

PRESS RELEASE

The 6 most common living room mistakes to avoid

Claire Gibson from leading furniture manufacturer, La-Z-Boy, offers some tips on how to achieve the perfect living room design.

The minute you enter a perfectly designed living room, you know it, says Claire Gibson, from leading furniture manufacturer, La-Z-Boy: “It just feels right – from the proportions, to the décor, and the seating – all of which suggests long, relaxing stays without having to leave. The perfect living room is immediately engaging, as it is comfortable in its familiarity.” However, getting the blend of elements just right can be challenging, so we turned to Claire to shed some light on the most common mistakes that she frequently notices in living rooms everywhere.

Says Claire: “When you spend your life dealing with living room furniture and décor, you soon get a feel for the little details that make the room perfect. Sometimes, a living room needs a really minor adjustment to take it from just being nice, to it being a real showstopper. The living room of your dreams needn’t be out of your grasp – there are a few simple mistakes that can be avoided, which will seriously help you lift and improve this space.”

Mistake #1: Replicating a showroom

Retail therapy might be soothing to the soul, but nobody wants to live in a showroom, explains Claire: “Living room designs can seem very flat and sterile if everything in it looks like it was purchased from the same shop. As such, it is essential to mix new and vintage, decorative and personal items into the mix in order to create a design that is interesting, eclectic and unique to you. It really is about the small touches that add the magic to a space, so be sure to leave adequate room in your budget for lighting, soft furnishings and accessories after all the larger items have been purchased.”

Mistake #2: Selecting the wrong sofa

It is a standard rule that a great living room starts with a great sofa, explains Claire: “Often, homeowners don’t want to change out their old sofa or lounge suite, as it is still in pretty good nick, but the bottom line is that if you want to upgrade the look of your living room, you have to start by updating the seating.”

She says that investing in a sofa can be tricky: “A good sofa needs to be comfortable, but it also needs to look good as it is integral to how a living room looks and feels. My top tips for choosing the right sofa is to pay attention to the sofa seat height, and to draw up a furniture floor plan before purchasing. Buying accessories on impulse is great, but it can be a very expensive mistake to make an impulse purchase decision when it comes to seating and other large living room furniture.”

Claire recommends choosing sofas with simple, clean design lines as they are easy to style, complement a host of different design styles and genres, and they offer a timeless quality that will ensure its aesthetic longevity. Also, it is important to pay particular attention to the quality of the upholstery fabric.”

Mistake #3: Small rugs

Claire notes that a common mistake she sees in living rooms all the time, is the inclusion of undersized rugs: “Investing in a really large rug can feel really extravagant, but it really is an incredibly important element for the success of any living room design. As a general rule of thumb, most living rooms need a rug that measures a minimum of 2,5m x 3m, if not 3m x 4m. Smaller rugs, of let’s say 1,5m x 2m for example, should be exclusively reserved for next to the bed or in the kitchen.”

Mistake #4: Making it too precious to live in

Claire says that it is imperative to make your living room as comfortable as possible for everyday living: “Everybody has been in one of those living rooms, where they are too scared to sit down in case you damage or upset its state of perfection. These types of living rooms are uncomfortable and uninviting to say the least – so try and avoid taking ‘perfection’ to this level. Instead, focus on making this room usable for the whole family and anybody who might be visiting – from family to friends, and even your fur babies. To do this, a good place to start is to select textiles that can take daily wear and tear of everyday life.”

Claire says that one of the best things you can do to protect your sofa or lounge suite is to invest in some kind of anti-stain protection for the upholstery: “La-Z-Boy for example, has increased its range of stain-repelling iClean fabrics due to the high demand. It is incredibly popular due to the fact that with iClean, you no longer have to worry about spills, stains or soils, as it incorporates safe, sophisticated chemistry to protect and surround each fibre, which repel spills before they can turn into stains. iClean fabric creates a barrier of protection from stains associated with children, pets and everyday life.”

Mistake #5: Badly planned layout

To achieve the perfect living room layout, you really need to go beyond simply pushing a sofa against a wall, facing the TV, notes Claire: “When designing your layout, you need to consider a number of things. First and foremost, creating conversation groupings is imperative, especially in long and narrow living rooms that are so common in lots of townhouses today. You also need to give some thought on how to maximise the window views, as well as including any feature elements in the room, such as a fireplace or accent pieces for example.”

Mistake #6: Hanging art incorrectly

Artwork that has been incorrectly displayed is a major bugbear of Claire’s: “Art can be a real feature in any living room, but if it is incorrectly hung, it can be

really distracting. Although most say that art should be hung at eye-level, it is important to note that this doesn't apply in every instance, say if the room in question has very low ceilings or the homeowners are very tall for example. As a rule of thumb, visually cut the wall up into four vertical sections, and the artwork should be hung in the third quadrant from the floor."

ENDS

Released on behalf of La-Z-Boy (www.la-z-boy.co.za) by The Line (www.theline.co.za).