

7 TOOLS THAT ALL INTERIOR DESIGNERS NEED TO HAVE

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1

COLOR WHEEL

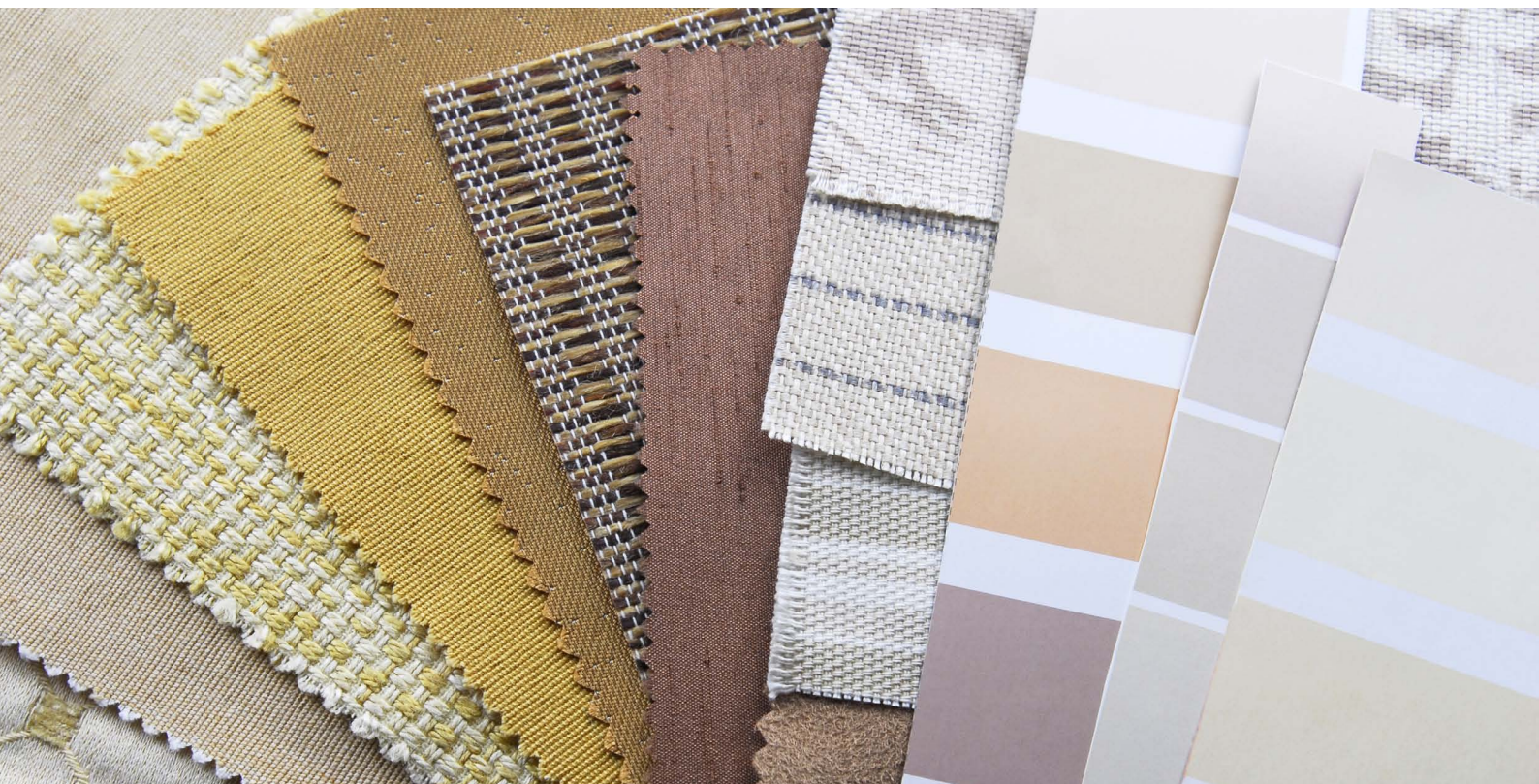
When you first meet with a potential client, take a color wheel with you so that you can explain which colors work harmoniously together. This will reinforce your professional credentials and add a dash of 'science' to your proposal. Some people may also like you to analyze their personalities to see which kind of colors suit them. Most people have a natural affinity with one of the seasons and the colors associated with that season may be the best choices for their design schemes.



2

SWATCHES & SAMPLES

Keeping a collection of fabric swatches will be vital when you want to help a client select the right material for any soft furnishings such as cushions, throws and curtains. The texture and feel of a fabric is as important as the design so taking along physical samples, rather than just looking at images, will be very important. Likewise samples of flooring, work tops etc., are useful to access, although it is important to narrow down the likely range from a catalog before this stage as the sheer variety and weight of samples make it prohibitive to take to all consultations. Creating a mood board with potential colors and fabrics is a good way of providing a cohesive idea of your proposed concept.



3

PAINT & WALLPAPER CHARTS

All paint and wallpaper manufacturers will have sample charts and books, which you should keep in stock and select accordingly when visiting a client. You will then be able to get an understanding of their proposed palette and see which colors or patterns will work with any existing pieces in the space. There are also useful online tools which allow you to select a color from a paint range and project it onto the room so that you can get a sense of how the finished product will look. When you have narrowed down the selection, it's also a good idea to bring along some match pots and paint an area onto the wall so that the options can be mulled over and an informed decision made.



4

MEASURING TAPE

While you are at a briefing meeting with a client it will be really important to make a note of the physical properties of the space you are planning out. Electronic measuring tapes are the most accurate and easiest to use. Combine this information with photographs of the space and do make a sketch of the layout of the room including windows, doors, sockets etc., with their dimensions, as these will impact on your design choices.



5

DESIGN MAGAZINES

Sometimes a prospect may have an idea of a design that they like, but may have trouble expressing themselves in words. If you have a selection of recent trade magazines you will have a contemporary visual prompt which will spark discussion and help you to understand their tastes and therefore a design scheme which they will like.



6

PORTFOLIO

Nothing will promote your work better than your own work! Building a portfolio of previous commissions will be a vital tool to take to visit potential clients. Having a tangible, physical book any new customers can browse through and feel, will do wonders to build your credibility. Be sure to include high res photos and lovely tactile examples of any fabrics, carpets or other materials you used. Getting prospective customers to engage at a sensory level with your previous work will make them feel closer to you and what you could achieve with their brief. It will also be key to include testimonials from previous commissions—what someone else says about you has tons more impact than anything you can say about yourself. Include any trade affiliations and awards or other types of externally recognized success, all will lend credibility to your offering. An electronic version of your portfolio is also a smart move as you can email it to clients and also use on your tablet when pitching for work. For your online presence you can include videos of projects and it's a great idea to ask clients if you can film their testimonials as this will really add impact to their words.



7

SOFTWARE

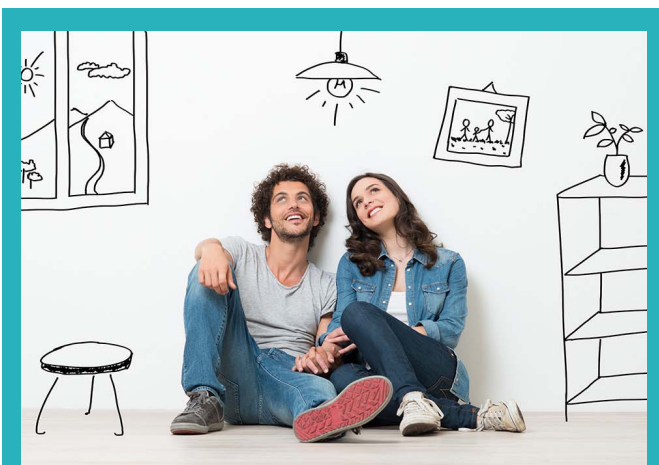
No interior designer nowadays can be without at least a basic knowledge of computer aided design. While the sensory feel of fabrics and colors are very relevant - seeing precise measurements, and how the finished project will look, greatly helps visualization for many people. Software such as SketchUp is relatively easy to use and will enable clients to see their space from different angles and to live the idea in 3D before making any final choices.



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So now you can be fully equipped to hit the ground running and be ready, willing and able to snap up those plum commissions! To get the very latest on how to become an interior designer, Trendimi's bestselling courses **HOME DECOR & REFURBISHMENT** and **INTERIOR DESIGN & HOME STYLING** are a great starting point.



HOUSE DECOR REFURBISHMENT



INTERIOR DESIGN & HOME STYLING

Do you have any top tips on any other must-have tools for designers?
What do you never leave home without?
Let us know as we'd love to hear your stories!

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