

7 Reasons to Work with an Interior Designer Before You Begin Your Project.

By Debbie Costa, CKD

A lot of people think that working with an interior designer is a luxury only the wealthy can afford. That is a myth. A well-versed designer can help *anyone* save time and money.

If you're giving thought to a home or commercial design project – whether it's simply changing colors, re-designing a room or doing a remodel – the place to start *first* is consulting with an interior designer. Why? A good designer helps bring life to your vision while saving you time and money.

If you're like most people, your home is your biggest financial investment. Taking care of that investment structurally and aesthetically is important. So, whether your budget is \$1,000 or \$1 million, it just makes sense to consult with a designer before making significant changes. Here are 7 ways the right designer will help you in your decision-making process.

#1. They are a sounding board for your ideas. Whether you have a specific vision for what you want or just some dreamy ideas, your designer will listen to you and help bring shape to the vision. This is important because the more specific the vision, the more satisfied you will be with the outcome. This includes how much you'll eventually invest. Whether you're simply looking for ideas or you want a designer

to manage a big project, the initial hourly consultation is well worth the investment because, in the end, the designer is helping you get exactly what you want.

#2. They understand color. Based on your vision, the designer will help you find just the right colors of paint, carpet, even furniture, fixtures and accessories. Since color makes the room, your long-term satisfaction is at stake with selecting the perfect mix. The designer will help you focus in on the colors that creates long-term satisfaction and joy.



#3. Designers help you make the right product choices. A good designer is an expert in fabrics, materials, lighting, furniture, and everything else that goes into a project. For example, if you're re-designing a room with a lot of traffic, the designer will direct you

toward highly resilient fabrics that will hold up over the years. A designer may direct you to use certain paints in a child's room that are easy to wash, or help you match kitchen border tile with the right fixtures. This saves you from having to replace materials in the long run, while giving you the aesthetic you want.

#4. They have access to resources not available to you. Designers often have access to wholesalers and retailers that will only work with licensed interior designers, architects and contractors. By

using these resources the designer can often save you money while finding the product perfect for your vision.

#5. A designer saves you time. Knowing where to find the right products and materials is the designer's job. You could spend months trying to find the right sofa or accessory – while it may only take the designer a few days (or even hours) to find the perfect product.

#6. A designer can eliminate cost over-runs. This is especially true when you're doing a remodel or new construction, but it's important that you hire the designer before or at the same time you hire the architect or contractor. The designer gives shape to your vision. They'll know just how far windows need to be from doors, or how big a room really needs to be to accommodate how you'll use it. The designer communicates these needs to the builder, and you end up bringing in the job at or even under budget – rather than paying a lot more for designing after the fact.

#7. A designer who understands construction really saves you time and money. If your project involves architects and contractors, make sure your designer is familiar with the construction process. Not every designer can read or even understand a blueprint. Having one who does understand –or who even can draw plans herself – will be a blessing to the entire process because she will talk the language of the contractor. Good communication, which includes speaking “construction-talk”, is essential to not only your budget, but to the efficient flow of the project. In this way the designer can ensure that everyone's needs on the job are fulfilled and you get the result you want.

The ultimate reason for working with the right designer is that you get what you want. Whether

it's a simple hour of consultation over accessories like pillows or throw blankets, or hiring a designer to over-see your re-model, in the end it's about achieving your vision while spending exactly the right amount of money, and expending the right amount of time. A well-versed designer helps you eliminate anxiety and indecision – they will be your ally from beginning to end.

And that's the best reason to work with a designer. You have a trusted, experienced and knowledgeable ally and friend who wants you to have everything you've imagined.

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4 Quick Tips on Choosing the Right Designer for You.

Seek referrals. The best source of finding a designer is by asking people who've worked with designers.

Interview them. Do they listen to what you want, or do they have their own vision? Pick the one who is listening to you.

Do you “click:?” Is there chemistry? Getting along is *very* important. Can you picture yourself working with this person for several months?

Do they have the experience and background? Check their references. Are they certified? Do they have the professionalism you need to get what you want, while making the process efficient and smooth?

Follow these four suggestions and you'll be happy with the designer you choose.



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