

INTERIORS BY TERRELL

Room Refresh Checklist

The Fresh Eyes Technique

Walk into your room as if you are entering it for the very first time. Grab a pen — and see what you've been overlooking.

How to use this checklist: Leave the room, then walk back in slowly as if you've never been there before. Let your eye land naturally. Notice what grabs attention — good and bad. Work through each step and check off what is already working. Circle or note what needs attention. Use the Action List on the final page to plan your next move.

Room
:

Date:

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■ ■ First Impressions & Focal Point



Stand at the doorway and notice: what is the VERY FIRST thing your eye lands on?

Write it in your notes — don't edit yourself. Just observe.



Is that the focal point you WANT people to notice when they enter?

If not, that's your number-one priority.



What is the SECOND thing your eye moves to?

This reveals your room's visual hierarchy.



Does the room have a clear, strong focal point?

Fireplace, gallery wall, statement furniture, or bold artwork all work well.



Is the focal point being enhanced — or competing with distractions?

A busy background, cluttered surface, or mismatched wall steals attention.



Is the focal point framed symmetrically? (Lamps, chairs, or plants on each side)

Framing draws the eye naturally and signals importance.



Does the room feel welcoming and inviting from the doorway?

If it doesn't feel good in the first 3 seconds, something is off.

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**DESIGNER
TIP**

Every room needs one clear focal point that grabs attention first. If yours isn't doing its job, you don't need to buy something new — try framing it with lamps, plants, or symmetrical accessories on either side. Contrast, color, and scale all help a focal point command the attention it deserves.

Light & Mood



Does the room feel light and bright, or dark and dreary?

Neither is wrong — but it should feel intentional, not accidental.



Does the room feel cozy and warm, or cold and uninviting?

Temperature of light affects this more than anything else.



Is natural light being maximized? Are windows clear and unobstructed?

Heavy furniture or dark curtains blocking windows kill natural light.



Do you have more than one light source in the room?

Overhead-only lighting creates flat, unflattering light and kills ambience.



Are there table or floor lamps providing warm ambient light?

A single lamp on a dimmer is the fastest way to make a room feel more inviting.



Is there accent lighting on art, shelves, or architectural features?

Accent lighting adds drama, depth, and visual interest to a room.



Are your bulbs warm white (2700–3000K) in living and sleeping areas?

Cool daylight bulbs feel clinical. Warm bulbs feel like home.



Do the window treatments frame the window beautifully — or hide it?

Hang curtains close to the ceiling and wide past the frame to maximize light and height.

DESIGNER
TIP

Think of lighting as the jewelry of the room — it can soften, flatter, highlight, and completely change the mood. Add one lamp you don't currently have, put it on a dimmer, and use a warm 2700K bulb. That single change will transform the feeling of the room by evening for under \$50.

■■ Eye Movement & Visual Balance

Do your eyes move around the room easily, or do they get stuck somewhere?

Where your eyes snag is where you should focus your attention first.

Does the room feel heavier or more cluttered on one side?

Furniture, color, and tall items all add visual weight to a side of the room.

Is furniture spread throughout, or all pushed against the walls?

Pulling furniture away from walls creates a more intimate, designed feeling.

Is there a mix of tall, medium, and short items distributed throughout?

Varying heights create visual rhythm. All-same-height arrangements feel flat.

Does the room have visual balance between left and right?

Balance doesn't mean matching — it means equal visual weight on both sides.

Do accent colors appear in more than one spot in the room?

A color that appears only once looks like a mistake. Repeat it at least 2–3 times.

Is there empty space that gives the eye a place to rest?

Good design needs breathing room. Negative space is not wasted space.

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**DESIGNER
TIP**

Take a photo of your room on your phone and switch it to black and white. This removes color distractions and makes visual imbalance — heavy sides, bare walls, awkward clusters — instantly obvious. Professional designers use this trick constantly when evaluating a space.

Are there enough different colors, or does everything read as one flat tone?

A room with only one tone can feel monotonous, even when it's tidy.

Do you have a dominant base color (walls + large furniture ≈ 60%)?

Do you have a supporting secondary color (drapes, upholstery, rug ≈ 30%)?

Do you have an accent color (pillows, art, accessories ≈ 10%)?

Your accent should appear at least 3 times in the room to feel intentional.

Do all colors share the same undertone family — warm OR cool?

Mixing warm and cool undertones makes a room feel 'off' without knowing why.

Does the color palette feel cohesive and intentional throughout?

If it feels random, identify one anchor color and build your palette from there.

Are any colors isolated to just one area and not repeated elsewhere?

Repeating color in 2–3 locations creates flow and ties a room together.

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DESIGNER
TIP

The 60/30/10 rule is your color safety net. If your room feels flat, you're probably missing the accent layer. A few throw pillows, a vase, or a piece of art in a contrasting color can make an immediate visual difference — without touching the walls or furniture.

■■■ Pattern & Texture



Is there ANY pattern in the room, or is everything solid?

Even one patterned pillow or throw adds life. All-solid rooms feel flat.



Do you have a variety of textures: soft, hard, rough, and smooth?

Think linen + wood + metal + ceramic. Varied texture creates visual depth.



Do your patterns vary in scale — large, medium, and small?

Never mix two patterns of the same scale. They compete and create visual noise.



Do all patterns share at least one color in common?

A shared color is the thread that ties patterns together so they converse, not clash.



Is there a natural or organic material in the room?

Wood, rattan, stone, linen, ceramic, or dried botanicals all add warmth.



Are accessories and decor grouped in odd numbers (3s, 5s)?

Odd-number groupings are more visually dynamic and interesting than pairs.

■■ DESIGNER TIP

If pattern feels intimidating, start with a throw blanket or two pillows in a complementary print. Test at low cost and low commitment. The rule: vary the scale (one large pattern, one smaller), keep a shared color between them, and always include a solid or subtle texture to ground the combination.

■■ Furniture Layout & Traffic Flow

Can people move through the room easily without squeezing or backtracking?

Traffic flow should feel natural, direct, and unobstructed.

Is the furniture grouped to support the room's main purpose?

Each zone — conversation, TV, reading — should have its own clear arrangement.

Is any furniture blocking a window, doorway, or architectural feature?

Blocking natural light or a focal point always hurts the room's look and function.

Is the rug large enough? (Front legs of all seating should rest on it)

A too-small rug is the single most common and most impactful layout mistake.

Is the coffee table within 18" of the sofa and at seat height?

Too far away feels disconnected. Too high or low is uncomfortable.

Is seating arranged to encourage conversation, not just face a screen?

Angled chairs or a curved arrangement pulls people into connection.

Are any pieces pushed flat against every wall with no breathing room?

Pulling furniture 6–12 inches from the wall feels more intentional and spacious.

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**DESIGNER
TIP**

Most people push all furniture against the walls thinking it makes the room feel bigger. It actually does the opposite. Float your seating group toward the center — even slightly — and the room immediately feels more designed, more intentional, and more spacious.

Do the walls look bare, too cluttered, or inconsistent from side to side?

A bare wall next to a busy one breaks the room's visual flow.

Is there a clear focal wall that anchors the room?

Gallery wall, statement art, accent color, or architectural detail all qualify.

Is artwork hung at eye level? (Center of piece = 57–60" from the floor)

Art hung too high is the #1 wall mistake. Bring it down to where eyes naturally land.

Above the sofa: is there 6–8" between art bottom and sofa back?

Art floating too far above the sofa looks disconnected and unfinished.

Is there a variety of heights and scales in your wall arrangement?

Varying heights guide the eye and create visual interest.

Is art or wall decor in proportion to the wall and furniture below it?

Small art above a large sofa looks lost. Scale up or group pieces together.

Does the art or decor reinforce the room's color palette?

Art should pull at least one color from the room's existing palette.

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DESIGNER
TIP

Before you hammer any nails, tape kraft paper cut-outs of your frames onto the wall and live with the arrangement for a full day. Move the paper until it feels right — then and only then hang the actual pieces. This saves countless holes in the wall and a lot of unnecessary frustration.

■■■ Clutter Check



Is there too much stuff competing for attention in the room?

A well-decorated room has a sense of calm. Clutter creates visual noise, not coziness.



Does every surface have enough breathing room around objects?

Empty space is not wasted space — it's where the eye rests and recovers.



Are there items in this room that belong somewhere else?

Misplaced objects signal disorder even when the room is otherwise clean and styled.



Could better storage solutions eliminate the visible clutter?

Baskets, trays, and closed cabinetry hide mess and add style at the same time.



Have you removed anything from this room that you no longer love?

If you wouldn't buy it again today, it may be time to let it go.



Does each piece of furniture earn its place in terms of function or beauty?

If a piece does neither, it's just in the way.

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**DESIGNER
TIP**

Clear every surface completely. Then only put back what you truly love and what genuinely belongs there. A single beautiful object on a clean surface has far more visual impact than ten things crowded together. When in doubt, take it out. You can always bring it back.

Plants, Life & Finishing Layers



Is there at least one green plant in the room — real or high-quality faux?

Plants add color, organic texture, and life. Designers always include them.



Is the plant proportional to the space?

A floor plant fills an empty corner. A small plant suits a shelf. Scale matters.



Is there something natural and organic in the room?

Wood, stone, rattan, linen, ceramic, or dried botanicals all add warmth and groundedness.



Does the room feel layered — with items at floor, table, and eye level?

Layering height creates visual richness: rug → furniture → table decor → wall art.



Is there at least one personal or meaningful object in the room?

Books, travel finds, heirlooms — they give a collected home its soul.



Does the room have a pleasant scent? (Candle, diffuser, or fresh flowers)

Scent is the most overlooked finishing layer. It makes a space feel truly complete.



Does the room feel 'collected over time,' or like it all came from one cart?

A mix of old and new, expensive and thrifted, makes a room feel real and personal.

DESIGNER
TIP

Start with one tall floor plant in an empty corner — a fiddle leaf fig, pothos, or snake plant. It costs less than a throw pillow and has a bigger visual impact than almost any other single change you can make to a room. Even a high-quality faux plant works beautifully if you're not a plant person.

Overall Assessment



Does the room feel cohesive — like everything belongs together?

Cohesion comes from a shared color story, consistent style, and intentional layering.



Does the room reflect your personal style, not just current trends?

If it looks like a showroom but doesn't feel like YOU, something is missing.



Does the room function well for how you actually live in it?

Beauty and function must coexist. A room that doesn't work for your life won't feel right.



Would you feel proud if a guest walked in right now?

If not — that feeling is your design compass. Trust it completely.



Have you identified 3 or fewer changes that would make the biggest impact?

Start small and focused. One or two intentional changes beat ten scattered ones.



Do you know your next action step?

A room refresh stalls when there's no clear first move. Identify it on the next page.

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**DESIGNER
TIP**

You don't have to fix everything at once. Pick the one or two changes that will make the biggest visual impact and start there. Often, rearranging furniture, editing a cluttered surface, or adding one lamp is completely free — and transforms the room more than any purchase could.

■■■ My Room Action List

Based on your Fresh Eyes walk-through, capture your observations and plan your next move. Focus on the changes with the biggest visual impact first.

The first thing I noticed that needs to change:

What my room is missing most:

My top 3 priority changes:

What I can do TODAY for free (rearrange, edit, reframe):

What I want to shop for or invest in:

My total budget for this refresh:

Ready to go deeper? Take the free Style Quiz and get a personalized color palette, style profile, and room-planning starter guide. interiorsbyterrell.com/style-quiz

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