Interior Decoration

When decoration needs permission

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QUICK SUMMARY

- Interior designers can project manage or serve as consultants
- Key considerations: layout, furniture selection, and ergonomics
- Create a mood board before approaching designers
- Check portfolios, references, and trade association membership
- Agree clear brief and transparent fee structure upfront

When Permits Apply Indoors

Interior designers can make a marked difference to the quality of a construction project. With their help you can create a unique space that develops your vision while also meeting your design requirements. That makes them a valuable asset, particularly if you are trying to create a space that truly relates to your clientele, business image or location.

Interior designers often offer flexible services. They may be able to project manage your entire project to make sure that it is completed on time, or they can serve as your consultant if you would prefer to take on the responsibility yourself. They can also co-ordinate your other contractors, such as architects and engineers, from a design standpoint, and handle the ordering of materials.

Some of the important questions that interior designers will ask may be how time, colour and interior furnishings will impact upon the interior design of your development. They may also determine how each interior design relates to the overall scheme of your development and analyse your options for finishing your development off. This will save you time and money as they can help you to visualise what the project will look like before it is completed.

Once construction is complete, interior designers can help you develop your desired space by showing you products suitable for your home environment. Because they will have an understanding of your specialised needs, they can help you decide on the right design scheme, taking into account factors such as light, space and the overall co-ordination of the building. Normally there will be a nominal charge for this service, but it is worth it to have a holistic view of how your vision for your development can be realised.

Interior decoration and design – it’s not all curtains and cushions

There are some key areas that must be taken into consideration:

Layout

Part of the process of creating a space that is both pleasing and functional is to understand the behaviour and desires of the end users, including how they will move through or around this area.

While one way to manipulate the layout of a room is by moving or removing walls, a more subtle approach may be to use furniture and other objects to achieve this outcome. The location of items within a space can create a pleasing flow without detracting from the sense of freedom that is has to offer. While there are many design rules that work well within spaces, designers are challenging them and proving that some rules can be broken. However, in order to ensure form and function work together, a designer must also take into consideration accessibility and escape options.

Furniture

The quality of furniture can heavily influence a project’s success.

Whether fixed or mobile, it is the designer’s job to make sure that the specified items work with the space and that the functionality of the space remains intact. You may not think of plants as furniture, but they are an aspect of interior design that should be explored.

Ergonomics

Given the amount of time we spend inside, it’s only natural for us to want to improve the environmental quality of our indoor spaces.

An uncomfortable and unhealthy interior space has been proven to be harmful to both physical and mental health. The comfort and ergonomics of a space is influenced by many aspects, including a breeze through an open window and the temperature upon entering a space. When looking at interior decoration, the colour, brightness and perceived depth of a space are among the main factors that can ensure a positive reaction.

Why hire an interior designer?

There are many reasons why a homeowner might choose to hire an interior designer.

For some, it’s the advantage of having a design professional lead the design process. For others, who may need help figuring out how to achieve a desired look or style, may benefit from the expertise of a professional. An interior designer will approach the project with fresh eyes, help solve problems and look at ways to enhance a space.

Where to start

Before approaching prospective designers, it can be helpful to look through magazines or websites to find images and design inspiration that reflect what you are trying to achieve. Creating a mood board will help to showcase what it is that you like and dislike, which in turn will help the designer when planning design schemes or selecting pieces for your home.

Consider whether there is a piece of furniture or art that you want to structure the room around. Such a focal point can influence the scheme of the room and be a useful starting point for your designer.

Do your research

Before signing a contract with an interior designer, make sure to do your research. Look at a selection of portfolios, as this will help you to make an informed choice that fits your style and budget.

Always meet with a prospective designer to make sure you can communicate well with them. It sounds simple, but it’s extremely important to build a good rapport with your interior designer and that they understand your requirements from the start.

Ask to be shown examples from their previous projects; prospective designers will be happy to provide photography or client testimonials. This will allow you to learn more about the designer and whether they will be a good fit for your makeover.

Be clear about your time frame. It’s very important that the prospective interior designer is aware of any time constraints and your aims for a completion date. A good interior designer will tell you whether a deadline is feasible and if it fits their current workload. For the right designer you may need to be flexible.

Budget matters

It is important to set a clear budget. Before signing a contract, ask your prospective interior designer to explain how they cost projects. Choose a designer who is transparent about their fee structure: do they charge an hourly rate or set a fixed charge for the whole project? A clear brief should be agreed up front and a detailed proposal with transparent costs should follow.

An experienced interior designer will be up to date on all the latest design trends. They can procure goods that are unique and often for a better price than the public can obtain. The final decision rests with the client but keep an open mind. You may not have initially chosen an item that they have selected but listening to their recommendations on materials, colour or layout may help you see the space in a different light.

Check if the professional, supplier or contractor is a member of a relevant trade association. At worst, you may have recourse should things go wrong and at best it could ensure you’ve found the right project partner.