

COUPLES WHO DESIGN TOGETHER STAY TOGETHER

Opposites attract, and for couples who live together, compromising on personal style and design choices can be a difficult bridge to cross. Someone who wants a modern, contemporary vibe might not like the décor of someone who prefers a more traditional or rustic feel. What most people don't realize, however, is that blending two opposing tastes can actually be more visually appealing than sticking with just one design style. And, more importantly, it can be done quickly and affordably.

Paint Is Prime

Adding a splash of color, or two, or three, is a low-cost way to liven up the blank canvas of your home. While neutral colors are ideal for selling your home, living with them might be a different story. If you want to evoke emotion, establish visual intrigue or set a certain mood, color is the best way to get the job done.

And you don't have to stick with just one color throughout your home. Highlight an accent wall in your living room with a darker shade or apply a funky wallpaper print. Or, paint your kitchen red with shades like Crisp Crimson or Rocket Red from Dutch Boy as it increases appetite and elevates passion, perfect for a romantic dinner for two. Purples such as Plumes or Merlot Grape, also from Dutch Boy, have been known to induce passion, ideal choices for a couple's bedroom.

Art and Soul

Bringing artistic elements into the space is an easy way to add personal flair. From wall décor and blown glass accents to picture frames and candles, no decorative piece is too small to make a big impact. Display items in groups of three for a dramatic display. Candleholders or vases in varying heights or complimentary color schemes can marry two styles easily, and pairing a gothic frame with a softer, lace-applique can actually bring great dimension to an overlooked nook of the home.

And just because you're a fan of Monet and your partner prefers Picasso, that doesn't mean you can't proudly display your favorite pieces for all to enjoy. While Picasso's pieces seem more abrupt and geometric, by combining with larger, softer pieces from an impressionist painter like Monet, you can actually blend the two artistic styles seamlessly.

The Perfect Mix

Don't be afraid to mix various textures and patterns. This will add dimension to the space, transforming a flat and otherwise boring look into a world of wonderment. First, pick a main color you want to focus on, which will be the anchor color for the space. Let's say you choose blue for this role. Lay all blue fabrics on the floor – window treatments, rugs, pillows and blankets. You'll immediately notice some that seem out of place. Remove these from the pile and you'll begin to notice an interesting cohesion among the remaining fabrics. Next, you'll want to incorporate a complementary color. If blue is your anchor color, add hints of orange to the mix for a playful pop.

Also, be mindful of the pattern's scale. If you have too many large scale patterns in one space, they will be competing with each other, adding unnecessary drama. Keeping it to just one large scale print and several mix-and-match small and medium scale prints will create perfect harmony. In terms of texture, pairing coarse fabrics with smooth variants will add yet another level of dimension to the space. While too many coarse items can seem overbearing, by adding some softer, more feminine textures you can actually create an interesting, eye-provoking combination.

Taking the time to blend your and your mate's style preferences can be a rewarding experience. Throughout the process you'll learn their likes and dislikes while having fun in the process, creating a stronger, more unified couple. And by playing around with colors, textures and patterns, the end result will be a well-designed, joint space that stimulates the senses from start to finish.

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