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LNHBA's Best of the Lake
Design Competition Winners

Special Feature
Ask The Expert
All Things Home



WORLD LIVING FOR THE CITY COAST
ART HOUSE



Starr Miller

"Could you help me with paint colors?" is the most often

asked question in the design industry. It seems to be a simple question. It is typically followed by, "What's the "in" color?" and my all-time favorite, "Don't you have your go-to colors?"

Let's break this down:

"Could you help me with my paint color?" My firm only does this in the scope of a full design plan as I firmly believe it is the very last decision that should be made in the plan, unless the wall color is the designed to be the focus of the room. Sherwin Williams and many decorators will do this as a one-time consultation. Do not hesitate to reach out for this type of service.

The "Color of the Year." I teach classes on this topic. The simple answer is, yes, there are palettes of colors that go in and out of style. The Color Marketing Group plan these out years in advance based on trends in the world, economy and technology. These agencies are paid by corporations to determine "what's next in color" so that they can make changes in their product line and force perceived obsolescence on the consumer. It will funnel through the fashion industry all the way down to your home goods and Kitchen-Aid mixer.

These color changes are sometimes nostalgic and usually are fresh to the eye, offering something we have not seen in awhile—like a

breath of fresh air. This air is what gives these colors flight in the marketplace.

The Neutrals:

Do you remember when every home was painted a yellowy beige? Now we have had gray on our walls for the past 7+ years. What's next? Like in fashion, anything goes. What needs to be thought about is if it is fresh and a good neutral for your home and furnishings. In the marketplace paint neutrals are headed to a more mushroom greige (green undertone) or a sandy taupe (pink undertone) beige. While green and blue are not considered neutral by most; if you add a bit of grey or shade the color they can act as a more interesting neutral in your space.

How do you decide? Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you looking at the color on a white background or against your current color? A white background is the only way to truly see the color.
- Do you like the color? Don't choose a color simply because it is "in" vogue.
- Does the color you want complement the fixed elements of your home?
- Does the color complement your furnishings?
- Do you like the color at all hours of the day and night?

If you answered no to any of these questions, move on to a different color.

When hiring a painter:

Make sure that you do your homework. It is not a painter's

job to tell you what you should paint your space. They are painters. You do not want what they have been painting every other house recently. You are unique and need to choose color specifically for your home and life.

Make sure you specify:

- What brand of paint you expect them to use. While all can match paint, to truly get the same depth of color it is important to use the paint as developed by the specific paint company.
- What type of paint you want (Research!) Do you want something scrubbable? Do you want a paint that is especially long lasting? Do you want a paint that resists fading? Talk to your paint store.
- What sheen of paint you want. I like flat finishes on large spaces. It shows less flaws. I like an eggshell in a bath for water resistance.
- How many coats of paint you want.

- If your home was simply painted by the builder prior

to this or you are covering a dark color with a light color you will want at least two coats. Or a primer and a coat.

- If you are covering paint with the same color you may only need one coat.

As a professional interior designer, paint is the very last decision we make in a design. It is the easiest to manipulate and can be the icing on the cake. But I feel that the cake needs to be baked before the icing is added to the mix. Choose your entire design first and you will be much happier with the result. ■

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