

start the journey...

*A holiday snap, summery sandals, a blue vase?
You're probably a Beach Casual.*



Many of us struggle to decide what decorating style we like and want to live with. It's the reason home magazines are so popular as we search for a look that resonates with us, keen to find a like-minded homeowner who has already achieved the look we desire.

But with a bit of confidence and good advice, it's fairly easy to discover your own style, even if it's not the look that's populating the pages of the magazines. It's easy to get swept up in the fashion of the moment but there's no use embracing what's on-trend if it fundamentally doesn't suit your personality. Few of us are chameleons who change our tastes with the wind. Rather, we're more likely to add fashionable accessories that complement our interiors, to keep things fresh and up to date.

Luckily we live in an eclectic world with many influences and a healthy tolerance of individual tastes and styles.

Look at what's around you

Have a look at the sort of clothes you choose to buy, and the colours in which you tend to dress. Can you describe your personal style? Have a look at any accessories, knick-knacks or artworks you have bought.

Take a photo of these things, as well as any inspirational settings or scenes (the beach, mountains, flowers) that strongly appeal to you. Set them out in front of you or on your computer screen and look for common elements

of colour and style. For example, your collection might include colourful summer sandals, a blue glass vase and a snap of your last Pacific Island holiday. Can you guess what type of decorating style you might relate to?

Or you might have a little black dress, an etching from an up-and-coming local artist and a miniature schnauzer. Quite different to the first personality but equally distinctive.

Also take note of your friends' houses. Which ones do you feel instantly at home at, which ones make you uncomfortable? Compare them to your selected photos and you should start to see your style emerge.

Ask yourself...

Are you a casual sort of person who doesn't mind a bit of clutter? Or are you more formal and like a tidy home?

What's your family situation – a family of young kids, one with teens, country lovers with lots of pets, a singleton, or a city-dwelling couple?

What type of house do you live in – character, modern, mid-century suburban, architectural, ex State...?

And did you choose that style of house or were your choices limited by the area in which you wanted to live?

And is your stage of life temporary? Being knee-deep in kids' toys can be rough for someone who craves a more

minimalist and ordered environment. Don't despair, there are ways of coping while you transition this stage.

Start with colour

There are many elements to house interior and exterior schemes: furniture, soft furnishings like curtains, rugs and cushions, flooring, lighting and accessories. But one of the most dominant features – simply because it covers the larger surfaces of your home, being the walls and ceilings – is colour.

Being knee-deep in kids' toys can be rough for someone who craves an ordered environment

If you figure out what colours you like with ease and confidence, then you're more than half way to deciding your style personality. It's easy to opt for off-white or beige as a fall-back. While there are many beautiful and useful white and neutral colours in the Resene collections, make them a considered choice rather than be driven by a fear of getting it wrong with a bolder colour.

Focusing on the colours that are dominant to your style personality when developing a room scheme can help you put together interiors that feel right quickly and easily.

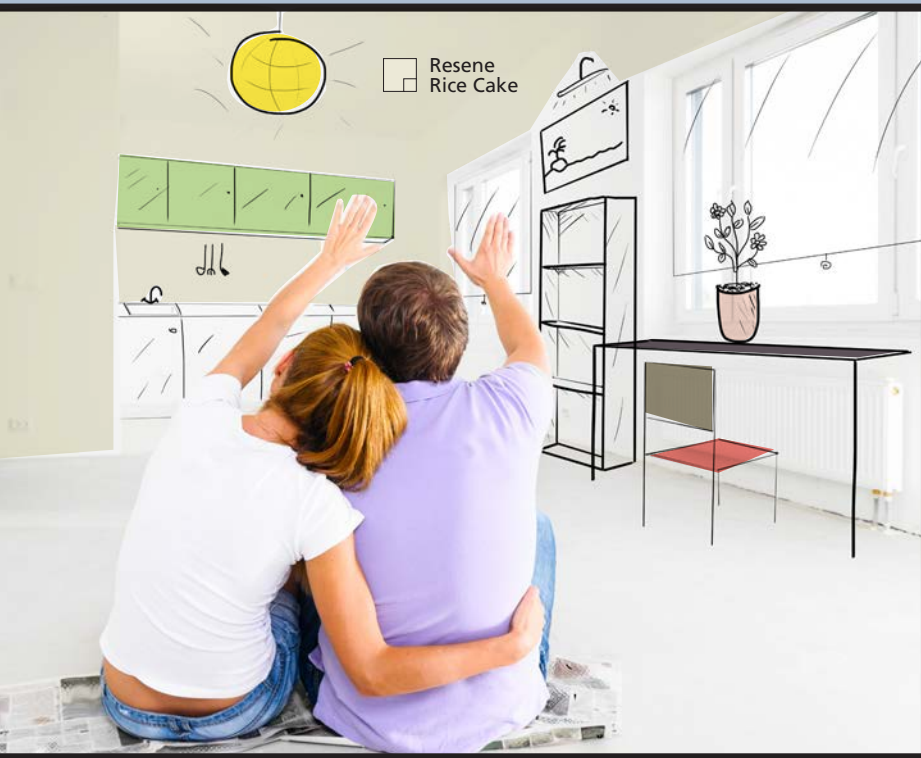


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Without these 'comfort' colours you may always feel a little out of touch, detached or dissatisfied as your personality works hard to try to find things in the environment that resonate with your preferences. Even introducing a few elements of your style personality into a room can make it feel instantly welcoming.

Living with others

Of course, few of us are purely one style personality and many of us have to consider the other personalities in our household. If you agree readily on the same colours and decorating looks as your spouse or kids, you will generally share a common style personality. But what if you can't agree on anything? Don't despair! Accommodating the personalities of different family members is easy:

- Allocate each family member a favourite room and let them select furnishings and colours for that space that suit their colour and style personality. That way in at least one part of the house they will feel truly at home. Bedrooms are ideal for this.
- To incorporate the tastes of other family members accessorise the room with one item from each family member's dominant style personality.
- Style personalities do overlap. Look for the common ground and use that as the basis for your colour scheme. For example, there are common elements between those who like a Beach Casual look and those who love Country Rustic interiors. Likewise, there can be overlap between Eco Warrior homeowners, and those who love a clean Architectural aesthetic.

With your colours in hand, and ideas from the following pages, you can now go shopping:

Once you have refined your Resene paint colour choices, take the Resene paint charts with you when you're shopping for furnishings, accessories and furniture. Or, paint your colours onto a Resene stirring stick, or individual ice-block sticks for handy reference.

Buy some testpots and paint up A2 pieces of card to test out at home, or order A4 swatches from Resene.

Once you have chosen some of your interior elements, compile a swatch board with bits of tile, flooring, fabric, carpet, paint colour etc so you can see the components come together as a collection. Try to represent the individual elements in the same proportion as they will appear in the room, ie the curtain fabric swatch will be larger than the one you have chosen for the cushions, and a paint colour or wallpaper for a feature wall will be smaller than the main wall colour.

Visit the www.habitatbyresene.com website and register for a Lookbook. Search the site and collect the photographs and colours you like. Also, find photographs you don't like – sometimes identifying what you don't like is easier and helps you pinpoint what style you're definitely not.

Take advantage of the services available from Resene: paint charts and cards, colour consultancies, testpots, drawdowns, wallpaper samples, the in-store colour library of thousands of large A4 swatches, Resene Colour View project slides, as well as copies of *habitat* magazine and the *habitat plus* booklets.

