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FALL 2017

MAGAZINE

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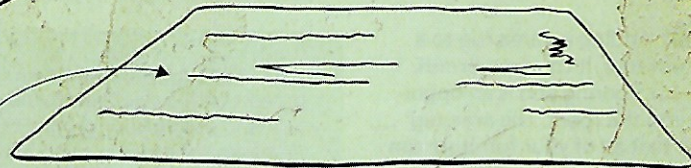
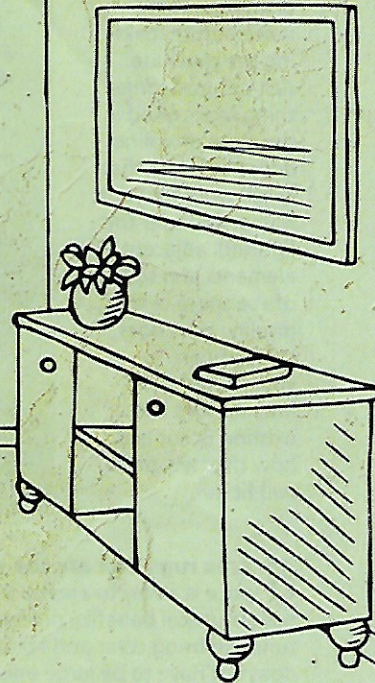
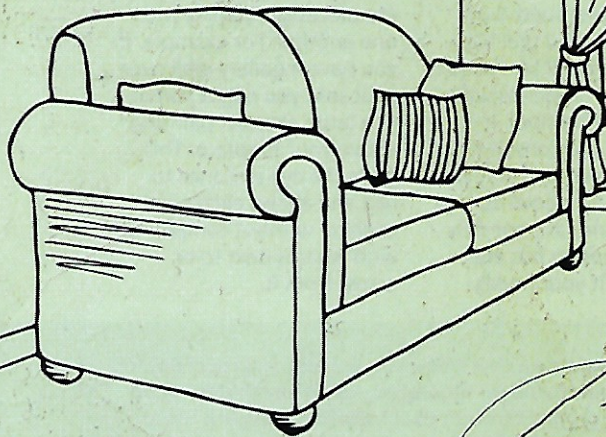
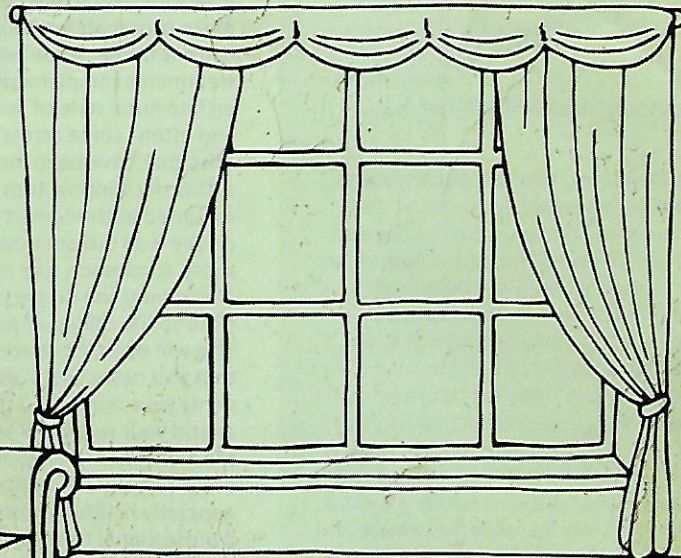
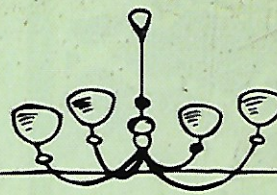


## space by space

**Ignoring gallery wall size:**  
Choose groupings of art that fit with the scale of the wall.



**Draperies at wrong height:**  
Mount the drapery rod as close to the ceiling as possible to make your room feel bigger.



**Too-small area rug:** The rug should be large enough to anchor at least the front leg of your furniture.

# Design intervention

Five mistakes to avoid when decorating your space

BY AMY SMITH

**A**s an interior designer, I see a lot of homes. Every space is unique, and clients have their individual style. Clients invite me into their homes for a multitude of reasons. Some are interested in a complete remodel while others may want assistance with space planning for a single room. Though the style, motivation and task at hand vary from client to client, I do see people falling into the same mistakes time and again. Here I share five of the most common and easily avoidable oversights in home decorating. >>



**1 Purchasing without a plan.** Determine what your space is lacking before shopping, and only purchase pieces that fit the criteria. If purchasing this item is not bringing you one step closer to your long-term plan, then think twice before making the purchase. Just because something looks good in the store or online does not mean that it will work for your home. Consider the lighting, adjacent elements and scale of the space in the display. How does this compare to your home? Take into account the existing decor and how this new piece will fit in.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Finish selections in shades of gray

**2 Believing that all neutrals are created equal.** Many think that white, gray and beige are neutral and that anything will go with a neutral. In my years as a designer I have never stumbled upon a neutral that coordinated with every other color. Even what we consider to be "just white" has color in it, and these colors are evident when they are viewed with adjacent colors. It is at that time that we realize that "just white" paint has a pink cast to it, and that gray carpet actually looks a little blue. Always request a sample and look at it in your space before making a purchase.

**3 Installing draperies at an inappropriate height.**

Draperies are an excellent way to complete a room, but they can be a financial investment. Since this is an element of your home that you will live with for a very long time, it is best to make sure that, regardless of the current trends, these window treatments complement the architectural style of your home. Too often I come across draperies that have been installed across the window trim or are mounted at the correct height close to the ceiling as possible. This will open the space in ways that you never imagined. Suddenly your ceiling will feel higher and your space will feel wider. Most commonly, draperies will break just shy of the floor. It is generally helpful to consult with a professional to ensure that you are considering all elements, and that your draperies are not only aesthetically pleasing but also functioning to fit your needs.

**4 Small groupings of art on a large wall.**

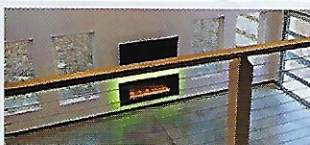
Creating a gallery wall is a great opportunity to showcase some smaller pieces and bring a lot of interest to a space. When purchasing wall decor make sure that it fits with the scale of the wall that you intend to hang it on. It is crucial that the overall size of the gallery utilizes enough of the wall space and that it is balanced out with larger scale pieces on adjacent walls. Generally speaking, more than one large grouping of art in a space can create an element of clutter. You then have many different pieces competing with one another. For example, if you have a gallery wall over your sofa you might consider a large abstract painting above your fireplace. This gives the eye a chance to rest and allows each piece to shine without competing with what is next to or across from it.

**5 Area rugs that are too small.** Adding an area rug to a space is a way to anchor the furniture. It creates warmth, has acoustical benefits, protects your flooring and is an opportunity to bring color and texture into the room. The area rug does not have to be large enough that all of your furniture can fit on it. In the living room it should be large enough that you can place at least the front leg of your furniture on the rug. You want to step off of the furniture onto a warm rug rather than the cold floor. This also helps to keep the rug in place and prevents shifting. The rug under a dining table should be large enough that when the chair is pushed away from the table it is still sitting on the rug. This is especially helpful if you have hardwood floors so that the chair does not scratch the floor.

Decorating a home can be an overwhelming process. Approaching this process with a clear vision and an organized plan is key to staying on task and seeing your project through to completion. Keeping these simple suggestions in mind will guide you in bringing your vision to life and enable you to embark on your next project with confidence.

» *Amy Smith is an interior designer at Stephan Design, Inc., where she spends her days designing residential and business interiors. Smith obtained a bachelor of arts in interior design from Purdue University and continues her education to bring the most innovative product and design solutions to the Greater Lafayette area. Submit questions, comments and design-related topics to [info@stephandesignstudio.com](mailto:info@stephandesignstudio.com).*

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