

Five Fundamentals of Smart Decorating

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Most people gravitate towards the beautiful photographs in design magazines. But actually reading the articles is a terrific way to gain an understanding of the designer's thought process in creating the space. Here are five simple decorating fundamentals gleaned from practical experience.

- Buy The Things You Love
- Go For Quality, Not Quantity
- Form Follows Function
- Invest in Paint
- Lighting is Everything

Fill your home with things you love

Purchase art, furniture and objects d'art that excite and move you even if you don't know where they will go in your home when you buy them. These are the items that will give you the greatest pleasure over time and will help to create a space that is uniquely yours.

Invest in quality not quantity

If your budget is tight, start furnishing your home with a few good pieces as the nucleus of a design scheme that will evolve and change over time as your finances permit. You are much better off buying good quality **used** furniture that can be refinished or reupholstered than buying lesser quality **new** furniture with a limited lifespan.

Form follows function

When planning the décor of a room, start with a clear understanding of how you want to use and experience the space and use that knowledge to guide the selection of the furnishings, fixtures and finishes to complete the room.

Paint is your best investment

A good paint job in the right color scheme can perform miracles in a drab space. Dollar for dollar, it is your best investment.

Lighting is everything

It creates atmosphere, drama and intrigue in a room no matter what the caliber of the furnishings within. The first rule of good lighting is to install dimmer switches on all ceiling fixtures and wall sconces. The second rule is to use table and floor lamps to create pools of light and shadow that enhance the feeling of intimacy and warmth no matter what the size of the room.