

Decorating mistakes you can avoid



Lois Pade



Lizzie Huck

BY SARA RAE LANCASTER | KENOSHA NEWS CORRESPONDENT

From the moment you walk through the front door, your home says a lot about you: your likes, your style and even your schedule.

Put your best face forward and avoid these common decorating mistakes by following the simple suggestions from Kenosha interior designers Lois Pade, owner and designer at Decorating Den Interiors, and Lizzie Huck of L. Huck Interiors.



Mistake: Too many decorating styles under one roof

SOLUTION: Creating a natural flow between rooms doesn't mean you have to limit your home to one specific style. Blend different decorating styles by incorporating contrasting styles in each room. For example, incorporate a modern photo frame or rug in a more traditionally styled room by coordinating the colors of the two different styles.

"That way the styles will feel more blended," Huck said.

But a word of caution about colors as they are related to paint: choose your furnishings, window treatments, flooring and accessories first.

"Most homeowners think paint is the first thing to select. It is actually the last piece of the puzzle, unless it is the only part of the room being changed," Pade said.

Tie the room together by using no more than three different colors or patterns in a space, Huck advised.

"For example, you could use a paisley, a stripe and a texture pattern within a coordinating or complementary color family," she said. Texture, she added, brings a sense of warmth to a space and is easy to incorporate through the use of throw pillows, rugs, blankets and upholstery.

Mistake: Too much clutter

Nothing adds color, interest and your personal signature to a room like accessories. But displaying too many accessories in one place can create a cluttered and disorganized appearance. It's one of the most common mistakes both Pade and Huck see in homes.

"Think of accessories as jewelry for your house," Huck added. "You wouldn't wear all your jewelry at once, so why would you display all your home's accessories at once?"

SOLUTION: Less is more.

Curb the chaos by rotating items by season and telling friends and family you are trying to de-clutter. Around the holidays, Pade suggests offering gift ideas that are consumable, like gift cards.

Also, avoid making impulsive purchases. "Many times homeowners will purchase an accessory because they like it, but then don't know where to place it in their home," Pade said. Items purchased without an intended use or location in the home either look out of place or end up in storage.

Huck advises her clients to set an intention and a plan for each room.

"If you want to create more space, think about what you really use in that room or want the room to say. Then decide how you can display those items tastefully," she said. "Make your checklist of those items you absolutely need so that room functions and looks great."

Mistake: Not paying attention to size and scale

Sure, that overstuffed, coffeehouse-style couch looks comfy, but will it dwarf your living room? Ignoring the size of a room and outfitting it with pieces that are too large — or too small — can drastically change the perception of a room's size.

SOLUTION: "When people go shopping, they go to this huge showroom where there are high ceilings and no walls and the furniture looks so small," said Huck.

Both Huck and Pade suggest shopping with the room's measurements and a small tape measure in hand. That way, if you see something that catches your eye — a chair, a rug, a picture frame — you can accurately assess whether the piece will fit the space.

Apply the same mindset when selecting flooring materials.

"If the flooring has a pattern, make sure the pattern matches the room's size," Huck advised. For example, avoid using small tiles or a laminate flooring with a small pattern in a large bathroom.



Mistake: Artwork hung too high

Artwork is meant to be admired, but if it's hung too high no one will notice it. It will also make a room appear unbalanced.

SOLUTION: Center art at eye level.

"To create the best feel, use eye level as the basic starting point," Huck recommended, and resist the urge to hang everything on the wall. Use other spaces of the home creatively to display artwork and pictures.

"People are leaning pictures, artwork or even mirrors against mantels or large walls," Huck said. "This not only frees up wall space, but when strategically placed, creates a focal point in the room."

Mistake: A new look requires a shopping spree

"When people redecorate a space, they often think they need to buy everything new," Huck said.

Save your cash and the potential for future clutter by finding new purposes for items you already have.

SOLUTION: Use what you have.

Some of the nicest spaces Huck sees are those that marry old with new.

"Go through your attic and see what you've been storing that is new to you and those entering your home. Play up existing pieces you already have by rearranging their location," Huck suggested. "A good room is something that brings the old and new together."

With some thoughtful planning and a few simple steps, you'll soon be saying, "There's no place like home."