



NDA Magazine

WINTER EDITION 2023 | ISSUE 02

Festive Décor

DIY Christmas Table Decoration

Add a creative and personal touch to your festive celebrations.

**5 Must Have Christmas Gifts
For Interior Designers**

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A Word from our Editor Winter Edition

Seasonal greetings and a warm welcome to the second edition of our NDA magazine! We're thrilled to have you with us, and we've designed this issue with the utmost care to provide you with a much-needed respite from the daily grind, allowing you to carve out some precious moments for yourself to delve deeper into your interior design passion.

We're especially proud of this issue, and we believe it's a true gem (if we do say so ourselves). Within the pages, you'll read about an emerging trend: the rise of anti-anxiety design, a concept gaining increasing prominence within the design world. We'll also unveil our winter 23 trend report predictions, giving you a sneak peek into what's on the horizon.

We've poured our heart and soul into creating this issue, and we genuinely hope that it provides you with a moment to cosy up and delve into your passion. Enjoy!

Contributors



Gill Lotter

Garden Design Tutor

Time at NDA
6 years.

Course/s you teach
Professional Diploma in Garden Design.

If your personality was a design trend, what would it be?
A harmonious wildlife garden with a natural swimming pond!

Career high
There really are too many to focus just upon one. I genuinely love what I do! The joy of seeing fledgling designers achieve never fails to give me a buzz!

Favourite design trend
You can't give me just one, surely! Foliage gardens really work for me. They invoke a real sense of serenity.

Hated design trend
Tiling that reminds me of public conveniences.

Sarah Yazji

Interior Design Tutor

Time at NDA
2 years.

Course/s you teach
BA (Hons) Interior Design, MA Interior Design & PID Diploma.

If your personality was a design trend, what would it be?
I have two loud, noisy boys so I really appreciate calm and clutter free spaces. Japandi and Minimalism with a touch of Biophilia suit me well!

Career high
Designing a 5-star spa in Dubai.

Favourite design trend
Incorporating different textured design elements throughout an interior space.

Hated design trend
Matchy-matchy furniture.

Carla Newman

Interior Design Tutor

Time at NDA
4 Months.

Course/s you teach
Professional Interior Design Diploma.

If your personality was a design trend, what would it be?
Japandi.

Career high
Creating a presentation deck which was pitched to Maya Jama.

Favourite design trend
Wabi Sabi.

Hated design trend
Maximalism.

Molly Johnson

Interior Design Tutor

Time at NDA
2 years.

Course/s you teach
BA Interior Design (Hons), Professional Diploma in Interior Design, Interior Design for your Home.

If your personality was a design trend, what would it be?
Danish/Nordic.

Career high
Designing for some incredible companies such as John Smedley.

Favourite design trend
Anything Danish!

Hated design trend
Shabby Chic.



Dr Anthony Rayworth

Director of Design Studies

Time at NDA

17 years.

Course/s you teach

Curriculum development and industry relevance across all courses.

If your personality was a design trend, what would it be?

Heritage Modern: Looking at history through the lens of the present in order to inform the future.

Career high

I don't really think in that way about my career, there have been many exceptional and memorable moments. I tend to look forward ... as Karl Lagerfeld said "People who say that yesterday was better than today are ultimately devaluing their own existence."

Favourite design trend

Antiquarian Minimalism – because it is warm, scholarly, and presents endless possibilities – rather like myself!

Hated design trend

Whilst I find contemporary interior design energising and interesting, 'Overtly Trendy Design' is problematic, for two reasons:

A) If an interior is resolutely bang on trend, it cannot truly reflect the personality of the inhabitant and, for me, that is completely missing the point of interior design.

B) Nothing dates more quickly than the height of trendiness, therefore, waste of materials, energy and other resources is implicit in this approach. An interior cannot possibly be both on-trend and wasteful in the current climate and therefore can only be, by definition, old fashioned.



Amy Payler-Carpenter

Senior Tutor

Time at NDA

10+ years.

Course/s you teach

Interior Design, Diploma right through to Masters.

If your personality was a design trend, what would it be?

Taxidermy.

Favourite design trend

I do not believe in trends, it's just another money-making scheme. I believe we should all be able to choose our own style without the pressure of having to keep up with the trend industry.

Hated design trend

Colour of the Year! These are always too safe; I prefer bold colours.



Marc Hagerty

Interior Design Tutor

Time at NDA

3 years.

Course/s you teach

Professional Interior Design Diploma.

Career high

Exhibiting final degree work at the Royal College Of Art and being included in seminars on multi-generational design.

Favourite design trend

Minimalism.

Hated design trend

Maximalism.



5 Must Have Christmas Gifts for Interior Designers

The holiday season is fast approaching, and with it comes the delightful task of selecting the perfect gifts for our loved ones. If you have an interior designer in your life, we've curated a list of five thoughtful presents that are bound to be on their Christmas list this year.



Personalised Diary or Weekly Planner

A true non-negotiable; what is an Interior Designer without a diary?

An organised space consisting of appointments, deadlines, meetings, and events that can be safely stored both on their desk or on the move. However, this journal is not any old kind, it is a personalised journal that allows you to emboss a name on the front (or anything for that matter). A great gift for an Interior Designer that really doesn't need much justifying.



Taschen / Phaidon Books

Any Interior Designer appreciates, and most likely owns an ever-expanding bookshelf. Whether you have their favourite, iconic artist in mind, a particular design style, photographer, or fashion designer – Taschen or Phaidon will have the perfect book for them. Featuring incredible projects and imagery, Taschen and Phaidon books are equally as pleasing to stack on a coffee table, perhaps resembling a sentimental location or memory. A great book collection to start, or to build upon further.



Museum Membership

For individuals who have a passion for exhibitions and museums, a V&A membership can be an excellent present, enriching an interior designer's schedule with

complimentary and limitless entry to exhibitions and events. It also provides access to exclusive content and previews.

The V&A is merely one instance of such a membership; other renowned museums and galleries offering similar benefits include the Royal Academy of Arts, Tate Collective, National Art Pass, and the National Trust.



Magazine Subscription

Interior designers are always in search of fresh inspiration and concepts to ignite their creativity.

A magazine subscription serves as the perfect gift, ensuring a continuous flow of inventive ideas, current trends, informative articles, and inspiring designs.

Moreover, a magazine subscription offers the delight of lasting throughout the entire year, making it a small gesture that can provide enjoyment for months on end.



A Workshop

Although material presents can bring happiness, experiences often create lasting memories. Gifting an artistic workshop upon an interior designer can offer a creative outlet, introducing them to fresh skills and unique experiences with like-minded creatives.

Whether it's ceramics, flower arranging, cooking, candle making, screen printing, or calligraphy, there's a workshop suitable for every individual.



When it comes to choosing the perfect Christmas gifts for interior designers, thoughtful consideration can go a long way. Whether you choose to gift an experience, book, or subscription these gift ideas are sure to excite any interior design enthusiast.

ANTI- ANXIETY

The Rise of Anti-Anxiety Interior Design

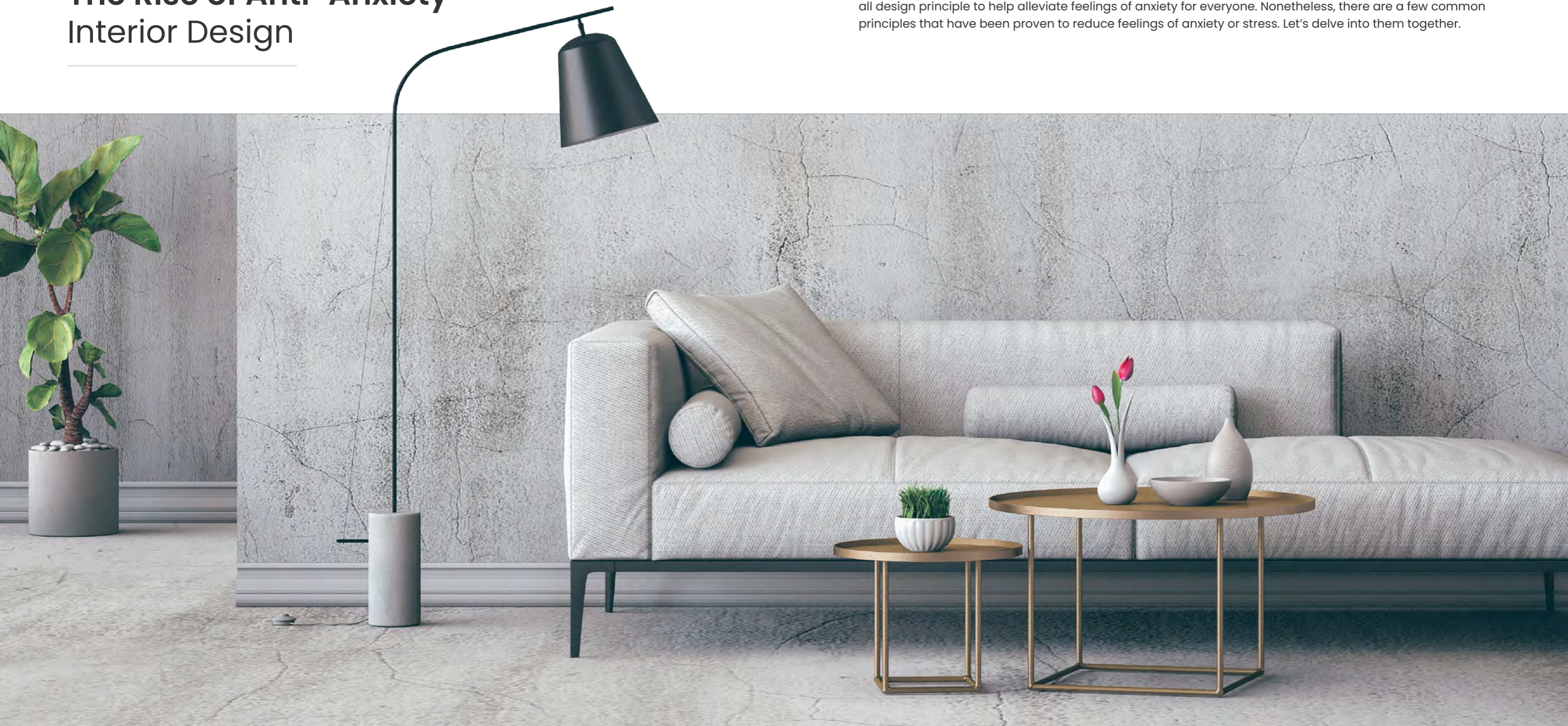
What is Anti-Anxiety Design?

Anti-anxiety interior design is a holistic approach to designing spaces that prioritise the well-being and mental health of individuals. It involves the intentional use of specific design principles to create calming, stress-reducing environments. Anti-anxiety design also takes into consideration the impact of surroundings on emotional states, aiming to minimise anxiety triggers.

The Emergence of Anti-Anxiety Design

As interior designers, we are well-versed in ensuring commercial and domestic spaces are accessible to individuals who have physical disabilities, but are we doing enough to be inclusive in designing spaces that are conducive to mental health? Thankfully, every day we're seeing a societal shift towards design that centres around improving the way we feel. But what interior design principles do we consider if we want to reduce anxiety in particular?

Individually, we experience feelings of anxiety or stress differently, so regrettably, there is no one-size-fits-all design principle to help alleviate feelings of anxiety for everyone. Nonetheless, there are a few common principles that have been proven to reduce feelings of anxiety or stress. Let's delve into them together.



Biophilic Design

Biophilic design principles offer some of the most promising approaches to reducing anxiety in our man-made environments. By integrating elements of nature into architectural and interior design, such as natural light, plant life, and organic materials, we can create spaces that resonate with our innate connection to the natural world. This connection has been shown to have psychological benefits, including lowered stress levels and reduced anxiety.

If you want a simple way to incorporate some biophilic elements into your interior schemes, start by adding some plant life. Not only will they improve the air quality, but it has been shown that nurturing plants can help improve mood regulation.

Quick Tips

- Incorporate plant life
- Harness natural light
- Use organic materials



Mindful Material & Texture Selection

Materials and textures also play a role in providing familiarity, which can alleviate feelings of anxiety.

Mindfully considering and selecting materials that evoke positive memories or associations has been demonstrated to assist with managing anxiety or stress.

Additionally, opting for materials in their natural state, such as concrete or wood, not only brings a sense of ease and familiarity but also reduces visual clutter, contributing positively to anxiety reduction.

Soft tactile textures are also an excellent material choice to quickly introduce calming, comforting sensations into any room.

Quick Tips

- Materials with positive associations
- Natural state materials
- Soft tactile textures



Open, Uncluttered Spaces

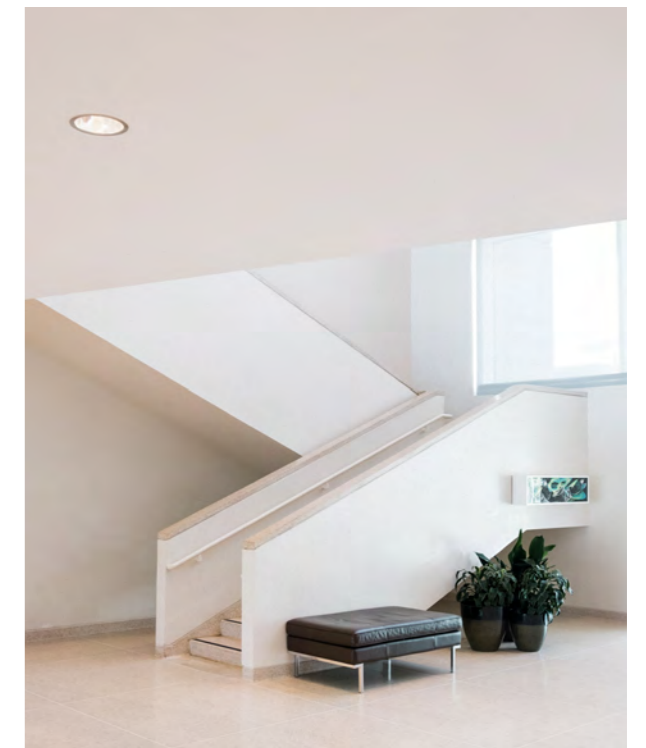
An open space with clear circulation and ease of movement can evoke a sense of emotional safety.

Arranging rooms with a clear sense of order means we can create spaces that feel more intentional, as being organised and minimising clutter has been proven to promote improved mood regulation.

It's been shown that a cluttered environment can have the ability to drain energy, which would negatively impact anxiety levels.

Quick Tips

- Open spaces
- Intentional order
- Minimalising clutter



Calming Colours

When it comes to choosing interior paint colours to improve anxiety, there are some key dos and don'ts to keep in mind. Opt for soothing and calming shades like soft blues, muted greens, and warm neutrals. These colours can create a serene atmosphere and promote a sense of relaxation, and they have even been proven to lower blood pressure.

Avoid selecting overly bold or vibrant colours like bright reds or neon yellows, as they can be too stimulating and may increase feelings of restlessness or tension. We suggest considering muted and pastel versions of your favourite colours, as they can provide a sense of familiarity.

Additionally, consider using a neutral colour palette consisting of whites, greys, or beiges, as these colours establish a calming atmosphere, especially in areas where individuals seek solace or relaxation.

Quick Tips

- Avoid neon colours
- Select pastel versions of your favourite colour
- Use natural hues

Incorporating all or some of these anti-anxiety interior design principles can be a transformative step towards creating spaces that not only look beautiful but also nurture our mental well-being.

By adopting biophilic design, opting for tranquil colour palettes, and upholding orderly, clutter-free spaces, you can take significant strides toward creating environments that aid in alleviating anxiety.



TREND REPORT

Winter 2023

Paper & Fabric Lighting

Throughout 2023, there has been a significant rise in the paper lighting trend, in particular, papier mâché. Providing an understated elegance, paper and fabric lighting introduces warmth and cosiness to a space through its subtle illumination. This trend is leaving its impression on several spaces, including homes, offices, and hospitality venues.

Adding an extra layer of artistry to paper and fabric lighting, papier mâché takes centre stage. This ancient craft involves the use of paper pulp, often reinforced with textiles, to create intricate and durable forms.

From floral motifs to abstract designs, papier mâché can elevate lighting to a form of artistic expression. Marie Michielssen's Earth collection for Serax reflects the designer's love of papier mâché, reusing materials and all the raw and rough elements of design.

Paper lighting is not just a fleeting trend; it is a timeless choice that stands the test of changing design sensibilities. Its ability to blend seamlessly with different aesthetics and its capacity to evoke emotions through light and form make it a lasting presence in interior design.





Earthy Tones

Muted shades of terracotta, pinks, browns, green, mustard, and plum. Earthy tones have captured our attention throughout 2023 due to their calming effects and associations with nature. As winter approaches, this timeless trend shows no signs of waning.

Mauve, peach, corals – “I’m loving shades of pink right now. It feels feminine and a softer way to incorporate colour.” – Jake Arnold

Terracotta accents add a rustic charm and warmth to a space. This can be introduced through pottery, vases, cushions, and artwork. Consider using muted pink within wallcoverings or upholstery for a soft and calming effect – it can be balanced with deeper colours such as plum to avoid overwhelming the space.

Opting for brown furniture pieces such as wooden tables or leather seating will complement this earthy palette. Introducing green through potted plants or botanical prints will bring a refreshing element to the space. Lively mustard accents like throw cushions or decorative items can add a touch of vibrancy to a room.

The key to incorporating these colours is to distribute them evenly throughout the rooms to create a harmonious flow. Avoid concentrating too much of one colour in a single area. Experiment with different combinations until you achieve the cosy yet moody atmosphere you are aiming for.

“I’m loving shades of pink right now. It feels feminine and a softer way to incorporate colour.”

Jake Arnold

Colour Drenching

Colour drenching is not about following a trend; it is about creating a lasting impact on your space. The concept is remarkably simple yet powerful: paint everything the same shade – walls, woodwork, ceiling, radiators, and some even go as far as furniture. At its core, colour drenching takes simplicity to a new level – by embracing a single colour throughout a room, you infuse harmony and cohesiveness into your design. Interior Designer, Abigail Ahern says that “One of the amazing things about colour drenching is that the walls and ceilings effectively disappear and become an amazing backdrop to all of your interesting furnishings and decor.”

The first step involves selecting your main colour and deciding how extensively you would like to apply the colour drenching technique. Just by focusing on the walls, skirting, and ceiling, you can make a significant impact on the space, often achieving the desired effect. Remember, the colour you choose plays the most crucial role in shaping the atmosphere. For instance, a lighter, neutral tone will create an illusion of spaciousness and calm. On the other hand, using a stronger, darker colour can create a cosy and intimate ambiance.

This design approach has gained significant popularity, and brands such as Farrow and Ball have made it easier than ever by innovating a multi-surface, long-lasting Dead Flat Paint. This paint's unique attributes ensure that your chosen hue appears consistent across different surfaces, creating an uninterrupted flow of colour.



Food Waste Furniture

Working with nature, regenerative design helps the environment and nurtures the life within it. The focus being on natural replenishment which builds a richer ecology, giving back to a landscape rather than taking from it. This movement is transforming design and surface material trends, revolutionising how we innovate, manufacture, and construct. It is our role as interior designers, architects, and product designers to push the boundaries of waste. We need to guide clients towards celebrating these new, innovative surface waste material trends.

Silver, Chrome, Aluminium, and Iron

Within interior design we have long been immersed in the cosy embrace of bronze, gold, and copper tones. However, a new trend is emerging – the cool touch of silver metals, offering a refreshing contrast that catches the eye. Expect to see more chrome, mirror, stainless steel, nickel, aluminium, and iron this winter and into 2024.

"I'm feeling less excitement around materials like natural brass and more interest for polished aluminium, stainless steel and nickel." – Robert D McKinley, an Interior designer known for his work in the hospitality and luxury lifestyle sector.



Share Your Work on Social Media

Posting your work on socials regularly is a great way to grow your personal brand, confidence, and skillset.

By tagging **@thenationaldesignacademy** we may feature your post on our feed to grow your network.



Miss the last issue?

Don't worry we have you covered. Click [here](#) to read the last edition of NDA Magazine.



Crafting a Winning Business Plan

When developing your ideas towards launching your own interior design business, it can be tempting to simply dive in and start preparing a portfolio, while rushing around trying to obtain as many clients as possible. Our advice would be to pause, step back, and really give some thought to the type of interior design business that you understand, will hold your interest, provide an income, allow your business to become profitable, and, perhaps most importantly, attract the client base that you want.

Define all these factors, and you will be able to provide clients with the best possible service, as well as an interior that fulfils all their requirements, is delivered on time, and at the best possible price. You will also understand how to attract such a client base, be able to focus your marketing budget, predict what your outgoings will be, and define your unique selling point (USP). In short, you need a business plan.

10 Key Areas

The Executive Summary

The executive summary is a one-page (or at most, two-page) description of your business. Its purpose is to explain your key ideas, introduce yourself, and the senior management and leadership team if applicable. It positions your business in the marketplace, and outlines how you will reach your customers, as well as why your business will succeed in your chosen market.

It should include your business name (and the reason for choosing it), a mission statement, a description of your service, your USP, and an outline of short-term (one year), medium-term (three years), and long-term (five years) goals. All this information should be connected to outlined financial goals supported by a very brief strategy for achieving them.

The Elevator Pitch

This is an even briefer version of the executive summary and will serve as your response to questions in social or business situations, such as, 'What do you do?' or 'Tell me about your business.' As a rule of thumb, your elevator pitch should take less than two minutes to deliver when spoken aloud.



Try this exercise in front of a mirror—continuously change the words and repeat until you are comfortable delivering the information naturally. Include your name, your business name, your customer base, and your USP.

Whether you use the elevator pitch regularly isn't the primary goal. The real objective is to enhance your understanding and confidence in your business. Aim to avoid using jargon, highly specialised terms, or excessive verbosity. For instance, telling someone that 'My business extracts elements of early Deconstructivism and re-locates them into a revisionist-modern, hyper-retail, contextual framework' is not particularly helpful when trying to explain your design for a shopping mall to a non-specialist business financier.

The People

This section provides a description of the leadership team within your business. Even if it's just you at this stage, it may be useful to include any potential key positions within your organisation and their respective job descriptions. However, the primary focus of this section is around you.

Describe your training, qualifications, and experience, directly relating these to your role within your business. Explain what motivated you to start the business and your plans for transforming it into a successful organisation. Highlight how your character traits will enhance your role and include any available testimonials.

The purpose of this section is to ensure that you and any potential partners possess the skills and qualifications necessary to effectively grow the business. It also helps in identifying any skill gaps that may be addressed through future recruitment or additional training.

What is your Business Offer?

This is where you define your business offering, what it provides, what it intends to provide, and how you plan to manage its growth. Be very specific in this section; it's not the time for broad-brush or vague statements. Similarly, try not to be overly ambitious. It's simply not feasible to do everything at startup stage. This is also the section in which you define your market sector, such as retail, residential, commercial, or hospitality, among others. External investors may not be subject specialists, so it's essential to be clear and realistic.

Even if the business plan is solely for your own use, it should provide an honest expression of what you will offer, as well as when and how you will provide it, and at what cost. Without accuracy, definition, and honesty, the document will be a meaningless waste of time. With these qualities, your business plan can guide you through all stages of development.

It's also worthwhile to have a secondary plan that uses actual achievements and is reviewed against monthly predictions. This will enable you to verify if you are on target or if it's becoming evident that your market is not precisely what you initially predicted, but rather another area closely related. For instance, shifting from hotels to restaurants and bars, both within the broader hospitality sector but with different focuses. This will allow you to refine and adjust the emphasis of your marketing to take advantage of this change, which may have otherwise gone unnoticed without the comparison provided by the business plan.

Client Base

In addition to defining what your business is about, its leadership, and what it will offer to your customers, it is essential to understand your target client base. This section will provide a detailed and clear description of who will require your services and why they will choose your business over another. Take time to 'get to know' your customers; create a profile for your ideal client. What magazines and books do they read? Where do they live, and what type of home do they live in? Where do they buy clothes, and so on? There is a world of difference in the design requirements of a single, career-oriented city apartment dweller compared to those with a family home

and a large garden in the countryside. You need to thoroughly comprehend these differences to relate to (and attract) a specific client base. Your marketing will also be geared towards attracting a particular type of client, so this stage is absolutely crucial when developing your business plan.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

This is the time to be brutally honest because without it, this section cannot be of any real use. As you gain more experience, and as your business becomes busier, this section will evolve. Therefore, it is highly recommended that you review your SWOT analysis every six months. A SWOT analysis will inform you about your position relative to the competition, the market, as well as your predictions and assumptions. Research and list any businesses that could potentially compete for the same customers as your business. List them. Examine their profiles in detail – what do they excel at, and where do you outperform them? Identify threats, some are unpredictable, like wars, but others can be assessed and mitigated. Opportunities, such as a surge in residential construction requiring show homes to promote the developer's vision, can be a significant advantage if show homes align with your area of design. Be very specific in this section; don't overlook anything.



Marketing Strategy

You understand your customers, you know the competition, you are aware of your strengths, and you can see the opportunities. All these elements come together in alignment within the marketing strategy. How will you attract your customers? How much will you charge? What type of market research will you conduct, and how will you launch your campaign to your chosen client base? Will you attend trade events, or will your campaign only be digital? Finally, but perhaps most importantly, how much will all this cost? Marketing can be quite expensive. Construct a strategy that is appropriate for the scale of your business. There are many free resources available, especially within social media, or consider driving traffic to your website at minimal cost through paid ads.

Define your USP

Only you can define your Unique Selling Point (USP). This is what sets you apart from the competition. It is perhaps the single most important aspect of your business because without a USP, you will have nothing to offer the market, and you won't have a foundation for your marketing strategy. Your USP is why your customers choose you over another. Try to summarise your USP in a single sentence (like your elevator pitch). A very clear and highly focused USP is much easier for you to deliver and for your customers to understand.

Finance

This is where hiring external expertise really makes sense. However, before spending any money, it's essential that you understand, even at a basic level, how the business works financially. Many banks will provide a template that includes sections for income and expenditure. Print out each draft and see how you can minimise costs and maximise sales. Include total costs and regular outgoings for each month, as well as any upfront costs incurred by projects you are working on. Be clear-eyed and realistic; never put on your rose-tinted glasses when dealing with financials. Establish a good relationship with your bank, as they can provide a valuable sounding board.

Flexibility

Markets change, employment laws change, tax laws change. Therefore, you need to build flexibility into your business plan. Work with freelancers, utilise hot-desking in a business centre, or work from home rather than in a dedicated office. Trade-focused centres, like Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, can be an inspiring place to meet clients for project discussions over coffee or lunch. Consider the structure of your business, and aim to reduce bureaucracy, especially in the early stages.

Finally, some parting advice; love what you do, and do what you love. Enjoy your business journey!



The Evolution of Christmas Tree Decorations

Christmas trees are traditionally evergreen conifers, such as spruce, fir, and pines. Unsurprisingly, these trees are abundant in winter and provide a burst of colour during a time when our landscapes are otherwise sparse. However, it's not just their availability that makes them perfect for our seasonal décor; each of these trees has its own unique history that adds to the spirit of Christmas.

Fir Trees

Fir symbolises hope for the future, and in the Bible, it is a signifier of good. The fir tree was also the focus of one of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, 'Grantræet,' which deals with an inability to live in the moment and appreciate what we have when we have it.

Photo by Enric Cruz López from Pexels

Spruce Trees

Spruce signifies resilience and strength and is often given as a memorial tree. In Greek mythology, it was associated with Artemis, the goddess of the moon, and in Gaelic tradition, it represents the eternal mother and offers protection.



Pine Trees

Pine is associated with virtue and long life by many. In Greek and Roman mythology, it is a symbol of fertility. In Scotland, Druids would decorate local pine trees with shiny objects, representing the divine light of the stars and the changing of the seasons.

In addition to the obvious reason for evergreens being used at Christmas, the history and folklore associated with these trees also make them the perfect choice for symbolizing what we associate with this special time of year.

Although the Christmas tree as we know it did not gain popularity until the 19th century, the tradition of decorating winter trees dates back to the ancient Greeks and Romans, who used adorned trees in celebrations dedicated to the gods. Many countries utilised decorated trees to ward off evil spirits, ghosts, and even witches.

In the 16th century, in Germany, Protestant reformers began bringing trees into their homes at Christmas and lighting them with candles, a practice that would be considered a health and safety nightmare by today's standards!



In the UK, the popularity of the Christmas tree surged in 1846 when a sketch was published depicting Queen Victoria and her family surrounding a decorated tree. With this publication, the tradition of decorating Christmas trees was born.

With the Christmas tree comes the decorations, and no traditional tree is complete without a bauble or two. Glass baubles were first created by German glass-blower Hans Greiner, with the oldest known bauble dating back to 1847. Nowadays, baubles come in all shapes and sizes. The largest Christmas bauble ever produced was for The Dubai Mall in 2018, measuring 4.68 meters in diameter and weighing 1,100 kilograms!

Hallmark Jewellers set a record in 2009 by creating the most expensive bauble, valued at \$136,000 USD. This exquisite bauble was crafted from 18-carat white gold and featured a traditional snowflake pattern.



What adorns the tree has changed over time as tastes and technologies have evolved. Candles, fruit, nuts, popcorn, cookies, electric lights, and delicate baubles have all found their place on the tree, with families often passing down their own traditions through the generations. The tree itself has also undergone changes with the invention of artificial trees, making Christmas a tidier affair. But why stop at fake pine? There are plenty of contemporary alternatives available.

Whether you are using building materials, books, or an old ladder, Christmas décor should be personal. Why not break with tradition this year?



8 Week Course



Outdoor Living & Garden Design

Take Your Interior Design Skills Outdoors

Whether you want to design gardens for clients or want to pursue your personal projects, this 8-week course will equip you with professional skills and principles to pursue your gardening ambitions.

Next course date: **9th January 2024**





DIY Christmas Table Décor Ideas

The time for indulgent feasts and gathering with loved ones is fast approaching. Some of us may have already prepared for the upcoming celebration by ordering food, drinks, and nibbles. But have you considered enhancing the festive atmosphere at your dining table? We've gathered a selection of our top DIY Christmas table décor ideas that will undoubtedly add a touch of seasonal magic to any table setting.

Winter Foliage Napkins

You will need

- String / twine
- Scissors
- Napkins
- Winter foliage

We absolutely love the easy and speedy concept of enhancing the fragrance and atmosphere at the dining table. What's fantastic is that it doesn't require a significant expense. You can freely gather winter foliage from your nearby park or forest; just remember to bring sturdy shears!

To create these winter foliage napkins, all you'll need is some clean, dried foliage, basic string, and napkins. Simply tie the foliage on the napkin's top, and voilà, you've got yourself a straightforward yet charming winter-themed napkin!



Winter Fruits

You will need

- A variety of winter fruits
- Light coloured tablecloth

A winter table arrangement doesn't have to be overly elaborate or crowded. You can embrace a minimalist approach to stage a more elegant and airier atmosphere for your winter dining table. To achieve this look, intentionally choose some intriguing winter fruits as your mini centrepieces to scatter around the table. We appreciate the contrast between the light-coloured tablecloth and the natural vibrant hues of the fruit. However, be cautious not to go overboard with the fruit. The more refined, the merrier!

Christmas Paper Crafts

You will need

- Card / paper
- Templates
- Glue / Scissors
- Double sided tape

For those with a crafty side, making your own Christmas paper scenes can add a personal and enjoyable touch to your table settings. All you need is some paper, cardstock (or even some discarded scraps destined for the bin), glue, or double-sided tape, and scissors.

You can then unleash your creativity by designing your winter scene templates, or you can find accessible templates online. You could even transform this table decoration into a delightful opportunity to share a cosy, idyllic afternoon activity with your loved ones.



Forest Table Runners

You will need

- Scissors
- Winter foliage (leaves, branches, pinecones)

Here's another simple yet impactful DIY Christmas table décor idea you can easily arrange yourself. Once again, you might want to put on your wellies and head outside to gather some winter foliage from your garden.

Handpick a variety of leaves, branches, and pinecones. Then, arrange them in the centre of the table to create a captivating focal point. This concept is guaranteed to evoke the scents and visual charm of winter.



Culinary Centrepieces

You will need

- Centrepiece
- Dried fruit / winter foliage

After dedicating considerable time baking your delightful, sweet treats in the kitchen, why not extend the enjoyment by featuring them on the table?

Winter-themed cakes, adorned with intricate frosting, aromatic biscuits, or an impressive cheese tower, can all serve as showstoppers at your winter banquet. These treats not only delight the taste buds but also contribute to the overall aesthetic of the table.



These DIY Christmas table decoration ideas offer a creative and personal touch to your festive celebrations. Whether you opt for the natural beauty of winter foliage or the elegance of handmade crafts, each idea can infuse your holiday table with seasonal charm. We'd love to see your winter tables; please snap a photo and tag us using @thenationaldesignacademy.

Fading Interior Design Trends

What's Going Out of Style

With so many influencing factors, such as culture, technology, and social shifts, interior design is an extremely dynamic field that is constantly changing and evolving. What was once trendy can quickly become outdated. As new ideas and concepts emerge to shape the spaces and homes that we inhabit, others are gradually fading away. As interior designers, we need to continue to adapt to new ideas, preferences, and trends. Here are some of the interior design trends that we predict are on their way out.

Matchy-Matchy Interiors

The era of meticulously coordinated furniture is a thing of the past; today, individuals seek to express their individuality through their interior design decisions.

A perfectly matched interior can become mundane and uninteresting over time, while mixing and matching various elements can cultivate a more vibrant and visually appealing scheme. People now yearn for greater diversity in their living spaces, giving rise to the increasing popularity of eclectic and mixed styles.



The All-White Kitchen

Although the all-white kitchen has proven to be a popular choice for many years, it is slowly starting to lose its appeal. Instead, designers are opting for more colourful and diverse kitchens that embrace high textures and materials.

Gone are the days when homeowners looked for that modern kitchen that could sometimes lack personality and warmth. Instead, we're seeing a rise in softer modern kitchens where contrast is key, and layers and textures are being used to warm up spaces.

Cream, taupe, and warmer woods are replacing the all-white interior to balance the kitchen and create a cosier space.



Exaggerated Minimalism

While minimalism is still very much a trend, the extreme form that strips spaces of all personality and comfort is falling out of favour. People are seeking to balance both simplicity and warmth in their interiors.

In some cases, exaggerated minimalism can prioritise aesthetics over functionality, and since practicality and comfort are important considerations in interior design, overly minimalistic spaces may not serve clients effectively.





Vintage Decorative Signs

"Live, Laugh, Love" is on its way out as we enter the new year. Word art became a popular and inexpensive way to make a house a home.

The wooden cut-out words like 'Dream,' 'Blessed,' and 'Family' conveyed positive and uplifting statements that served as daily reminders to focus on the joyful and meaningful aspects of life, which many people found appealing.

However, there has been a shift away from these decorative signs. Instead, there is an increasing popularity in the use of nature and natural elements in interior design art that aligns with sustainability and biophilia trends that are constantly gaining popularity.



Open Concept Living

The open floor plan, which involves combining multiple rooms into one large living space, has recently been declining in popularity, while partition walls and room dividers are now making a comeback. Although having an open-plan living space can give us the illusion of added space and occasionally a more visually pleasing entertaining area, having defined or separate rooms within the home can, on the other hand, provide a sense of cosiness and differentiation of various functions.

As our homes have become more versatile in function (due to the increasing popularity of remote working and the desire for multifunctional spaces), it is proving to be quite challenging to create distinct zones within an open concept layout.

As we enter 2024, we will see a departure from clichéd word art and a move towards more sustainable and nature-inspired elements. This shift underscores the enduring appeal of balancing simplicity and warmth, aesthetics, and functionality, enabling people to create spaces that authentically resonate with their values and personalities. What interior trends are you excited to see the back of?



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Thank you to all our amazing contributors and designers!

+44 (0) 1159 123 412 | hello@nda.ac.uk | nda.ac.uk

