

THE NORTHWEST'S GREAT INDOORS

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECT

There's a lot more to Seattle than just its downtown area, with each neighborhood offering residents something special. Up-and-coming areas feature tech workers who prefer a refuge away from all the hustle and bustle while living closer to the mountains and forests. Smaller suburban areas afford all of the culture and convenience of a metro vibe without sacrificing a small-town community feeling. It becomes the best of both worlds, and we are delighted you're making your home here.

Transforming your personal space into an enhanced reflection of who you are makes coming home all the more welcoming while projecting your identity to your family and guests. Such updates and custom accentuations afford a special type of comfort that helps you

relax and sink into your Northwestern home. Before jumping headfirst into such an important project, it's wise to consider certain elements. Interior design isn't just a matter of personal taste. It's also an enterprise in balancing the aforementioned personal reflection and a sense of style that complements your surroundings, as they affect your mood, productivity, and ease of life. The Pacific Northwest has its own character, from the green-inducing precipitation to the lofty peaks rising on the horizon and the vibrant flora that breathes life into the atmosphere.

Fortunately, you don't need to get going on this uninformed. We have gathered a few tips and advice on what to think about before you begin. Here are a few considerations when looking into your interior design project.





MAKING THE BEST MATCH WITH YOUR DESIGNER

First things first: When you're looking to remake the inside of your abode, you must be sure to engage a design professional. That can take a little doing, and it may mean more than you think at first. Yes, of course, you want to research the local community's best in the field. Reviewing portfolios and reading up on the testimonials (both good and bad) are an essential part of the process. Asking friends and colleagues for referrals is excellent, as is going to your real estate agent. You can also utilize Seattle Design Centers, Find a Designer Program, an easy to access list of the PNW most trusted and talented design professionals.

On a practical level, you want these folks properly vetted, ensuring that they are appropriately licensed and members of professional associations. But it would be best if you also got to know them beforehand. Do you like their sense of style? When presenting your ideas, do they "get" your tastes? Ask them about their flexibility and workflow. Quiz them on their priorities like budget, safety, and resale value, and be sure their answers align with yours. This person is your partner in making your personal space wonderful, so be sure you are cool with them!

In addition to getting to know the professionals you want to work with, Interior Designer, Christy Yaden from Christy Yaden Interior Design has helpful insight on what you can prepare:

1. Images of spaces that you like or would like your home to feel like. They can be from magazines, Pinterest or photos of places you've visited.

2. Have an idea of how you want to use the space. Things like how many people you want to seat or if the space is casual or more formal or will be a high traffic area. These are all very helpful thoughts for designers in knowing how to support the use.

3. Determine a preliminary scope of work. It may change over the course of the overall process, but it is helpful to know initially what you are wanting to do. From there you can see how it works with your budget and timing. Things like- new paint and lighting, new furnishings for the masterbedroom, new powder room etc. are very helpful to get an overall scope of work started and letting your designer know what your priorities are. This can also help create a constructive conversation in the initial consultation.

4. If you are able to find original floor plans from either the builder, passed down from the homeowner or given to you by the real estate agent this could save time and money from having the designer measure the space.

WORKING FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

Living in this part of Washington state means lush trees with snowcapped mountains surround you. The view out your window can guide you in your interior design choices. A local designer will know what each season brings. They will take into consideration the amount of natural light your home gets and other thoughtful details to help you in the darker months. Such prominent features will play on your interior strategy as they can almost become a background theme.

Mixing brighter tones into a paint job can help illuminate a room without diminishing in the case of diffused lighting. Big sky windows bring in the surrounding woodlands. Keep Washington's epic exteriors top of mind when thinking about your interior design.

SUSTAINABLE AND DESIRABLE

Sustainability is becoming more central to interior design. Beyond doing your part in creating an eco-friendly space, going this way can actually create more opportunities for enhancing your style. A good designer can identify elegant refurbished antique furniture that will look as amazing as it is functional. Vintage decor adds fun styles that you won't find in modern stores, giving you more options for beautifying your home.

Another big trend in this environmentally conscious corner of the world is using eco-friendly producers. There are many companies that focus on incorporating replenishable materials like natural fibers or 100% recycled synthetic fibers. Wonderfully stylish rugs, carpeting, bedding, and decorations will help you find balance. And those who practice in this space are often aesthetically aligned with your sensibilities as well.

WEAVING IN SOME PRACTICALITIES

Whatever route you end up going with your interior design plans here in the eastern and southern outskirts of the greater Seattle area, it would be prudent to take a few practical matters into hand. First and foremost would be weatherizing your home. If you're tearing up walls or installing new floors, you may as well take advantage of the work your contractors are doing to simultaneously improve climate control. That can mean anything from double-paned windows to replacing leaky roofs and updating the insulation, or even adding heated floors in the bathrooms.

Another thing you could be looking at is updating your home with smart features. If you're redoing a section of your electrical systems anyway, you may as well incorporate security systems such as app-controlled doorbells and camera systems. You can even tie in elements like heating and cooling, ensuring that your home will be at a comfortable temperature when you return. Energy efficiency, pet monitoring, and even scent release can all be done remotely. Why shouldn't your home be beautiful? Such upgrades add comfort and peace of mind to your 21st-century updates.

BONUS TIP

For those who are about to embark on the home buying adventure or currently looking for their dream home, here is an insider tip that can help make a sometimes stressful experience an enjoyable collaborative journey:

"Our best advice to new home buyers is to bring an interior designer in before you purchase the house. Why? Because the house hunting process can be a lengthy and tiring one, and if you aren't a skilled professional in the design industry, it's hard to know what to look for in a new space beyond the obvious style and space considerations. A real estate agent can help find homes that check your lists, but an interior designer can show you how your current furniture and style fit with the home and, even better, how the home can be updated to truly become your own. We love getting in on a project before the home is purchased or the ground is broken for a new build because we can save our clients time and money by being involved from the very beginning. Interior designers know how a space is used and how it should function for you and your family. And the Pulp team will always maximize every single square inch so there is no wasted space. Bringing a designer in early saves you time and money in what is one of the biggest investments you'll ever make!"

- BETH DOTOLO, RID, NCIDQ

Principal Interior Designer + Co Founder
of Pulp Design Studio's