

CHARLOTTE URBAN

# HOME

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CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE



# Why Hire AN INTERIOR DESIGNER

By Anne Marie Ashley

**Your home is distinctive;** it's a reflection of your personality and your lifestyle and hiring a professional to help you design the perfect space allows you to focus on enjoying it. Hiring an interior designer can take expression of your style to a whole new level while taking the pressure off to get the job done in your free time. We spoke with the experts at the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) for the Carolinas to get some tips on hiring the perfect designer for you.

## How do homeowners hire the right designer?

Designing the interiors of your home is as personal as selecting your wardrobe, so choosing a professional that understands your style is key to loving the finished product. Have an idea of what you'd like your space to look like and use inspiration from magazines and design websites to get your message across to the designer. ASID offers some key considerations when hiring a designer:

- Is the professional accredited as an interior designer? (If required in your state, be sure the designer is licensed)
- Does the designer have experience in the type of project you are doing?
- Has he/she demonstrated creativity, talent and resourcefulness in their portfolio?
- Is the designer attentive, responsive and do they communicate well with you?
- Be sure the designer has a record of reliability and good work habits.

## What can a professional interior designer bring to the table?

As ASID points out, when you hire an interior designer, you get the benefit of an experienced professional who can solve problems, help you avoid costly mistakes and, most importantly, create an attractive, affordable space designed specifically to meet your lifestyle needs. Interior designers offer a trained eye that can help you bring your vision to life, possibly in ways you never imagined. They also provide specification and purchasing services for materials, furniture, accessories and art, some of which you might not be able to find on your own.

## What should homeowners expect to pay for an interior design project?

Designers, like other professionals, are different from one another in their combinations of talents, knowledge, experience, and specialties. What and how they charge will vary accordingly. Here, ASID outlines the common methods or combined methods for residential designers, tailored to fit the client's needs:



Traci Zeller Design /  
Dustin Peck Photography

- Fixed fee (or flat fee) — The designer identifies a specific sum to cover costs, exclusive of reimbursement for expenses. One total fee applies to the complete range of services, from conceptual development through layouts, specifications and final installation.
- Hourly fee — Compensation is based on actual time expended by the designer on a project or specific service.
- Cost plus — A designer purchases materials, furnishings and services (e.g., carpentry, drapery workrooms, picture framing, etc.) at cost and sells to the client at the designer's cost plus a specified percentage agreed to with the client to compensate for the designer's time and effort.

ASID offers this final word about cost: How you choose to furnish your interior and how you work with your designer will have tremendous impact on the final cost of the project. Items such as antiques or custom-made furniture, and modifications that involve altering or moving load-bearing walls or beams will significantly increase the cost of your project, as will requesting changes mid-project or making excessive demands on the designer's time. The more research and planning you do before you start, the more you will be able to help keep costs down during the project. ❖

To find an interior designer in Charlotte, please visit [www.asidcarolinas.org](http://www.asidcarolinas.org) or [www.interiordesignsociety.org](http://www.interiordesignsociety.org) for more information.