

A photograph of a tea table setting. The table is dark wood and covered with a white tablecloth featuring a large pink and green floral pattern. In the center, there is a white teapot with gold handles and a lid, sitting on a white tray. To the left and right of the teapot are several white teacups with gold handles and saucers. In the foreground, there is a bowl of pastries and a plate of chocolate cupcakes with white frosting. The background shows a white wall with a floral pattern and a wicker basket hanging from the ceiling.

HOW TO FIND YOUR STYLE

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Run to Radiance



“Since beginning a blog, I’ve had hundreds of women ask me how I became so creative and how I finally figured out my design style. This handout is the highlight-reel answer to that question!”

Ever take one of those online “find your style” quizzes and get insanely frustrated by your results? Me too. Although it seems easy enough in theory, the problem with those quizzes is each person’s interior design style is completely unique—so much so that there may not even be a name invented for it. I remember taking these quizzes then thinking, *“Hmm. I guess farmhouse style is maybe my thing?”*, then promptly retaking the quiz and landing with bohemian style. Then once more, but with French cottage style. None of them felt quite right.

After years of trying to fit my style into a box, I found myself increasingly frustrated. Paralyzed by the fear of making the wrong choices, I played it safe and purchased the same bland furniture that everyone else was buying. The type of environment I’m in easily affects me, like the majority of people. I found myself feeling quite *blah* about my home. I remember looking around my living room during a New Year’s Eve party I was throwing and having a flash of realization that I hated how it looked.

That was over seven years ago, and since then I have learned how to narrow in to my style and figure out what makes me happy. **Since beginning a blog, I’ve had hundreds of women ask me how I became so creative and how I finally figured out my design style.** This handout is the highlight-reel answer to that question!

If you’re feeling uncreative and frustrated—give yourself a break. Us women have a lot on our plates, which is the exact reason you need to make the time to create an environment you and your family will thrive in. **Ready to get started? Here are 10 simple things to consider when discovering your style!**

This workbook contains a few affiliate links—you don’t pay a penny extra and I make a tiny commission to help pay my bills...win/win!

1. Look at your wardrobe.



It sounds odd, but if you want to understand your interior design style better, take a peek inside your closet. Perhaps because clothes are cheaper than furniture, most of us have definite preferences for the clothes that we wear.

Take note of both the colors and the types of clothing you own. Do you prefer sleek black pantsuits? You might be a fan of modern, no-fuss style. Is your closet full of lace and ultra-feminine silhouettes in soft colors? Then shabby chic might be right up your alley. A pared-down closet might indicate a nod to minimalism and a closet full of contemporary classic clothing could indicate a fan of classical style.

What do you see in your closet? What's the unifying factor of the pieces there?

If you were to describe your clothing style in 3 words, what would they be?

2. Look at your favorite shops.



Image courtesy of Anthropologie.

All shops do an incredible job at putting together a definitive style. Which shops are your favorites to wander into and browse? Do you love flea markets? If so, there's a good chance there's a touch of rustic in your style. Are you really into bazaars and outdoor global markets? Then that's a big hint that your style is influenced by global trends.

In my case, the number one store I can't get enough of is Anthropologie. I seriously could spend hours in there and be inspired by their products and displays. That was one of my first clues that my style had an antique vibe to it. One of my other favorite stores is West Elm, showing me that I liked clean lines and muted colors. Those seem contradictory, but remember, every style is unique! We get the fun task of blending and playing (we'll talk more about this below!).

What are your favorite stores? What are the common characteristics they have?

Noting what stores you don't like is equally as helpful to start narrowing your design style down. Which stores are your least favorite? Why?

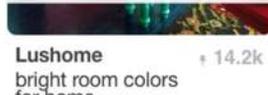
3. Look at your Pinterest account.



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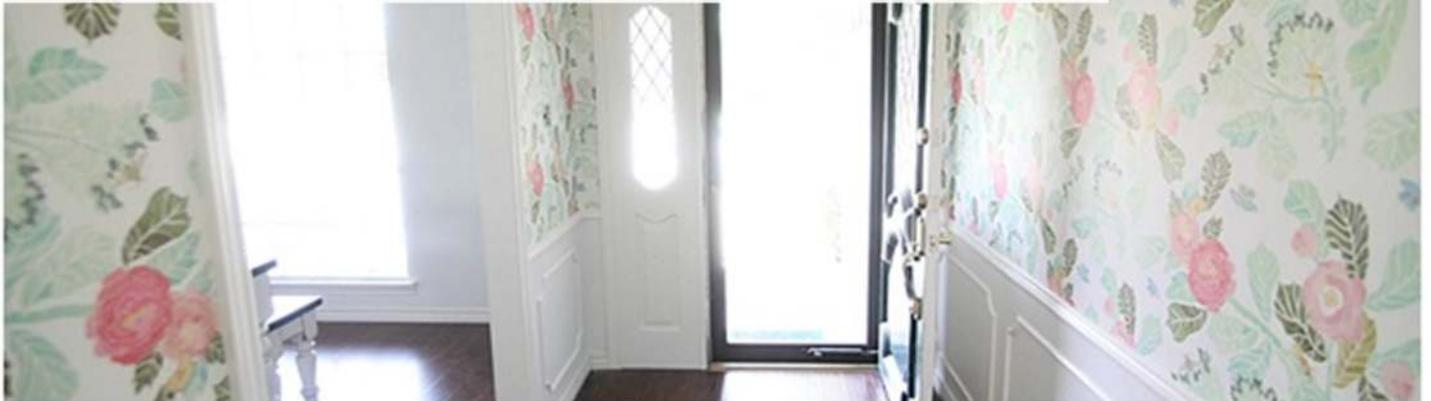
The Best Farmhouse Decor From Amazon + 20.5k
Bread box [here]
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Take a look at your Pinterest account. You probably have an interiors board (or 12 if you are like me!), and if you don't, go make one. Scroll down a bit in your board, then take a screenshot. Study the screenshot and note similarities. Are you pinning rooms full of Pottery Barn? Then it's likely you are a fan of contemporary style. Can't get enough of farmhouses? That indicates you are probably a fan of modern or rustic farmhouse style.

What is your Pinterest board showing you? What are the common threads? Is there a consistent color or piece of furniture? Are there distressed pieces or modern ones?

4. *Create a real-life inspiration board.*



I love the convenience of digital just as much as the next person, but sometimes there's nothing that beats tangible inspiration. Creating an inspiration board is easy and fun! Start with a piece of foam board or cork bulletin board that you can pin things to, then start looking for inspiration!

Inspiration can take many forms so don't rule anything out. For example, I was absolutely enthralled by this paper napkin at a party I went to. It was a watercolor floral with soft pinks and gold. That napkin is one of the reasons why I made the most controversial decision of my blogging career and wallpapered our entryway (still love it!!). I also had a page I tore out of a magazine of a vintage champagne bottle print and some fabric I really liked.

What do you have on your inspiration board?

What is the common theme? List the characteristics and words that come to mind.

5. Consider your favorite hobbies.



What do you love (like really, *truly love*) to do? If money was no object, what would happen? My favorite thing in the world, outside of writing, is travel. I'm fortunate enough to have gone on many trips, including 3 trips (soon to be 4!) to my favorite place in the world—Paris.

What I love about Paris is the beauty everything has there. I kid you not, the streetlamps and trash cans along the streets are pieces of art. I have spent hours strolling those streets and taking it all in. So, when considering style, I have to include Paris' opulence because I love it so much!

What's your favorite thing in the world to do? What would you do if money was no object?

How can you translate that to your home?

6. *Be okay with being outside the box.*



Chances are, after going through the exercises above you have narrowed your style down to two or three types. If you have narrowed it down to just one—awesome! You are one of the few. 😊

When I first did this exercise, I came up with several, seemingly conflicting styles. I love the classic French interior design style as well as the modern farmhouse style with a touch of bohemian. What am I supposed to call that? Turns out, I got to make up my own name for my eclectic style—you ready for it? I call it *laid-back fancy*. Meaning I want the elegance of the French style in a casual way. I love ornate chandeliers over a rustic farmhouse table, a beautiful tufted headboard with a simple white duvet and champagne with pizza. It's weird, but it works. And more importantly, I love it!

What styles have you narrowed down to?

How can you make them work together?

7. *Think practical + pretty.*



As beautiful as design magazines and model homes are, they aren't always livable. When implementing your design style, it's important to think in terms of function as well as form.

Every time I buy something, I run it through the filter of 1) *is it pretty?* and 2) *is it practical?* Or, more specifically in my case—does this fit a *laid-back fancy look*?

For example, if you want a white couch, I highly recommend getting one with machine-washable slipcovers. I love my white couch but we have pets as well as friends and family over when we entertain. I can't tell you how many times being able to pop the cover in the washer has saved me!

Ideally, what item(s) would you love to have in your home?

Are they practical? If not, how could you make them be?

8. Start with low-commitment.



I never recommend throwing out all your furniture and starting over. As dramatic and fun as that would be, very few of us have the cash to completely makeover our entire home at one time. Instead, I recommend you start slowly and experiment with your style. My favorite way to do this? Pillows!

I kid you not—I have a pillow problem. My poor husband has kindly asked what I’m planning to do with my collection of pillows (my answer? Love them. ☺). But I’ve found switching pillows on my sofa, armchairs and bed is the cheapest and most low commitment way to try out a new look. Amazon has a great collection of inexpensive pillows, many of which that can be shipped right to your home in 1-2 days!

Art is another fantastic way to experiment. If you’ve found yourself leaning towards a global style, hang up a large framed map. If you like farmhouse style, this cow print is quite popular!

Don’t be afraid to go bold with these small items! The whole point is to try out a new look and see how you like it. Finding out you don’t like the style of a pillow is a lot easier to fix than finding out you hate the style of a new couch! You can find more of my favorite inexpensive decorating items in this blog post.

From the work you’ve done above, what style or styles are you leaning towards?

What are a few low-risk ways you can start adding this style to your home?

When will you take the first step and experiment with accessories? What’s holding you back?

9. *Style is never stagnant.*



The first piece of furniture I bought when I graduated from college was a pink couch with a matching armchair. I really loved that sofa—it was a fantastic conversation piece and made the rest of the room more elevated. With that being said, I would never purchase that couch again today. These days I'm much more into white couches and white walls with vintage accessories and playful pillows.

Just like we (hopefully) don't wear the same clothes we did 20 years ago, we can't expect our design style to be stagnant. I feel like mine evolves almost daily as I find things I lean more towards and realize other things aren't as beloved as I thought.

While it is expensive (and unpractical!) to replace furniture every year, work with what you have. Try new pillows or hang new art like we discussed above. Feel free to rearrange the furniture. Trade pieces with a friend, or paint your dresser a new color. Don't be afraid to evolve along with your surroundings!

What is different about you now from 1 year ago? What about 5 years ago?

Is there something you have now in your home that isn't visually pleasing or functional? What is it and why? How can you fix or replace it?



All things being considered, even once we find our style match, we don't live in a vacuum. Meaning there are husbands, boyfriends, roommates, kids who are living with us. They have tastes and needs we have to consider as well. Don't worry. It can be done!

My husband, Scott, and I have pretty opposite design styles. My *laid-back fancy* doesn't necessarily give with his minimalistic tendencies. I like stuff. He doesn't. It took us a few years of trial and error, but we figured out how to mesh our two styles and create an environment where we both thrive. I wrote an entire post about the subject here with more info.

Who else's tastes/needs do you have to consider? What do they need or want?

After reading the post linked above, list 3 ways you can compromise your styles.

I hope this mini-workbook was helpful to you! If you want someone to bounce ideas off of, or if you have found breakthrough- I'd love to hear from you! Shoot me an email at hi@runtoradiance.com and tell me all about it!