

# Hiring An Interior Designer?

## Westchester Expert Shares Newbie Advice

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By Jeanne Muchnick

IRVINGTON, N.Y. — About to buy a home and thinking about hiring a designer? Or looking for an update on your existing place? Renae Cohen of Irvington-based Renae Cohen Interiors, admitted it's often difficult for homeowners to make the decision to hire a designer.

"Many people feel they should be able to do a project themselves and don't want to be told what to do," she said. "Others feel the money invested in a designer can be used to purchase additional product and hesitate to make that extra investment."

Here, she offers five tips for what you need to know before moving forward.

- Choose a designer early in the process; it will save you from making costly mistakes, and if an architect is part of the mix, your designer should collaborate with the architect. It's about collaboration and communication.
- Choose a designer you can talk to--your thoughts and ideas are important --after all, it's your "home." A good designer will make you part of the process.
- Choose a designer who's organized -- -there are a lot of details to worry about and a professional knows what details need the most attention. An organized designer will also keep the process moving ahead in an efficient manner. See how the designer communicates with you. Will you have regular meetings? Will you receive timely updates via email? Will there be time lines and progress reports? Will there be budget updates?
- Choose a designer who does a variety of work -- don't get stuck on one look. Keep an open mind and you may become inspired! Review their work whether via their website or portfolio. Ask to talk to past clients.
- Choose a designer who will work with your budget, but be realistic. Remember, quality is more important than quantity. You should do your homework and have a rough idea of what things cost in your area. A professional designer will be transparent in how they work and bill. You must develop a comfortable level of trust in order to make the process an enjoyable one.

Go to [www.renaecohen.com/](http://www.renaecohen.com/) for more information.



Photo by Christopher Galluzzo