

## *Laurel's How-To-Guide So That You Can Stop Freaking Out Over Your Paint Colors!*

If there's one thing that creates abject terror when decorating, it's selecting our paint colors.

Believe me, it once did for me too— until after many years, I learned the techniques that make it much easier. I also learned what not to do.

Oh, I know the drill... There's a painting contractor breathing down your back. He needs to know the colors. Like right this moment, he needs to know them. [why oh why do they do that to us?]

Panic sets in. You might even ask the painter what *he* recommends?

I see...

That desperate huh? [although, at the risk of getting shat on from a dizzying height, some painters do have a good eye. The majority, no. They are two completely different skills]

**I am going to give you three easy exercises to get your creative juices flowing.**

**ONE** - Think in terms of color palettes. Do you feel most comfortable with soft, pale serene colors? Do you like bold, vivid colors? Maybe you're a minimalist and loves the look of clean white. Or maybe you love the idea of creating rich, sophisticated deep hues. Or a combination of dark and light.

*For inspiration:*

**Look at Nature** - Have you ever thought, gee that sky clashes with the trees?

**Look at Fine Art** - No need to invent the wheel. The masters have it down!

**Look online** - I love Pinterest, but there are other sources too, like magazines and houzz, but most everything is already on Pinterest.

**TWO** - Walk through your home. Is it traditional, modern, or a combo? Is the home old or new? What style are you drawn to in terms of furnishings? If you really allow it, I find that rooms often tell us what color they want to be.

**THREE** - I would procure the fan decks that you are interested in. And I would stick to one, or two companies at the most. You might have to pay for them, but it's a lot better than constantly running to the store for those little swatches that are going to look completely different when you get them home. **I heartily recommend Benjamin Moore. And I love their Regal Select in the matte finish for the main wall color.**

**Now, it's time to create your paint palette.** I realize that this sounds very scary, but think of it as a puzzle and all of the pieces need to fit together. We aren't creating this in a vacuum. I find that one of the easiest ways is to take a work of art with the colors that are close to what I'm envisioning.



John Singer Sargent - Nonchalant Repose

Or it might be a photo you found; either a room or scenery.



[http://www.asmarainc.com/Assets/ProductImages/3220B\\_Room\\_xl.jpg](http://www.asmarainc.com/Assets/ProductImages/3220B_Room_xl.jpg)

Or, it could come from a piece of fabric or wallpaper. There are lots of ways to jump off.

Relax with it. Folks, it's not brain surgery! **When you find colors you like, research them online. See what others are saying about that color.**

Here is a very helpful post that explains exactly how I select colors for my clients. Please read it and then come back.

<http://laurelberninteriors.com/2015/03/17/guilty-12-hideous-painting-mistakes/>

### **Why does the paint sample need to go flat against the wall?**

The light is going to bounce off the sample and render it lighter than it will be on the wall. Or, the undertones will be less evident. It will just look a lot different.

## **Selecting a Trim color.**

For white/off-white trim, you can narrow down the field to the following 6 shades of white

**White Dove OC-17** - the universal donor of paints. It almost always looks great. It is a white with a touch of cream and a touch of gray without being dirty.

**Cloud White 967**- a touch brighter with a very slight pink undertone, this is a great non-yellow white, but still warm

**Simply White OC-117** - a very clean white, but might be too bright for darker colors

**Cotton Balls OC-122** - another universal donor. Very much like white dove but virtually no gray

**Linen White 912** - It's usually not my first choice for walls unless the space has good lighting. But this is often an excellent choice for deeper colors.



**Mascarpone AF-20** - Another lovely cream that's a bit brighter than linen white.

Ceiling? If white walls, then I like to paint it the same shade as the walls. It can also match the trim if there's a crown moulding.

The trim can contrast with the walls and ceiling or not. Both are correct.

Another rule of thumb is if painting deeper shades, then they go deeper into the home, not the other way around.

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A hearty, warm welcome as a treasured subscriber to laurel home. Every week, I'll be providing you with many tips such as what you've found here.

I adore your responses and also love it when you tell me what you would like to know more about. This blog is for you!

The laurel home blog's subscribers are a wonderful, supportive community. We all have in common an appreciation of beautiful interior design and for making our homes our own personal haven.

My Very Best Wishes,

*Laurel*