

Make the best of your living space

By Hafiz Rasid

A home makeover should be welcoming and satisfying, and as fuss free as possible.

Given the cost involved in beautifying a living space, homeowners should carefully plan the look and feel of each room before splurging on home furnishings.

When in doubt, always approach well-established and reputable names in home interior solutions. Some companies, such as SuMisura, may provide an initial consultation at no charge, so you can decide if the company is a good fit for what you have in mind.

Ms Angela Lim, the creative director for SuMisura, advised homeowners to bring along some necessities such as a layout plan, design briefs, wishlist and photographs or references of ideal living spaces to get the most out of the personalised consultation.

Assess your rooms

Before you seek advice from a design consultant, Mr Paul Keng, the managing director of The Furniture Mall, advised homeowners to identify what changes

are required in their living space.

He shared that homeowners should focus on four focal points in the rooms: the walls, flooring, light fixtures and furniture.

Mr Keng said that homeowners should ask themselves if each of these focal points need an update before proceeding to discuss with a design consultant.

For instance, see if the walls need require any attention. Ask yourself if it could do with a fresh coat of paint or simple fixes, like wallpaper or wall art. If you are looking to change your wall colours, decide on your preferred palette.

For flooring, think about whether your floor needs a fresh coat of polish to freshen up the files or wood panels.

Are your light fixtures still on trend? Mr Keng shared that recessed lightings usually do not need changing as they are timeless. But consider switching up your pendant lightings, if you feel they need an update.

Pay extra attention to your furniture if you are



Photo: The Furniture Mall

But consider switching up your pendant lightings, if you deem it out of style.

looking to revamp the look and feel of your home.

Mr Keng said: "Determine if your furniture pieces suit the new shade of paint or new lights. If not, key items like a sofa can be re-upholstered with another leather colour or a totally different fabric motif style. Of course, you replace it with a brand-new sofa."

Ms Lim said that homeowners with family members should reach a consensus before deciding on a particular theme or decor. As different family members may have different lifestyle requirements, this will prevent any complications in the future.

She said: "Since design preferences are subjective, different family members may perceive a design differently. It is best to present visuals or magazine cut-outs as reference points. Take into account what your family needs too. For instance, growing families may require more storage space."

Go luxe for less

Making your home look fabulous need not put a dent in your wallet. Mr Keng shared that a nifty trick to create a luxe ambience in any room is to place emphasis on lighting and key statement pieces.

He said: "The right lighting and statement pieces should set the tone and anchor the design theme of a room. Homeowners should aim to achieve aesthetic harmony and balance. Once this is achieved with the help of a talented design consultant, any living space in the home will exude a luxurious feel without excessive costs."

Echoing his sentiment, Ms Lim said choosing the right designer who can effectively combine a homeowner's ideas and their expertise to translate the plans into a well-designed living space is key.

Turn the page for more furnishing ideas and the latest trends.

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

It is easy to be overwhelmed by swatches and furniture recommendations. Before you sign the dotted line, discuss every little detail of the makeover with your designer consultant. Here are five questions to ask.

What is a viable look for my room?

Revitalising a home requires a personal touch. Since homeowners may have a specific idea of how they want their rooms to be, it is best to have a sit-down session with a design consultant.

Be sure to deliberate on a theme for the consultants to work on and touch on the details involved to execute the theme.

Mr Keng said: "In instances when a very general brief is given to interior design consultants, it will be challenging for designers to come up with a design concept by second-guessing client's requirements and making assumptions."

How much will it cost?

Mr Keng said it is best to be aware that different decor styles come with varying prices. It is best to discuss your working budget with your design consultant on and work towards it so you do not exceed your budget.

Will the makeover suit my lifestyle?

Whatever look you decide on should not be purely based on aesthetics alone. Homeowners should let design consultants know about some key points of their lifestyles so the designers can make suitable recommendations.

Mr Keng said: "Brief them on your lifestyle needs. For instance, homeowners with young kids may need child-proofing for certain furniture pieces. For homeowners living with the elderly, safety aspects like non-slip floor surfaces and handles in the bathroom should be considered."

When will it be completed?

Although revamping your house may not take as long as a renovation work, it is still best to have an estimate on the timeframe. Processes such as wall painting and retro-fitting take much longer compared to moving of furniture.

What are the after-sales services provided?

While most homeowners may not encounter any problems if they deal with quality design and furniture companies, it is still best to ask what warranties are provided for peace of mind.

Mr Keng said: "It is pertinent to check with design consultants on after-sales warranties, such as the guarantee period for any unforeseen problems for curtains and blinds, or wall papering and paint works. Ask beforehand if there will be additional replacement costs, and if they are available for a nominal sum or free under the warranty period."



Choosing the right designer who can effectively use his expertise to translate a homeowner's preferences into a well-designed living space.

Photo: Nobel Design

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