

INTERIOR

A HELPFUL GUIDE FOR PLANNING
YOUR INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECT PHOTO SHOOTS

PHOTO STYLING



Created by Will Brown Interiors

THANK YOU

Thank You for finding your way to this Interior Photo Styling Guide.

This was created to offer helpful planning insights from an experienced photo stylist to help interior designers, decorators and homeowners alike who want to capture the style and personality of an interior space. You likely know how to put together the elements to create a complete room but when it comes to translating that for the camera, your space may fall flat or seem to lose that wow factor that your eye experiences when you're physically in the space.

This guide starts to scratch the surface around practical planning and styling tips to maximize an interior photoshoot. It's also meant to help you become more comfortable as you produce more interior photoshoots that will showcase your spaces to its fullest potential.





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ABOUT ME

Finding my way to interior design through the imaginative world of photography and photo styling.

PLANNING AHEAD

Create an Inspired 'Set'

While your project may be an actual room, you don't always have to think of it as such – maybe a certain movie or a special travel destination will lend that extra layer to inspire how you approach the styling. From whimsical to period touches, gather inspiring images and create a what's known as a mood board. This consists of design elements or images that are brought together onto a physical or digital board to help you evoke your inspiration and guide your vision.

Develop a Shot List:

Develop a list of the specific room shots you want to capture, including different angles and compositions. Consider the lighting component (see below) when prioritizing your shot list. This will help ensure that you get all the necessary shots during the photoshoot based on the best quality of light throughout the day.

Capture the Story-telling Details:

Build into your main shot list what I call Sister Shots aka versions of the main image where you may switch out certain elements. Additionally, be sure and go in tighter to pick up well-composed detail vignettes. This is where you can visually tell a more detailed story about the space or the homeowner that a pulled back full room view may not always reveal.

Where Will Your Images Appear:

Based on where you're planning on placing your images, you'll want to consider composing both Vertically and Horizontally framed shots of your space. Print, website and online publications as well as YouTube benefit from horizontal while Instagram, FB and TikTok favor taller verticals.

Lighting is Key:

Consider the time of day when scheduling the photoshoot. Interior spaces will always look better using natural light. An experienced photographer will know how to control the light to create the perfect atmosphere. Schedule the shoot during the best light or, if the space lacks natural light, seek out a photographer who is adept at using soft, diffused or artificial lighting techniques.



A YOUNG BALLERINA'S BEDROOM REFRESH PROVIDED THE PERFECT CANVAS FOR BRINGING AN ENCHANTED PINK WORLD TO LIFE.

PRE-PRODUCTION

Plan a Pre-Production Meeting:

In the world of professional photography, a producer is often hired to orchestrate the planning and executing of a shoot production – and yes, you should think of your shoot as a production. As the designer who hired the photographer, you're wearing the producer hat. You may also be the stylist, which essentially means you'll have to toggle between your left and right brain to be organized, give direction while also being creative 'on the spot' remaining focused with your photographer. Can you feel your anxiety rising just thinking about this? Pause. Exhale... The easiest way to avoid this stressor is to bring on a design assistant.

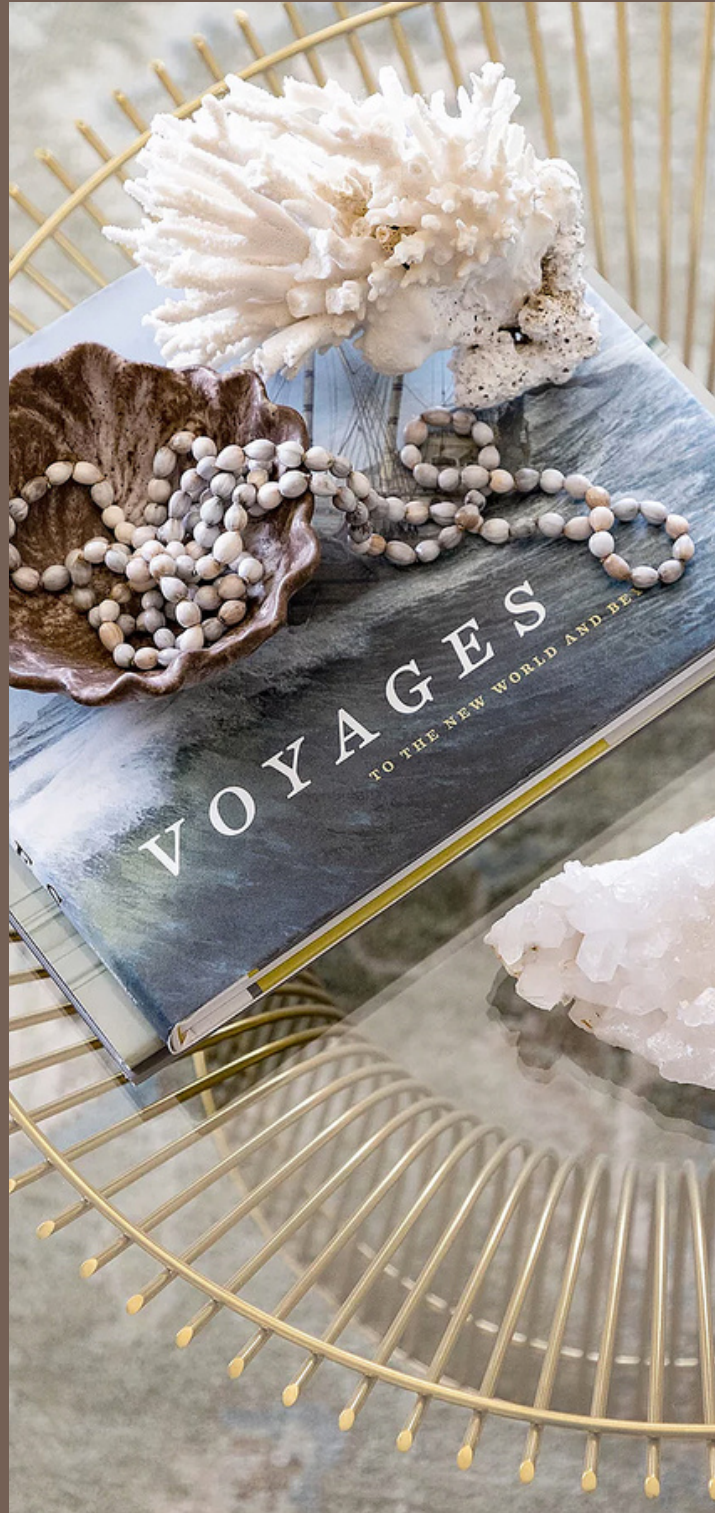
Hire An Assistant:

If you hire a design assistant, remember that you set the tone. Be sure and set aside a meeting well ahead of the day of shooting to introduce them to the project. Walk them through the logistics, create a schedule, review the shot list, assign specific tasks.

If you're shooting a smaller number of spaces, you may not need more than one additional person to assist, but sometimes, a larger scale (i.e. whole home) shoot may require two assistants. If this is the case, you'll assign them 1st assistant and 2nd assistant roles. The 1st assistant rarely leaves your side and can be an extra set of eyes and hands while the 2nd assistant will handle issues surrounding the set (i.e. ordering lunch, keeping props organized, prepping the next shot, etc).

If possible, walk through the spaces with your assistant in advance so they will have a sense of the spaces - this step will also instill confidence in them as well. BTW, It's also entirely possible to have too many folks on the set so you will want to manage this based on the scope of the project.

**PRODUCTION PRO TIP: Stage all your props and photo equipment in a separate room not part of the photoshoot. This may be a garage or even outside. It keeps the room, or set, clear of clutter so you can bring items in without visual distraction.*



A DETAIL VIGNETTE ON A COFFEE TABLE TELLS OF THE HOMEOWNER'S LOVE OF THE SEA AND ALL THINGS COASTAL.

SELECTING THE RIGHT PHOTOGRAPHER

Selecting A Photographer:

Selecting the right photographer for an interior photo shoot can make a significant difference in the quality and impact of your photos. Here are some factors to consider when choosing a photographer:

1. Chemistry:

Seek out photographers who are easy to work with and complement my own work style.

2. Portfolio:

When researching, request to see their work to get a sense of their style and if it works for your project. I believe it's essential to hire a photographer who has experience shooting interior photography work.

3. Experience:

Everyone starts somewhere so based on your project, you can decide on someone who understands unique lighting or complicated set-ups. Consider newer photographers if you have smaller projects as they may have a better rate and offer a different perspective.

4. Equipment:

Find out if the photographer has their own equipment. If they've invested in their own cameras, lenses, and such, it's a good sign they're serious about their craft.

5. Editing Skills:

Find out if the photographer has experience with post-processing and editing software. This can make a big difference in the final product, as they can adjust color balance, brightness and retouching for a polished image.

6. Communication

Ensure the photographer understands your vision for the shoot and is willing to communicate effectively with you. This includes discussing goals, timelines, budget and address specific requests or concern you may have.



7. Pricing an Usage Rights:

Get a clear understanding of the photographer's pricing structure and what is included in the package. Ensure you're clear on where and how you're allowed to use their imagery and ensure proper credit is given.

STYLING KIT ESSENTIALS

Why You Need a Styling Kit:

A photo stylist kit is a collection of tools, accessories, and props used by professional photo stylists to create the perfect look for a photo shoot. The kit contains everything the stylist needs to enhance and transform the space or objects being photographed, ensuring they look their best in the final images.

A kit can be as simple as a tool box or a tackle box with open and close lid latches and handles. They can be both carried or come with casters – all depending on the amount of supplies.

Having a well-stocked photo stylist kit is essential for any interior photo stylist, and by extension any designer who may find themselves in the styling role for the shoot. It enables for quickly and easily adding or removing elements from the set, adjust lighting and camera angles, and create a cohesive and visually appealing scene that highlights the focal point of the room being photographed.

What's in a Styling Kit:

This is a useful list of items that you'll likely find in a photo stylist kit.

1. Tape Measure
2. Scissors & Flower Clippers
3. Utility Knife
4. Glue Gun and Glue Sticks
5. Rubber Cement
6. Double-Sided Tape
7. Gaffer Tape
8. Wax Dots
9. Blue Painter's Tape
10. Fishing Line
11. Thin Wire
12. Command Strips
13. Clamps
14. Spray Bottle
15. Lint Roller
16. Steamer
17. Iron and Ironing Board
18. Extension Cords and Power Strips
19. Light Bulbs and Reflector
20. Batteries



REPEATING PATTERN AND AN ETHNIC MOTIF REINFORCES BOTH THE NEUTRAL COLOR PALETTE AND THE ORGANIC NATURE INSIDE THIS BEDROOM

INTERIOR STYLING TIPS

Select Your Focal Point(s):

Choose one or two elements at the most in a room to highlight and style them in a way that draws the viewer's eye. This could be a statement piece of furniture, and interesting piece of art, or a unique architectural feature. Just remember, everything can't (and shouldn't be) equally weighted in importance.

Depth of Layers:

Layering elements in a space creates depth and interest in photos. Consider layering textiles, such as rugs and pillows, to add visual texture to a space.

Add Greenery:

Incorporating greenery, such as plants and flowers will literally and instantly bring LIFE to a photo. It awakens the energy in a room and the body responds positively the presence of plants and florals, even in a photo.

Create Vignettes:

Create small vignettes or tablescapes by grouping together complementary objects, such as books, candles, and vases. This can add visual interest tell an interesting story about the homeowner.

Add Contrast:

Contrast is visually pleasing and adds interest to a space. Consider using contrasting colors, textures, and materials to create a dynamic composition.

The Rule of Odds:

When styling a space, use the rule of odds to create a more interesting composition. This means grouping objects in odd numbers, such as three or five.

Keep it Simple:

A cluttered space can be distracting in photographs. Keep it simple by decluttering and only including necessary elements in the composition.

Pay Attention to Lighting:

I've written about lighting already but I have to stress under styling as well. Lighting is key in photography, and interior photography is no exception. Natural lighting is best for interior photography, so consider scheduling the shoot during the daytime



A NEW BUILD'S PRIMARY BATHROOM NEEDED WARMTH AND A FOCAL POINT TO HELP ANCHOR THE SPACE AND GIVE IT A TRANQUIL, SPA-LIKE QUALITY.

ABOUT ME



Will Brown left the corporate world in 2019 in pursuit of his passion for interior design and decorating. He relishes rooms that delight the imagination and also has a soul that reflects the homeowners. He is known for his calm and charismatic approach to high-end design. His keen eye for styling spaces is one of his hidden talents that brings his interior spaces to life.

One of Will's unique design approach is his natural way of integrating the principles of Feng Shui into his projects. He understands the importance of creating spaces that promote balance and harmony, and he uses Feng Shui to create designs that not only look great but also optimize the energy flow within each space for the wellbeing of his clients.

I learned the ins and outs of photo styling and appreciated the craft of how to style both a simple tabletop project to working on full set productions assignments with models, pets, wardrobe, multiple locations, and props for days. I thrived on imagining how to bring the essence of the story to life. This has followed me into the world of interiors.

My experience and credibility in this field were built through years of working on countless photo shoots, where I honed my skill in lighting, composition, prep and planning. I worked closely with photographers to ensure that every shot captured the essence of the project and effectively communicated the brand's message.

Today, I bring this hidden talent to all my interior projects, especially when I style my photo shoots. I have often heard other interior designers state that they could use some helpful insights on how to make a beautifully appointed room look its very best on camera and feel less documented. My style is geared toward storytelling so I look for opportunities to tell the homeowners story in both broad and nuanced ways in the photography. I hope these tips and insights offer you practical tips to follow in your own planning.

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