

Designing A-Z

Have you ever hired a contractor or designer to come into your home, and found yourself questioning your knowledge of the English language when they started explaining what they would like to do? These trades tend to use words from a dictionary all their own, so whether you are hiring someone to do work on your home, or planning to do work yourself, I have put together a list of terms from A-Z that you need to know before you get started. This week features A-M.

Ambient Lighting vs Accent Lighting—Ambient Lighting is the light that is available in a room, whether from light fixtures, lamps, or natural light. Accent Lighting is focused on a particular element in the room, such as artwork, or architectural features.

Beveled—slanted and polished edge detail used on wood, marble, glass, etc.

Console Table—a small table fixed to a wall or designed to stand against a wall (see figure 1).



Figure 1

Decoupage—artistic application of glue, paper cut-outs and varnish applied to the surface of any object (see figure 2).



Figure 2

Eclectic—combines various characteristics of at least two different styles to create a look that is unique.

Focal Point—specific visual elements such as a spectacular view, home entertainment system, fireplace, art, sculpture or furniture piece, which becomes the main focus of the room or vignette.

Gilded—an object with a thin overlay of *gold leaf* added to its surface (see gold picture frame to the right). *Gold leaf* is paper thin layers of gold brushed onto a prepared adhesive surface, usually over a red primer to increase vibrancy and lustre (see figure 3).



Figure 3



Figure 4

Hearth—The original definition for this is a “fire-proof floor extending out from a fireplace into a room for fire protection”, however, many of these are now more decorative than anything else, and while they still provide fire protection, their main purpose is decoration (see figure 4).

Iridescence—the property of certain surfaces which appear to change colour as the angle of view changes. Iridescence may be seen commonly in soap bubbles.

Jabot—side portion of a window treatment where fabric is draped in soft folds vertically (see figure 5).

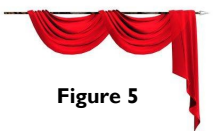


Figure 5

Key Pattern—An ornamental design consisting of repeated and symmetrical geometric figures, often in relief, contained within a band or border.

Lattice—a criss-cross pattern made from strips of metal, wood, or fabric.

Motif—a design or figure that consists of recurring shapes or color.