

## Ask An Expert

### Danielle Trippett

*Interior designer - Interior Design and Decoration*

**Q. What should people look for when choosing an interior designer?**

A. Try to find someone who is like-minded and someone you feel you can relate to. Look at their work in magazines, through referrals or on a website. If you are polar opposites and you like a classic contemporary look and the client is a minimalist, you are unlikely to agree on the decor.



**Q. Do you provide insurance or guarantees of a job?**

A. No. But most of my work comes from referrals so people know what they are getting. Some products come with a manufacturer's guarantee, for example many sofa manufacturers have a 10 year guarantee. I use only high quality workrooms because people expect their furnishings to perform.

**Q. What should I pay for an interior designer?**

A. It depends on the job and what is involved, but most charge an hourly rate plus a margin on the goods that are supplied. The industry rate varies between \$80 and \$250 an hour. Many designers don't charge full retail margins on goods.

*Q. What are the advantages of using an interior designer?*

A. You deal with a person who gives you a cohesive view of your home and a product you won't see everywhere. An experienced designer knows what is available and can narrow the field to make your choice easier. If you are short of time, a designer can make your choices easier by pulling together fabrics, furniture and accessories in your style.

*Q. How should I prepare for a consultation with an interior designer?*

A. Keep a file of looks you like from newspapers, magazines and even digital pics, if you are in the habit of quickly photographing anything that catches your eye. Prepare a schedule of what you want done and in what order. If you and your partner have different tastes, save time and try to agree on what you want before you meet with the designer. If you are not sure, leave it to the expert.

*Q. What does it take to be an interior designer?*

A. I did an interior design course at RMIT University. There are several courses available. A lot of designers are not formally trained but have extensive experience. It's a small industry so it's hard to get work experience because most residential designers are small operators. For this reason many young interior designers move into other fields.

Source: Yellow Pages

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