



Jean Greeson Richard Fast

HE SAID, SHE SAID

Wallpaper dos and don'ts

Question: Do you think wallpaper enhances a house, or is it considered passé? — Robert J., Weaverville

Jean: Hi, Robert. That's an open-ended question. Wallpaper is certainly not passé, but there are certain things you need to consider before an installation. For example, if the wallpaper is for a foyer, it should have a color scheme that ties it to the neighboring rooms. If the pattern is pronounced, make sure the design is timeless and you really love it, because you don't want such a significant investment to grow tired or go out of date.

Richard: So true. Some people think they can cut corners when choosing wallpaper, but to do it beautifully, it's a sizable expense. Good wallpaper ranges from \$35 to \$90 per single roll. At those prices, it's smart to hire a professional paperhanger, and when you do, insist on seeing references. But the investment can be well worth it, because a good paper can set the tone of the room or house.

Jean: Of course, you may save money in other ways. We just finished a client's 1950s-era house that had pink tile in the bath. Rather than replace the tile, we chose bold, coral-colored floral wallpaper that had subtle pink accents. The result was beautiful, and the savings on tile work was substantial.

Richard: Good point. But sometimes there's more to consider than color or pattern. For example, you may want to cover paneling, but if you do you should use a plaster skim-coat to cover the cracks and then apply a liner. (Liners are also good to help smooth out imperfect or old plaster walls, and always size the walls.) Textures can also be used to great effect — even the old grass cloth is becoming popular again, and it's a great way to get an interesting effect. To get the full effect of any textured walls, use indirect lighting.

Jean: Well, you can also get a textured effect using some of the new metallic finishes. They're much improved over those used in the '70s, and many simulate old textiles or faux

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PAPER: Don't forget ceiling

ders at all.

Jean: Well said. My pet peeve is wallpaper either above or below a chair rail. Either paper the whole wall or don't! Don't make it look like you ran out of money or were afraid of the paper. But if you're working with wainscoting, it can be beautiful either painted or papered above. If you paper a bedroom, paper the walk-in closets, too. Another option: don't forget ceilings, with either the same paper or a complementary

one in a different scale. It feels so decadent. Remember, wallpaper can make any room more colorful and more fabulous.

Richard: And it doesn't have to be a man's flowering feminine nightmare.

These are the opinions of nationally recognized interior design team Jean Greeson and Richard Fast, who offer advice and services from their studio in Asheville's River Arts District at 352 Depot St. Greeson & Fast Design can be reached at 252-0400 or www.GreesonAndFast.com.