

Laying down a few bathroom design rules



YANIC SIMARD

THE DESIGN FEED

Interior design is all about taking a space, seeing its potential and figuring out what to do to bring that potential to life.

As I always say, work with the space, not against it! But every now and then, you feel like just laying down the law and sharing some of your ultimate design 'don'ts.'

For this column I decided to get honest (and humorous), and share my top design don'ts for bathroom spaces. Read on and see if you agree — or if you don't!

Don't 'mix and match'

When browsing a store or website, different plumbing fixtures can easily appear to be the exact same shade of white.

Side-by-side in your bathroom, however, the subtle differences between a mismatched tub and toilet can become a lot less subtle.

The best bet is to settle on one manufacturer to source all your major fixtures so they coordinate.

This goes for your shower fixtures as well — I'm all for mixing metals elsewhere but here you should pick one collection for a consistent finish.

For the cleanest look, don't even mix-match your towels, as this can easily start to look messy (and coloured towels often fade badly).

Don't lean on one light

Anyone who has tried to get ready in the morning in a bathroom with a single pot-light has probably noticed that their face looks a bit different once they go out into natural lighting — or at least the people around them notice!

Use multiple sources of light in the bathroom to avoid missing stray hairs and the

like, ideally including both wall lights and ceiling lights together.

If construction isn't an option, you can usually still add a plug-in sconce or two; there are plenty of options on the market with beautiful cords that become a cool feature.

Don't display your essentials

Trendy open shelving is great for sharing personal mementos in the bedroom or stashing plates and bowls in the kitchen.

In the bath, however, basics like bathroom toilet tissue and an array of toiletries easily become overwhelming clutter.

Display a nice soap or a few perfumes, and keep as many other items hidden as possible — including the toilet brush!

A tip-out drawer in front of the sink can be a great place to quickly toss items you might be tempted to leave out, like a brush, razor, or makeup.

Also try using small glass jars inside a medicine cabinet to keep items contained but handy.

Don't hide behind a curtain

It can be tempting to "makeover" your bathroom by simply hanging a bright and bold shower curtain, but this can quickly shrink the space — plus every guest will peek behind the curtain to see what you're hiding anyway.

(Or at least I would, but I guess I'm nosy!) Use a white or pale curtain to keep the look airy, and skip the funny prints.

For the biggest makeover, don't use any curtain, upgrading to a fixed glass panel instead. If you want to add personality by hanging art, use a framed photo or painting instead.

A few more don'ts for good measure

Don't even consider carpeting in the bathroom — and this includes wrap-around rugs for the toilet. For a warm floor try a Nu-heat in-floor system, and avoid the fabric germ-traps.

Don't leave your toothbrush out on the counter, as it will inevitably pick up misted water from the sink and even



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from toilet flushes — plus nobody needs to see your leftovers from the night before!

Don't get overly trendy with your long-term fixtures. A hip brass faucet will stay in style for a long time, but that pink sink? You'll probably regret it in five years.

— Now that you've read my bathroom 'don'ts,' check out tidg.ca for plenty of inspiration for what to Do (with your bath and beyond). Think one of these Don'ts is a Do? Let me know on Twitter or Instagram at @yanicsimard!

Designer or electrician? These experts are both



JESSICA VITULLO

EIEIHOME.COM

When it comes to illuminating your home, effective and efficient lighting isn't as simple as placing a few pot lights in the ceiling. The right electrician can design your space in a way that highlights your room's best features.

eieihome.com spoke with Hanna Taylor of Hotwire Electric about the importance of hiring an electrician who can help you design your home lighting system.

What is a lighting design expert? An electrician's job is to pay close attention to a home's structure and identify where electrical wiring should go.

"Electricians are all about code," says Taylor. Not every electrician has the ability to envision what type of lighting belongs where. The team at Hotwire Electric are lighting design experts. "That's what sets us apart from the regular electrician," she says.

How Hotwire can transform your spaces. Taylor has received calls from homeowners asking how many pot lights they'll need in a room of a specific size. "There is never a set or standard answer," she says. That's because Taylor wants her team to walk through the house to design the home's lighting and find out how the spaces will be used. If a homeowner is hang-

ing a piece of artwork, Hotwire can incorporate art lighting. If a TV is being installed on the wall, pot lights shouldn't be placed above it. "If you have amazing cabinets, we can put LED tape lighting or puck lights," she says, adding other electricians may not pay so much attention to detail. "Let's make that space special for you."

In addition to helping you choose the right lighting for your home, Taylor can put them on the right switches, including double switches to control lighting on two sides of the room, and place outdoor lights on a timer, as well as home automation systems to allow for user-friendly lighting controls.

Lighting technology is important to Hotwire. Taylor prides herself in being informed when it comes to the latest technology in lighting. LED lights are a popular option, but Taylor once advised homeowners to hold off on purchasing bulbs for six months because the new generation was coming out. "I'm

thinking about the long-term," she says. Taylor also has knowledge of colour LED lights, which can be used to enhance both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Lighting isn't just for the indoors. Speaking of outdoor lighting, Hotwire Electric can transform your outdoor living spaces, including playing with colour to really enhance the space. When uplighting trees and pools, there are a lot of lighting variations you can play around with. "We'll sit down and create a budget with the homeowner," says Taylor. "We work very closely you're your architects and engineers to make sure it's the right lighting that meets their standards. The end result is what you're looking for."

From commercial to residential spaces, indoor and out-



door, Hotwire Electric can assist with your lighting needs. Visit www.hotwire-electric.com for more information, or call 416-553-5533.

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