

Start with a color you love. Even if it's not a trend at the moment, it will always be on trend in a space that resonates with you.

KRISTIAN A. HOWELL, textile designer and color expert

Blend in strong colors. A bold color on the wall will feel jarring unless you consider the trim and ceiling color in your plans.

PATRICE COWAN DEVANS, designer

What's more livable than the colors found right outside your back door? Look to earthy, natural colors—blues, greens, beige, and taupe—when choosing color for your rooms.

SEHRA HAN, designer

When choosing wall colors, find versions of your favorite colors that are muted with gray.

ERICA LUGBILL, designer

Choose the best paint you can afford. Good paint has better pigments and a more livable finish.

COURTNEY PRICE, designer

If you find a color that you love but you're afraid it might be too dark, ask the person mixing the paint to do a 50 percent tint of the color.

GAIL WRIGHT, designer

LOOK AT PAINT COLORS IN THE MORNING AND AT NIGHT, AND PUT THEM NEAR YOUR FURNITURE.

EMILY HENDERSON, stylist

When you shop for paint, take along an existing pillow, a piece of drapery fabric, or a photo of your space. You'll make informed color decisions.

ALEJANDRA BERNARDEZ, designer

For a cohesive look, flow two or three of the same colors in each room. An accent wall in the family room is reflected in the master bedroom bedding, for example.

DIANA HATHAWAY TIMMONS, designer

## 23 expert tips for choosing and using livable colors

WARM COLORS LIKE RED, YELLOW, AND ORANGE HAVE AN ENERGIZING EFFECT. BLUE, GREEN, AND GRAY ARE CALMING.

DAVID BROMSTAD, designer and HGTV star

Save strong wall colors for statement rooms that are smaller and visited less—a library, guest room, or a powder room.

LULU DUKWATKOWSKI, textile designer

You can take just about anything to the paint store and ask the associate to mix a paint that's a perfect match using the store's color reader.

DANNY SEO, lifestyle expert

CHOOSE COLORS BASED ON THE USE OF A ROOM. MORNING ROOMS CAN BE BRIGHTER; ROOMS USED AT NIGHT CAN GO DARK.

BETH KUSH-NICK, set decorator

Give yourself permission to use a bold color. You don't have to love it everywhere—one throw or pillow might be just enough.

NATE BERKUS, designer

Colors close together on the color wheel are analogous and will make a calm room. Colors that are farther apart are complementary and add drama.

DAVID BROMSTAD

Always sample paint colors. Paint a sample board so you can move it around a room.

DIANA HATHAWAY TIMMONS

Play with intensity. I love monochromatic rooms that use a single hue in a variety of ways.

SARAH RICHARDSON, designer

In the same way a bright shoe adds surprise and fun to a black outfit, an unexpected touch of trim along a curtain panel or in piping can add color in a way that's easy to live with.

ANNA LOBELL, designer

THINK OF PLACES AND SPACES YOU LOVE FOR INSPIRATION. FOR EXAMPLE, I LOVE THE CREAM-COLOR STUCCO WALLS I SEE IN ITALIAN CHURCHES, AND I TRY TO MATCH THAT FEELING.

LULU DUKWATKOWSKI

When rooms open to one another, avoid choosing radically different colors, or the space will look choppy and small.

COURTNEY PRICE

Choose your favorite color, but watch that it's not too bright.

MARIA KELLAM, color expert

Your home is made up of more than walls—ceilings, floors, stairs, and doors are also great places to have fun with paint.

BOB AND CORINEY NOVGRATZ, designers

### Designer picks

"Layer bold color with midtones and neutrals to balance color in a room," Kristian A. Howell says. Go to [BHG.com/FebColor](http://BHG.com/FebColor) to see her designer palette.