

A modern interior scene featuring a wooden console table with a bowl, a lamp, and a framed floral painting. The text "DECORATING WITH COLOUR CONFIDENCE" is overlaid in a large, black, serif font. A large, white, curved graphic element is positioned on the right side of the image.

DECORATING WITH COLOUR CONFIDENCE

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Introduction

We all have a sense for what we like — whether it's 'moody green', 'powder blue', or 'earthy terracotta' —but translating that into a cohesive colour palette throughout your home can be tricky. Colour decisions often feel risky: *will it look muddy, clash, look dated in a year, or overwhelm the space?*

Many of us play it safe (read all neutrals!) for fear of getting it wrong. But the truth is, once you understand a few fundamentals and adopt a confident process, you can make bold (or gentle) colour choices that feel intentional, not accidental.

This book is designed to build your confidence step by step — to take the guesswork out of choosing colours, help you test and explore, and give you visual tools and fresh direction based on what's trending now (especially for Australian homes).

You don't need to repaint your whole house or commit to a dramatic palette overnight. Even a few well-chosen design accents or bolder cushions, trim or artwork can shift the energy of a space.

Let's get started.

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Colour should feel empowering — not overwhelming. My aim in this e-book is to help you test, play and commit with more confidence.”

About me



Since I was a child, I've been obsessed with decorating. Over a decade ago, I poured that passion into Style Curator. What began as a hobby blog has grown into one of Australia's leading interior sites, now reaching millions of people each month across our website and social platforms.

I went from interiors enthusiast to interior designer — but not without making some terrible mistakes along the way. (Like the time I painted a whole room a hideous shade of baby-poo that was so offensive it needed an immediate redo!)

That moment taught me an important lesson: colour isn't just about picking what looks nice in isolation — it's about how tones, undertones, light and mood all work together.

Through this e-book, I'm here to share the simple rules that gave me the confidence to experiment with colour, so you can step outside your comfort zone and bring more life, depth and personality into your home.

Gina

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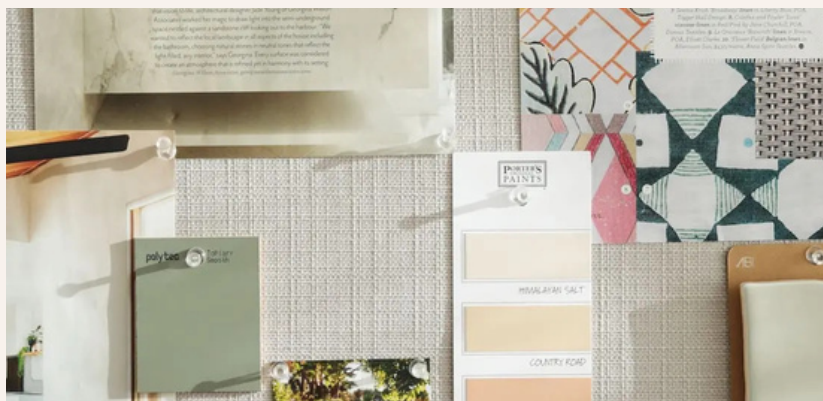


01 Fundamentals of colour

Before diving into palettes, let's cover a few key concepts:

- hue: the purest form of a colour (like blue, red, yellow)
- tints: the result of adding white to a hue (soft, pastel versions)
- shades: made by adding black to a hue (deeper, moodier versions)
- tones: created by adding grey to a hue (more subtle versions)
- undertones: the hidden 'lean' within a neutral (a beige might lean pink, green, or yellow)
- warm vs cool colours: typically reds, yellows and oranges are warm colours while blues, greens and purples feel cool. However all colours can have warm or cool variations.

Light also changes how colours read — Australian sunlight is strong and can make colours appear cooler and brighter indoors. Always test swatches in your own space, and at different times of the day.



02

Colour schemes and harmonies



Now that we're all speaking the same language, let's look at the four most useful approaches to colour harmony.

Natural neutrals

Yes, this book is aimed at helping you embrace colour but it would be amiss of me not to include one of the most popular and timeless colour schemes — neutrals.

Starting with a simple base of whites, soft greys, beiges, browns and charcoals, allows you to inject accents of colour. It's ideal for people who just want to dip their toe into colour.

Accent colours that work particularly well are sage green, dusty pink, terracotta, burgundy, black or brown.

Style with objects inspired by nature — raw timber, woven textures, ceramic vessels — to bring warmth and depth.



Monochromatic

Despite popular use, monochromatic does not mean black and white — rather, single hue. That's to say, you can create a monochromatic scheme using any colour — just play with varying tints, tones and shades.

The trick to avoid it feeling flat is to break up the scheme with texture and neutrals.

For example, deep navy walls with a mid-blue sofa, pale sky-blue cushions balanced with oak timber accents.



Tips to pull off a monochromatic colour scheme:

- 1 Add texture and pattern for depth, like a panel feature wall and sheer curtains.
- 2 Use lighting to add to the drama of your space and highlight features.
- 3 Limit the colour scheme to a room or zone of your home rather than your whole house.

Complementary

My favourite way to build a colour palette is to use colours on opposite sides of the colour wheel, known as complementary colours. For example, blue and orange or pink and green.

This scheme always looks best when one colour is dominant and the other plays a supporting role.

Analogous

Finally, an analogous scheme uses three colours that sit side-by-side on the colour wheel (such as blue, blue-green and green).

These schemes feel soothing, balanced and immersive. They work particularly well in open plan living where you want to create a sense of flow and calm.



Complementary schemes are bold and dramatic. Start small with cushions, throws or artwork if you're nervous.



03

Building a palette

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Knowing the colours you love is one thing. Choosing the right shades and balancing them in the right proportions across a space is another. These are the fail-proof rules I swear by.

Find your inspiration

Mother Nature never gets colour wrong. Fact. So if you're looking for inspiration on what colours to use, my top tip is to look for inspiration in nature.

Tip: snap photos that inspire you when you're out and about. You can refer back to these and even use apps to colour match paints from the images.

Of course, inspiration is everywhere once you start looking.

The goal isn't to copy exactly what you see but to notice patterns in what draws you in. Are you gravitating towards calm, coastal palettes? Or do you prefer moody and dramatic? Warm and earthy?

Collect those clues as they're the first step in creating your own colour story at home.

You could gather your inspiration digitally, such as on Pinterest, or start a physical mood board.

Top places to find colour inspiration:

- ✓ Design blogs: Style Curator (of course!) plus other interior sites like The Design Files, Emily Henderson, The Interiors Addict and more!
- ✓ Shop windows and displays: retailers often work with stylists who are masters at colour stories. I'm officially giving you permission to go shopping... all in the name of 'research', ha!
- ✓ Display homes and showrooms: if you want to get a sense of how colours will look in situ, you're bound to find inspiration here.
- ✓ Magazines: tear out pages that catch your eye and start a physical mood board.



Pick your anchor colour

Once you've identified the colour (or colours) you love most, it's time to pick your anchor colour. This is the dominant hue in your palette and the one that sets the tone for the whole space.

Remember back in Chapter 2 we explored different colour schemes? Whether you're building a natural, monochromatic, complementary or analogous palette, you'll always need one anchor colour to ground the look.

If you use all your colours in equal measure, they'll feel as though they are competing against each other. It might seem counter intuitive but giving one colour dominance and letting the others play supporting roles will create balance and harmony.

“ A classic guide is the 60-30-10 rule where 60% is your anchor colour, 30% is your secondary colour and 10% is an accent colour.

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A common mistake is selecting too many accent colours. Choose 2-3 colours that complement or contrast your anchor colour.

- GINA BESCHORNER



04

Final tips for success



By now you've chose the type of colour scheme you want to create and built a colour palette with an anchor colour and supporting shades. Here are my final tips to use colour with confidence:

Test paint swatches

If you're painting walls, always invest in sample pots. Paint swatches onto your wall (minimum A4 size) and see how the colour looks in the space at different times of day.

In Australia south-facing rooms throw cooler, blue tones so consider balancing with warmer colours. On the flip side, north-facing rooms will make colours appear brighter and cooler.

Sprinkle your accent colour

A fool-proof way to get a designer look is to repeat your accent colour across the space. Aim for 3-5 pops of the same hue. This could be as simple as a throw blanket, vase, cushion, lamp or artwork. Your eye will naturally travel across a room, picking up the accent colour, which ties the palette together and strengthens your colour story.

Conclusion and next steps

Colour confidence doesn't come from reading theory, it comes from noticing, testing and trusting yourself to experiment.

Two final things to keep in mind is flow and balance. Rooms are not separate islands so to give your home flow, think about consistent undertones and how all your colour schemes work together. Balance is about balancing out neutrals with textures, metallic accents and some bold colour choices. Your space should feel intentional and curated, not overwhelming.

Most importantly, remember a home is a reflection of you. Create palettes that bring you joy and make spaces feel inviting.

For more practical tips, DIYs and trend inspiration, keep exploring Style Curator at stylecurator.com.au. And if you'd like tailored one-on-one help to build the perfect colour palette for your home I'd love to work with you through an e-styling session.

The best way to gain confidence with colour is to start small, experiment, and keep laying your knowledge. Every decision gets easier from here.

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