal touches you put into each room, through your colour choices, can really transform your property from just another house, into your perfect home.

Colours have the ability to completely transform your interior space, and painting is the quickest way to freshen up a dull, out of date room. But choosing a colour scheme that you and your family have to live with day in and day out can be a little daunting. Colour choices today are endless, and sometimes the more you have to choose from, the harder the choice can be.

Some rooms have specific needs and uses, and you need to keep this in mind when deciding upon your palette. The colours that will suit a bathroom or laundry can often be very different to those that will suit a living room or kitchen. When creating a calm, tranquil environment, stick to a cool palette, using colours like soft grey greens, blues, apple greens, and mushroom tones. These colours are great for sitting rooms, offices and libraries and other areas designed for peace and quiet.

KEEP IT NEUTRAL

Most designers would recommend you use a fairly neutral colour scheme in living spaces, as these are the areas where most people spend the majority of their time. You will tend to get sick of colours in these spaces more quickly than others, and you don't want to decide on the spur of the moment to paint the whole room tangerine and then tire of it within six months.

If you're confident with colour, by all means brighten up a living space, but if you're not, try sticking to a neutral palette and add colour to the room with bold accessories. That way you can freshen up your colour scheme as often as you want.

ACCESSORIES

If you've decided to play it safe, but still want to have a bit of fun with colour, inject some life into your neutral space with flamboyant artwork. A colourful canvas will brighten up your wall and can be replaced as often as you want, that is, if your wallet is willing to oblige. If you've got no idea where to start looking for art, check out *Art Almanac* (www.art-almanac.com.au) to find a comprehensive guide to Melbourne's art galleries.

If investing in contemporary art doesn't interest you, why not create your own? Canvases are available at all art stores and by creating your

own masterpiece, you can design a modern piece to match your desired colour scheme perfectly.

Another sneaky colour tip is to place mirrors strategically around your room so that they pick up the colours of your art and accessories, adding character to the space. Colourful cushions will brighten up a neutral space instantly while a bright rug or throw will look great underneath, or on top of, a plain couch.

If your budget is tight, trawl local second hand stores for brightly coloured vases or glasses. Arrange a few flowers from the garden inside and you have an instant splash of colour for your room that is both stylish and guaranteed not to break the bank. Fill your shelves, bookcases, couches and floor with colour co-ordinated accessories, and you have an easy and completely temporary colour solution to liven up your space.

EXPERIMENTING IN THE BEDROOM

For those who are itching to experiment with paint, bedrooms are a great place to trial colours and textures. Guests don't spend a lot of time in this space so it can be as personalised as you like. If you love hot pink, splash out with a bold feature wall behind your bed. By placing it here, it will brighten up the room but won't keep you up all night.

Dazzling colours such as fiery reds, cobalt blue, tangerine, watermelon and even lime green will add energy and zest to a lifeless room. Bright, extravagant colours are great in hallways and entrances, because while these are high traffic areas, people don't tend to spend extended periods of time in them.

BLACK AND WHITE

Black and white colour schemes continue to be very fashionable. This modern take on vintage and Art Deco styles works really well in a range of spaces, from the traditional to the ultra modern. But if you find a black and white scheme a little cold, throw a few cosy cushions and rugs into a black and white living room, or break up a black and white kitchen with brightly coloured vases filled with flowers. A stunning multi-coloured chandelier could be the ultimate accessory against black and white walls in your dining room.



METALLIC MANIA

Metallic tones, both in paint and accessories, are still a popular design trend. Try metallic tones such as gold, copper, bronze and pewter. Opulent, luxurious designs are very fashionable and metallic paint can be a great way to achieve this look. Metallic paints, when applied correctly, can also add a wonderful sense of texture to your walls, but if you are applying it yourself, be sure to practise with a small area first as they can be tricky to apply. Accent your opulent look with fur rugs and throws, candles of all shapes and sizes and vases.

BACK TO NATURE

Rich, natural inspired tones such as earthy greens, browns, ochres, reddish chestnuts and sandy colours are very popular at the moment. Natural colours will warm up a cold room making it instantly inviting.

Water inspired colours are also in style. Soft blues and greens add a calm, tranquil feel to any room, while also making the area appear airy and spacious. These colours tend to work really well in bathrooms and other wet areas.

QUALITY PAINT

Once you have decided to paint, it's important to choose the right type of paint to use. Good quality paints are the way to go. Even though they may cost a little more, they will last a lot longer and you won't have to deal with the hassle of repainting every few years. It is also important to keep in mind that different types of paints will suit different surfaces.

Make sure you consult a professional before you purchase your paint. Flat finish paint will give you a matte look and is suitable for walls and ceilings. The pigments used in flat paints are coarse, so they diffuse light and minimise reflection. Gloss paint has a shiny look to it and is suitable for walls, woodwork and metal. Satin finish paint is a subtle alternative to bold, shiny gloss. It is suitable for walls and interior woodwork, and known for its durability. Low sheen paint is the final option. It's slightly shiny, very easy to clean and tends to be used in the wet areas of the home such as the bathroom, laundry or kitchen.

THE REBIRTH OF WALLPAPER

Paint is not the only option when it comes to putting colour on your walls, wallpaper is a popular alternative. Whether it's for a feature wall or an entire room, striking wallpapers have the ability to completely transform the look of a space.

Modern wallpapers are nothing like their historic counterparts. They range from bold patterns, retro inspired prints, seagrass and black and white prints to top of the range Chinoiserie wallpaper featuring exotic birds, insects, plants, flowers and trees. You can even get 'paintable' wallpaper, which is patterned white paper that you can paint in your desired colour.

When choosing a colour scheme for your home, pick colours that suit your personality and that you know you will be happy to live with. Colour can completely transform your space, so choose wisely, as after all, you are the one that has to live with it day in, day out. A successful colour makeover can transform a house into your dream home.