



A HOMEOWNERS GUIDE
To choosing an inspired paint colour palette
eBook

Colour with confidence

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First steps - Finding your creative muse

A STARTING POINT

Colour choices can be one of the toughest but most important and rewarding design decisions you can make to transform your home. This helpful easy-to-follow guide to choosing colour is a great way to navigate your colour journey.

Before you dash off to your local paint store only to be overwhelmed by the sheer volume of colour options, there are a couple of steps to check off first. These steps will have you choosing potential colour options with confidence and purpose.

So, to begin, ask yourself, "what inspires me?"

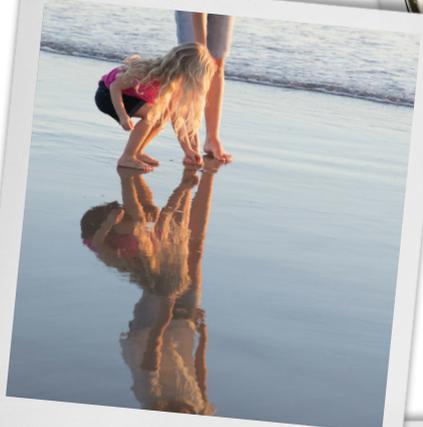
Look for an item in your home that resonates with you. A photo, piece of artwork or magazine clipping. Or it may be something dear to you, like your Grandmother's favourite vintage chair, or a collectable you brought home from overseas.

Use this item as your springboard, a starting point for your colour scheme.

WHAT
INSPIRES ME?



MAGAZINE CLIPPING



CHERISHED MEMORY



FAVOURITE ARTWORK



FAVOURITE PIECE OF FURNITURE



NATURES COLOUR PALETTE



NATURES COLOUR PALETTE

How to choose colours you actually like

REFER - Refer to your inspirational image or item. In this example, the inspiration is a landscape.

IDENTIFY - 3 colours or tonal textures you like. If this is difficult, you may want to add another inspirational item alongside this first to bring other colours into play.

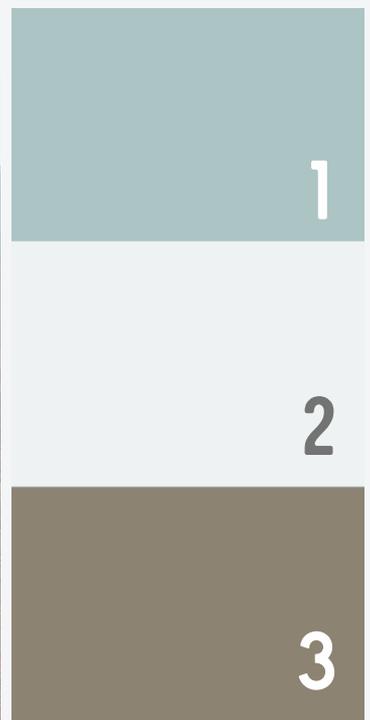
EXPLORE - Now go to your preferred paint manufacturers website and search out the closest paint colour matches from your 3 inspirational colours.

- <https://www.dulux.co.nz>
- <https://www.resene.co.nz>
- <https://www.aaltopaint.co.nz>

TRY AND GET TO A
SHORTLIST STAGE ONLINE
BEFORE YOU VISIT YOUR
LOCAL PAINT STORE

PRO
TIP

EXPAMPLE INSPIRATIONAL IMAGE



DULUX matches are:

- 1 - Lakeside
- 2 - Southern Alps
- 3 - Shoe Island

RESENE matches are:

- 1 - Chi
- 2 - Eighth Black White
- 3 - Double Napa

AALTO matches are:

- 1 - Lure 1/2
- 2 - Ice White
- 3 - Structure



Identifying your 'Not negotiables'

WHAT IS ALREADY DECIDED?



WHAT SURFACES
MUST I WORK AROUND?
WILL THEY COMPLIMENT MY
NEW COLOUR SCHEME?

IMAGE | HAUS OF CRUZE



IDENTIFYING 'NOT NEGOTIABLES'

Before considering any paint colours, identify any elements in the room that will remain in place. These may include timber flooring and hard surfaces such as bench tops, tiled areas or cabinetry. It may also be a favourite or expensive furnishing you are unlikely to replace in the future.

In these spaces, surfaces count as a colour. So keep in mind that if you introduced 3 additional colours, the result would be overuse of colour, which is not desirable.

Where to paint each colour?

DOMINANT, SECONDARY AND ACCENT COLOURS

Start with your favourite colour and your large largest wall. This is the dominant colour and acts as the foundation colour for the room. It's a place for your eye to settle when first entering, so it's imperative to get this right. Theoretically, the dominant colour should cover 60% of your surface space. Typically your walls. If this colour is not quite right, let's say it's too overbearing or somewhat insipid, refer to your colour cards collected from the paint store and select a colour either side of your chosen favourite.

Your second colour is either:

- A. Your second favourite
- B. A hard surface like flooring, [refer to page 2](#)

*If there's no place for the secondary paint colour in a scheme, feel free to omit it.



Thirdly is your accent colour. Often used for trim and doors. But may also be cabinetry, benches, wardrobes, bookshelves, and other smaller painted surfaces.



60%

OF THE SURFACES ARE
THE DOMINANT COLOUR

30%

SECONDARY
COLOUR

* IF YOU OMIT YOUR
SECONDARY PAINT COLOUR,
INTRODUCE IT BACK
INTO THE SCHEME LATER
WITH ACCESSORIES

PRO
TIP

10%

ACCENT
COLOUR

4

Whites... & where to paint them

WHITE WILL GROUND YOUR SPACE

You will also need a white. There are many whites to choose from. Every white has its own special attributes, and therefore lends itself to a particular use. White can be categorised into 4 groups.

1. PURE, TRUE WHITE

True white sometimes referred to as Appliance White or Vivid white, is pure white, straight from the can, no tint no shade and no colour added. Choose pure white for:



- An accent colour for trims and doors
- As a secondary colour in a monochromatic colour scheme
- Ceilings as this surface reflects the least light
- Looks great with bright blocks clean prime colours

2. NEUTRAL WHITES

Neutral whites are the most versatial of all whites, they are adaptable and work well alongside other colours they are paired with. They are subtly warm and have good light reflection.



- Adaptable - suitable for high or low light rooms
- A white which is simply 'just there' not asking for any attention
- Use neutral white if you're unsure about what white to choose

3. COOL WHITES

Cool whites often carry blue or grey undertones and are useful in tempering bright light. They appear softer to the eye and will give a feeling of a larger space within the room.



- Perfect for high light rooms that receive all day sun
- Good for subconsciously cooling a space down
- Gives a feeling of voluminous space in a room

4. WARM WHITES

Warm whites have subtle peach, pink, or yellow undertones. They invite a relaxed warmth into your home.



- Softens a space so it feels more friendly
- Ideal for cooler rooms situated on the shaded side of the house

Don't be afraid of the dark

The thought of using dark colours in your home can be scary. However, a dark colour applied to a wall in the right location can look stunning! Deep hues bring a richness to a space unachievable when only using a light colour palette.

Dark colours offer a perfect backdrop for fresher lighter colours to be exhibited in front, such as furniture and artworks. Creating strong tonal variations like paring crisp clean white architraves with a receding dark neutral wall will introduce a timeless and classic touch to a room.

Moody dark colours cleverly partnered with splashes of colour, accent lighting and mirrors, set a cosy and intimate scene. You'll soon realise there was no need to be scared of the dark at all!

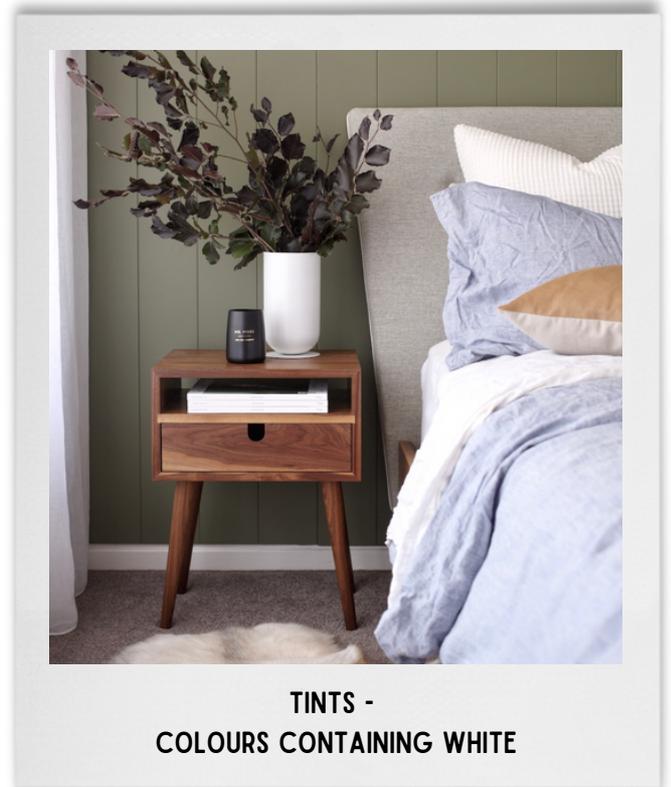
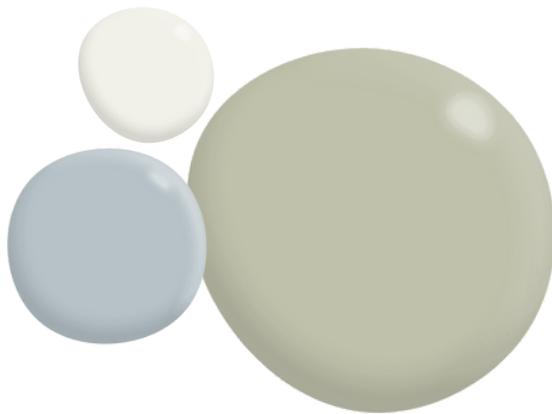


Colour Psychology

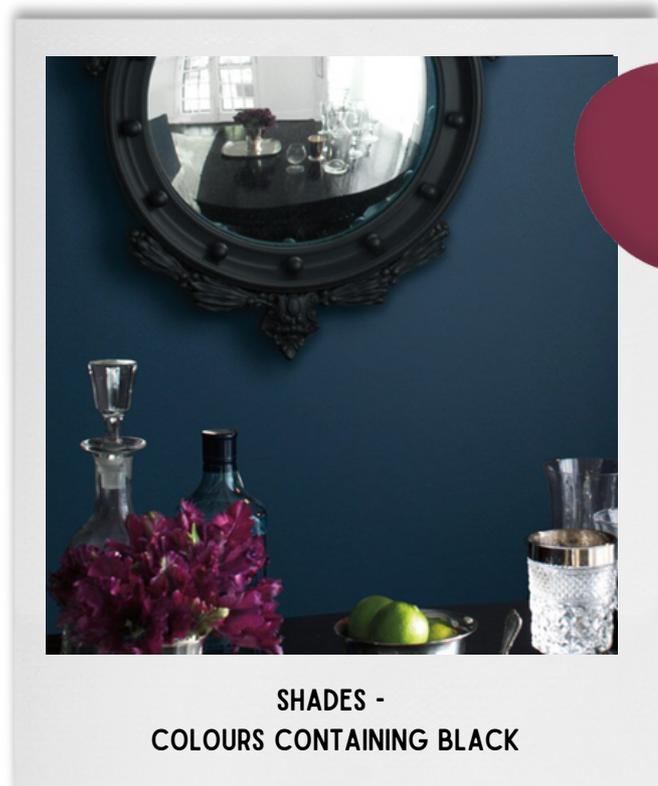
HOW YOUR MIND INTERPRETS COLOUR

Colour intensity speaks directly to our subconscious mind and sets the mood of a space.

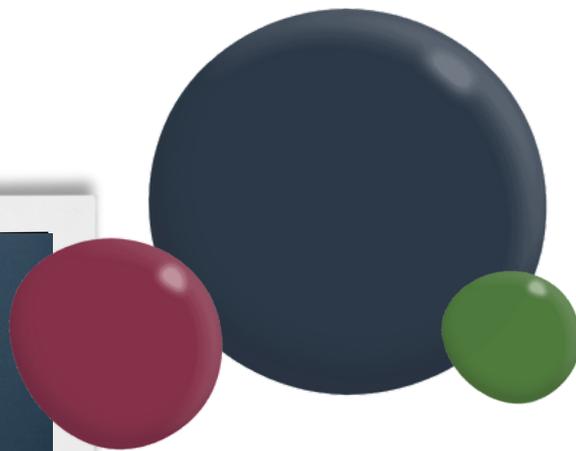
Muted tinted colours or those containing a combination of white tints produce a feeling of calmness and a sense of ease.



TINTS -
COLOURS CONTAINING WHITE



SHADES -
COLOURS CONTAINING BLACK



Shaded colours speak the colour language of retreating. They are encompassing, moody, and sometimes exotic, and they ooze personality.

Shaded colours are best used in rooms that are a destination. For example, bedrooms, TV rooms, and bathrooms. They don't work so well in transitional spaces such as hallways.

Tackling the wall of colour

VISITING THE PAINT SHOP WITH PURPOSE

TAKE THESE ITEMS WITH YOU

Pen or pencil for noting paint colour preferences. Ziplock bag to collect and protect paint sample cards

ALLOW PLENTY OF TIME

You may need an hour. Take your time. If there is another decision maker in the household, take them with you, and leave children at home

BUYING TEST POTS

Buy a maximum of 3 colour test pots only. Less if you are feeling confident. Test pots come in a low sheen formula which is ideal for interior walls. In addition, buy a test pot of vivid white and a bottle of sugar soap while your there - Ready for the next step

ORDERING BRUSH OUTS/DRAWDOWNS

If you prefer, you can order brush outs rather than buying test pots. Brush outs or drawdowns are A4 sheets of card painted in the actual colour you have chosen. Order via your paint suppliers website. Samples are couriered out to you and arrive a few days after your order is placed.

STICK TO YOUR COLOUR SHORTLIST

Print out or save your colour shortlist to your phone. Take along any hard surface samples or fabric samples you've already committed to

CHOOSING COLOUR CARDS

Choose, as best you can, the colours closest to those on your shortlist. Also choose a colour either side of that. One tint lighter and one shade darker

PREPING YOUR WALLS - SAMPLE COLOURS

Sugarsoap/clean and rinse off a section of wall on at least 2 sides of the room.

Paint out a block area of 1 metre square using the white test pot in both locations. Then apply your chosen colour over the white base ensuring you can still see at least a 100mm boarder of white.

EXISTING WALL COLOURS VISUALLY DISTORT YOUR COLOUR READING OF THE TEST POT COLOUR. FOR THIS REASON, ENSURE YOU UNDER PAINT A WHITE BOARDER

PRO TIP

LIGHT REFLECTS DIFFERENTLY OFF EACH WALL. A RESULT OF COOL MORNING LIGHT AND WARM EVENING LIGHT. PAINT THE SAMPLE ON 2 OPPOSING WALLS IN THE ROOM

PRO TIP

8

Unashamedly make it yours

AND OWN IT!

Be brave, push the boat out! After all it's only colour. If you don't like it you can always paint over it. Forget the niggling voice in your head that says "What about resale appeal". Paint colour is the easiest thing to change for a new owner. It's your house right now so go for it!



About the author



This eBook came about after many years of working alongside homeowners and understanding their struggles in choosing colours for the interior and exterior of their homes.

Co-ordinating paint colours for an entire home can be a daunting task. Colour overwhelm, followed by confusion, then nagging self-doubt is the typical colour journey for most.

As a colour professional and interior designer, there is nothing that brings me more satisfaction than being able to resolve homeowners' colour woes. Colour is, out of all the disciplines in my interior design practice my absolute all-time favourite subject, and it's backed up with sound knowledge of the practicalities of painting.

I am delighted that you have taken the time to download this eBook and hope it inspires you and offers helpful advice, so you too can choose colours you love.

If you still don't feel confident with colour, or would like more guidance, I offer both online and in-person colour consultations. To find out more about my interior and exterior packages

[click here for the details](#)

Yours in colour *Karen x*



“Karen just got it! We had hit a wall with colours and asked her to help out. We love the selected colours and so does everyone else. Thanks Karen, You are our go too! [AM Staples]”

“Karens skill and experience as a colour expert was the reason I employed her. The final result is a cohesive, warm and inviting home that we are super stoked with [K Nicholls]”

“We felt in confident hands as soon as Karen arrived. She had some great suggestions we hadn't considered. We chose some brave colours we wouldn't otherwise have picked. [M Davies]”