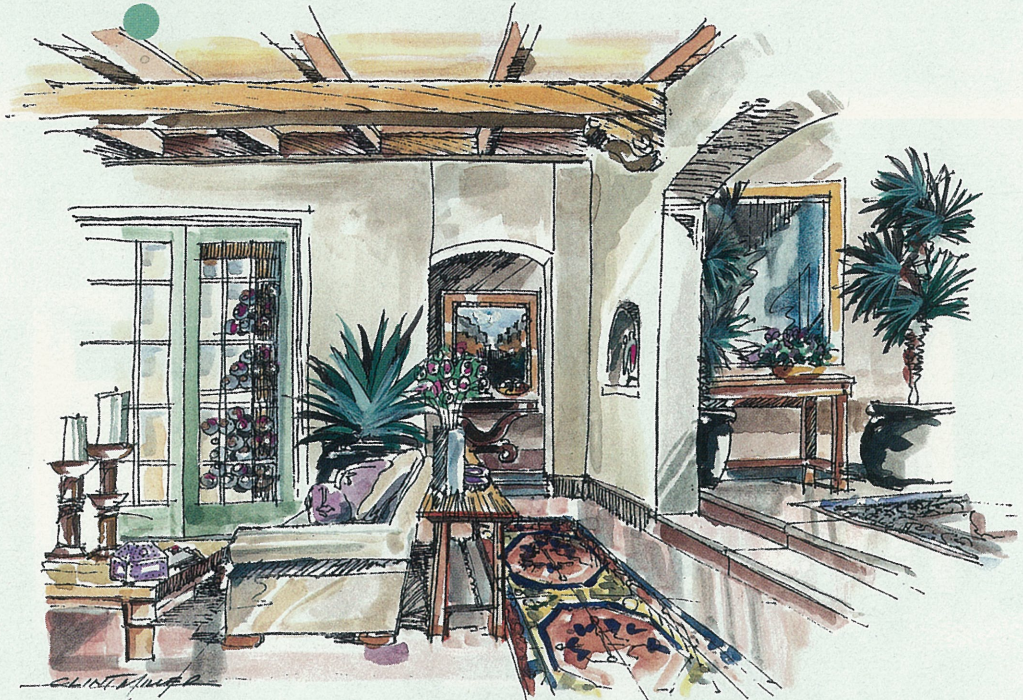


# attention to detail

*My house is full of furniture, yet it doesn't look pulled together.  
Can you offer some guidance?*



Text by Gera King • Illustration by Clint Miller



See this often: rooms filled with sofas, tables, chairs, TVs and cabinets, but lacking the complexity that imparts a sense of style and a polished, personal look. To achieve this, you need to pay attention to the details.

“Details should not be obvious, but they should be right,” notes Tricia Guild in her book *Design and Detail: The Practical Guide to Styling a House* (Simon & Schuster). “It’s important to take pains with everything from light switches to cupboard handles.”

I agree. Around my house we have a saying: “It’s the little things that count.” Here are some “little things” that will make a big difference in your decorating scheme.

- **Accessories:** To add a personal touch to indoor spaces, accessorize with possessions and keepsakes that have special meaning to you. The brass cash register that belonged to my husband’s grandfather sits in his office today as a conversation piece. It shows a link to the past, and the memories it evokes, as well as its gleam, add a warm glow to the room.

- **Color:** In the absence of architectural detailing, such as ceiling moldings and baseboards, color can help define spaces without adding clutter. Consider painting the ceiling of a room a deep hue and extending that color partway down the wall, creating an imaginary cove. Likewise, a wide band of color can be painted at the base of a wall to suggest a baseboard.

- **Lighting:** The glow of light is a welcoming detail that can be achieved with candles, recessed ceiling cans, wall sconces, chandeliers or free-standing lamps. When choosing lighting for the various rooms of your home, keep in mind that the average family room or bedroom needs at least three lamps, spaced to create overlapping pools of light.

- **Repetition:** In order to make a point, you need to repeat an image in a room at least three times. For example, a nature theme can be reinforced through a stenciled leaf pattern on the wall, a wallpaper border of leaves, and a large metal or ceramic leaf on a table.

- **Contrast:** Just as red lipstick will set off a navy blue suit, contrast will enliven rooms of your home. This can be as subtle as outlining black pillows or seat cushions with white piping, or as bold as adding a bright geometric print band to the bottom of a neutral tablecloth or drape.

The right details can evoke an emotional response and heighten visual interest. They will add the finishing touch you seek and give your rooms a distinctive look that is yours alone. 🌿

*Director of Interior Design at Scottsdale Community College, Gera King is past president of the Arizona North Chapter of ASID and chair-elect of the ASID National Chapter Support Team.*