

# Expand visual space using color

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**R**emodel with color, it's one of the quickest and most inexpensive ways to lift your spirits and give your home a facelift! Even if you do nothing else, begin with painting your walls—you can expand a small room by using certain colors to create the visual illusion of open space.

## Painting For Panorama

With the swish of a brush you can defy the laws of gravity—you can lift a ceiling, push out walls and even make unsightly features like oddly placed windows disappear. Outside, gutters and down spouts will simply melt into the facade. Once you have mastered color and paint, you can move onto applying the same formula for expanding visual space with your furniture and furnishings.

As frivolous as color may seem, it is everywhere. Color comes in all sizes, shapes and forms and at no extra cost, unless you make a mistake! Have you ever noticed how long it takes for carpeting you dislike to wear out? There are no wrong colors, just poor combinations. With such an array of products and colors to select from, no wonder decisions are difficult and mistakes easily made. Whether you live in a cottage or a castle, or somewhere in between, on a champagne or shoestring budget, there's no "cutting corners" when it comes to color. It's not the cost, but rather what colors you select and where you place them, that matters most.

## Creating The Illusion Of Space

Here are some tips for expanding space with color. The secret is illusion!

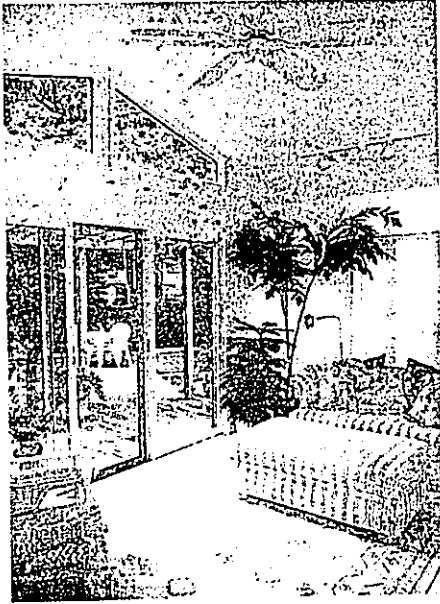
As with any color combination, to increase visual space is to minimize the effect of contrast. You should select colors carefully from the largest samples you can find. Next, make your final color decisions in the environment they will occupy.

One helpful tip to remember: color intensifies as the area you color increases. Walls and carpeting reflect off of each

other, so you may want to lighten your wall color.

Reds, yellows and oranges can perk up and warm rooms that face north, while greens, purples and blues can visually cool down rooms with a southern exposure. Color can actually alter space, depending on the tint or shade you select.

Tints are colors which contain white, and shades are colors to which black has been added. Shades can visually decrease



The proper use of lighting is a key ingredient to making small look big. Here, a corner lamp "pushes" out the corner; while track lighting accents ceiling. Colors that complement in simple prints also create the illusion of a larger room!

space; in contrast, tints visually expand space.

For balance and interest, always use an unequal amount of color, patterns and textures in a room.

Monochromatic color schemes with various tints and shades, along with wall to wall carpeting to blend with wall color add the illusion of space to smaller rooms. Light colored woods with white or natural wicker furniture, accented by mirrors to double the space, are also helpful for cramped quarters.

Other elements to complement your room:

- Carpeting—your best bet is wall-to-wall, low-pile carpeting that blends with your wall color for smooth visual flow; whereas area rugs cut space.

- Walls—use window coverings that match wall color; small-sealed wallpaper.

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