

white



early beginnings - new delicate fragile precious

White is the colour of peace and innocence, of calm and comfort, simplicity and cleanliness. It radiates clarity, purity and newness. It is tranquil and soothing.

Artists have painted on white canvas for years, and homeowners and designers use white as a foil for other colours, which allows brilliant shades to really sing, and throws subdued colours into sharp relief. It is also used as an accent colour to give crisp detail, adding light to a dark colour scheme, or bringing serenity to a colourful one.

There are many different shades of white, warm whites and cool whites, and Resene are aware of the importance of these subtle differences and produce whites tinted with a number of colours.

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the paint the professionals use



soft fluffy warm cuddly

White on white schemes became popular in the 1920's and 1930's, partly as a result of the introduction of a bright and stable titanium oxide. The idea caught on and rooms everywhere were being painted in shades of white with touches of gold and glass accessories that shimmered in the white light.

In a white setting, beautiful objects take centre stage. Note how many art galleries and museums are painted white for this reason.

A new store called White has recently opened in the UK and it only sells white objects - blankets, linen, crockery, lighting, homewares, textiles, glassware etc. White objects in a white room provide a play of light within the space - light and shadow.



hygienic clean clinical medical sterile

White always portrays cleanliness and hygiene, which is why it is often the selected colour for laboratories, hospital operating theatres and food processing factories and wherever sterile conditions are of the utmost importance.

In home and building design, white may appear a little industrial and clinical, cold and uninviting, especially if complimentary furnishings are predominantly stainless steel and glass or stone.

To avoid this it is important to introduce texture and textiles. Shagpile carpet, soft cushions, woven upholstery, wool rugs, cane, matt and glossy finishes, opaque glass, candles - they can all be white but with the textural relief and changes on gloss level the room is softened and becomes more inviting and interesting.



peace light love divinity

White is the purist of colours, reflecting all light. Oddly enough pure white is not a single colour at all, but all colours whirled together to create white light. White is hardly ever seen in this form, even brilliant white contains hues of blue.

Brilliant white is dazzling and fresh, lending strength to other colours. It reflects and radiates and changes - tinted with pink at dawn, yellow in the day and blue at night. Artificial lighting is another science to consider with any colour scheme, particularly white.

White is considered romantic - white doves signify love. White diamonds are selected for engagement rings and weddings are usually themed in white.

White light in a spiritual context expresses eternal love, peace and divinity.



smooth creamy cool fresh dairy

Pavlova and icecream - two traditional deserts - both white. Pavlova - smooth, cool and creamy, with the meringue crunchy on the outside and light and fluffy in the middle.

White chocolate mousse is another favourite, or even just white chocolate - decadent! It's got to be good for you...

Thick white paint also looks smooth and creamy, glossy and fresh, almost good enough to eat.





kitchen appliances clean efficient

White is popular in the kitchen, probably because of its association with hygiene and cleanliness. White appliances are still the most popular choice, despite the range of colours on offer today.

White looks bright and clean, and is also frequently selected for crockery and tableware as it makes a great background to the colourful food that is served upon it.

White walls and tiles in the kitchen are used as a backdrop to hang utensils, pots and pans and white benchtops glisten alongside stainless steel.



kitchens white hygienic slick shiny industrial



bathrooms - white shiny sanitised fresh indulgent luxury

In the bathroom, white feels clean and calm. White is a visual tonic and allows us to unwind both physically and mentally. It feels serene and creates an optical illusion of space so perfect for a small bathroom.

A white colour scheme offers a fresh environment suggestive of wide expanses of emptiness and that is why many people find it soothing - they rejoice in feeling free and having space to themselves. And the bathroom is one space where you can lock yourself away if you need time to sort out your thoughts. White is the colour of solitude - too much white can make a person feel isolated.

Thick white towels and robes add a feel of luxury to any bathroom and are most often used in hotels to create this feeling.



farming and industry

Farming and industry is full of 'whites' from sheep or cows to various produce.

And of course there is the healthy association with milk - believed to build healthy teeth and bones, and provide nutrients for growing children.

Many of us have had white pets in our childhood - a little white mouse or rabbit, a guinea pig or a kitten. And for those living in the country, we have bottle-fed baby lambs or ridden horses to round up the sheep or cattle.



white bedrooms - peace restful tranquil luxury

White bedrooms for restful sleep, to rejuvenate our tired bodies. There is nothing nicer than white bed linen, crisp white sheets and a cool cotton blanket in the summer. Add warm-white wool blankets or a soft duvet for the winter.

A white bedroom also creates the feeling of tranquillity and luxury, a peaceful sanctuary. White muslin curtains flowing in the breeze, shadows on the white ceiling from an oscillating fan, whitewashed timber floor and milky-white painted walls.

Soft lighting or candles complete the scene to create a retreat from the stress of a busy lifestyle.



white buildings elegant expensive luxurious

White architecture can be most elegant and opulent. The White House (restaurant) and Whites restaurants are associated with fine dining for the most discerning of guests. And of course everything is white, from the furniture to the serving platters, the napkins to the décor accessories.

White signifies expense because of the higher cost of maintaining white carpet or textile furnishings and is frequently selected by the rich and famous to reflect their wealth.



white building materials - paint concrete timber metal stone texture

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black and white - contrast formal graphic

The combination of white with black has always been popular, such as in Tudor style homes where the plaster was washed white in between black oak beams. Black and white floor tiles, and fireplaces in black and white marble, can be seen in many magazines.

They are a striking combination - while white reflects light, black absorbs it - so in equal quantities they create an invigorating pattern. An all white room with just a touch of black, such as white walls and ceiling with black stained floorboards, can look classy and quite understated

Black and white in clothing is usually rather formal, and the same can apply to black and white colour schemes - they are rigid and sometimes controlling.

In graphics black and white were once our only option.



soft clouds white surf sailing white rapids foam

As we see in nature, blue and white work well together and always look fresh and crisp. It is a classic and appealing combination of colours that now translates to the Willow pattern in crockery, or Wedgwood or Delph.

It can create a connection to the sea in nautical themes, ideal for the beach-house. Or a comfortable country style kitchen with blue and white gingham curtains and whitewashed cupboard doors.

One of the well known combinations of blue and white can be seen in Greece - blue water and white buildings in the hot Mediterranean. From the softness of white clouds to the harshness of white surf, white evokes a variety of emotions.



white living - minimal stylish modern

White leather furniture, white walls, white floor and a play of gloss levels and lightwaves provides a minimalist sitting room. A place to relax and meditate, or read and listen to music.

White is always timeless, but for some it may appear a little spartan if no colour is introduced. A cool, poorly lit room painted white may make the space feel dark and chilly. This is because white is a highly reflective colour and will draw attention to the deficiency of light

Because white reflects light and dissolves spaces, it provides a classic way of creating or emphasising a sense of space. It may be used to draw attention to the soaring qualities of a lofty space or to make a small room look brighter and roomier.

White with green feels fresh and spring-like and picks up shades of plants outdoors. White with red is jolly - a red and white check tablecloth makes a kitchen table look bright and cheerful. White with yellow looks sunny and may also look very elegant when teamed with primrose.



opulence longevity permanence strength

White alabaster, white marble, white concrete, white stone. These materials are opulent and generally provide years of service when used for building and decorating.

For rather grand interior schemes combine whites with creams and neutrals and add gilded mirrors, crystal chandeliers, exquisite silks cushions, damask drapes and of course antique furniture.

A white glossy painted front door looks good on a rustic style home especially when teamed with black iron door hardware.



culture religion ceremonies weddings funerals

White weddings, white cakes, white churches, white christening gowns, white hats, white flowers, white coffins.

Honesty, purity, innocence, restraint, birth, death - white means different things to different cultures.



underwear lace cotton

Many years ago people only wore white underwear, and undercoats and primer paints were predominantly white. Utilitarian white, practical white, Persil washing powder white. Delicate fabrics like lace, fine linen and wool cashmere were also popular in white.

When using an elegant white colour scheme, think translucent. Think sheer fabrics and frosted glass for accessories. And visible texture to add a tactile appeal.



glacier chilled ice snow clean crisp untouched

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sportswear tennis cricket bowls t-shirt

White sports clothing was the only colour ever seen on a tennis court, cricket pitch or bowling greens not that long ago. It was considered a distraction to one's opponent to wear strong colours. White was also cool for outdoor summer sport.

And everyone has to have at least one white t-shirt in their wardrobe, if not several. The classic white tee and jeans has replaced the white shirt and dark suit for business attire in many offices today.

And the old white sandshoes once worn for sport have been replaced with a huge selection of multi-coloured sports shoes.



motor vehicles vans ambulance police car

White cars are popular and have always been popular because it is believed that dents and dings don't show up so much in white. Before air-conditioning they were deemed to be cooler as well. The white automotive paints are now being glamorised with crystal silver and pearlised pigments to provide variations on white.

Think about service vehicles - many of these are also mostly white such as taxi-cabs, police cars, ambulances, courier vans - usually graphically decorated with company logos or identification.



cleansing fragrant nourishing moisturising

White soap, bubble baths, iridescent white creams, nourishing gels, milky lotions, translucent gloss, satin powder. White again triggers a feeling of indulgence and skin-nourishment when used for packaging in toiletries and cosmetics.

There has been a move from pale apricot and pale pink for women's cosmetic and perfume bottles to white and silver that look more new-age and vital. Men's aftershaves and toiletries are also changing from brown and blue packaging to white and black, or white and silver.

It is believed that people who have a strong preference to white are likely to be broadminded, a perfectionist, optimistic and self sufficient. Other emotional connections to white are joy, hope, enlightenment and futuristic.

There is a white to complement every scheme - the key is deciding whether you want to warm up or cool down the scheme and select a white that can influence the scheme in that manner.

See the Resene The Range Whites & Neutrals for a mix of whites from the 'dirty white' **Resene Sea Fog** to the 'warm white' **Resene Soapstone**.

