

# interiors ADDICT

*Style Without The Snobbery*

## *4 ways using an interior designer can actually save you money*

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By *Ali Ross*

There is no doubt the DIY design market is rapidly expanding. This trend is driven largely by the hot housing market and the design industry is more accessible now than ever.

We have daily design content delivered to our inboxes each morning as we eat our breakfast, while online platforms such as Pinterest provide us with an opportunity to gather new ideas and source products. Naturally, there is also an understanding that DIY renovating will save money. This isn't always the case though.

As a design professional with over a decade of experience here in Australia and the US, one of my biggest learnings relates to the value a designer can add. You may not need an architect to run your project but consider using an interior designer for these reasons:

1. We add value through considered space planning, maximising the potential of a space in terms of flow and function and the level of comfort through thoughtful detailing. In other words, we get it right and we get it right the first time.

On a recent project, I was called on to help improve the flow and function of an entry, hall and lounge room. By simply filling in an oversized opening off the entry and recommending a new glazed door in a new location, it opened up a whole new way for the client to arrange and use the space. It was an obvious solution to me, but one that had been overlooked by the client. Now they actually enjoy using the space!

2. As professionals, we have the skills, experience and foresight to identify and solve problems and make the right decisions as they arise (or before) quickly and confidently. We take control of what can otherwise be a stressful process. Whether it's selecting the appropriate tap spout length to suit a basin, establishing the perfect position for a power point to work in with a furniture plan or simply selecting a suitable size sofa or rug for a space, all of these small decisions impact the end result.

3. We have relationships with reputable trades and suppliers who we trust to deliver good services and products.

On a few occasions, I have been brought in to correct or 'make good' mistakes that have been made, with joinery in particular. One client had allowed a joiner to make some design-related decisions but the result was far from well resolved. In fact, they could hardly access one part of the wardrobe, the hardware that had been selected was cheap and the sliding doors were so thin they shook and shuddered along the tracks. When they decided to have new joinery built for another location, they didn't hesitate to contact me.

4. Designers have access to trade pricing on all local and international furniture and this ranges from 10%-to-25% off retail. I pass on this trade pricing to my clients.

To give you an example, I recently completed a job where I provided a combination of bespoke joinery and furniture selections. The furniture purchases made for part of the home came to approximately \$18,000. A trade discount ranging from 10%-to-20% was passed on to them, offering a saving of over \$2,500. My fees for this part of the job were around \$2,000, an amount more than covered by the savings on the furniture.

When you consider these figures and facts – can you really afford *not* to use an interior designer?

*Ali Ross has her own business, [Ali Ross Design](#). See some of her work on her website.*