

June 30, 2023

## 9 Contemporary Interior Design Tips You Haven't Heard Before



A contemporary living room designed by Audrey Scheck CATE BLACK PHOTOGRAPHY

Not traditional yet far from modern, contemporary interior design can feel like the best of all worlds.

Audrey Scheck of [Audrey Scheck Design](#) tells me, “While modern design refers to a specific time period, contemporary design is a more loose term designating both current and future design trends.

Contemporary design evolves as interior design trends come and go.”

Current contemporary spaces have an easy, warm feel to them. Far from formulaic, they can be eclectic or even fun. Whether you’re currently designing a contemporary space or just refreshing an old one, here are nine contemporary design tips shared by expert interior designers.

## Choose Curved Lines

Scheck tells me curved lines can truly enhance a contemporary space. “From rounded corners on furniture to arched mirrors and doorways, curves bring so much dimension to a space. Incorporating curves helps to balance a space by breaking up angles and hard lines.”



A curved archway

GETTY

There are lots of ways to add curved lines to a room. Choose a curvy sofa or chair. Even a curvy bookcase, mirror, or artwork can create visual interest.

White can look very modern and stark, so choose a creamy neutral if you want a space to have a more contemporary aesthetic.



Neutrals look nice in contemporary homes

GETTY

“Consumers are leaning into creamy neutral tones which are versatile enough to make a space feel calm and neutral while also being warm and inviting,” says Scheck. “A neutral base allows for even more flexibility to introduce color through fun accents like artwork, textiles, and decorative accents.”

### **Add A Statement Rug**

If a contemporary room feels as if it's missing something, it would probably benefit from a statement rug. “Utilizing a statement rug in a space helps define a room, especially in open-concept homes,” explains Scheck. “To maximize the ground covering, we often layer a smaller accent rug over a natural fiber rug such as jute or sisal. This not only helps to fill the space but also brings in additional layers and textures.”

In addition to texture, rugs are also a great way to add color to a neutral space.

### **Bringing The Outdoors Inside Feels Like A Breath Of Fresh Air**

Bringing outdoor elements indoors and blending both spaces has been on-trend for a while now.

Adriana Hoyos, designer of [Shoma Bay](#), which is a condominium project in Miami—is a big proponent of this design choice. “A captivating dialogue is established by seamlessly connecting the outdoor and indoor environments, giving birth to a truly functional, dynamic, and energetic living experience. Merging the organic beauty of the natural world with the comforts of indoor living transforms the spaces and brings serenity, relaxation, and creativity,” she says.

A great example of this is that the Owner’s Lounge at Shoma Bay is designed to connect with the Zen Garden. On a smaller scale, even something as simple as bringing plants inside can transform a contemporary space.

### Install Herringbone Flooring In A Single Direction

Skip the slats. Herringbone flooring is charming and chic, but also versatile. Because this type of flooring has a vintage vibe and isn’t quite everywhere yet—it really gets noticed.



Herringbone floors in a Scandinavian style space

GETTY

Anja Pavlin, Associate Director for [Nova](#) suggests installing this type of flooring in a single direction. “It creates a contemporary pattern underfoot and gives the illusion of more space. Plus, the combination of a traditional hand-crafted look with a contemporary exterior makes for an interesting contrast,” she says.

### **Opt For Natural Stone And White Woods**

While man-made materials can sometimes be less expensive, natural is always better in a contemporary home.





A kitchen with a natural stone countertop

GETTY

“Natural stone, white woods, and elegant metals are a foundation of contemporary design. These materials are warm and inviting and help to connect residents to their surroundings and welcome guests and visitors,” says Pavilin. “Taking cues from nature and the outdoors as well as minimalist-infused Scandinavian design, these elements foster a calming and elevated atmosphere.”

## Elevate A Room With A Monochromatic Color Scheme

The monochromatic look has been in style for quite a while now and it doesn't look like this trend is going away any time soon.



A monochromatic living room

GETTY

It's a great way to really make a statement and doesn't require a massive budget. Andrea DeRosa, cofounder and principal designer of [Avenue Interior Design](#) tells me, "Accessorize in one color. Shape, size, and texture should vary for interest, but keeping accessories and artwork all a similar color creates a very contemporary interior."

## **Mix And Match**

Or go the opposite direction by mixing and matching. This is a favorite choice of Melissa Urdang Bodie of [Melissa and Miller Interiors](#). "The key, for us, is to mix and match. We love to incorporate modern pieces, but we never like sacrificing the warmth, or the way the room makes you feel. Sometimes, modern can feel cold and impersonal. We solve that by mixing fabric textures, finishes, and materials within the spaces so that the room feels inviting."

## **Look To The Past For Furniture And Decor**

One of the best elements of contemporary interior design is that you can easily use pieces from different eras. Bethany Adams of [Bethany Adams Interiors](#) tells me, "It may sound counterintuitive, but when decorating in a contemporary style, I look to the past. So many designers and artists in Italy, France, and Germany created ahead-of-its-time furnishings and decor in the middle of the last century."

While you can scour local antique shops and estate sales, you can also easily source online. Adam likes [1stDibs](#) and [South Loop Loft](#).