

ASK THE DESIGNER: Curating the Perfect Foyer

By Jean Bisnaire

?I don't know how to design or layout my narrow front hallway. Please help!?

There are several ways to curate the perfect front entry way.

I always tend to ask my clients about the way they use the space in order to come up with the best solution. If you and your family don't use the front door regularly, then you're lucky, you can design the foyer to be as visually appealing as you like. If it is an area you and your family pass through multiple times a day then put some good thought into the functionality as well as the organization of the space.

Do you need to organize clutter?

You may want to consider a custom built-in that will have a bench for sitting and pulling on shoes and boots, storage for bulky items and hooks to hang coats on. If you have a closet nearby, and this isn't a concern, then you may want to start with a nice console to put your keys, wallets, etc.

The style of this furniture piece can also set the tone for the rest of your space (antique, clean and modern, etc.). For narrow hallways, there are lots of smaller scale pieces available or you may want to consider a floating shelf with a mirror above it. If you have the room you may want to consider a round table in the center of the space to create flow around the piece. A gorgeous sculptural or floral centerpiece would finish off the look and create that wow factor!

Some houses don't have a clear and separate entryway. The front door opens into a living room or family room. In this instance, I would recommend putting a console up against the back of a sofa in the opposite room facing the entry to create the feeling of a separated entrance area.

A piece of art, or a mirror in the entry way is always a great idea as well. The majority of my clients want a final glimpse into the mirror before leaving their house and other clients who would prefer to see a striking piece of art set the tone for their home. Either option is great. If you have a narrow, long hallway, you may want to consider several pieces of art along the hallway to create an art gallery feel.

If your entry is very narrow, there's nothing wrong with hanging a piece of art and having no other furniture in the space.

If you're looking to make a statement in the entry way or looking to refresh your space with a minor tweak, update your light fixture!

The variety of styles and finish selections out there today are amazing and you can really have fun setting the tone with the lighting in your entry way. Be cautious of how much light the fixture gives off as some are quite dim and won't do well without natural light close by.

If you need more light you can also put lamps on the console for times that you may need it.

Having something to sit on in your front entry way is always a good idea as well. If you can fit a small chair or bench in your space that's great. You can also get a funky bench and tuck it in under your console table. If you need storage but a built-in is not an option, this would be the perfect place to also put a storage bench for added practicality.

I can go on all day about entry ways.

Once you get the substantial pieces in place, be sure to accessorize for maximum impact. This is the first space people will see when you open the door. Be sure to make it reflect the personality of you and your home so that it sets the tone for what to expect throughout.

Do you love colour? Be sure to add in pops of colour (through art, bench fabric, accessories) and as always, remember to have fun with it!

Feel free to send me your comments or questions to askjean@nichedecor.ca