



INTERIORS

HOW TO WORK WITH A

# Luxury Interior Designer





# Is hiring an interior designer worth it?

With the rise of DIY home projects and the seemingly infinite amount of inspiration you can find on social media these days, hiring an interior designer may feel more like a luxury than an actual need.

In actuality, the role of an interior designer goes far beyond the ability to put together a mood board. Designers bring an invaluable level of expertise and project management skills to every project, not to mention having all the connections and vetted resources needed to see your vision come to life.



## Protip

It's important to know the difference between an interior designer and an interior decorator. An interior designer creates functional spaces within a building, while an interior decorator only adorns a space with decorative elements. Understanding what your needs are will help you hire the one that's right for you!



# How to choose the right interior designer?

Finding the right interior designer is more than simply looking at their portfolio of work, although that's a great place to start. The ideal working relationship between client and designer is founded on comfort and trust. Comfort in expressing your opinion while trusting where the designer is going with the creative vision is what makes for the most exciting and beautiful projects.

## Where to begin

Unless you have a personal referral, you'll likely begin your search online. Here are key things to consider when figuring out which designer is the best fit for your project: hire the one that's right for you!

- ✓ A review of their portfolio
- ✓ An understanding of how they price their jobs
- ✓ An understanding of how they handle time/budget
- ✓ Client Testimonials (Can be found on their website, Houzz, or Google)



## Protip

Look for a portfolio that speaks to your sense of style. A good designer will not only know the basic principles of design but how to tailor them to their client's unique tastes. Finding a designer that showcases designs that fit your style can make the entire process a lot easier.

# Asking the right questions

You'll find that choosing the right interior designer is a lot like dating. Since you'll be spending a lot of time together, you need to ask the right questions to see if your values and personalities are aligned in addition to understanding the creative vision for the project.



## ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS



We recommend that you ask potential candidates these questions before ever signing a contract:

- ✓ How would you describe your design style?
- ✓ What design services do you offer?
- ✓ How much do you charge and can you work with my budget?
- ✓ Who do you have connections with in the industry?
- ✓ How will you present your design concept and ideas?
- ✓ Who will be working on my project and how are they selected?
- ✓ What happens if I don't like the design?

### Designer Do's & Don'ts

**DO:** Research your style preferences in advance

**DO:** Feel free to voice your opinion

**DO:** Set a budget for your project and share it in detail with your designer

**DON'T:** Underestimate the scope and timeline of your project

**DON'T:** Have unrealistic expectations

**DON'T:** Hire a designer without having a signed contract



## Protip

For the most seamless experience, we always recommend finding an interior designer that offers full-service design. This is service that provides not only the complete design plan and all of the selections but also manages the purchasing, tracking, receiving, delivery, and installation of all of these elements.



# When should you hire an interior designer?

If you're planning on building a new home or having major renovations done, you should reach out to an interior designer as soon as you begin working with your architect or builder. During the planning phase, it's critical to discuss how your family will use the new home. This includes the furnishings plan, lighting plans, and the need for light control within these new spaces. Also, interior designers have a network of trusted trades that we've built relationships with over time. And because we work so closely with our trades, if needed, we can recommend our own trusted trades that are part of our network for your project.

When you're ready to invest in new furnishings, window treatments, and decor for your home, it's important to bring in an interior designer from the start. Designers help clients with space planning and selections. We also have exclusive access to vendors that you didn't even know existed (and have a superior level of quality for many of the retailers available to the public). We also offer full-service design, which is a service that provides not only the complete design plan and all of the selections, but also manages the purchasing, tracking, receiving delivery, and installation of all of these elements.



## *Protip*

We suggest allocating about 7-10% of your home's value for interior design expenses as a general rule of thumb. This will give you a design with some mid-range products. If you're looking for high-level or luxury design, we recommend budgeting about 25% of your home's overall value.



# Getting started with the design process

The first phase is about getting to know you, your lifestyle, and your space. This is the time to review reference photos with your designer that align with your goals, ideas, and overall vision. There will be meetings where you will see fabrics, wallpapers, tiles, and an array of other finishes depending on the scope of your project.

Once the design direction has been solidified, you'll enter the schematic design phase where your designer will start to visualize your space three-dimensionally. As the client, you can expect one or two meetings in this phase to review the furniture selections, window treatments, architectural details, and preliminary floor plans.

The next phase is design development where the designer ensures your project is executed according to plan. There are a lot of moving parts during this phase, and your designer will coordinate with contractors, workmen, and installers to keep track of it all and troubleshoot any issues that arise.

The installation is the final event in the design process. All soft goods, window treatments, and furnishings are installed by the receiving agent they were shipped to and your interior designer.



## Protip

The client should expect 6 to 9 months for smaller-scale projects, and 9 months to 1 year for larger projects that require construction permits.

# Interior Design Glossary

When you begin exploring the world of interior design, it may feel like speaking a whole new language. Here are some of the important terms to add to your design vocabulary.

**Bespoke:**

Something custom that is made especially for you

**Layered:**

Building interest through various levels of elements

**Tailored:**

Something with clean lines that holds up through the test of time

**Clean:**

A linear and uncluttered style with no frills

**Timeless:**

design style that stays away from trends to avoid quickly dating

**Curated:**

Design that incorporates distinct style with a point of view

**Lead time:**

The time between ordering an item and shipping or delivery

**Drop Ship:**

Delivery direct to a client's home

**Proforma:**

This means that you're going to pay for the goods before you receive them

