



Why These Hues Are The New Neutrals

Design associate Amanda Barkley explains why light blue, blush and silver are taking over the latest interior design trends.

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Show anyone a picture of something they wore in the distant past, something that was "a trend" at a given point in time, and there will almost always be a reaction along the lines of, "what was I thinking?"

Whether it's bell-bottom jeans, bleached blonde hair or platform shoes, there are fads that go in and out of style all the time. But the fact of the matter is that things change. Trends come and go, and this is not limited to the clothes we wear. It also effects home trends when it comes to both exterior and interior design.

These trends can occur in things that seem simple, like the neutral colors we choose when we are trying to avoid making a statement—or at least when we don't want to make it look like we

are. There's been a shift from the plain whites, browns and beiges that used to line our walls. Light blue, blush and silver are now the neutral colors to beat for the time being.

ESTATENVY caught up with design associate Amanda Barkley of [Rae Duncan Interior Design](#) in Chicago to discuss the trend.

ESTATENVY: Have you noticed any new trends emerging in regards to how new neutral colors are being used?

Amanda Barkley: I think that now more than ever, people are wanting their homes to be a refuge from the harried pace and stress of the outside world. In our opinion, this accounts for the recent emergence of calming, peaceful colors like blush, light blue and silver in interior design.

EE: Which "new neutral" do you think is most popular right now?

AB: I'd say that blush is the most popular new neutral right now. Dusty pink is sophisticated and understated, and it instantly warms up any space. When paired with camel leather chairs, blush strikes the perfect balance of being feminine but not overly girly. It also goes beautifully with the brass light fixtures that are so popular now. EE: Do you think it's best to stick with one neutral when working with interior design, or is it best to incorporate many different options together?

AB: Sky blue and blush are stunning when paired together, but it has to be just the right dose of each color or you'll end up with a room that looks like a pastel explosion. Sky blue and silver is a classic color combination that never fails to look sophisticated. With blush, we think warmer metals such as brass and copper are the way to go. Warm metals can also look great with the right shade of light blue. EE: Why do you think this trend of using new neutrals came about?

AB: I think one major contributor was Pantone announcing Rose Quartz and Serenity as its 2016 Colors of the Year. Rose Quartz is a warm soft pink rose tone, whereas Serenity is a cool light blue. Both colors were chosen for the sense of calm they bring to everyday life. EE: What can you tell me about the recent history of neutral colors? Do you like the shift into new trends?

AB: For a while, everything was brown, beige and taupe. Then we saw a lot of all-gray palettes, which are beautiful but can get too one-note. The idea of soft colors as neutrals is such a fun trend that opens you up to a lot of exciting design possibilities. We love incorporating unexpected colors in our interiors. When a client is willing to see our vision and go with blush or light blue instead of a tried-and-true beige, it's exciting and allows us to really express our creativity. EE: Where are the best places to incorporate these new neutrals?

AB: In terms of color pairings, we love the idea of a room done in blush, black and white. This palette is incredibly chic, and with the addition of rose gold and copper accents (in lighting and accessories), it really pops. In particular, a blush sofa is a unique and fabulous choice for a

living room. Besides black and white, blush also looks great with brown (in the form of leather or natural wood) and gray. In our opinion, sky blue is best left to either wall color or accent furniture. Too much of it can be jarring, but just the right amount creates the perfect relaxing atmosphere. We love putting silver or gray on walls, lighting, accessories and even accent pieces like a metal coffee table. Silver accessories are especially beautiful juxtaposed with natural wood.

Photo courtesy of Rae Duncan Interior Design