

Expert Contributor



Every Project Begins with a Consultation

By Arlene Lyon

Have you been considering hiring an interior designer? You've watched the TV programs showing designers and contractors completing projects, and maybe you're thinking, "I want that look," or "How do they accomplish so much in such a short span of time?" Whether you

want to update one room, the whole house, renovate the basement or you've bought that beautiful property on the lake and it's time to build your dream cottage, hiring a professional to assist with your project is a wise choice.

Interior designers are trained to take your vision, streamline decisions to bring the project forward, formulate a plan, source the appropriate materials, and once you, the client, have approved, the designer will work with the required professionals. This ultimately saves the client time and certainly a headache or two. Interior designers are creative people, and they love finding ways to make a project as special as the individuals they are fortunate enough to work with. It's the designer's business to know where to find the best products that fit your budget.

But before you start rolling up your sleeves, remember: Every project begins with a consultation. The consultation is a specific amount of time allotted to the client and the interior designer to discuss the project. The designer will be very focused on providing solutions to any interior challenges presented, verbally giving descriptions to provide the client with a visual picture. The designer needs to draw on their training, experience and creativity, while the client tries to absorb a lot of information in a short period of time. It's also when a client will assess if they can work with the designer, going forward. Sometimes the project is just the consultation. Other times, the consultation leads to the project. It's up to the client to decide during this meeting if they feel the designer has provided value for the fee paid. Yes — there is a consultation fee! Experience shows that when there is a price put on a service, the client is given the most value for the money spent. The old adage of "you get what you pay for" applies — so be wary of free consultations.

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As the time frame given for the consultation draws to a close, the interior designer will make many notes in summary form and provide these notes to the client as a resource. Taking measurements and floor plans drawn to scale, are not provided at consultations. These steps would be done once the client and interior designer have chosen to work together for the duration of the project. By providing the summarized notes, the client has time to digest the information and decide if they want to be a "DIY-er" or if they wish to hire the designer.

If you have any questions on the services an interior designer provides, please send an email or give A L Designs a call.

