

Interior Designer VS. Interior Decorator

What is the difference?



By Christina Duperron

What do you think of when you hear the words interior decorator? How about when you hear interior designer? Most people think of it as someone who selects colors for an interior environment, making things look nice, and that it is a luxury to hire such a person! This is just the tip of the iceberg!

An interior decorator is generally someone who is creative and/or has good taste and works mainly with surface decoration, selecting and placing items such as paint, fabrics, furnishings, decorative lighting and accessories.

An interior designer is professionally educated, trained and generally licensed to practice interior design (depending on the state in which it is required). They have comprehensive training and understanding of evaluating clients to help determine project goals and objectives, space planning, local and state code requirements, lighting and electrical, developing documents and specifications for building trades, selecting the appropriate materials and products for certain applications, ergonomics, drafting, illustration and rendering skills, the construction and properties of interior finish materials, and much more.

An interior designer will generally be affiliated with a professional organization such as; the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) or International Interior Design Association (IIDA). As with any profession, it is generally good to be a member of an

organization for benefits such as continuing education and worldwide referral service for potential clients. These types of associations will generally only allow members that have an education from an accredited college or university. This helps to ensure that the person is educated and trained in all aspects of interior design, bound by a code of ethics, and will be delivering services to clients based on knowledge and fact - verses only opinion. The end result will be a well-planned and well-thought out project with generally fewer headaches!

Why use an interior designer?

- Saves time, frustrations and money
- Resource for an endless selection of products and services
- Keep project running smoothly and on schedule
- Work with short or long term planning
- Create end product that reflects you
- Work within any size budget
- Peace of mind for those not able to be on-site during project

When is it best to use an interior designer? The best time for one to be involved is actually in the very early planning stages with your architect or builder. A designer can help with reviewing your plan set to make sure your needs and desires are fully incorporated into the architecturally-planned space, as well as with aesthetics of the space.

When looking for a designer or decorator, be sure to ask them about their education, training, experience, continuing education and professional affiliations. Ask them for references, and if they have a portfolio of their work. See how your personalities fit with each other, and what their personal style is. You want to invest your time and money in the right person who will do a quality job for you and above all, listen to you and consider your needs, wants and desires. Keep these differences in mind the next time you are planning a project, and select the individual that will suit you and your project the best. Good luck!

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