

YOUR GUIDE TO HOME AND LIFE IMPROVEMENT

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FABRICS!

How to
create
contrast
and depth
in your
decor with
patterns,
textures and
colours

One of the beautiful things about fabric is its versatility in bringing a room together. From upholstery to cushions, bedding to drapes, and in any number of accent pieces, fabric's uses are literally limitless.

Add to that the huge array of colours, patterns and textures, and the possibilities become so endless that it can feel overwhelming. No one wants to make the wrong choice.

With a little planning, those abundant choices become opportunities to make

your existing room into an amazing space. When designing, I get the most enjoyment from selecting fabrics, so I am going to share with you some simple guidelines that will help make choosing fabric patterns fun and effective, so you can transform a room with a new look and feel.

Start with a theme. It doesn't have to be complicated. It can be as simple as a feeling or an idea. Using your theme as a guide, start by picking out three or four different fabric patterns. You'll want to use the patterns' shape, scale and colour, along with the texture of



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Photographs: Stephanie Buchman, Room designs: Kate Davidson.

the fabric, to create contrast and depth, while holding onto your theme. Here's how.

Pick a fabric with a large, bold pattern to set the tone for your room, and provide the feel of your theme. Large flowery designs are making a comeback and offer a sophisticated, retro look, or you can pick a geometric pattern for a contemporary feel. Any large pattern design will work.

Now add a second pattern with similar colours but in a completely different scale. The difference between your first two patterns should be significant enough to create the contrast you're looking for. Think about shapes as you make your choices. If you started with organic flowery shapes, make your second choice geometric shapes with lines or stripes. With your third and fourth patterns, you can try something with a really small or sparse design.

Finally, bring it all together with colour. Whatever colour stands out in your main pattern should also be found in the other patterns you choose. They don't have to be identical, but they should be shades with a similar tone. As long as you don't go overboard with drastically different intensities, you should do alright.

You can also use colour to create contrast. For example, if your general colour theme is blue, cushions with an orange pattern will create contrast and really accent your room. Just stay in the same tone range with your colours.

Finally, think about texture when you choose your fabrics. A mixture of different textures creates more depth and gives a kind of tactile element to your room that makes it more interactive and inviting.

When you're shopping for your fabrics, don't be afraid to grab different samples. Put them together to see how they work. If one is too overbearing, or just doesn't feel right, try something different. Look at Alendel Fabrics, a Canadian company that offers collections of fabrics that work well together; they would be great for getting you pointed in the right direction.

Consider working with a designer if you feel that you need some guidance. At the end of the day, your room design is about you, and what makes you comfortable and happy. So don't get too hung up on the rules, but use them as a guide to create a space you'll really enjoy. ✨



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