

interior design

Interior designers do far more than just help choose nice cushions. They play a crucial role in ensuring your new space works for you on every level, turning a house into a home and making it a pleasure to live in

What are the benefits of using an interior designer?

Anna Campbell-Jones, Habitus, Glasgow:

Personalisation is really important. An interior designer can help you to work out the best way of expressing your personality and your passions. Their service is not a luxury – they will be able to help you find cost-effective ways of achieving what you want and will have access to tried and trusted tradesmen, and you will be far less likely to spend too much money on things you later regret.

Anna Agapova, O&A Design, London: A good designer is an artist and a psychologist. They study their clients, their rhythm of life, character, dreams and desires. And then they reflect this in the design, creating spaces that go far beyond simply an idea of comfort. I want my rooms to be like art – to inspire people and bring out different emotions. It's a myth that hiring a designer is expensive. A good designer will find the best combination of price and quality. They will know the characteristics of building materials and will tell you how these behave and whether their cost is justified. That way, you can avoid irreversible mistakes and unnecessary expenses. Also, many shops give designers discounts, which will help to keep your project on budget.

When should the interior designer get involved in a build or renovation project?

Gillian Gillies, Gillian Gillies Interiors,

Toronto: An interior designer should be hired at the same time as you hire the other key people in your renovation or build, such as the architect or builder. That way, you benefit from everyone's individual skills from the start. It's a lot like building on strong foundations. It pays dividends to build a strong team from day one.



A classic interior designed bedroom complements the room's proportions and scale

Habitus: As early as possible. If it's an extension, the designer will help work out the impact the new space is going to have on the rest of the home. If it's a new-build, they'll take a holistic approach to the whole house.

O&A Design: Ideally, the interior designer should get involved at the very beginning. Just like the architect, builder and engineer, they will offer a different perspective and have an important influence on the finished product. The designer will draw up a work plan with a description of what needs to be done when. They'll also assist with costs and can help steer you away from impulsive decisions that may break the budget. Most importantly, they will help create a space that truly reflects who you are.



Sarang fabric in fuchsia from Designers Guild

Why do you think people care more these days about interior design?

Habitus: People are spending more time at home – and entertaining at home – no doubt as a result of such things as streaming services for movie nights and restaurant-quality food delivery services. The general increasing interest in interior design, and the greater accessibility of a wide range of styles of furniture, fabrics, wallpapers and decorative items to suit all budgets, has made it easier for people to have fun with design at home.

I need more storage. How do I get more out of redundant corners and spaces such as eaves and under the stairs?