

# The Four Questions of Painting

**T**HE COLORS WE CHOOSE for our homes are often influenced by factors that have nothing to do with the people who live in them. For example, many people stick to beige colors because they heard it will increase resale value. Others are influenced by the opinion of neighbors, friends, or what their Aunt Betty says. Several homeowners are swayed by the latest color trends. To avoid selecting colors for the wrong reasons, ask yourself the following four questions before the next paint job to help create a décor that empowers you and your loved ones.

## 1 What is the main function and purpose of the room? Is it for sleeping or play and socializing? Is homework done in that room?

If the room is intended for sleeping, select cooler, more subdued colors. However, if your child is not a morning person, warmer or brighter colors would be better. If the room is used for studying, make it more interesting and inviting by using mural elements or stencils.

In a family room that serves many functions, from viewing TV and listening to music, to reading and conversation, you can create a more relaxing space by selecting warm neutrals like tan, camel, or creamy tones that create the feeling of suede. Stay away from exciting colors like yellow, orange, and red.

## 2 Who uses the room?

The answer to this question will yield important clues on how to decorate. For instance, if a child has ADHD, avoid warm, vibrant colors. Keep colors more uniform, and use low contrast between them. Selecting the right colors for your child can also have a significant impact on their grades, as demonstrated by a recent project in which the client's daughter increased her grades drastically after her room received new colors. The makeover helped her feel more comfortable and nurtured. For a family room, consult all the family members. Ask about their likes and dislikes. Decide who has the final word at the outset but seek input.



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## 3 What feeling, emotion, or mood do you want to convey?

Color has a strong impact on a room's mood, which has an equally significant effect on the well-being of those living in it. For instance, if you want to create a more intimate space that fosters conversation, consider painting your ceiling a color other than white. (However, note that painting a ceiling blue will have the opposite effect.) Sometimes certain colors can actually evoke a feeling or mood of happiness. For example, one recent client who suffered from fibromyalgia craved warm tones with lots of rich yellows and golds, not realizing that those colors would make her feel better.

When considering colors, keep in mind these distinctions: Cool colors have a component of blue such as violet, purple, blue-gray, and blue-green; warm colors have elements of yellow or red such as in pinks, maroons, peach, orange, yellow, or green; neutrals can be cool or warm depending upon their composition.

## 4 Is it important to decorate the room in a way that inspires creativity in your child or facilitates bonding among family members?

If you answer yes, then ask questions about your family members, use your intuition, observe their personal style, etc. A young client who favored summer selected a color palate of grass green, daffodil yellow, and pacific blue. To some this might be extreme, but it suited the girl perfectly.

If you answer no, then consider the room's actual purpose. Is it to showcase the most recent design trends, make people feel welcome, or communicate how you feel about family? Seek inspiration by looking through magazines, or find a swatch of color or a piece of fabric or wallpaper. Determine what you like and dislike. All this will help you focus and articulate a picture for the room you envision.

If you answer these four questions, then you will be able to work successfully with your painting contractor to create an environment that is special and unique. U