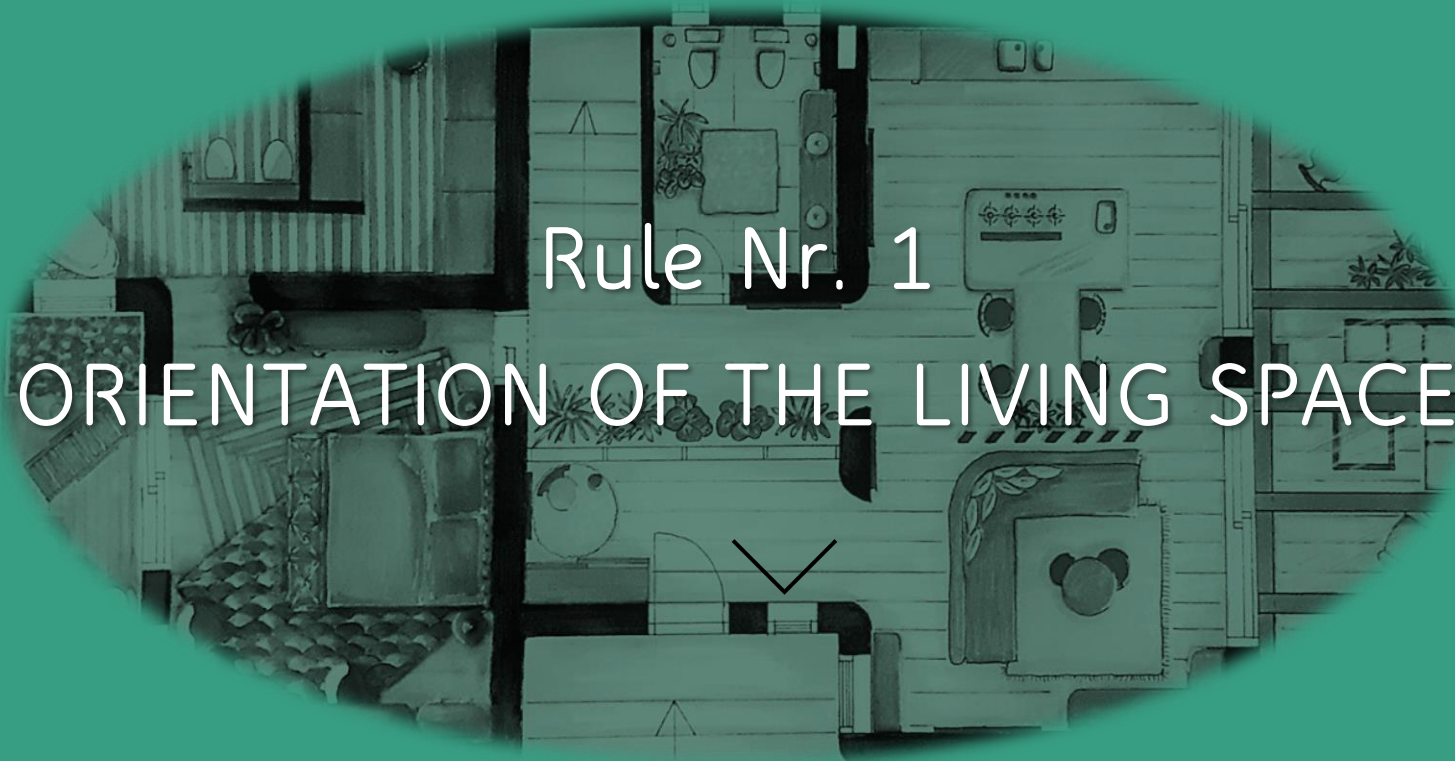


7 DESIGN RULES YOU NEED TO KNOW

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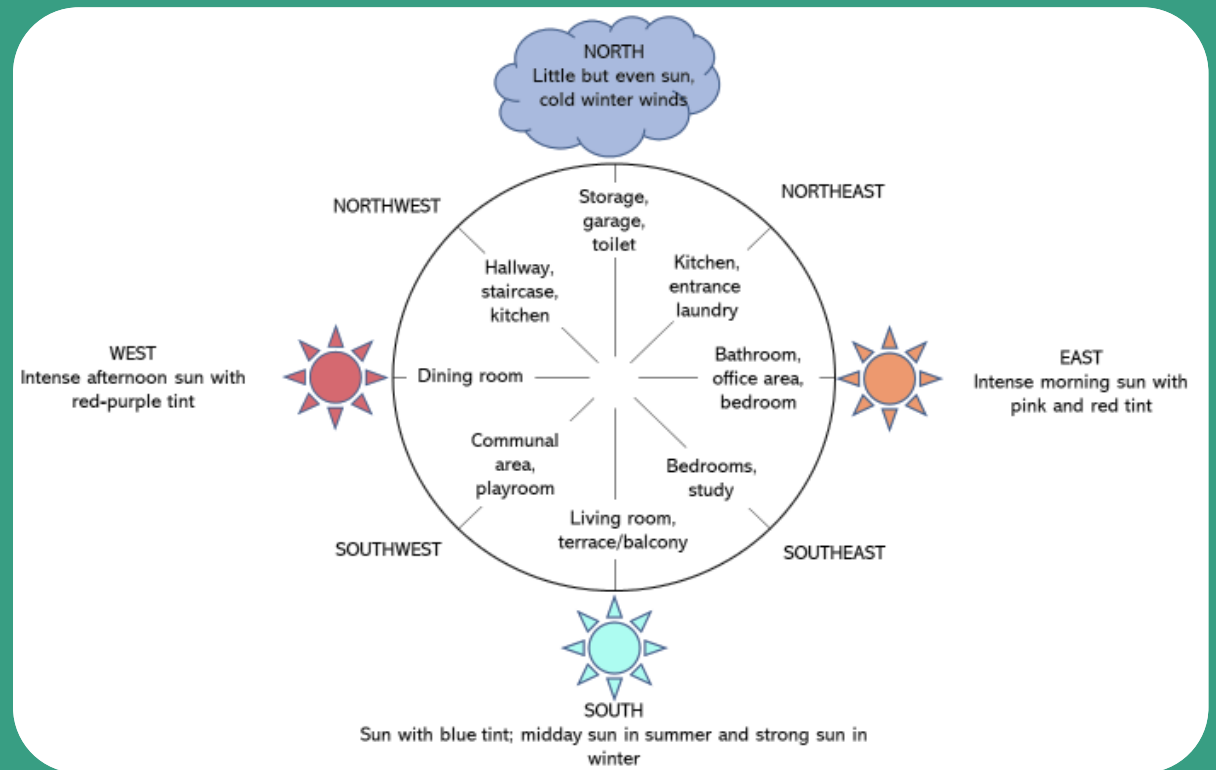


Rule Nr. 1

ORIENTATION OF THE LIVING SPACE

Before start to change the room layout, or the wall colors, it is essential to get to know the characteristics of the living space.

At first thing we need to identify the orientation of the room and check where the natural daylight is coming from. This is defined by the position, the amount and size of the window(s), patio door(s) and skylights.

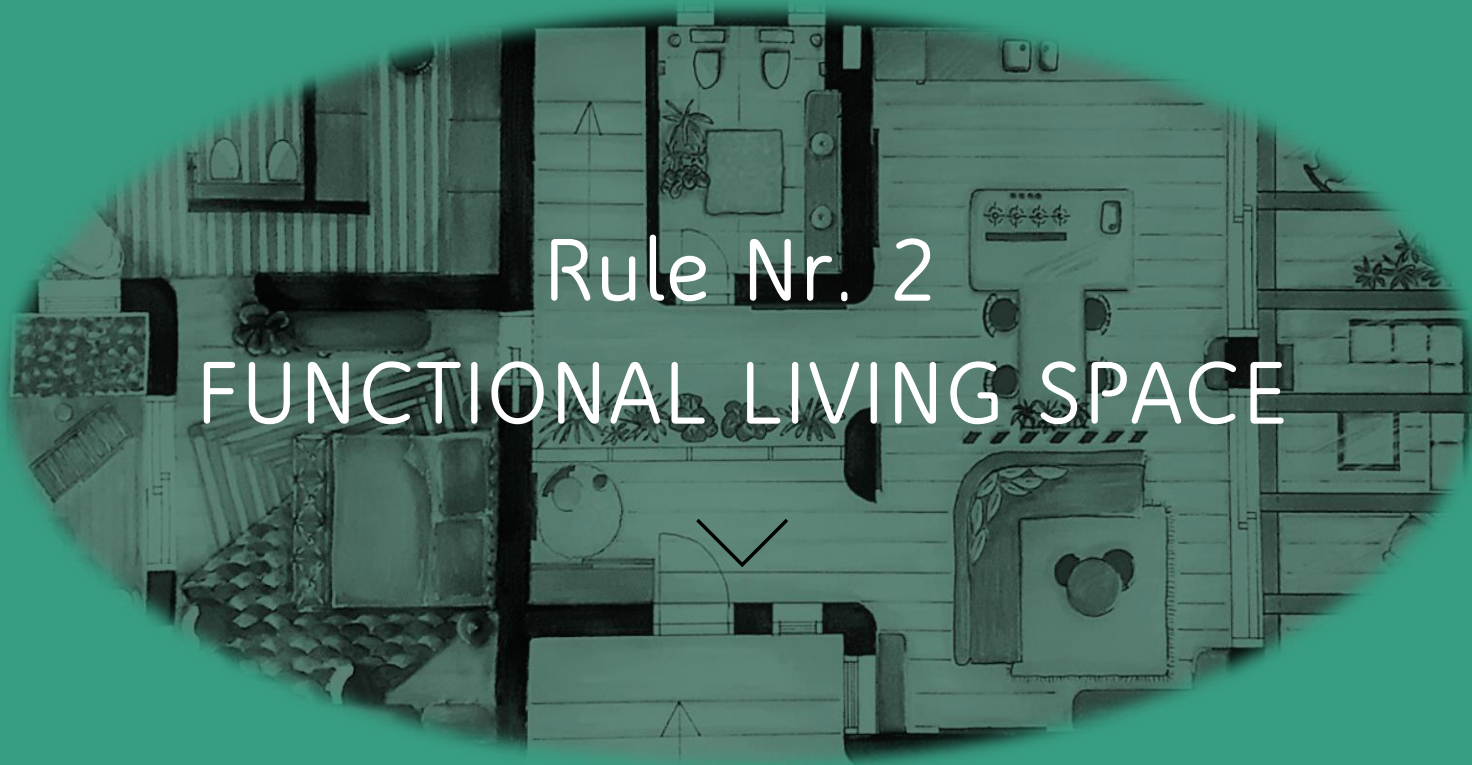


Once we've figured out the orientation, we continue with measuring the walls, floor and ceiling parameters and note them down.

The next step is to give the space a function or make it even multifunctional. Therefore, we need to define how many people will be at the same time in the room and what kind of functional areas the room needs to fill in.

For example, if we design a living room, we need to create zones for different activities: a conversation area, a reading corner, an area to watch tv or invite guests etc.

In case we have one open space for the living, the dining and kitchen area we need to pay more attention to the different functionalities and create a useful zone for each activity avoiding any disturbance between the zones. Which means that we also need to plan the walking path around and between the zones.



Rule Nr. 2
FUNCTIONAL LIVING SPACE

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An empty room may give the feeling that we have plenty of space to fill in and we might lose the reality by start to shop for big size furniture, dark wall paint or rich patterned wallpapers.

To avoid any design mistake, we need to make a sketch of the room on a sheet of paper, mark the functional zones on our drawing and understand the ergonomics in interior design. Ergonomics in interior design are basic rules, which make a living space more useful and livable by minimizing any kind of design mistakes.

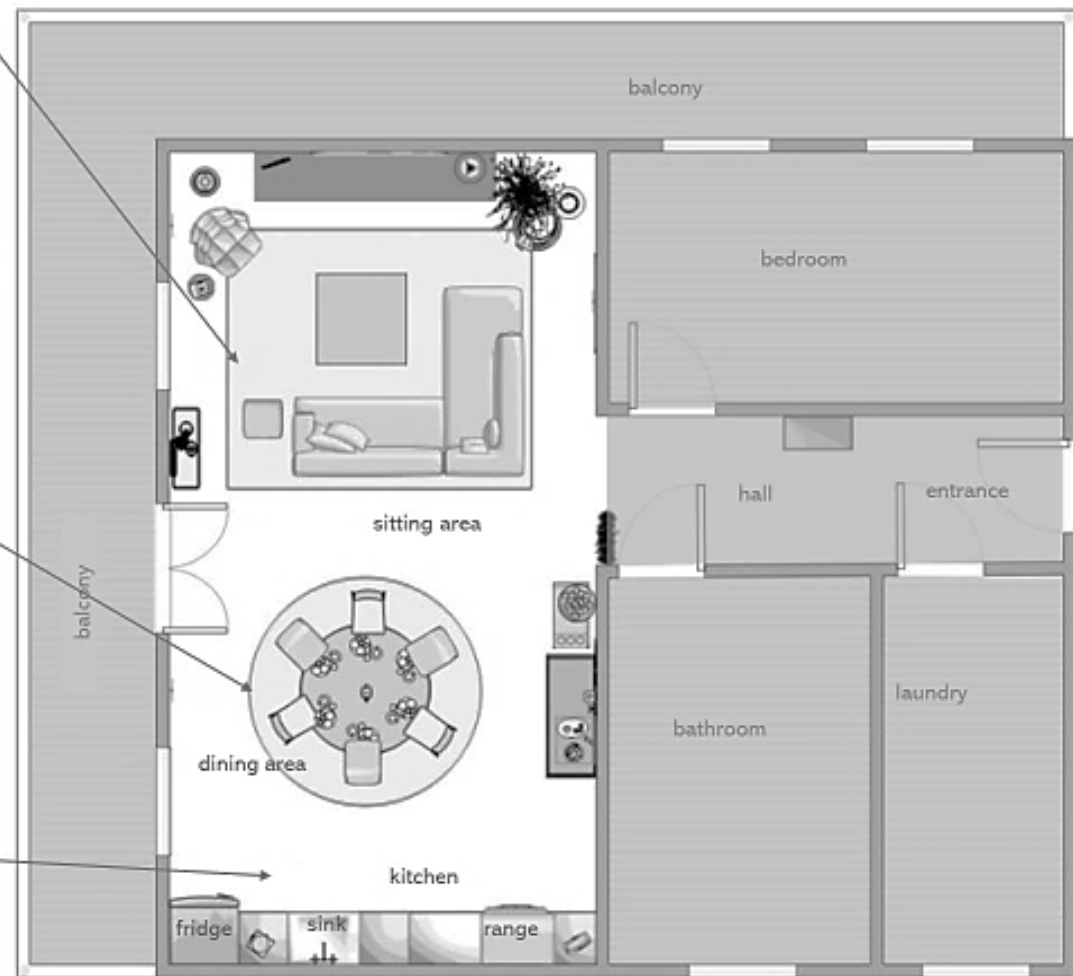
LET`S SEE IT IN PRACTICE!

We want to create an open space living room for a young couple without kids. On weekdays both work in an office and arrive home late in the afternoon. After dinner they watch tv or films and chill on the sofa. On weekends they invite some of their friends (about 3-4 people) for dinner and to play poker.

For the **sitting area** an L-shaped sofa of 230cm x 230cm was picked. Around the sofa a walking path is created, which according to the ergonomics rule needs to be at least 60cm. A coffee table was placed in the middle of the area with the distance of 30cm on each side from the sofa. That is the minimum distance between a sofa and a coffee table. To provide enough seating possibility an armchair and two ottomans were chosen (one next to the sofa and the other one next to the armchair as a side table). If we want to place an armchair the minimum measurement we have to take into consideration will be 150cm x 120cm. Between the armchair and coffee table the minimum distance applies 30cm as well, so therefore there is not enough space to place two armchairs here. The armchair also fulfils the reading corner function.

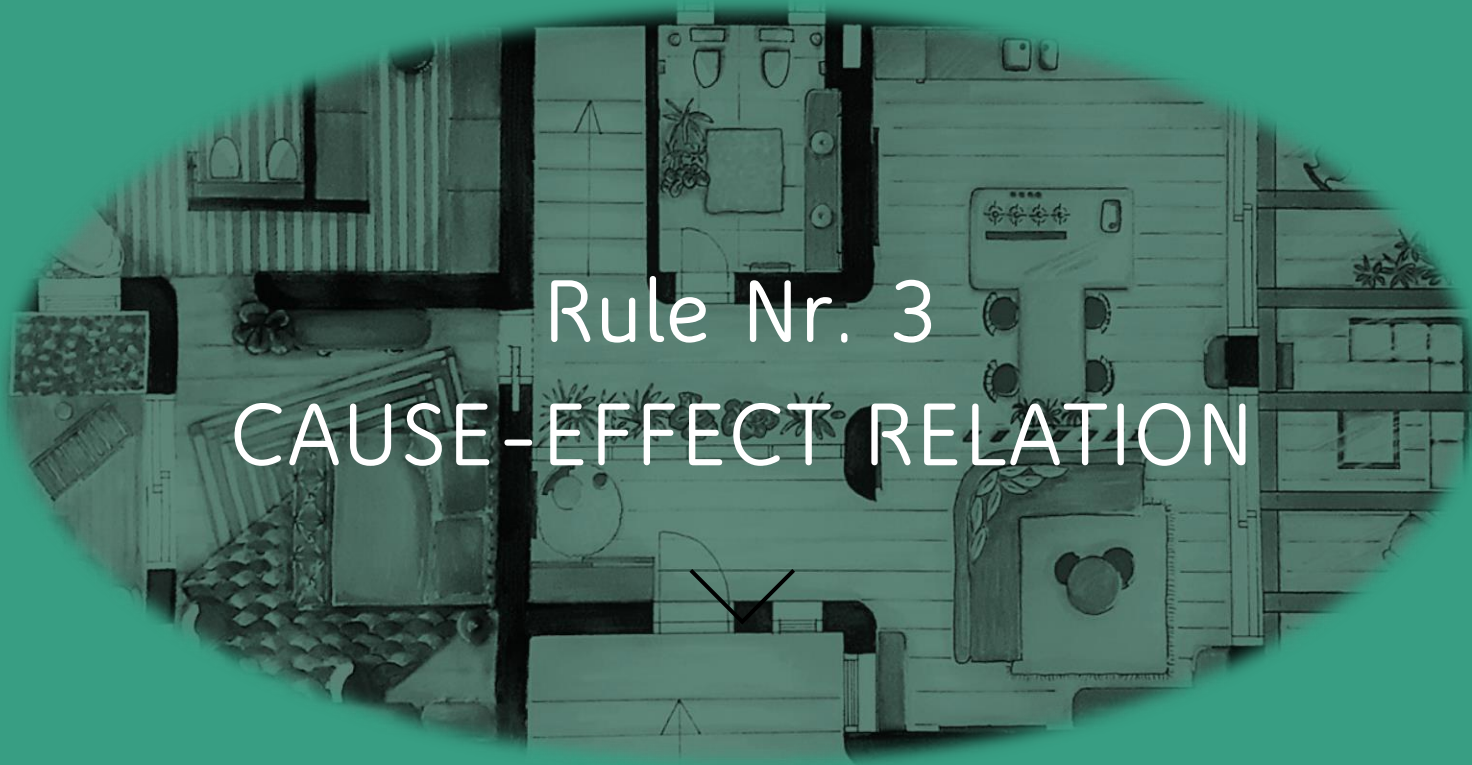
The **dining area** is designed to seat 6 people easily. The diameter of the table is 120cm, which is the minimum size for 6 people. For this design the dining chairs were chosen without armrest, but if we choose for dining chairs with armrest we need to calculate more distance between two people or pick a bigger table. One person needs 60cm x 40cm space to be able to eat comfortably and at least 60-80cm to move in and out with the chair. So in this design the dining area required a space of 280cm (diameter).

This **straight-line kitchen** is a typical solution for such open and narrow spaces. It contains the basic cabinets and appliances, which fulfil the cooking requirements of two people. The working triangle is flattened to a straight line. From left to right: refrigerator → sink → cooktop with oven.



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Rule Nr. 3
CAUSE-EFFECT RELATION

Okay, so we are done with determining the different functions and we've just realized that the given space will be overcrowded after all the furniture is placed or we may have doubts that the room will be too dark after applying the same wall paint what we've seen on internet or in an interior design magazine.

The good thing is that there is no need for panic. In interior design there is always a solution for each challenge, we just need to understand the cause-effect relation. Is the room too small, then we can achieve a great result by painting the walls and ceiling white and/or lay down a light tint of flooring.

Let's check some of these effects by changing the wall color.



Original picture of a room with dark colors on the walls and on the floor.



Using dark color on the back wall of the room will make the space feel like less deep.

The back wall will look to be nearer and the room will look wider. Painting the sidewalls with dark color will lengthen the room and gives the feeling that the space is much longer.



If we apply following coloring combination, it will make the room to look less wide than in reality, but it adds an extra dimension and sphere to the interior.



Using dark color on the ceiling will make the space much lower. This is a smart solution for high ceilings but in this case, it squeezes the room and gives a bit claustrophobic feeling.

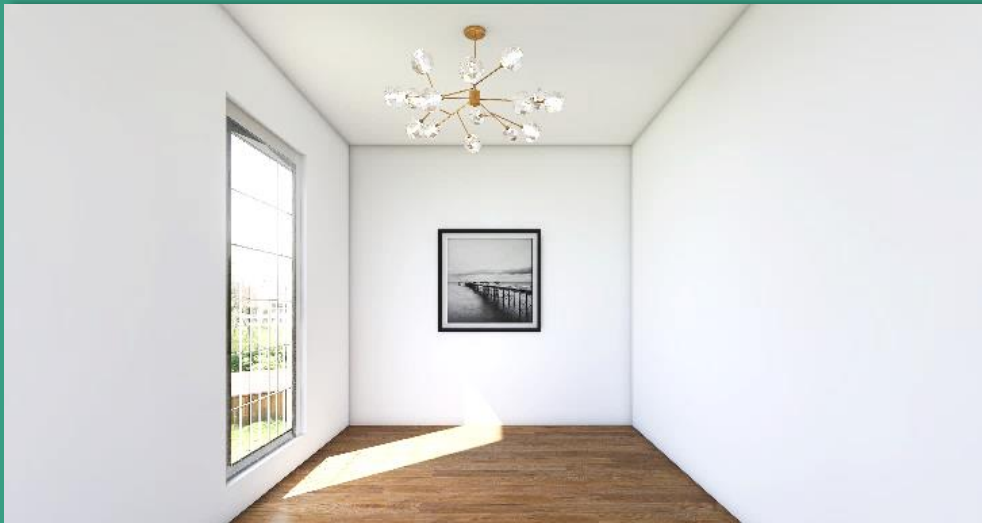


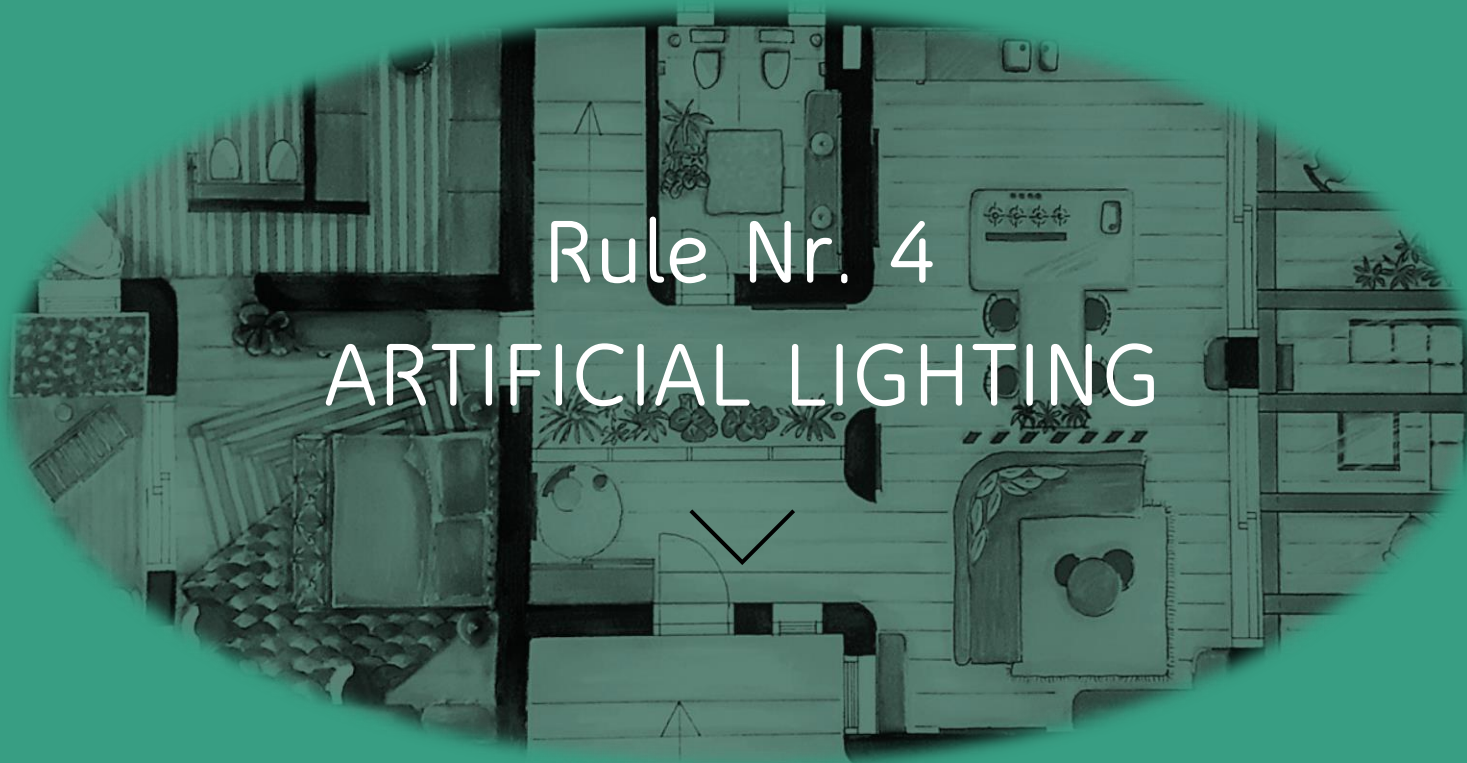
By painting the walls and the ceiling white the room will look more spacious and if we also change the flooring to something lighter, we get the perception that the room is much bigger. Though it still has the same size...



Extra tip

If we have a small wall and want it to look a bit wider, then place a picture or a piece of art in a dark frame on the wall. Our eyes automatically will focus on the art and not on the width or height of the wall anymore.





Rule Nr. 4

ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

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For dark corners and hallways, you can light up the back wall with different spotlights and wall lamps. This way you can create an inviting walking path and you will never enter the wrong bedroom.

Does this narrow hallway look inviting to you? Hmm, not really...



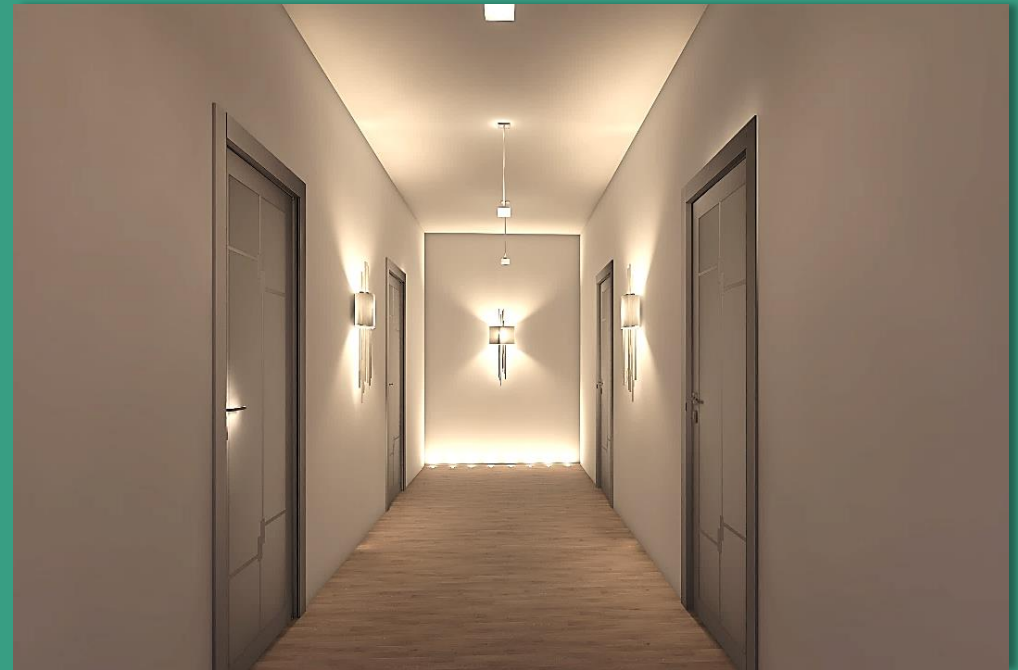
HOW ABOUT THESE LIGHTING OPTIONS?

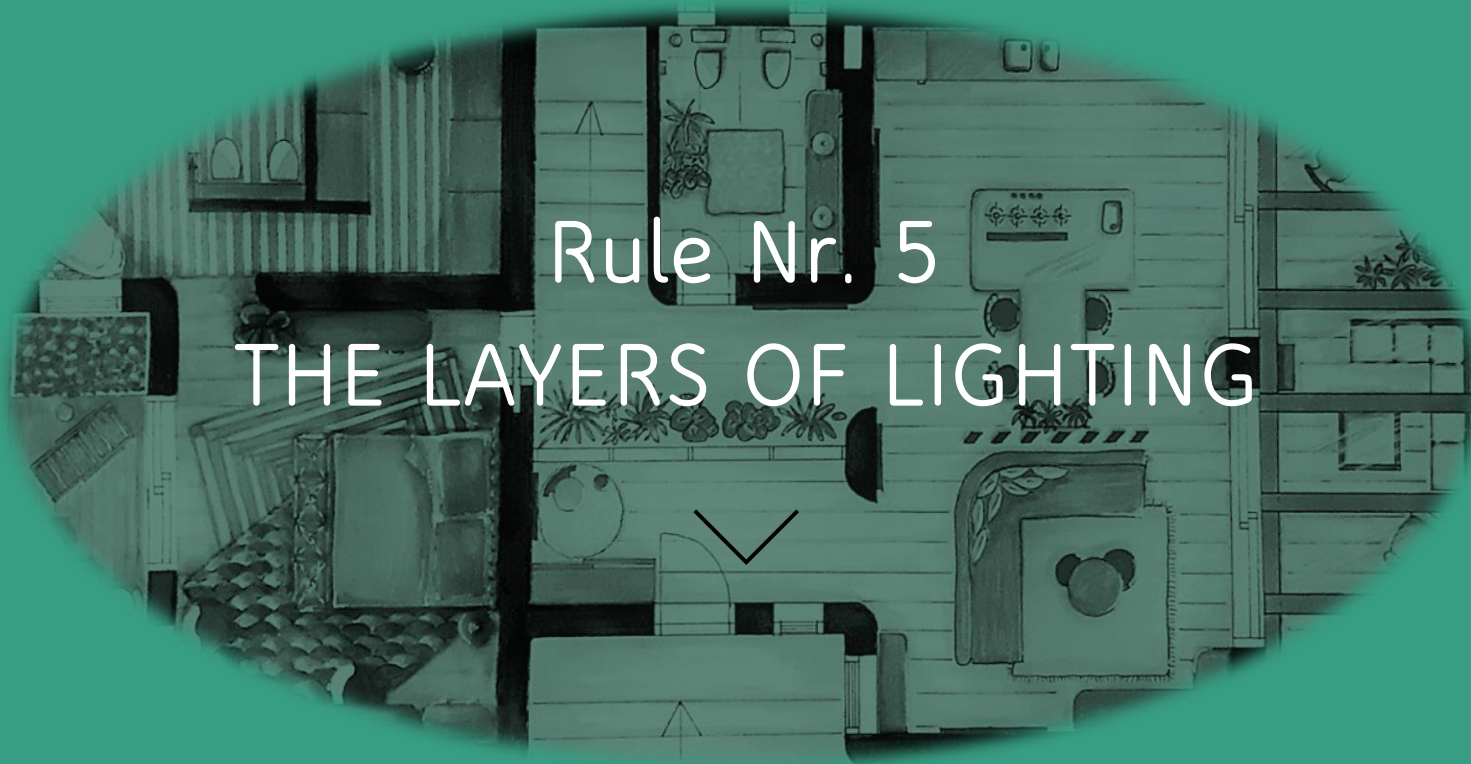


Yes, it's more inviting to enter a room where there is enough daylight and artificial light in the evening. But how do you pick the right luminaire?

Well, a good lighting plan consists of quite a few components. You need to think about:

- ✓ where your home is located (continent, country, city etc.)
- ✓ the orientation of the room and the windows (North, East, South, West etc.)
- ✓ what kind of functions the lighting needs to support (study, cooking, sleeping etc.)
- ✓ the color of the walls, the ceiling, the floor and the furnishing
- ✓ the texture of the furniture and the used materials (carpet, area rug, tiles) and so on.





Rule Nr. 5
THE LAYERS OF LIGHTING

A good lighting consists of different layers, which can vary depending on the different activities. But let`s see how it works in practice.

This bedroom has been designed for a 10-12-year-old girl. Pictures are taken in the evening, so that we can see a better effect of the applied lighting.

This lighting is built up from 3 layers:

- 1st layer - central light
- 2nd layer - sphere light
- 3rd layer - task light.



Now let`s check how the room would look like if only one layer of lighting is on at the same time.

Only the central lighting is on - There are dark corners in the room and there is lack of light for study or reading.



Only the sphere lighting is on - There is still not enough light for study and around the wardrobe.



Only the task lighting is on - There is enough light around the desk, the armchair and the wardrobe, but other parts of the room are in the dark.



Now we see the importance of the different layering if the room fulfils several functions.

The quantity of light (lumen) and its intensity (lux) determine what kind of activity is possible and how we feel ourselves in the room.

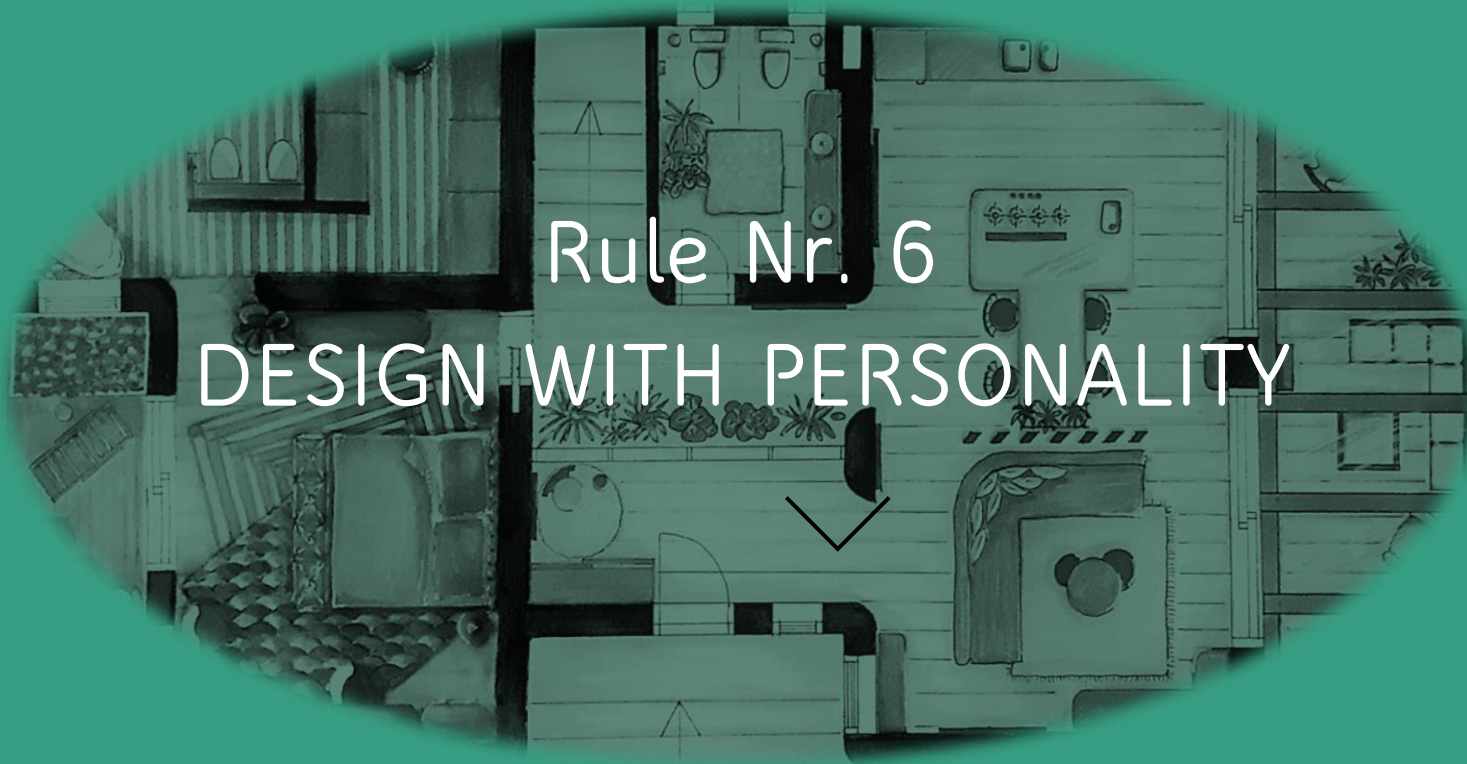
Of course, we don't have to bath in light if we just walk through the hallway or go to the toilet. We just need to know how many lux is required for each living space.



So, the next time when we shop for a nice luminaire the first thing that we need to know is how many lux will be needed in the room.

If we find the right chandelier or table lamp - beyond its appearance - we also need to check some basic information just like:

- ✓ Lumen
- ✓ Color of light (given in Kelvin)
- ✓ CRI (color rendering index)



Rule Nr. 6
DESIGN WITH PERSONALITY

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Or with other words, choosing the interior which truly reflects our personality. Copying a showroom style will not really suggest that we have a firm taste - rather that we are one out of many.

One thing is sure, there is no bad taste, just incorrect combination or execution. If we desire a stylish home, it will not mean that we need to design an interior according to the latest trends.

Not everybody has the wallet to change the furnishing once or twice in a year and it's also not necessary if we have unique pieces or a good base.



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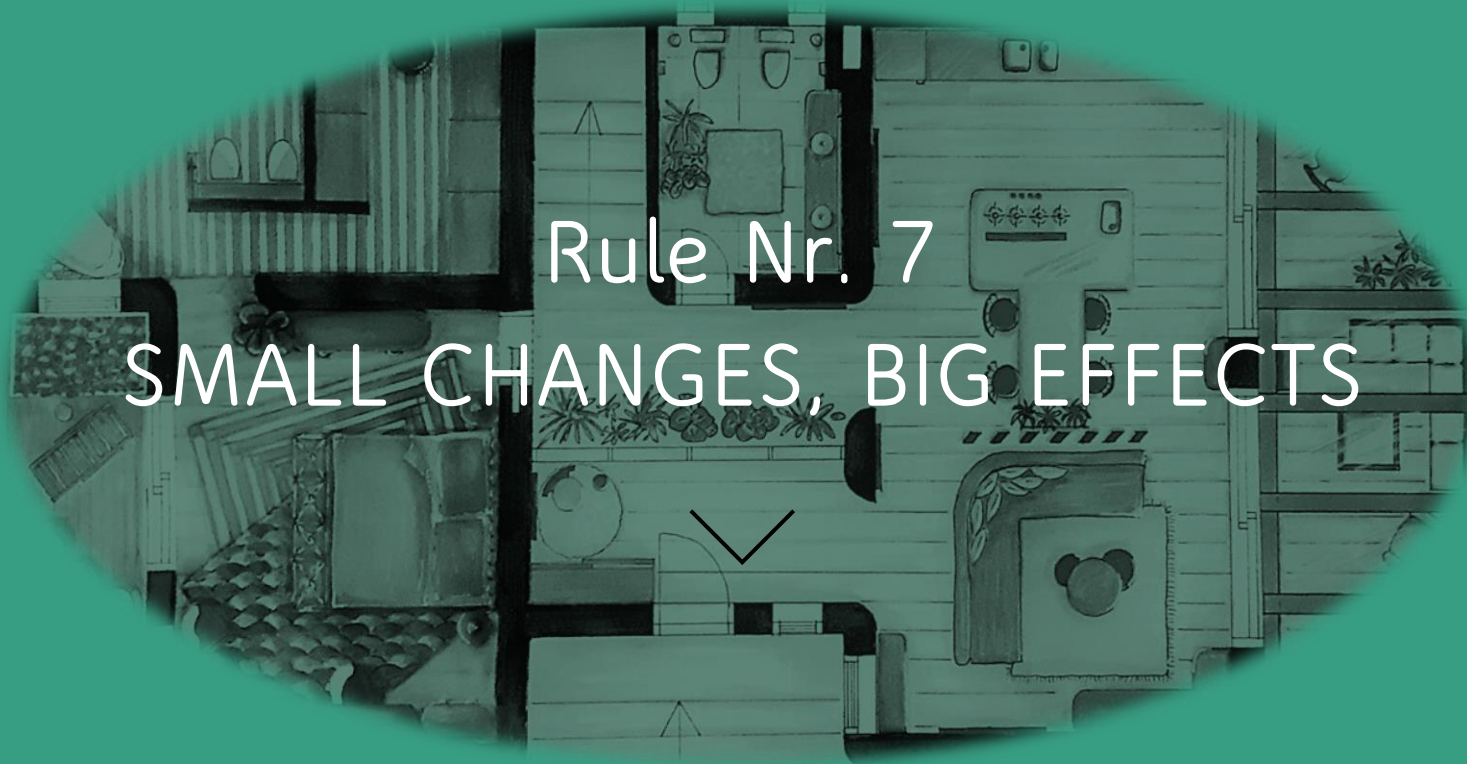


Trends are changing more quicker than people personality and mood. Our style - also called our taste - develops and grows with us during decades and that is what makes each of us so unique.

Some of us love the old-fashioned interior or want to keep up with the latest innovations, whilst others love to combine different design waves.

It`s not an obligation to press on ourselves an interior style if that is against our taste and personality. Because at the end of the day our home will be the place where we still have the total control about how we feel ourselves.

We need to take the time to find out our “likes and dislikes” and display our personality proudly.



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Finally, we need to talk about the “finishing touch” and what kind of an impact it could have on our design.

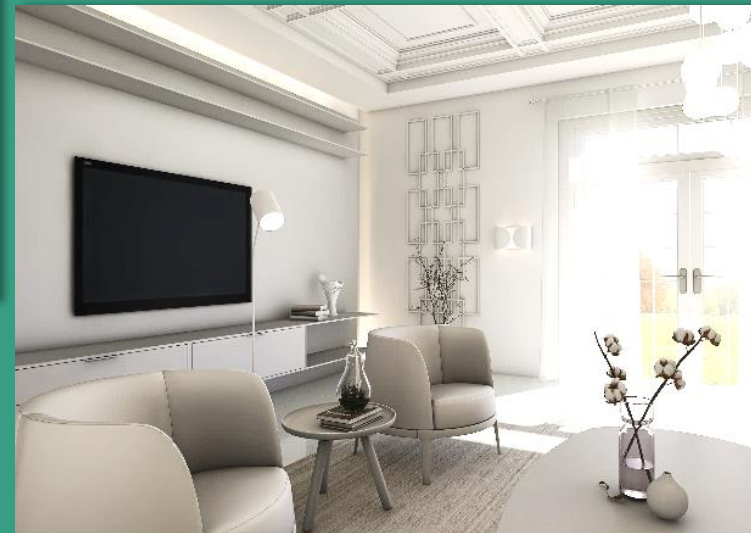
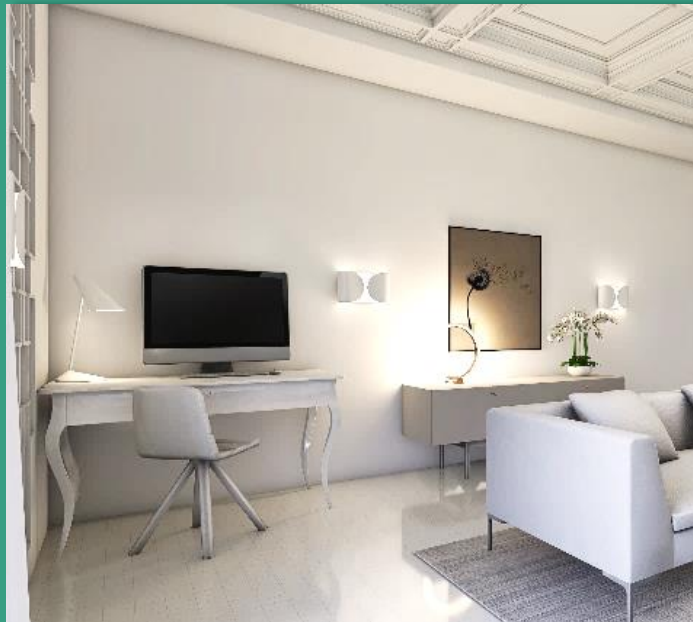
Finishing touch comprises all the accessories which make a room complete: area rugs, pillows, vases, books, a piece of art, curtains etc.

They can lift a room to higher level and via them we can express our personal taste.

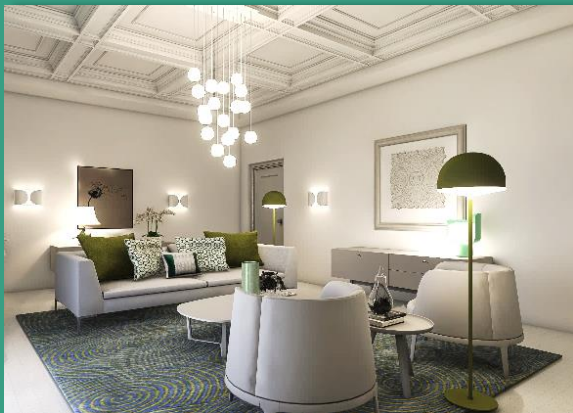
Accessories can alter the look of the room by just changing their color or pattern multiple times in a year (if we would like to) and needless to mention that it`s more affordable than buying new furniture.



Living room in white: the accessories are in different shades of white.



The same living room after changing the accessories and some details to green.



Another example for small alteration is by adding an area rug to the space. The rug automatically draws our attention down and makes the space look bigger. In addition to that an area rug not just separates but also combines the different functionalities in the room.



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Let's see a good example for the curtains. Curtains have many functions: they let in or close out the daylight and filter the bright sunlight. But they can also make a room look higher if we place the curtain poles near to the ceiling



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Now we see that a well-accomplished design always points to a complex planning and demands more higher qualifications than just creativity and following the trends.

These 7 design rules are just a tiny fragment of the whole set, but they are some of the basics and as we know without a strong foundation, we can't have a stable construction.



If you get in the mood of giving your living space a makeover and are interested in online interior and spatial design service, then please check out the HomeMood Interior Space Planning package on the website: <https://homemood.nl/online-interior-design/space-planning> and let me help you to bring out the best of your living space.

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