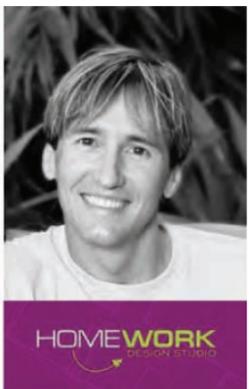




Get in the Mood for Simple!



Randall Waddell
Principal Designer
HomeWork Design Studio
680-6732

An architect builds a house on foundations. Your basic building block for interior design is that shell - a room's walls, floor, and ceiling. You have to be able to see a room clearly to understand how it will support your design. In terms of its physical footprint or visual integrity, the shell may have to be changed. It's here when you can see what a space will become, you have it at its skeletal beginnings and you will add the meat and body which in turn will create the mood.

As with fashion, the less-is-more thinking works well with interior design. If you walk into a room and remove the cushions from the couch, suddenly the place may look completely different and perhaps even better. It just goes to show that even the smallest object, like the wrong cushion, has a power far beyond its size and can break up the harmony you've worked hard to achieve.

Pared-down usually means less furniture, less decoration, and more simple solutions.

In colour, it might mean either a neutral, monochromatic environment or a room done in no more than two hues. For example, visualise a bouquet where there is only one type of flower in the same colour rather than all kinds of flowers in every shade. Likewise, in decorating, pairing down requires that you resist the urge to clutter surfaces and indulge in all sorts of patterns, whether it's on furniture, walls, or floors. Forget covering the sofa and chairs in many cushions. Use a single object on the table, but make sure it's full of history and meaning and beautiful, because nothing can hide when a room is simple. If the pieces stand out, they have to stand on their own. Some people want to comfort themselves with many objects and visual fuss, but that can lead to an over energised room vs. a calm retreat.

There's a fine line between complexity and simplicity, and you can push it in either direction and get beautiful results. If the visual stimulation is controlled and elegant, then the surplus is an advantage. It's all about creating mood, and in design the mood is what drives the detail. Be aware of your own tastes and limits, and try to reflect your own personality in ways that make you feel comfortable. A minimal room that seems serene to some people might strike others as boring, but this is where you live, and what you love, so embrace it. This aesthetic doesn't have to be purely contemporary design. You can build on either a traditional or contemporary design by including traits of both, that usually gives the best of both worlds. It's not that one is right and the other wrong. In the end it's simply about the mood it puts you in when you enjoy the space.

"There's a fine line between complexity and simplicity, and you can push it in either direction and get beautiful results."