

## Using Patterns in Interior Design

The latest trend in décor is bringing graphic design elements into the realm of interior design. Whether that is done through the use of computer generated patterns in fabrics and wall coverings, or using elements such as stylized letters, words or quotes as wall art, the visual statement it creates is a bold one.

Graphic patterns lend texture, color and depth to the design of a room. When you think of patterns, the first thing that probably comes to mind are the patterns in fabrics, but patterns can be brought in through other mediums such as wall coverings, flooring and in the arrangement of your furniture and accessories. Patterns can be comprised from all the elements of your interior design.

Identify the shapes in all of the objects in your design. As you combine the shapes, patterns will start to emerge. Rectangles grouped together make stripes; squares together create patterns of checks or plaids; angled furniture can create triangles, etc.

**Colors in Patterns** - The first rule of thumb in mixing patterns is to use like colors. Similar or complimentary colors tie the patterns together, while contrasting colors can create confusion within the look of your space.

**Scale and Proportion** - Another element in pattern mixing is scale. Narrow stripes paired with oversized flowers look out of proportion. When your patterns are of similar proportions, they harmonize. When patterns are mixed together, you should be able to distinguish the individuality of each pattern while also viewing them as a cohesive design.

**How much is too much?** - Consider the quantity of patterns you want. In this case, quantity refers to visual quantity or how much your eye processes when you are in the room. For example, a strong graphic print can create a stunning splash of color and texture to your design. You'll want this to be a focal point. Mix this bold statement with more subdued patterns, so as not to overpower one strong graphic element with another. If patterned fabrics and floor coverings are not your thing, or if you are looking to add pattern with less permanency, consider making your patterned focal point a wallpaper mural.



"Swirl Symphony" by Sonja Erickson

**Pattern and Texture** - The last consideration in mixing patterns is texture and style. A bold graphic can be edgy, modern and sleek. You'll want the rest of your design and finishes to be sleek as well. Your accessories should mimic the patterns you have chosen through shape, color, and material finishes.

Once you've developed these levels of patterns, your interior design will come together easily and successfully.

## Featured Artist



Sonja Erickson

Sonja Erickson is a Minneapolis-based designer who specializes in upscale product design across multiple categories, including home decor, stationery, giftware, fashion and the children's market. Sonja's sensibility is decidedly modern - her innovative design solutions are consistently fresh and imaginative. Her diverse range of art styles are influenced by her deep intuition for identifying and interpreting trends, which she seeks out by regularly visiting a variety of international and domestic markets. It is her goal to bring sophisticated yet accessible design to consumers. "I am delighted to create products that people love to live with!" she says. Currently, Sonja is the owner of Art Garden Studios, a Minneapolis agency specializing in product development consulting and design.

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