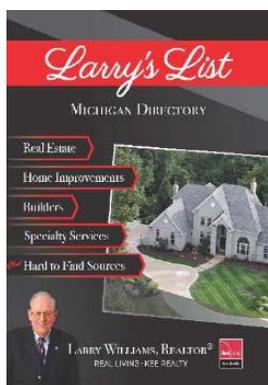




I try to avoid looking forward or backward, and try to keep looking upward.

Charlotte Brontë



I—What is new: “Larry’s List” has been updated and is available on our Website: [“larrywilliamsrealtor.com”](http://larrywilliamsrealtor.com). If you have not used this Directory you are missing out on a lot of good contractors—just try it once and you appreciate it. Also available on Larry’s Vip Card. If you want a discount card, call Larry for details!



II — Completing Your Final Walk-Through

You put a lot of effort into finding the right house, and now that your closing is just days away, you're finally ready to start calling your new place home. Before this can happen, however, you should do a final walk-through of the property.

What is a final walk-through?

A final walk-through isn't a home inspection (that typically takes place in conjunction with your offer). It's not the time to request new repairs, either. Instead, this is an opportunity to make sure the condition of the home is as expected. Specifically, you'll want to confirm there haven't been any unexpected or unwanted changes made to the property.

What should you look for?

Make sure there isn't any move-out damage and that all your requested repairs have been made. You'll also want to check that no extra furnishings or personal belongings have been left behind and that everything included in the home price -- items like appliances, unique light fixtures or window blinds and curtains are in place.



When does it take place?

The final walk-through can happen anywhere from a few days prior to your closing to just a few hours before.

Finally, be sure you or your realtor brings a copy of your contract along for reference. Now you can go to closing confident you are getting the house in good condition or per contract as specified.

III—6 Things Interior Designers Really Wish You Wouldn't Buy

One of the most satisfying parts of buying a home is filling it with brand-new furniture. But before you plunk down your credit card on that red leather couch or Eames-knockoff coffee table, listen up: Interior designers would like to sit you down and share some items they really, really wish you wouldn't get.

Why? Because these professionals see, client after client, home after home, what works and what doesn't. And, rather than silently cringe at seeing yet *another* horribly furnished space, they want to clear the air by revealing certain furnishings they absolutely hate—and explain why you'll end up regretting them, too.



We're focusing first on the living room, the site of many traditional furniture-buying blunders. Behold seven purchases to avoid if you know what's good for you.



1. Excessively formal furniture

When it comes to furnishing your living room, consider how you actually live every day.

"The formal living room is a dying breed, along with all of the furniture that goes with it—nobody entertains this way anymore," reports Carole Marcotte, an interior designer with Form & Function in Raleigh, NC. Stiff couches, a chandelier, and pillows piled "just so" are simply too precious for modern families. And even if it all works right now, you'll want to think about how this style will age along with your family. When kids come along or you add a pet or three, you may regret a too-formal choice.

2. Overstuffed chairs

Home design experts are very clear when it comes to these puffy pieces, especially those with built-in cup holders.

"I get that lounge chairs are comfortable, but they're truly the elephant in the room," explains Karen Gray-Plaisted, a home staging and decor pro with Design Solutions KGP.



And very often, huge recliners won't fit in the space you have. Measuring is critical, she says.

"Sketch the sizes on graph paper and then take them to the showroom staff for help with layout and proportion," she suggests. Or just skip these monstrosities entirely.

3. Outdated drapes

There's fancy—and then there's *fusty*. If your drapes remind you of your mother-in-law, it's time to switch them out.

"Long, heavy drapes or inner coverings made of lace are done," points out Gray-Plaisted. Instead, pick a lighter, modern design. "Side panel curtains with beautiful hardware hung above the window allows in light and highlights the architectural detail of the windows."



4. Matched sets

Just because the store features matching sofa, chair, and ottoman sets doesn't mean you have to buy the entire package, explains Bee Heinemann, an interior designer with Vant Wall Panels.



When decor pros see this arrangement, they're faced with making it more interesting, says Marcotte.

"It's like walking into a sea of wood, which could have looked better with a mix of texture and color if the pieces had been chosen separately," she explains.

The fix: Buy a few pieces from one set and then integrate other styles.

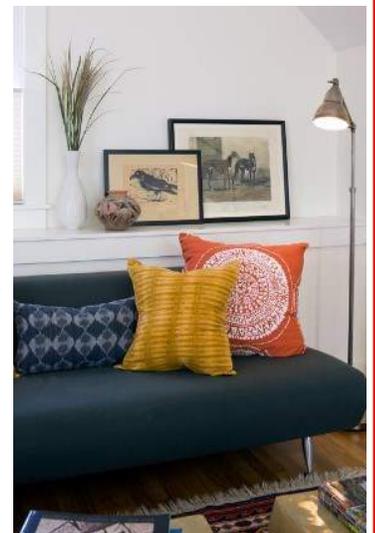
"Start by removing the love seat and replacing it with two chairs from another collection," Heinemann suggests.

5. Disposable furniture

Yup, we're looking at you, futon. And, sadly, much of the furniture you'll pick up at Ikea falls into this category as well. Cheap pieces that are poorly made or constructed from particle board will chip, fade, and then fall apart, costing you more money in the long run.

"Buying furniture you plan to replace every few years isn't smart," points out Sara Chiarilli, owner of the design firm Artful Conceptions in Tampa, FL.

Instead, buy high-quality, neutral pieces and add pops of color with pillows or others accents to keep costs down and the space looking new, she says.



6. Too-small rugs

Having a hard time choosing a rug for your living room? You're not alone.

"Clients often underestimate rug size and there's nothing worse than having furniture surround a dinky one," laments Marcotte. You'll end up with a too-small carpet floating in the middle the room.

"The pieces don't need to sit completely on the rug—just aim for the front third or half of the chairs and couch to straddle it."



IV—THE TOP 7 LUXURY HOME TRENDS FOR 2018 YOU NEED TO BOOKMARK

While minimalism, the driving force of home decor over the past decade, still reigns primarily, luxury homes have continued to evolve and shift. With affluent clients, we see an overall bigger appreciation for art and history than the average consumer. Taking notes from decades past, we now see more culture, color, and appreciation for unique and vintage design than ever before in the luxury space.

Just as high-waisted Levi jeans and 70's bell bottoms have made a return in the fashion world, design trends for luxury homes are also following the revival trend. Let's take a look at what decor and design trends we will continue to see rise in 2018. Whether you're making recommendations to luxury home buyers looking to keep in trend, or helping luxury home sellers pick the best theme to stage their home for sales, knowledge of in-trend design of your luxury clientele is a must to win over any deal.



TREND 1: WALLPAPER MAKEOVER

For years, wallpaper was something you possibly only saw in your grandmother's old guest bedroom, but the wallpaper world has definitely had a makeover in recent years. Bold and modern prints with hints of metallic have made their way onto the scene along with rich accent colors, to help add a eye-catching pop to any room.



Don't be mistaken, wallpaper isn't being used to plaster over every wall in the house, but instead is used as a tasteful accent or added texture. Using wallpaper on only one wall in the bedroom can create a headboard style accent wall or a perfect addition to a dressing room.

TREND 2: DYNAMIC LIGHTING

Lamps and light fixtures can make or break a room and currently, lighting design is tearing a page out of the past. With the once popular Edison bulb resurging as a main theme in rustic and modern decor over the last couple of years, we can only expect more vintage lighting to rise from the ashes.

Elizabeth Mayhew, Today show style expert and designer, says that not only does retro lighting add interest to your home, the lighting in earlier decades and centuries was also often better made. Just one more reason we find this trend so incredibly appealing.



TREND 3: FLORAL FUSION

Bold floral prints and abstract florals are a huge trend for this upcoming year. While it may seem like a risk to some, those that have embraced the trend, definitely feel the reward is worth the risk.



“Think dark, large-scale floral wallpaper in a powder room with a subtly striated marble countertop, faceted crystal sconces, and antique gold fixtures—and a typically mundane bathroom becomes a conversation piece.” Writes Jennifer Tzeses of Mansion Global.

TREND 4: CONCRETE COMEBACK

Marble has paved the way for luxury over the last decade or more, but concrete has pushed its way into the design world and is standing firm, slight pun intended.

Concrete gives a sleek industrial element to your home and can project as being extremely luxurious when paired with other bold accents, such as the wallpaper mentioned above. Affordable but impactful, concrete paves the way for new finishes and textures to evolve.



TREND 5: MOODY COLOR PALETTES

We have seen white, greys, and neutral take over the design scene with the surge of minimalism, but with retro style and a heavy art deco influence, rich and moody colors are back and more powerful than ever.

In order to refrain your home from dating too quickly, stick to slightly saturated reds, oranges, deeper blues, and mossy greens. According to HouseBeautiful, deeper gem tones and metals with wood accents and white contrast modernizes your home with beautiful color that isn't too overwhelming.

TREND 6: WOOD WASHES

With the rise of rustic decor and Joanna Gaines famous love affair with white-washing Shiplap, typically an exterior wood found inside homes often beneath the drywall, we will continue to see a variation of washed woods and finishes.

While white-washed wood and a light natural unfinished look are two of the most common, don't be too quick to write off the oak-y heavily grained finishes. Designers are also turning to cerused wood, which entails using white pigment to fill in

and better show the unique grain lines of the wood, creating more interest and texture.



TREND 7: NATURAL DETAILS

Along with the cerused and washed wood looks, other natural elements are becoming a huge part of luxury design. These timeless fundamentals create a clean space that also last much longer down the road.

Stone, exposed brick, and woven textures in the decor, create an earthy and sustainable feel to your home while not losing any design or creative components. The look of luxury plus a design that is beautiful and lasting, we're sold.

While it takes more than just design and decor to make a house into a home, we know that many homes can be transformed through some of these luxury elements that can help truly separate your home and make it stand out in a crowd.



Have a great winter with beautiful snow and a great Valentine's Day!!

LARRY, GISELE & AGATHA



Happy
Valentine's
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