

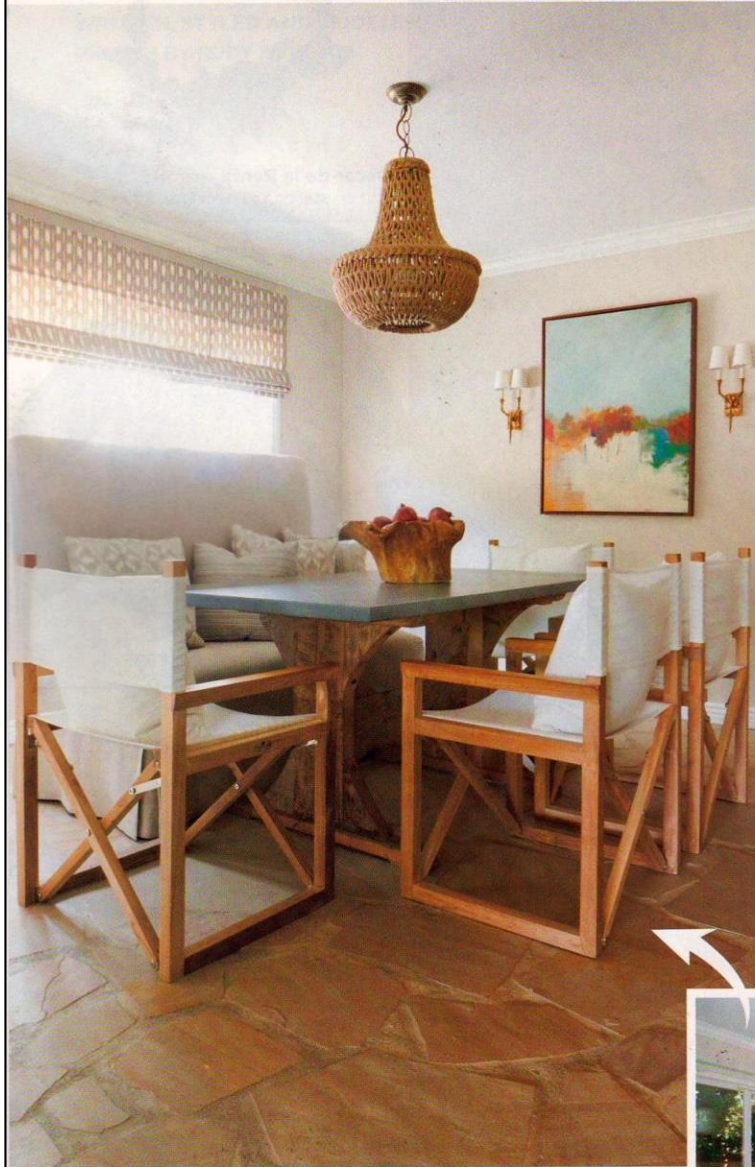


Austin Woman Magazine
 February 2015
 When DIY Goes Awry (1 of 2)

WHEN DIY GOES AWRY

Why you need a decorator.

BY MEREDITH ELLIS



“THERE NEVER WAS A HOUSE SO BAD THAT IT COULDN'T BE MADE INTO SOMETHING WORTHWHILE.”

- Elsie de Wolfe, *The House in Good Taste*, 1913

In the eyes of a decorator, never were truer words spoken. A decorator sees potential in the most unsettling of environments. Decorators love the challenge of a space deemed unremarkable or boring, but having the ability to see through the mess that we are sometimes handed isn't just about a gifted eye; it's so much more.

These days, it's easier to play decorator since there are so many unbelievable online resources filled with limitless ideas, like Pinterest and Houzz. There are major stores like Crate & Barrel, Pottery Barn and Restoration Hardware that offer countless options, as well as design services.

But sometimes you get stuck. You may want your home to be more unique than what's offered in the big chain stores. When looking at all the beautiful homes on Pinterest, you may have a hard time separating what's realistic and what's fantasy. Your project may also be bigger and more complicated, making you fearful to navigate the process alone.

Let me give it to you straight. Decorating isn't just about having a great eye, or the ability to be a savvy shopper. The real value of an interior designer comes from years of experience, learning, studying and building important relationships. Realize this may be the first time you've attempted this. We do it time and time again. We've learned how to minimize the mistakes and maximize the return.



BREAKFAST ROOM:

Before (right): This breakfast room worked functionally but lacked personality, and the light fixture was too big for the table.

After (above): This Jute light fixture is much more proportional. I also added sconces on a dimmer for mood lighting. Mixing materials like metal, wood and Jute give the room more of a unique feel, and the custom banquette makes it more inviting.



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TOP FIVE REASONS YOU NEED A PROFESSIONAL DECORATOR:

- 1. They will save you money.** Decorators are not necessarily a discount. They are there to spend your money wisely. They can prevent you from making costly mistakes, which is invaluable.
- 2. They will save you time.** They speak the language and can be a liaison between you and a contractor, architect or vendor, and make educated decisions more quickly.
- 3. They will create a personalized game plan for you.** A good decorator will create a floor plan that works with your budget. This will help you make calculated decisions and guide you in prioritizing purchases.
- 4. They have multiple resources and contacts.** They have a tried-and-true list of tradespeople, contractors, painters and electricians, not to mention, they know the best places to shop!
- 5. They will help you curate a look for your home that is uniquely personal.** They are trained to visualize the big picture from the very beginning. This means they will help you choose the appropriate scale and size of furniture and rugs. They will help you select the right paint colors and finishes, which is trickier than you might imagine. And they can help you mix styles and periods so you have a home that's truly one of a kind and personal.

DESIGNERS' BEST-KEPT SECRETS:

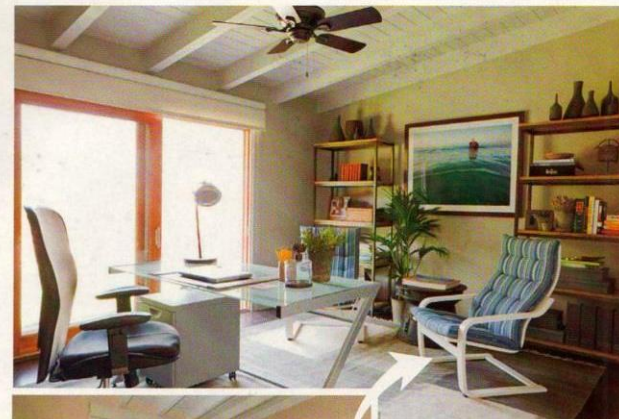
Tipler's Lamp Shop: 1204 W. Fifth St., tiplerslampshop.com
 Mr. Tipler can bring an old lantern back to life or help you size a proper custom lampshade. My favorite is a hard paper cream shade, #126.

Renner Project: 3018 N. Lamar Blvd., therennerproject.com
 There's nothing else like it in town. You'll find great vintage pieces, 20th-century modern furniture and unique art.

Alexander Marchant: 1114 W. Fifth St., Suite A, alexandermarchant.com
 They have the best collection of door hardware. I also love the cement decorative tiles from La Granada.

Austin Antique Mall: 8822 McCann Drive, austinantiquemall.com
 If you're up for the hunt, this huge antique mall carries lots of great finds. I'm always searching for pretty blue and white china.

The Antique Swan: 1009 W. Sixth St. (in Whit Hanks), antiqueswan.com
 He has an amazing collection of English antiques. It's bamboo-furniture heaven, and you can always find beautiful silver accessories and antique wood boxes.



OFFICE:
 We took a spare bedroom and made it into an office for the husband since he works from home. It's now not only functional, but also incorporates a lot of his favorite things and interests.



LIVING ROOM:
 The clients wanted their home to be comfortable and functional, but at the same time, they wanted it to be a combination of contemporary and traditional. We used the clean, modern lines of the home, and softened them with the L-shape custom sofa and pillows and a more traditional-style cabinet. A large sisal rug covering the majority of the stone floor adds warmth and pulls it all together.