



Color Theory

Q&A with certified color consultant Debra Spindler Pinals



Certified color consultant and interior stylist Debra Spindler Pinals of Weston, Connecticut-based Spinpin Creative says the biggest mistake she sees people making with color is not using any

at all. We got her advice on how to avoid the bland and boring trap by creating instead a cool, cohesive and color-saturated space.



Where do we start?

First, take a look at your “fixed elements,” the hard finishes and things in the space that won’t be changing—the countertops, natural light, ceiling height, tile or flooring. These will guide you in choosing the best colors; a space that looks well designed and cohesive considers all these elements together.

What is the “inspiration pillow”?

When I’m designing, my starting point for color would be a pillow with, for instance, three colors—and that’s the palette for the space.

If you can find an inspirational pillow—or painting, area rug, or artwork—you can use that as a model for the room.

Start by mixing in color sparingly—adding some flowers or towels in that shade, and then if you start to feel comfortable, maybe you’ll buy some pillows, and then at some point you’re buying a sofa in your favorite color.

Start with something small.

What’s one of your favorite color tips?

I personally love yellow on a front door—school bus yellow, straw yellow, yellow green are all beautiful colors on a front door.

Yellows are a sunny color that will brighten your mood and raise your energy. It’s just happiness.

If you want to use it on your interior, it’s better to use a light honey color, a more subtle shade. It would look beautiful with blue-grays, green-grays and true white—you could even add a little bit of midnight blue.



How do you turn a beige, blah room into boho chic?

Add texture. Plush throw rugs, nubby textures, woven baskets, wall hangings, woven pendants—all work great. Texture is an amazing way to make a neutral room come to life.

Another way is to add warm woods into a neutral room. The wood provides lots of organic warmth and dimension. Something like a live-edge table would be beautiful, and it also adds shape.

Metals are also a great way to add interest to a room. I would stick to choosing two different metals. The way the light catches the metallics gives them dimension—which is what a neutral room needs. In fact, a lot of times, that is what the neutral space is missing.

Patterns, fabrics and wallpapers with prints in varying sizes and patterns are also really important.