

Go Neutral, Not Boring

By ANNA CHANG-YEN | Green Shoot Media

Many real estate agents tell sellers to paint their walls neutral colors. The idea is that this sort of blank canvas allows buyers to envision their particular style taking shape in the home, no matter if it's French provincial or funky modern.

That doesn't mean, however, that sellers have to live an existence with a white or beige backdrop until their home sells. If you're planning to sell in the near future but craving a refresh of your space, or if you're specifically remodeling to put your home on the market, there are far more options beyond beige.

GRAY OR GREIGE

Beige isn't the only neutral color, and one that's enjoyed its time in the sun lately is gray. From kitchen cabinets to walls to rugs to front doors, there are few places gray paints and textiles can't be found.

Gray is a great neutral because it works with a wide variety of colors. "It's very easy to refresh a gray canvas by simply adding or changing colors," notes Houzz.com. Think throw pillows, comforters, curtains and upholstery. Chances are that your current color scheme would work on a gray backdrop, making for a quick, inexpensive refresh



with just a coat of paint on the walls.

Of course, as with any color, gray is not gray is not simply gray. Some grays have green or blue undertones, allowing a greater variety of choices to blend in with your current decor.

Even newer and more versatile than the gray trend is "greige." Once defined as an undyed textile, greige's new definition is gray mixed with warm beige undertones.

If you've found a gray you like but aren't sure if it will

blend well with your decor, look at the darkest color on the paint swatch to better see its undertones.

STRONG NEUTRALS

If you absolutely cannot abide light-colored walls, go darker with a "strong neutral." These colors, while being darker than typical neutral colors, still can coordinate with many different accent colors while leaving a space with a "blank canvas" feel.

Did you know gold can be "restrained?" According to

BobVila.com, Sherwin-Williams' "Restrained Gold" is a "warm and inviting color (that) not only looks good with painted white trim but also stained trims like oaks, plus it maintains its hue well in daylight or artificial light. It also looks great in just about every room and pairs well with a wide range of colors, from reds and oranges to blues, greens, or purples."

Also consider a mid-tone gray (not too light but not too dark), or an understated medium blue-gray.

REAL ESTATE 101

2017's Hot Hues

If you can't resist a trend, take a look at these compilations of 2017's hottest colors.

Benjamin Moore:

<http://bit.ly/2etW5bx>

Elle Decor:

<http://bit.ly/2auOn1y>

Sherwin-Williams:

<http://bit.ly/2jgk3Jy>

Pantone:

<http://bit.ly/2geNXLu>

GO MULTI-TONAL

One problem with beige is that everything can start to blend together. Houzz.com warns: "If you don't bring in contrast when using beige, you run the risk of your space looking 'muddy' in color." The solution: multi-tonal shades of your wall color that range from the lightest to darkest options.

Go multi-tonal by pairing grays with black and white, and accenting beiges with coordinating off-white and espresso or mahogany.

After all, it is still your space, and no one wants to live for months in an environment that feels hospital-grade sterile or browned-down drab. With some creativity, you can draw in potential buyers and still let your personality shine.



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HOMESWISE GLOSSARY

Gross rent multiplier: — A number which, times the gross income of a property, produces an estimate of value of the property. For example, suppos the gross income from an unfurnished apartment building is \$200,000 per annum. If an appraiser uses a gross multiplier of 7 percent, then it is said that based on the gross multiplier the value of the building is \$1,400,000.

SOURCE: California Bureau of Real Estate

AD SPACE