

Dressing Your HOME



Don't hurry in choosing paint

Paint is the least expensive and easiest wall cover-up for the handy man or woman. And, since it comes in so many colors, it can be the home decorator's great tool. But, paint is not something you should choose in a hurry.

Selecting the right type of paint is no problem, since there are really only two types. Solvent-thinned paints, which include resin or oil-based enamels, and water-thinned paints, which have latex particles emulsified in water. The latter are especially easy to apply, are quick-drying and odorless and provide excellent fading power.

But choosing the right color of paint is a little more tricky. When making your selection, remember that colors have special characteristics:

*Colors react to each other. When selecting paint, take along swatches of your draperies, upholstery fabric and carpeting to make sure the colors like each other.

*They cast reflections. That is especially true when you apply a wide sweep of one color. A bright yellow wall, for example, can cast a yellow glow that may change the appearance of an entire room.

*Color becomes more intense when used on all four walls. Keep that in mind and always look at more than just a tiny color patch when choosing paints.

*Lighting can affect colors. If the paint you choose will be used with incandescent lights, be sure to look at the color in the same light. If the store does not have it, always take a sample home so you can look at it in the room for which it is intended.

As you can see, selecting paint colors should not be rushed. Take your time—once it's on the wall, there's not much that can be done, except repaint with another color.

Q: We've just moved to another home, which I'm sure we're going to love. The only problem is the living room. The walls are a pale blue, and my furniture is upholstered in soft tones of greens and golds. My draperies don't fit the windows, so I'll have to be replaced. What do you suggest for draperies and recovering the furniture? Fortunately, the room has hardwood floors, which are in beautiful condition, so I needn't worry about carpeting.

A: Do you really want to recover the furniture? If it's not worn, you can bring the colors all together much more easily—and inexpensively—by changing the walls. You don't describe a pattern in the upholstery, so I assume it is plain. If so, I'd select an attractive patterned wallcover in tones of greens and golds that match the furniture. The size of the pattern will depend on the size of your room. A matching fabric for the draperies will finish off the room nicely. But don't forget to add another accent color or two with pillows, apricot and warm pink would be nice.

Q: I have a tiny foyer that I just don't know what to do with. My home is done in bright blues in contemporary style, although there are touches of modern in some areas. What do you suggest for the foyer to warm it up?

A: Since you have touches of modern in some areas of your home, why not have a few opulent touches in the foyer? Put a warm ruby red wallcovering on the wall that visitors see first. In front of it, place a small table with a ruby velvet cloth fringed in blue. On the table, place a small, plain gold lamp and one or two photographs in gold enamel frames.
Lauretta Regan

Furnishings expert begins home column



LAURETTA REGAN

All the things you wanted to know about how to make your home your special castle, you'll be able to find in the newest of columns to be featured in the Observer & Eccentric newspapers.

Lauretta Regan, long considered an authority in home fashion coordinating and a consultant on furnishings problems, is the writer of "Dressing Your Home," a regular feature beginning today.

Ms. Regan will deal in her column with use of decorating tools like paint and wallpaper; furniture arrangement possibilities; seasonal use of home accessories, and with specific home areas such as foyer or bath.

She also will answer readers' questions about decorating problems. These may be directed to her in care of this newspaper.

Ms. Regan currently is decorating consultants for the Wickes Furniture and decorating centers in the Detroit and Chicago areas.

She was for 14 years associated with a large retail firm in the Chicago area, serving as coordinator and consultant in fashion as well as home furnishings, and she has written extensively in both areas.

She also has appeared on network television in a regular program originating in Chicago, and has appeared as a guest on radio and TV shows.

She has been interviewed often for articles on women in the business world.

A resident of the Chicago area, Ms. Regan is a graduate of Northwestern University. She has done graduate work in the arts at Boston University and Rosary College in River Forest, Ill.

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