

Embracing the dark side



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THE DESIGN FEED

As winter approaches, and the days get shorter, it's normal to want to retreat inside more often.

However, there's a certain comfort in an interior that has its own dark side — or at least, a bit of the cozy sophistication that dark hues can bring.

This season, instead of looking solely to snowy whites, try some of these tips for getting comfortable with a darker side of decor.

Punctuation marks

Nothing beats black as a punchy accent — in fact, I rec-

ommend at least a small hint of black for any space, as it helps give the eye the full spectrum of shades that it craves.

Try stark black accessories like a picture frame, a sculptural lamp, books, a chalkboard or a worldly globe.

For a larger, architectural accent, try an “off-black” shade, like a charcoal grey (such as Benjamin Moore's 2121-10 Gray). Painting interior doors this shade adds sophistication and interest throughout the home without going all the way into the deep end.

Beautiful tones

When using dark shades as more than just a small accent, one way to keep the look from feeling overwhelming is to apply a multi-tonal palette.

Using a mid-tone for the walls (try B.M. #1461 Sterling Silver) and use darker and light accents to create lots of depth without even introducing colour.

Black and white together are a classic combination, and it suits the bedroom well. Use a deep, moody shade (one you wouldn't dare use anywhere else) as a “headboard” accent wall, and let white sheets, pillows and artwork bring light back into the room for a dreamy balance.

Blissful bathroom

The bathroom is another safe place to embrace darker hues: moody walls create a

spa atmosphere, while sparkling white fixtures and a space-enlarging mirror keep the room from feeling claustrophobic.

An all-over tile or paint treatment in a deep shade will give you a taste of drama every day when you visit, but you won't spend enough time here to grow tired of it.

When possible, using one tile treatment throughout the room will actually help the space feel larger — or you can simply paint the untiled walls out a similar shade.

Use the largest vanity mirror you can, and consider switching from a shower curtain to a glass panel to keep sight-lines as long as possible; the result will feel even bigger than when you started.

A touch of warmth

When working with chilly greys, don't forget to reintro-

duce a sense of warmth to keep a space feeling like home. Pairing charcoal with inviting mid-tone wood floors results in a pleasing contrast; or try a sandy tile mixed with a smokey vanity. This classic neutral combination will look beautiful alone, with whites, or accents in virtually any hue.

Don't love your wood floors as is? Turn them into a beautiful feature by staining them a deep espresso shade, and watch unwanted details like parquet patterning vanish while the welcoming texture of wood remains.

Hints and hints

Looking for a softer way to add depth to your decor? Rather than the classic white sheers, try a black sheer drape treatment instead: the semi-transparent material will create drama without closing

in sightlines and crowding out the room.

Likewise, consider a smokey grey shower glass for the same effect in a bathroom, with a greater sense of privacy.

If you aren't a fan of grey, look to near-neutrals like navy and deep emerald to add some weight to your colour palette without creating any harsh contrasts.

To see my personal home kitchen with sumptuous navy cabinetry (and see how I kept the overall look feeling light), check out my past articles on www.torontosun.com!

— *Want even more inspiration to get your interior winter ready? Visit the newly revamped website for the Toronto Interior Design Group at www.tidg.ca, and don't forget to find Yanic on Twitter and Instagram at [@yanicsimard](https://twitter.com/yanicsimard).*



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Painting interior doors in a charcoal grey creates interest and can add sophistication to a home.



The bathroom is a safe place to embrace darker hues: moody walls can create a spa-like atmosphere.