

What makes a good home?

A good home is one that you can't wait to go back to. It is instantly welcoming, with a personality that grabs you the moment you walk through the front door, and perhaps even the moment you turn into the driveway.

When making your home your own, don't be afraid to go with your own sense of style and your convictions - after all, you are the person who will have to live there.

While houses in lifestyle magazines may be appealing, the beautiful furnishings may not be appropriate in a home with a large number of energetic children and large pets.

There are some universal rules to home design to guide you on your decorating endeavours, but remember to stamp your personality on each.

Develop a theme

Pick a theme and be true to it. If you are striving for a traditional theme, use materials, textures and colours that are true to this style.

Maintaining a theme throughout your home's exterior and interior will help you develop a harmonious and balanced living environment. Once you have selected your theme, your decorating decisions will be simplified because you will have a unifying theme guiding your decisions. For example, the addition of complicated fretwork may enhance the appearance of your villa but look out of place on a modern plaster home.

Use your theme to inspire your decorating choices, but don't be a slave to your theme when it comes to selecting appliances - remember that you will have to live in the completed home and while authenticity is nice to look at, you may regret that old-fashioned washing machine later!

Harmonise with the environment

Stamping your individual style on a home is one way of making it your own, but don't forget that a good home should complement the site and environment. Look around your home - this is the wider environment you have to work with. A brightly painted home may not be appropriate in a street full of neutrally painted villas.

Accent the positive

Use accents on your home's exterior and in each interior room. Aim for a focal point in each area and develop the room or exterior around this. Typically the focal point in a dining room would be the table, in a bedroom it would be the bed and duvet, while the focal point on an exterior may simply be the brightly painted front door.

Go with the flow

A good home is designed to allow easy movement from one area to another, usually dictating that like rooms should be located in clusters. It is logical that the kitchen, dining and living room be located close together to allow guests to move easily between the three areas, while the bedrooms will be located in a quieter part of the house.

When planning your budget, plan to spend the most on those items that are most important to you and that are used most often. Don't skimp on items like driveways or benchtops - you will only end up paying more in the long run if you need to repair inferior quality products. Remember, you can always add more luxurious furniture later, but it will be harder to change more permanent fixtures.

Decide on the extent of your project before you start. If necessary break large projects into smaller more manageable chunks of work. If you don't set any limits for yourself, you'll spend months and months surrounded by paint cans, half-stripped wallpaper and fractured nerves.

When painting interiors, it is often better to move furniture out of one or two rooms and paint them, then move items back into the newly painted areas before continuing onto other interior areas, rather than trying to do everything at once.

Make the most of the information available to you

Resene have a wide range of information available to you to help you make the right decorating choices. Either pick up brochures in-store or explore the over 1000 pages of information on the Resene website.

Once you have decided that you wish to redecorate, one of the first major decisions you will need to make is whether you wish to do it yourself or hire a professional contractor to do the work on your behalf. See the Resene DIY Info leaflet 'Time to DIY or hire a professional painter?' for tips on hiring a professional painter to do your project for you.



For ideas, inspiration and instructions:

In Australia: Call 1800 738 383, visit www.resene.com.au or email us at advice@resene.com.au

In New Zealand: Call 0800 RESENE (737 363), visit www.resene.co.nz or email us at advice@resene.co.nz