

How to find the right white

Choosing the perfect shade of pale can be harder than selecting bold colour. We unravel the mystery

Text by Sarah Kerr.

Thinking about freshening up your home by painting it white? Beware: selecting the right white can be more challenging than choosing any other hue. There are hundreds of shades of white, and if you'd prefer to avoid wandering around your home wearing sunglasses because you've chosen one that's too bright, it's worth thinking the decision through carefully.

Look at the level of light in the room – if the space is north-facing and very sunny, it can take a cooler white, and if there's less natural light or it's a south-facing room, a warmer white base will have the desired effect.

White reflects light to make a space feel larger, so it's a natural fit for smaller areas. It also allows your furniture and accessories to take centre stage.

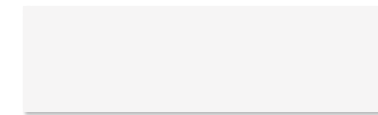
A white leather sofa is easy to clean with gentle soap and a soft cloth!



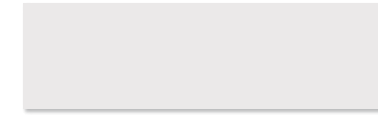
Photography by Tony Amos/acpsyndication.com.

cool whites

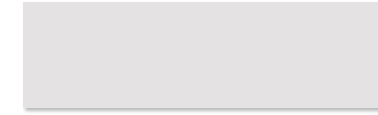
Cool whites such as Resene 'Black White' and Resene 'Sea Fog' contain a hint of blue, grey or green.



RESENE 'Black White'



RESENE 'Sea Fog'



RESENE 'Double Sea Fog'

Photography by Maree Homer, Derek Swalwell and James Knowler/acpsyndication.com.



white in the kitchen

+ TEST DRIVE If you're considering installing a composite stone benchtop (a mix of ground granite marble and resin), ask your kitchen specialist to give you a sample before you have it installed. This will enable you to test it for staining and ease of cleaning with items such as beetroot, red wine and curry powder.
+ HERE OR THERE? Marble such as Carrera is divine, but can easily stain. Combat this by using it for the splashback surface behind your hob instead of as your benchtop.

+ EASY FIX Colour therapy can work wonders if you can't afford a major reno. Having your kitchen professionally spray painted will involve your doors and drawers being taken away and painted, and the rest will be done on site. Change your splashback to glass and put in new door handles, and it will look as good as new.
+ THE RIGHT MIX The general rule of thumb for a monochromatic scheme is to use a shade full-strength on the walls, half-strength on the ceilings and quarter-strength on the doors, skirting, trims and architraves.

JUXTAPOSE A FRESH WHITE SCHEME WITH NATURE'S BEST LEAFY GREENS



PAINT OLD WOODEN FURNITURE WHITE FOR A MODERN, CLEAN FEEL





White looks thoroughly modern teamed with glass

CONTRAST WHITE TILES WITH BLACK

warm whites

Warm whites such as Resene 'Albescent White' and Resene 'Double Alabaster' contain a hint of cream, amber or peach.

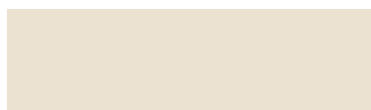
More warm shades to try:



RESENE 'Bianca'



RESENE 'Rice Cake'



RESENE 'Half Caraway'



Photography top left by photo.newzealand/living4media.com; other images by Maree Homer and [Derek Swalwell/acpsyndication.com](http://DerekSwalwell/acpsyndication.com).

white wash

+ BATHING BEAUTY Crisp white tiles look good in any bathroom, but restrict their use to the walls and use a darker or natural stone tile on the floor as they're easier to keep clean.

+ BETTER TOGETHER White looks thoroughly modern teamed with 'clears'. Crystal chandeliers, acrylic accessories, beautiful bevelled mirrors and a glass table are star supporters of team white.

+ ISLAND STYLE White shutters or blinds evoke the atmosphere of a tropical resort. Wide slats allow you to usher in greenery from the view outside to counteract all that white light.

+ GO WITH THE FLOW White linen curtains soften a room but you do need to be careful as the fabric can break down in sunny areas. For a better result, choose a 50 percent linen and synthetic mix. This way your curtains will be durable but you'll retain the softness and feel of natural linen.



Add floaty white blinds

white in the bedroom

+ LIGHT & DARK Pairing white with black creates a beautifully elegant, art deco feel. Even with so much contrast, this look is still a blank canvas to which you can add any other colour. To lessen the drama, choose a slightly softer white.

+ SO SERENE A white bedroom can be an incredibly relaxing haven. Nothing beats a white waffle-weave bedspread combined with a white fabric headboard. For best results, vary the textures and tones of white and layer them in the space.

+ JUST ADD COLOUR White bedrooms look fabulous with a bit of soft grey or duck egg. Or, if you are feeling braver, go for high impact by introducing lime or hot pink.

+ TRY & TRY AGAIN Take home some paint swatches and several testpots, and pin them up in the space for a few days to see how the colour performs with your carpet and furnishings. Remember to check to see how different whites look during the day and at night.

+ WELCOME HOME For a more traditional look, consider antique whites. They look fantastic in bedrooms because they lend the room a lived-in feel. Try Resene 'Double Pearl Lusta'.

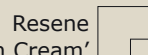
Photography by [Derek Swalwell](http://DerekSwalwell) and [James Busch/acpsyndication.com](http://JamesBusch/acpsyndication.com).



WHITE PAIRED WITH BLACK HAS AN ELEGANT ART DECO APPEAL

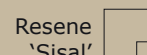


Nothing beats crisp white linen



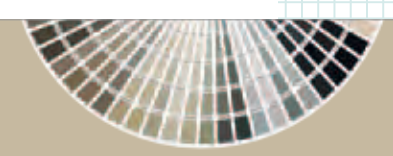
Resene 'Thorndon Cream'

Colour trends are moving towards green-edged creams and off-whites, an example of which is Resene 'Thorndon Cream', an up and coming neutral, especially popular in cities.



Resene 'Sisal'

The Resene Whites & Neutrals collection is available in a fandeck or as free individual palettes. Available only from Resene: resene.co.nz, 0800 RESENE (737 363).



Treat the eye to some variety by using paints with different gloss levels



added interest

For a textured white finish, opt for one of these anaglyptic (embossed and paintable) wallpaper designs.



RESENE 'Anaglypta 2011 RD80028'



RESENE 'Anaglypta 2011 RD80099'



RESENE 'Anaglypta 2011 RD80103'



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