

A circular arrangement of 14 light red icons on a white background. The icons include: a pencil and eraser, a living room with a sofa and coffee table, a window with curtains, a document with a pencil, a camera, a shopping cart with plants, a clapperboard and video camera, a bee on a laptop, a hand holding a pencil over a grid, a logo with the word 'GRAPHIC', a pair of scissors, and a window with a blind.

INTERIOR DESIGN BASICS

Practical Design and Decor

PRACTICAL INTERIOR DESIGN

Interior Design, Room Design and Interior Decorating are all terms that are used interchangeably to describe the process of furnishing, organising, designing and decorating interior rooms. Popular television programmes which focus on room renovations, redesigning and revamping have ramped up interest in Interior Design over the past ten years, and with sharing sites such as Pinterest and social media groups dedicated to it, there are resources available to help anyone with any knowledge base and any budget.

This workshop will focus on practical interior design for your own home, which can be applied to any scale or budget. We will cover design, decor, organisation and room models, and will look into the basics of colour, pattern and upcycling techniques.

CHOOSING A ROOM

For the purposes of this workshop you will need the accurate dimensions of a room in your home. If you are doing this workshop with a means to redesign or redecorate a room in your home then you can use this as a starting point, otherwise you can pick any room in your house as a basis for the exercises.



EXPLORATION: DECOR STYLES

At this point you may want to research certain decor styles and gain some inspiration. You can search these online, and through apps such as Pinterest.

Over the following pages are some styles to get you started. These have been chosen for their recent popularity and practical, cost-conscious applications in home design.

These styles are not written in stone, and you can take elements from those that you like and incorporate them in your own design to create something that resonates with you. Just be sure to constantly evaluate how those elements will work together. These styles and choices work well because they are complementary and have good flow, so keep that in mind when making your own design choices.

SCANDINAVIAN

Simple and functional. Makes use of natural materials and plants as decorative pieces.



RETRO

Bold, curvy and plush. Encompassing design elements from the fifties and sixties.



FARMHOUSE/ARTISAN

Comfortable, classic and organic. Uses a variety of natural and bright materials.



CONTEMPORARY

Simple, sophisticated and clean. Uses colour and lines to create a sleek and fresh feel.



BOHEMIAN

Rich and heady. Creates space with visual interest and a relaxed spirit.



INDUSTRIAL

Raw, functional and utilitarian. Displays the raw materials, woods and metals, of a building proudly.



MINIMALIST

Open, light and simple. Creates a soothing and inviting space with a timeless aesthetic.



COLOURS, PATTERNS AND MATERIALS

The first thing to think about when planning a redesign of a room is the colour palette. Look through a paint colour chart, or through the paint selection on a DIY website to browse your options. Look at **wallpapers or feature colours** first if you're wanting to include them in the decor, and then pick accompanying colours afterwards. If your wallpaper or feature colour is bright or has a bold pattern pick a softer, lighter colour to accompany it. This will help that feature colour or wallpaper 'pop'.

Note: A 'Feature wall' is the perfect way to add impact to a room using patterns, textures and bright colour, without making it overpowering. Your feature wall should draw the eye, and works best if used on a wall that has a distinguishing structural feature (like a fireplace), is the largest/immediate wall as you enter the room, or is the wall which distinguishing furniture pieces will be placed against.

Patterns don't have to be matching in order to be balanced. If the colours compliment each other then you can make use of several different patterns in your room. If you're using patterned soft furnishings, such as cushions, it may look more balanced if the furniture itself is a plain, soft colour (and vice versa).

Different materials or textures also play a part in how everything ties together. This could be anything from the types of woods used, to the soft furnishings and even whether you decide on carpet, tile, laminate or using rugs as floor coverings.

Note: Always be sure to keep in mind the practical aspects of the materials that you choose. Long-pile carpet or rugs will need extra care, whereas wood floors are easier to clean, and textures such as velvet and suede need extra attention to upkeep.

UPCYCLING AND REPURPOSING

Upcycling is the process of transforming waste, useless or unwanted objects into new, useful products that save money and are of environmental value.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of tips, tricks and how-to's online to help you turn just about any unwanted object into something of use, but the main point of upcycling is to **use what waste material you have to hand**. Everyday waste items such as tin cans, jars and scrap wood can be made into a variety of quirky items. Use a quick online search, or check out **Pinterest** for ideas on what projects to use your waste on.

Upcycle, revamp and repaint furniture instead of buying new pieces, or make your own 'new' furniture pieces using wooden pallets, barrels or large spools.

DESIGN BOARDS

A design board is a collection of **images, swatches and samples** that help you to decide on the aesthetic design of your interior space. They may contain colours, wallpaper samples, furniture or images which all relate to the style that you want the space to evoke.

Design boards are about **experimentation in order to reach conclusions**. Place colour samples side by side to see how they compliment each other before you make more permanent decisions, and look through stores online to decide on what sort of furniture will compliment the space (if any is needed).

SHOPPING AROUND

When you are choosing furniture pieces, decorative items, paint and wallpapers, it is useful to shop around for the best bargains for your budget. Your design board may contain items with a certain aesthetic, of certain colours, or made from particular materials, but you should always search wider to see if you can find the same or very similar item for a better price or with better quality (never neglect the customer reviews!).

Your design boards are there for you to experiment and choose stylings and colours, and so they can be used to narrow down your choices when shopping and stick to the right aesthetic. It is very easy to simply buy up anything that takes your fancy on the shelf of a store, so having a plan or style guide helps to keep you on track and only buy what you need/want.

EXERCISE: DESIGN BOARD

Create a design board for your chosen room.

You can do this either on a plain piece of paper, a wall, a Word document or Powerpoint, Google Slides, Photoshop, online pinboard app or any other means that allows you to paste in images to a blank space.

You could populate your board with images from downloads, screenshots or print.

Remember to experiment and swap out items or colours if they're not working. Your design board should contain your final choices on style, colour and decor.

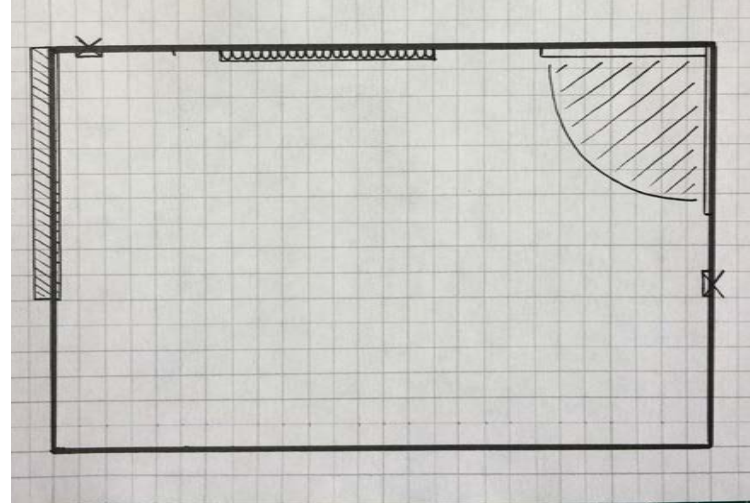
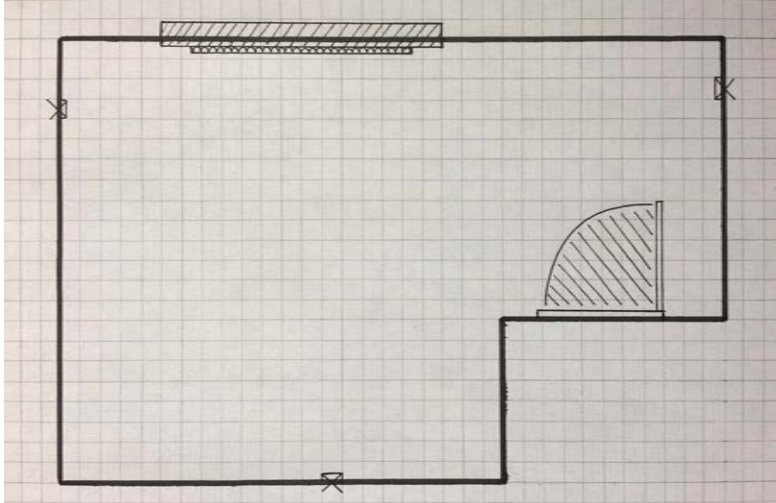
EXAMPLE: DESIGN BOARD



ROOM LAYOUT DRAWINGS

Room layout drawings are to-scale schematics of interior spaces which accurately represent the measurements of walls, windows and doorways, and show the placement of outlets, radiators and other permanent fixtures.

These accurate drawings can then be used to decide on the placement of furniture within the space.



FURNITURE PLACEMENT AND PRACTICALITY

When you are using a layout drawing to decide on furniture placement, it is important to have the accurate measurements of the furniture piece, including how much extra room is needed in front of it if it has drawers, cupboard doors or to allow access to storage. Most sites will give you this information (i.e. the length drawers pull out to) so you can factor the extra space in.

Think about how to use the space practically, and what furniture and arrangement best suits what the room will be used for. **For example:** a studio space will need both desk space and plenty of storage, and bedrooms need enough storage room for both clothing and belongings.

Tip: One of the biggest pieces of advice when room designing is '**Always leave room for more.**' You are almost certain to add to your collections of clothing, books or general belongings, so be sure to factor that in!

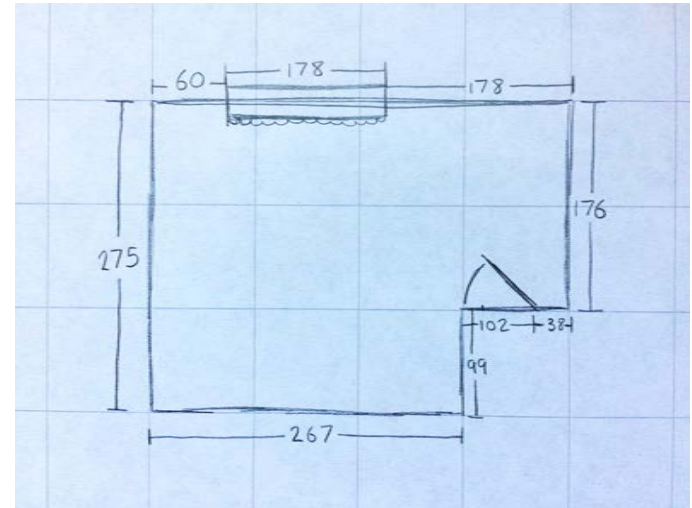
EXERCISE: LAYOUT DRAWINGS

Create an accurate layout drawing of your chosen room.

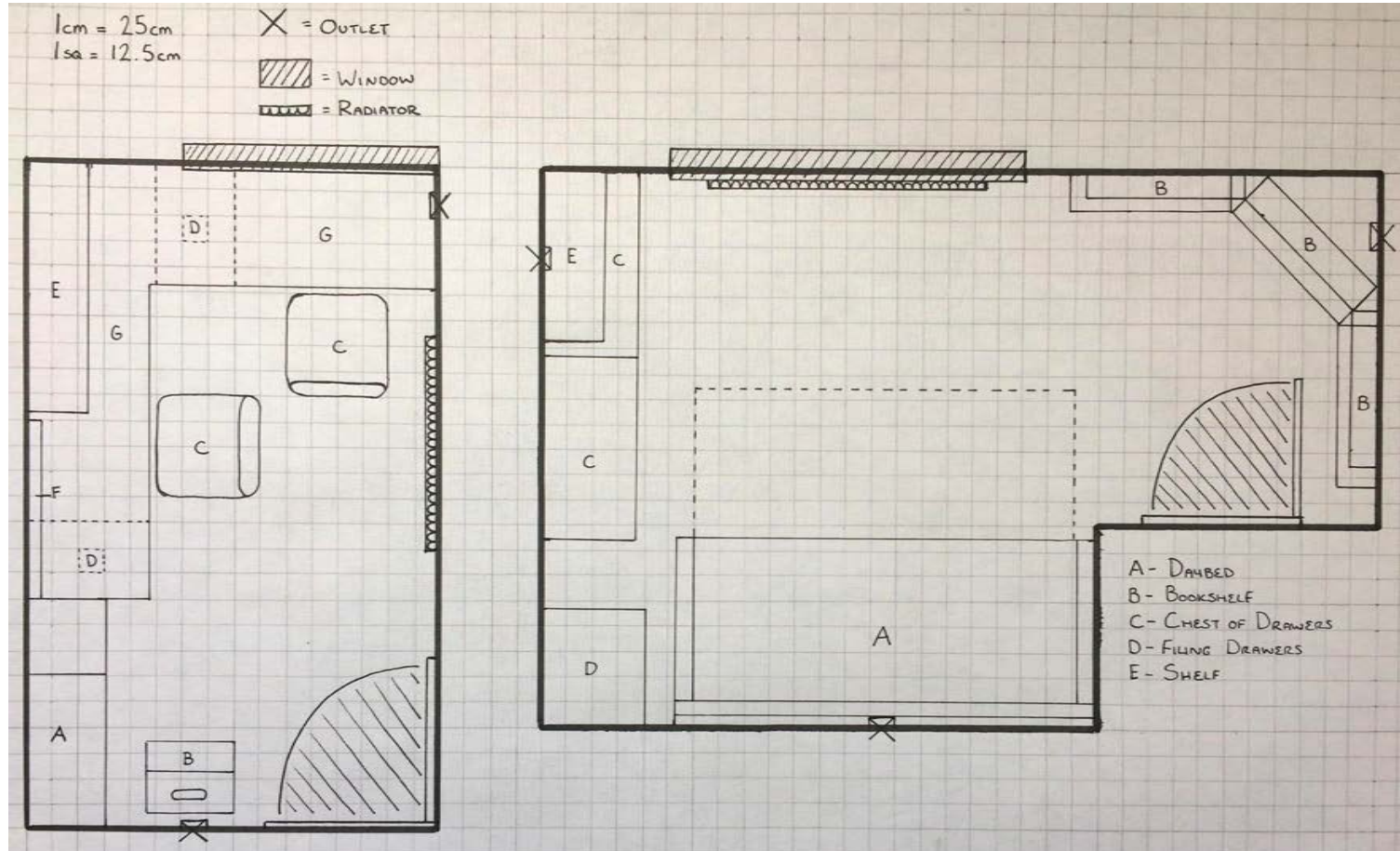
Start by making a rough sketch of the floor plan, and use a tape measure to accurately measure the lengths of all of the walls, windows, and radiators (as in the example below).

From this rough sketch create a to-scale layout drawing. Square paper is the best to use for this, although if you don't have any you can do this on plain paper. Use an easy to follow scale, such as 1:25. This means that 1cm on paper represents 25cm in reality.

When you have a well drawn floor plan you can use pencil lines or even cut-out paper squares to represent furniture and experiment with placement within the room before settling on a final layout.



EXAMPLE: LAYOUT DRAWINGS



ROOM LAYOUT MODELS

A room layout model is a 3D model of an interior space that better represents it outside of just the floorplan. With a model, you not only see the floor space in a room, but also the height available. This can be important when it comes to choosing tall furniture pieces, or deciding on decorative pieces and wall mounted items.

3D layout models can be either digital or physical, but for this workshop we will be focusing on creating a physical model.

Note: You will need to take more measurements of your room for this, mainly the height of the room and the height of the windows and radiators.

EXERCISE: LAYOUT MODEL

Create a 3D model of your chosen room.

You can either stick to the scale of your drawing or make it larger, perhaps going from 1:25 scale to 1:10 (1cm in the model represents 10cm in reality). It is up to you, and totally depends on the space and resources you have available.

Create simple representations of the furniture you want to place in the room. They don't have to be detailed as long as they give you a good idea of the space and placement, and are accurately scaled.

Materials

These models are traditionally made from **foam core**, but you can use whatever you have available. Thick card or cardboard will do the job just as well. You'll also need a good, fast drying glue, like craft glue.

EXAMPLE: LAYOUT MODEL



REFLECTIONS

We hope you have enjoyed learning the basics of interior design with us. You can now take what you've learned and develop it further. The only limit is your imagination.

It is important to remember to constantly self-evaluate your work as you go along. Keep practicing and redesigning and learn from any mistakes, but whatever you create you should be proud of!



The OCA would love to see what you've created. Share your pictures and videos with us by tagging us in them on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



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