

By: Starr Miller

White Out



Have you ever walked into the paint store only to stand in front of all of those paint swatches and scratch your head in wonderment? I think this is why so many people just end up with white walls and call it a day. One wrong turn with a color that looked great on the swatch but horrible on the wall, and back to safe white. I encourage you to try again!

- Start with what you love and are attracted to in color. Do not let trend dictate your tastes. I find that people respond to colors in a very personal way. It could be the calming effect of blue or the vibrancy of red that makes you feel at home. It is your home and it should reflect you.

- Understand that certain colors drive certain responses in the brain. If you are a type "A" person you may need a cool calming space, and if you are an individual that craves sunshine, yellow may be your answer. Some interesting facts on color:

- Blue is a relaxing color due to its cool nature. It is not however the perfect color for a kitchen or dining room as studies show that it decreases hunger. (I need to paint my kitchen blue, post-haste!)

- Yellow is sunshine. It is perfect for a dark room that needs light. It is not however the perfect shade for a nursery as studies show that babies tend to cry more in yellow rooms.

- Red is sexy, stimulating, and awakening—perfect for a party. This is why you see so many red dining rooms.

- Orange is a friendly color. It invites conversation and community—perfect for a family room.

ORDER OF DECISION MAKING:

- I work with both rugs and fabrics at the same time. Rugs and fabrics must be coordinated and play off one another. The fabric choices will inform the rug choice and vice-versa. For instance, if the fabric choices have the feel of a North Carolina cabin, then the rug needs to work with that feel and not have the feel of a French chateau.


- Only after the rug, furnishings, and window treatments are chosen do I settle on a wall color.

HOW TO CHOOSE A WALL COLOR:

- When looking at paint swatches, look at the entire strip! The lightest and darkest colors on the strip will give you hints about the underlying tones that will be more apparent on a large wall than on a small swatch.

- Always get a sample of the color and try it out on a large piece of board and move it around the room. Look at it at different times of the day and night. How your rooms are situated with northern or southern exposures will change the color. The lighting in your home will change the color dramatically. Different types of bulbs accentuate some colors and can gray others.

- If you love a bright color, look at the same color with a touch of gray in it. Toning down the color will make it easier on the eyes in a large space.

Most people believe that the first thing they need to determine in a room design is the paint color; in reality, it is the last—just don't be afraid of it! 



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