

Worcestershire interior designer, Elaine Lewis, provides professional insights into using a blend of three colours to create the perfect mood

# The ***FEEL GOOD*** factor

**T**he art of welcoming people anywhere is the art of creating an environment that makes people feel good as soon as they walk through the door. From hotels that use their interior design to create a more pleasing atmosphere, to the way individuals adapt their homes to better host guests, friends and families, the ultimate question is 'how does the room make you feel?' Have you ever considered the psychological effect of interior design on your subconscious? Believe it or not, the choices you make on how your home or business look will have a profound effect on emotions and perceptions.

Usually when we discuss interior design, we talk about the aesthetic aspects of achieving a certain look, style or trend, but this is often only one piece of the puzzle. How does this room or indeed business premises make you feel as you walk in? Is the room welcoming, light and airy, calming and peaceful using a muted colour palette, or bright, stimulating and uplifting, using a dynamic colour palette? Decide your feeling is as important as deciding your colour palettes. How do you want this space to feel? Colour is the main component in how we experience the world around us and the colours in our environment have a definite effect on our mood and emotions. Firstly, remember that when you're choosing which colours to use in your interior design, three picks are better than one. A neutral colour for the largest areas like walls and floors, a calm colour for the furniture and other items, then pick a third, more dramatic colour to pop into your statement accessories. Pick the colour palette that depicts the 'feeling' you want to achieve. Here is how the choice of colour can make you feel:

## RED

Symbolises power and passion. It can be used to warm up spaces and make them feel more intimate.

## ORANGE

Offers a jolt of energy and innovation. It is best used as an accent because too much can leave people feeling overwhelmed.





## YELLOW

Associated with happiness, creation and creativity. It works well with calming neutrals and in a room with lots of natural daylight to create a peaceful environment.

## GREEN

Known for its soothing qualities, green is the perfect choice for a hallway or foyer because it eases the transition from the outdoors.

## BLUE

Perpetuates feelings of calm and freshness. Great for bathrooms.

## PURPLE

Connote royalty and luxury. Purple is a great choice for a formal living room or master bedroom because it adds an air of lush sophistication.

## GREY

Gives a sense of relaxation and serenity. Use in home offices and bathrooms.

## BROWN

Like green, brown's natural roots give it a relaxing touch. Choose it for rooms where families gather; also around furniture groupings that will invite conversation.

## BLACK

An assertion of power. Use for statement pieces to which you want to draw the eye.

## WHITE

Relates a sense of cleanliness and purity. It is great for defining spaces, but use white in conjunction with other colours or it will read as sterile.

Once you put colour on the walls, it's time to decide how to fill the spaces. Every object chosen to fill a space helps to inform its function. The combination of every item that fills an interior, from seating to wall hangings and down to the coasters that sit on your coffee table, act as an expression of our personalities and desires.

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Besides the importance of colour, spaciousness and natural elements, the textures and shapes of furniture in the house can also produce certain emotional responses.

They should represent natural elements (earth, water, wood, metal and fire). The rich texture of a 'shaggy rug' will enhance the sense of comfort and happiness, while the decorative elements such as a wall clock or vase will promote strength and independence.

The same discipline teaches us that furniture should be arranged in a way that does not create 'dead space' (furniture arranged against the wall), since it fosters negative energy. A seamless flow of the elements in the room allows the energy to flow equally and seamlessly, and balance should always be more important than symmetry.

With all this being said, it is perhaps not surprising that interior designers work with some knowledge of psychology to improve the emotional impact of space at home and work. Some techniques use a persuasive design (such as seating around a table to boost communication), others use spatial perception to create a sense of freedom and stimulation and, last but by no means least, a range of natural finishes to create an optimal atmosphere for relaxation and health.

The notion that home is a happy place is definitely correct but it's also important to realise that homes are not promoting happiness per se, but they can be designed and formed in such a way that promotes good health and happiness. ◉



*'live a life less ordinary'*

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