

# THE DESIGN WORKBOOK

A FRAMEWORK  
FOR CONFIDENT  
DESIGN  
DECISIONS



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RACK DESIGN



# HOW TO USE THE DESIGN WORKBOOK

This workbook is designed to help you move from uncertainty to clarity in your design decisions.

Instead of collecting endless inspiration, second-guessing purchases, or feeling stuck halfway through a room, you'll use this workbook to define what truly guides your choices. Your palette, priorities, and overall direction become clear so every decision builds on the last.

You don't need to complete this all at once. Use it at the start of a project, revisit it when something feels off, or return to it whenever you're considering a new purchase or change. The goal is confident, intentional progress.

Think of this workbook as your filter. When something doesn't feel quite right, these pages help you identify why and adjust with clarity instead of guesswork.

*Rebecca Katzman*



# YOUR DESIGN LENS

## A simple filter for confident decisions

Use this page to define what guides your choices. When your lens is clear, decisions become faster, calmer, and more intentional.

There are no right answers. Trust what feels aligned to you.

### How I want my home to feel?

Choose words that reflect emotion, not style   Calm • Warm • Grounded  
• Energized • Refined • Collected • Cozy • Airy.

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### How I want my home to function

Think about daily life, routines, storage, flow, and how you actually use your space.

# What doesn't feel right for me

Clutter, trends that don't last, tight layouts, high maintenance finishes, visual noise, etc.

# My non-negotiables

Comfort, durability, kid-friendly, pet-friendly, low maintenance, budget boundaries, natural light, flexibility.



# FOUNDATION FIRST

## A grounded approach to intentional design

Use this page to define the fixed elements that anchor your space. These decisions create cohesion so future layers and styling feel intentional, not reactive.

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### Overall mood and tone

These choices should reflect how you want your home to feel at a foundational level.

Primary feeling I want to evoke: \_\_\_\_\_

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Secondary feeling or unifying tone: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Visible Materials

Choose materials that establish a cohesive base palette and repeat naturally throughout the space.

Consider wood tones, stone, metals, textiles, and finishes.

Foundation material palette: \_\_\_\_\_

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Key textures or finishes to repeat: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Color foundation**

Select a small set of grounding colors that align with the mood and materials you've defined. These should anchor the space and support layering.

Overall color direction: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Main neutrals: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Subtle accent tones: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Details:**

# SPACE & FLOW

## Understanding how your room actually works

A beautiful room starts with a space that functions well.

Before thinking about furniture styles, finishes, or decor, it's important to understand how the room is used, how people move through it, and what the space truly needs to support day to day life.

When layout and flow are overlooked, even well-designed rooms can feel awkward, crowded, or underutilized.

Use this page to step back and evaluate how the room should work first. Clarity here prevents costly mistakes later.

### Room Purpose

What activities happen in this space? (Relaxing, working, entertaining, storage, circulation, etc.)

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### Who Uses the Space

Who needs this room to function well? Consider daily routines, ages, pets, guests, and accessibility needs.

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# SPACE & FLOW CONT'D

## Traffic Flow

How do people enter, exit, and move through the room? Are there any pinch points or awkward pathways?

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## Anchors & Zones

What are the fixed elements that cannot move? (Windows, doors, fireplace, built-ins, plumbing, etc.) Where do natural zones exist within the room?

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## Scale & Proportion Check

What feels too large, too small, or visually heavy in the space right now?

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## Opportunities for Improvement

If the layout worked better, what would improve your daily experience in this room?

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# PRIORITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Clarifying what truly matters before you invest

## Top Priorities

What matters most in this space? (Comfort, durability, aesthetics, storage, flexibility, entertaining, maintenance, etc.)

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## Budget Comfort Zone

What investment range feels realistic and comfortable for this project?

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## Timing & Phasing

Is this a one-phase project or something you'll complete in stages?

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## Constraints to Respect

What limitations should guide decisions? (Rental rules, existing furniture, structural limitations, timeline, family needs, etc.)

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## Where I Can Be Flexible

Where are you open to adjusting expectations if needed?

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# VISUAL DIRECTION

Defining the look and atmosphere of your space



A visual reference helps anchor your decisions.

Instead of relying on memory or scattered inspiration, create a simple visual snapshot that reflects the mood, materials, and overall direction you're drawn to. This becomes a reference point when evaluating future choices.

When something aligns with this snapshot, it usually belongs. When it doesn't, it's often a sign to pause or refine.

Keep this visual close as your project evolves.

## Where to gather inspiration

Look for images that consistently resonate with you rather than chasing trends or saving everything you like.

Good sources include interior magazines, design books, Pinterest, Instagram, hotel interiors, restaurants, travel photography, and spaces you've visited and loved. Screenshots from real environments can be just as valuable as styled photos.

Focus on what feels emotionally aligned, not what feels popular.

# DECISION FILTER

## **A simple way to pause before you commit**

Before making a purchase or design decision, use this page as a quick filter. It helps you slow down just enough to evaluate alignment instead of reacting on impulse.

Not every “beautiful” piece belongs in your home. The goal is cohesion, clarity, and long-term satisfaction.

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Does this support how I want the space to feel?

Does this work with the layout, scale, and flow of the room?

Does this align with my foundational materials and color direction?

Will this still feel right six months from now?

Am I choosing this intentionally or emotionally in the moment?

Final instinct

Keep • Pause • Let go

# DESIGN NOTES



# NEXT STEPS



IF THIS WORKBOOK HELPED  
YOU GAIN CLARITY, IMAGINE  
WHAT'S POSSIBLE WITH A  
FULLY GUIDED FRAMEWORK.

THE COLLECTED MODERN  
METHOD EXPANDS THIS  
THINKING INTO A COMPLETE  
DESIGN SYSTEM THAT HELPS  
YOU SEQUENCE DECISIONS,  
AVOID COSTLY MISSTEPS, AND  
CREATE A HOME THAT FEELS  
COHESIVE, INTENTIONAL,  
AND DEEPLY PERSONAL.

IF YOU'D PREFER  
PERSONALIZED GUIDANCE,  
MY VIRTUAL DESIGN SERVICES  
PROVIDE EXPERT SUPPORT  
TAILORED TO YOUR SPACE,  
LIFESTYLE, AND GOALS.  
EXPLORE WHAT'S RIGHT FOR  
YOU WHEN YOU'RE READY.

*Rebecca*