

## THE SUN NEW HOMES & CONDOS

# Design like a pro



YANIC SIMARD

## THE DESIGN FEED

Looking for that designer secret for creating your dream interior?

This week, I thought I'd give you to an inside peek at how the professionals put together their totally unique projects but starting from the same ground rules.

To help you tackle any sort of space like a pro, here's five or so of my top tips — starting with the basics.

### Design 101

I begin most spaces with a simple blank canvas — crisp neutral walls and warm wood floors — and keep many of the major furnishings neutral as well. This way, the long-term investment is cohesive, and trend-free.

Look for lasting anchor items like charcoal gray sofas or white bed linens, and always include at least one small element each of pure white and pure black in every room (to give the eye a full spectrum of shades).

Tip: To camouflage wall flaws, try my signature Benjamin Moore shade, OC-23 Classic Gray. It's a chameleon colour which suits warm or cool schemes equally beautifully. Use it on the ceiling and walls together (in a smart washable matte finish) for true seamlessness.

### Layer up

With a beautiful base in place, I add dramatic layers like patterned throw blankets, colourful rugs, vivid art or mixed metal accents.

You can always change up the noncommittal layers, so this is the place to infuse plenty of colour, and introduce new textures.

Try draping a sheepskin ruglet over a wood chair, spreading a wild print blanket over a sofa seat or piling up mix-matched pillows.

Tip: Layering also works in reverse! If a large item (like a sofa, or colourful feature wall) feels too intense, add simpler

accents on top (like plain pillows, neutral artwork, or white curtains) to tone it back down. If you love a bold look, dive in, and then use layering to make it liveable.

### Be classic

Being unique doesn't mean you can't ground your design with popular must-haves. I include at least one mid-century modern item in most spaces, because these classic designs fit with virtually any style and add a sense of timelessness.

If you see a look you love, don't be ashamed to copy the basic elements, and then bring in your personality through how you mix it.

Tip: A "high-low" mix usually gets better results than evenly spreading the budget. Feel free to include some beautifully affordable big-box-store items, and make the space your own by how you mix it.



Anchor one-of-a-kind items with mid-century classics for a sense of timelessness.

### Go custom

Although "custom" can immediately sound "budget-busting", designers know a relatively small investment can seriously upgrade a look. Try having a seamstress customize drapery to the room height (whether fully custom or by adding panels); ordering a simple but perfect-sized area rug (leaving a 12" floor border); or, having a salvage-store furniture piece transformed into a quirky vanity.

Tip: If you check with a small boutique, you can often order a custom sized dining table for a similar price to a fixed chain store option, for the perfect fit at the right investment.

One of a kind

A designed interior almost always includes at least one unique piece that can't be found anywhere else. Look to stores with quirky or vintage finds (like Patina Antiques, or Kandleberg+Co) for items with unique character outside of the current trends. If a one-of-a-kind piece speaks to you, it'll be timeless.

Tip: To really see all these tips in action, browse "The Apt" by 800SqFt (800sqft.com), a shoppable, fully designed interior newly opened in Toronto—or catch my tour of the space on an upcoming Cityline!



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— For more designer interior inspiration and to see the Yanic Simard Selected accessory collection, visit [tidg.ca](http://tidg.ca). Find Yanic on Instagram and Twitter at @yanicsimard.

### QUICK BITES

1. Start with crisp neutrals, keeping the major elements cohesive and trend-proof (like uniform walls in #OC-23 Classic Gray).
2. Use layering to help control your look — start with basics and add dramatic pieces overtop (or vice versa!) until everything feels balanced.
3. Anchor one-of-kind items with mid-century classics for a sense of timelessness.
4. Indulge in some custom details, like having curtains resized, to give a room a designed touch.
5. Include at least one unique piece in each design for personality.



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