

# To colour or NOT TO colour

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photos DUALITY PHOTOGRAPHIC

The weather is finally warm after a long, cold, snowy, not to mention slow and wet spring thaw. After these long grey months, many people wish to be surrounded by colour. The question designers are often asked is, 'how do I introduce this into my home?' In theory, the desire may be strong, but when it comes to actually implementing the scheme, many people decide to go with neutral colours instead. Why are most people apprehensive to use colour?

## People fear that:

- Purchasing a piece of furniture in a colour may go out of style.
- They will grow bored of their colour selections.
- They could be making the wrong decision.
- Using too much or too little colour may not achieve their desired look.

Colour can affect your mood and emotions. It has the potential to incite cheerfulness, excitement, calmness, and even refresh the mind. We use colour every day to express ourselves, whether it is through our clothing, make-up, or hair colour. This approach can be transferred to our homes with research, careful planning and the boldness to allow yourself to express your colour infused personality into your home!

The first step is to begin researching current interior design concepts and ask yourself which ones you relate the most to. The following are some interior design concepts to start your brainstorming.

## VINTAGE

Embrace the past where vintage textiles are repurposed and retro period pieces are used. Take comfort in worn surfaces and different sheen



levels. Together they emphasize the diversity in design. Use timeless colours, heritage fabrics and rugs.

## MODERN VINTAGE

Take a bright and fresh approach to an interior that appreciates the past, but is refreshed and seen in a new light. Clean lines paired with character pieces create a timeless vision in your home.

## UNDERSTATED ELEGANCE

A subtle palette that utilizes soft colours paired with high contrasting textures and finishes. Light warm wood tones combined with soft notes of cream, blue, green, and greys are used in a restrained aesthetic. Shells, glass, crystal, marble, granite with subtle washes of metallic are often used. The palette speaks of quality.

## BIOPHILIC INTERIORS

Inspired by the beauty of Mother Nature, this pallet contains natural shades paired with nature, greenery, and natural light. This centers on how we experience a space and

our connection to nature. It often explores sustainability in our furniture and how we can eco-manufacture them. Interiors relate to the outdoors with the use of soft tones, wood, natural stone, and textured surfaces inspired by nature.

## MINIMALIST

This is a backdrop that embraces white, soft grey, charcoal, and black. Space is the canvas with notes of contrast, carefully crafted with pops of colour. Interior spaces center on the idea of reductive design elements to rid the space of unnecessary ornamentation and decoration.

## DISCOVER YOUR STYLE!

Start by creating a portfolio of images from resources like the internet, magazines, show homes, or any space you love. Examine the colours in the space and think about how the space makes you feel. Is it serene, stimulating, formal or informal, cozy or open? Then, make a list to help determine what best reflects your family and lifestyle.

## What is the character of your family home like?

### ACTION ORIENTED

Your life is busy, bustling and you are always on the go, whether it's partaking in sports or practices. You value a home full of fun and laughter. Vivacious active people are often attracted to oranges and reds or strong colours and strong contrasts.

### OUTDOORS AND NATURE

You would rather be outside experiencing nature and when you are at home, a sense of peace and harmony is prevalent throughout. You enjoy a sense of contentment about yourself and those who surround you. Colour preferences may be towards blues and greens, or a composition of cool hues combined with warm coloured accents. Retreat colours could be a combination of neutrals using textural elements. Think rattan, textural fabrics and wooden pieces with pronounced grain patterns for visual interest.

### ARTISTIC AND LIVELY

Are you imaginative and outgoing but also value introspection and privacy when you're at home? Colours like yellow, pink, and even pastels can have an uplifting effect on moods and express liveliness and happiness. Alternatively, a low contrast, monochromatic palette, with variations of one colour, may also appeal to this group.

It is likely that you may view your home as a combination of the above characteristics. By understanding your family dynamic and needs, you can determine the colour concept that best reflects your home and family.



## Now that you have done your research, it is time to pull the colour scheme together!

### INSPIRATION CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE

Is there a piece of art that you love, or even a rug or a swatch of fabric? Consider the colours in the piece, then select a main colour with one or two accent colours that can be a part of the colour scheme.

### ROOM ORIENTATION

Note how the sun shines into your space. Typically, north facing rooms do not have direct sun exposure so the light is softer. These rooms are often cooler and using warmer shades will balance out the space. South facing rooms see more sunlight and this could be an ideal space to play with darker colours.

### FLOORS AND CABINETRY

If you are planning to replace your floors or cabinets, consider using a neutral colour as these tend to be costly upgrades. Using neutral colours will give your space a timeless appeal and takes into consideration that your taste may change before your budget allows for replacing. Use colour in easily replaceable items like cushions, vases, and other accessories. Don't forget to remember that upholstered items will wear out and paint is an economical yet dramatic colour tool.

### WHAT COLOURS ARE IN YOUR FURNISHING?

Consider the colours in your existing furniture and decorations. These will influence your selections and how you apply this new scheme to your home.

### CONSISTENCY

Be sure to carry the colour scheme throughout the entire home. By using a different colour from your palette, you can create a different balance by playing with proportions. Colour has the ability to unify space and create harmony.

### HIERARCHY

Select a colour that you would like to use as the main colour. Then pick one or two accent colours and use them sparingly. If the colours are used uniformly in a space, they will compete with one another and create discourse.

### ACCESSORIES

When it comes to choosing accessories, pick pieces that relate and enhance the overall scheme. Colour is an essential tool to communicate personality in your home. Now that you're equipped with a guideline for colour selection, it's time to express yourself using colour in your home!

**Are you still unsure and feeling cautious? Call a designer! We are equipped with the ability to give constructive feedback and tweak as required. A consult can help you prevent making costly mistakes and meet colour with confidence!**

*Clarice is the principal designer of Fenwick & Company Interior Design. We transform your home or commercial space to express your character! [www.fenwickinteriordesign.ca](http://www.fenwickinteriordesign.ca), Telephone 204-487-5151.*