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must-haves to create a luxury bath

# what look is right for you?

Four experts explain how to choose décor you can live with by Lisa Jill Schlang

**C**onfused about your style? We polled four design professionals for advice on how to determine what choices are appropriate for your home project.

## 1. Where should you begin?

■ **Goldberg:** Magazines are a great way to get ideas. I always give my clients a stack of magazines and tell them to rip out pictures of anything that appeals to them. It doesn't have to be the whole room; it can just be a single item.

■ **Blank:** Start by looking at other people's homes. Also visit antique stores, flea markets, and design stores.

■ **Cama:** If there is a design center in your area, visit the showrooms to find the most unusual materials.

■ **Hoffenberg:** Magazines, design books, and designer showhouses all can provide inspiration.

## 2. What's the best method of narrowing down all of your choices?

■ **Goldberg:** Get an opinion from someone whose taste you admire; that person doesn't always have to be a designer, although a designer may be more objective than a friend.

■ **Blank:** Eliminate what you definitely don't like first. And remember, if you can't decide, price can always be the final deciding factor.

■ **Cama:** Eventually, it will become apparent what your design preferences are. Or, sit down with a professional to determine how he or she can achieve the right look for your environment.

■ **Hoffenberg:** Examine your current lifestyle, but also think about what your needs will be in the future, particularly regarding children and pets. Also, think

about whether you need a desk or study space and where it will fit.

## 3. How should you organize your ideas?

■ **Goldberg:** Files are a great way to keep pictures organized. I like to keep my clippings separated room by room.

■ **Blank:** In addition to figuring out your preferences, compiling material samples will help a designer or architect to understand your taste.

## Our panel of experts

### Suzanne Goldberg

*SBG Design, Inc.*  
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### Alice Blank

*a blank design*  
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### Rosalyn Cama, FASID

*CAMA, Inc.*  
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### Felicia R. Hoffenberg

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■ **Cama:** A three-ring binder is often the best solution. Use ZipLock pockets for loose samples, and photo sleeves for personal photographs. Every so often the binder should be culled for inconsistent ideas.

■ **Hoffenberg:** I like to organize what I call my "Style File" into a variety of categories such as rooms, styles, furnishings, and accessories.

## 4. Are there certain design dos and don'ts to follow?

■ **Goldberg:** I don't think in terms of

"dos and don'ts." A room's design should reflect the personality of the person or people who live there.

■ **Blank:** Always follow your heart. Don't be afraid to mix and match from different periods in history.

■ **Cama:** Do select from your most limiting choices first, perhaps the item that is the most expensive. Don't design a room or a component of a room without being conscious of what else is going on in your home. One great room that is not complementary to the next will lose its impact.

■ **Hoffenberg:** Today anything goes, but I do think that a well put-together color scheme facilitates a successful combination of styles.

## 5. How can you select features that you'll continue to like over time?

■ **Goldberg:** Don't spend huge amounts of money on trendy designs. Kitchens and baths are not rooms that you want to renovate regularly, so take that into consideration when making selections.

■ **Blank:** I advise clients to do the following: Walk into the store, look at the products without thinking about the price, then walk out. If by the following week you have forgotten about the item and did not think about it during the week, then don't buy it. However, if it is still lodged firmly in your mind, then buy it; this will most likely ensure your affections over time.

■ **Cama:** The features you choose have to be of the right scale for the space, but it's also important to select components that have the flexibility to grow with you through various stages of your life.

■ **Hoffenberg:** Choose classic elements instead of trendy, especially in terms of color and fixtures. □