



*Great Ideas
Come in
Small Packages*

Testing Colors for Your Walls

Spring is traditionally a time of intense re-decorating. This is probably because people who spend time indoors in the cooler months have more exposure to the drabness of their surroundings (which doesn't compare favorably to the bright updated rooms featured on television programs). Making the transition from white walls to colored walls can be daunting unless you have an "eye" for color and can visualize an entire room by looking at a small paint chip. The best way to get an accurate idea of your reaction to the proposed color scheme is to paint a four foot wide swath of the new wall color from floor to ceiling next to moulding painted with the new trim color. Paint the ceiling its new color. Now view the swaths of color during both daylight and evening hours to see how the natural light and the artificial light affect the color.

Color actually is the reflected light from the wall as perceived by your brain (which explains why color perception is such an individualist thing). No two people see colors exactly the same. As we age, our eyes see colors with a more yellowish caste. When we see colors we react both physiologically and psychologically (such as a decreased heart rate and feelings of serenity). Personal response to a particular hue is very individualized. Some people derive a calming sensation when they are in a blue room. Other people find a blue room depressing.

Color is the ultimate expression of the homeowner's style. The more extroverted person will want several colors in their home, changing the palette from room to room. An introvert will prefer only subtle shifts in a single hue to be used throughout the house.

No matter how we see color, it has the power to create spaces that are either mundane or special. Color can highlight architectural features and create a sense of atmosphere in an otherwise ordinary space. If you want to highlight a special piece of furniture or art, select a strong contrasting color for the walls. If you want to minimize the impact of large furniture in small space, select a wall color that blends with the fabric of the furniture. Darker colors will make a wall appear to recede. Strong saturated colors create exciting spaces with a dramatic impact. Weaker pastel colors are more relaxing.

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