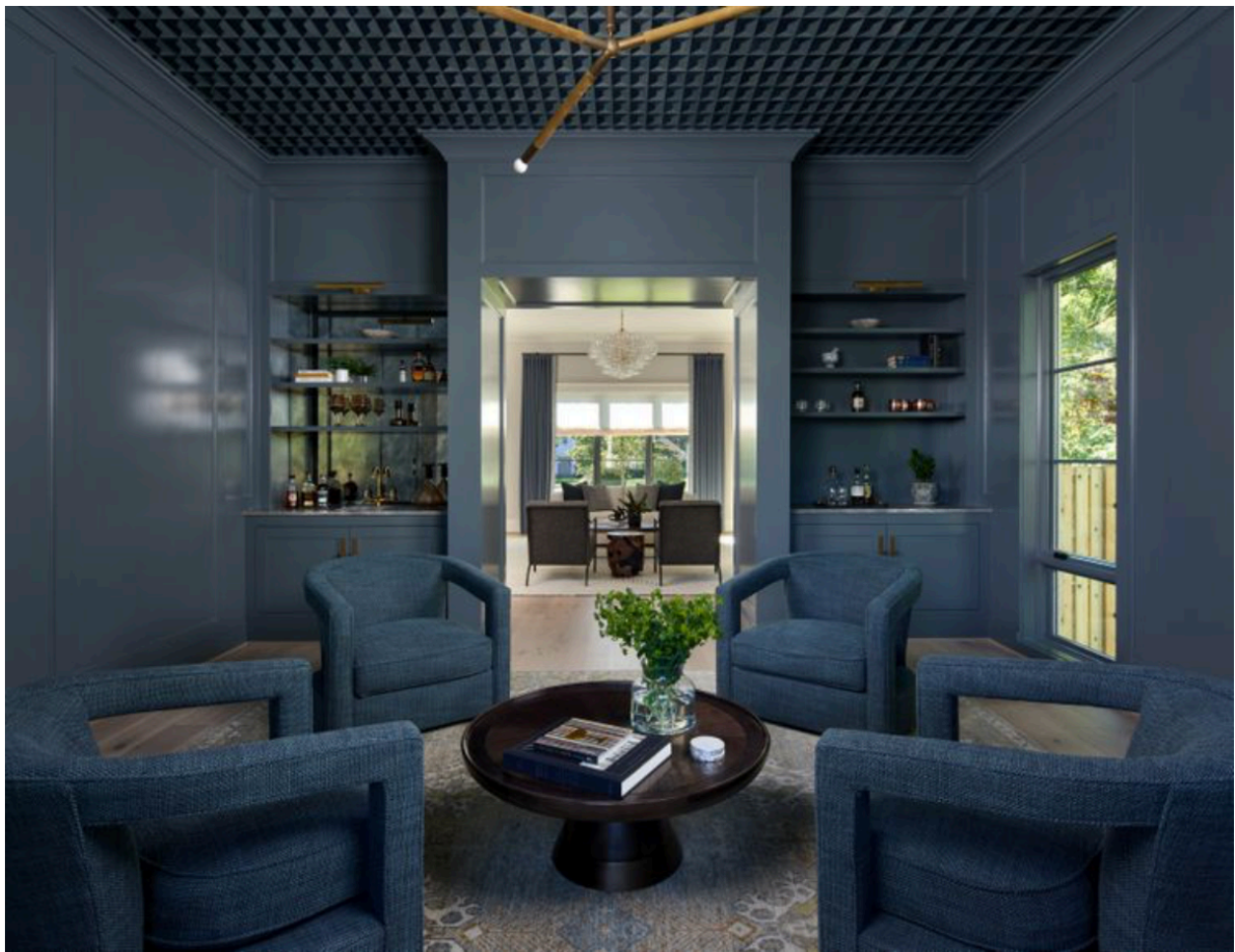


# 8 Must-Know Rules for Creating a Monochromatic Color Scheme

By [SARAH LYON](#) | Published on 01/27/24



 Design by Tracy Morris / Photo by Greg Powers

When designing a monochromatic space, there are many considerations to keep in mind to ensure that the room looks as elevated and sophisticated as possible, and we asked designers to share their top tips.

"Monochromatic designs are not only beautiful but also versatile, making them suitable for any home size or style," Cathleen Gruver, a lead interior designer at [Gruver Cooley](#), says. "I love playing with tones of the same color to add depth and layering textures for visual interest."

Below, you'll find eight useful guidelines to keep in mind if you choose to go the monochromatic route in your own home.



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# Don't Worry If Your Space Is on the Smaller Side

Working with a room that lacks tons of square footage? Go ahead and still embrace a monochromatic look, Gruver says.

"The magic of monochromatic design lies in its ability to make a space feel more expansive, a valuable trick, especially for smaller homes," she says. "Mastering the art of mixing tones, layering textures, and highlighting key elements can transform your space into a timeless and visually captivating haven."

## Feel Free to Go Bold in Color

Keep in mind that monochromatic spaces don't have to be neutral in hue, even though this is a popular approach. Go ahead and pick a color that truly brings you joy, even if it's a bit outside the box.

Christopher Boutlier, an interior designer at [Christoper Boutlier Interiors](#), has seen tons of stunning monochromatic spaces that range from crimson to yellow.

"The trick is to vary the intensity and textural qualities of the color selected to give the space depth and interest," she says.

## Say Yes to Texture

To ensure that a monochromatic room doesn't fall flat, you will want to be sure to incorporate plenty of textural accents in the space, Molly Torres Portnof, the founder of [DATE Interiors](#), explains.

"Layer in texture, interesting shapes, compelling art pieces, and found objects," she says. "They allow the space to feel dynamic and interesting."



Not sure what specific [textural materials](#) to use? Try boucle, linen, wool, velvets, and twills, Kristina Phillips, the founder of [Kristina Phillips Interior Design](#), says.

Weaving in natural elements is also a smart approach, Boutlier explains. Why not shop your backyard to get started? He often draws upon woods, branches, flowers, natural stone, and earthenware pottery in his own monochromatic projects.



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# Vary Your Finishes

Mix finishes within a space to add further variety, in addition to incorporating plenty of texture, Phillips says. Whether you select wood, metals, grasscloth, or lacquers, these materials will add polish to any monochromatic room, she says.



 Design by [Tracy Morris](#) / Photo by [Greg Powers](#)

# Pay Attention to Paint Sheen

This step is particularly key when working with the color white. Boutlier warns about creating a dull space since there won't be a variety of colors other interiors have. To counteract this, Boutlier suggests using a flat or matte finish for the walls, gloss or semi-gloss for baseboards, crown molding, door and window casings, and selecting a high-gloss for the ceiling.

"The varying sheen allows light to bounce through the room giving the space additional depth and dimension," he says.

## Incorporate Multiple Tones

Additionally, be mindful to allow for high, low, and mid-range tones.

"In many of our interiors, we look to black as a high-range tone that helps to anchor spaces and draw your eyes through a room," he says, adding that mid-range tones he turns to include warm browns, tans, olive greens, or rusts.

## Add Art

No space is complete without at least a bit of art, so go on and hang up that [framed picture](#) in your monochromatic room. Doing so will add visual interest and elevate the space, Phillips says.

Whether it's opting for an intricate, gold frame to pop against your dark walls or a minimal, silver frame for a polished look, go for a style that will complement your room's design.

## Don't Forget Architectural Details

Do not underestimate the power of [moldings](#), trim, and wall coverings in making a monochromatic space sing, Phillips says. Even renters can choose to make such additions to their spaces, given that there are many options for removable wall molding and wallpaper on the market. This will help make a major impact without leaving lasting damage upon removal.