

Creating that “magazine” look in your home

By Maria Fox

Do you wish you could get the designer look of your favorite magazine or model home? You can — with a little practice and a few designer secrets you can learn to use home accents to add interest, style and individuality to your home's décor.

Before you get started, take some time to consider what colors you are naturally drawn to. Keep in mind; the colors you choose will be the single most unifying factor of your design theme, so stick to them. Too many colors will result in a muddled, unprofessional result. Look through magazines for design ideas. Notice the reoccurring styles, colors and themes that appeal to you.

Think of three words that best express the look you want to achieve. Words like, soft, elegant and comfortable or sophisticated, sleek and dramatic will help you to refine your interior choices. Start a collection of interior choices of paint chips, swatches and pictures and carry it with you for easy reference.

To create the most impact, choose home accents that have the proper scale for the place they are intended. Good designers create that “wow” factor in large part by using accessories that are in scale with the room or even slightly larger. The biggest mistake many people make is opting for accessories that are too small. When choosing your accessories bigger is always better. Impressive decorating is not busy — it's bold. When in doubt, go larger.

Too many little objects can easily result in a cluttered look. Don't try to decorate

every surface. Rather, select a few key areas and display groupings using complimentary colors and like styles. Use accessories in various shapes, sizes, heights and textures to add more interest, impact and balance. A mix of elements like wood, metal, ceramic, glass and foliage creates a harmonious appeal. Above all else: stay true to your color selections. Straying from your color palette will reap disappointing results. When making decorating purchases, referring to your collection of interior paint chips and swatches will save you time and money.

For more flexibility, invest in key pieces that you can move from room to room. Things like, baskets, candlesticks, glass jars. A great example might be a wire basket. Use it in the kitchen to display fruits and vegetables, in the bath to hold rolled towels, or even in the family room to showcase a collection of shells.

Finally, regardless of a room's style, designers will always add some form of foliage. This could be in the form of a tree, floral arrangement, greens or a balanced combination of all three. This final element gives life to a room, and shouldn't be forgotten. With practice the art of accessorizing will feel more natural and become an extremely enjoyable process.

So gather up your swatches, paint chips, pictures and measurements and you'll be on your way to decorating success.

Information courtesy of Wight's Home & Garden, 5026 196th St. SW, Lynnwood. Contact them at (425) 775-3636 or visit www.wights.com.