

SWIFT DESIGNS GUIDE TO

Interior Spatial Planning

THE NUMBERS YOU NEED FOR
SUCCESS, PLUS PRO DESIGNER
TIPS FOR EVERY ROOM





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DEFINING INTERIOR DESIGN

Congratulations, you've just taken the first step to creating a well defined space! This design guide offers professional designer knowledge to ensure success in your spatial planning. It provides the dimensions you need to consider in order to design a functional home.

Spatial planning is crucial for ensuring that a space is functional and meets the needs of its occupants. Without proper planning costly mistakes can occur, which if not rectified, will result in the loss of functionality of the space. If rectified after construction, the costs will be significantly higher.

Two of the most common mistakes we see are;

1. Purchasing furniture that is either too large or too small for the space, which can significantly impact on its usability.
2. Not knowing the functional layout of each room, prior to the electrical wiring being installed. This requires for furniture pieces and the interior joinery designs needed, to be identified and virtually placed within each space prior to construction. This then dictates the placement of the wiring needed.

To avoid making these mistakes, and many others, it's important to understand how to interpret a floor plan and determine the necessary ergonomic spaces between items.

Careful consideration must also be given to the uses of each space, the people who will use them, and for what purpose. We understand the importance of spatial planning, which is why we've provided a comprehensive questionnaire to help you consider all aspects of your space. By working through the questionnaire, which follows this guide, you can take this information to your Architect, Interior Designer or Builder to ensure all needs are met.

Read on to get Designer tips on how to create a functional space. Please also note this section below.

This guide offers the 'average' dimensions that you will need to consider when designing your home. This information is offered as a guide only and not as a replacement to professional design services.

Altering these dimensions to meet the needs of the individuals that will use the space is encouraged, with the help of a professional designer.

It is also important to note that the size of the room you are designing may negate the use of these 'average' dimensions and in some cases the furniture pieces or fixtures that are suitable for use within your space. The proportion and the scale of the ideal furniture pieces can alter greatly in a larger or smaller than average space.



Key Living Room Dimensions

Average dimensions allowing movement around furniture, except where minimum's are noted;

Between a sofa and coffee table = 450mm

Between a sofa and side table = 100mm

Between a sofa and TV = a minimum of 2.2m

Between two seating areas sitting at a 90 degree angle to each other = a minimum of 600mm

Pro tips for designing a living room

- The larger the TV, the larger the space that is required for between the sofa and the TV.
- Layer your lighting; install wall lights or standard lamps behind or to the side of the sofa. This provides a soft light for watching TV at night.
- Conversations are best done when you're not sitting next to the person you are speaking to. Try placing seating for visitors at an angle to the main sofa to create a conversation area.
- Consider using inbuilt furniture or a feature paneling to hide electronic components needed for a wall hung TV.

Key Bedroom Dimensions

Average dimensions allowing movement around furniture, except where minimum's are noted;

Between a bed, or furniture at the end of the bed and a drawer set opposite the end of the bed = a minimum of 950mm

Between a bed and a drawer set placed beside the bed with drawers facing the bed = 1000mm

Between a bed and bedside table or drawer set = a minimum of 150mm

Dimensions of a queen size bed in NZ = 1500mm w x 2030mm l

Dimensions of a single bed in NZ = 920mm w x 1880mm l

Dimensions of a king size bed in NZ = 1650mm w x 2030mm l

Pro tips for designing a bedroom

- Consider the width of the bed before placing electrical fixtures around it, keeping these well clear of the width of the bed. This allows easy access to power points and switches and allows for a bedhead to sit against the wall.
- Include a space for sitting, somewhere other than on the bed.
- Measure out your existing storage capacity to ensure your new space has sufficient storage for your needs.



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Key Kitchen and Laundry Dimensions

Average dimensions allowing movement around furniture, except where minimum's are noted;

A standard kitchen or laundry benchtop height is between 900 - 915mm.

A Galley style (often with a separate Island), U or G shaped Kitchen requires minimum dimensions between the cabinetry placed opposite each other for it to function well. The space required varies depending on the number of chefs using the kitchen at one time.

For 1 chef, allow a minimum of 1150mm. For 2 chefs, allow a minimum of 1300mm.

If designing an L, U or G shaped kitchen, take particular note of the working triangle for best results in the layout of appliances.

The kitchen work triangle is a design principle that identifies the optimal dimensions between the fridge, sink and cooktop, it is used mostly for designing residential kitchens: No 'leg' of the triangle should be less than 1.2 m or more than 2.7 m. The sum of all three sides of the triangle should be between 4.0 m and 7.9 m.

The minimum required dimension (to meet the NZ Building Code) for the extractor to sit above the cooktop is 750mm.

The average reach of an average adult person is 1.8m, use this dimension to guide you on upper cabinet heights. Ideally, heavy items should not be placed above 1.65m.

Pro tips for designing a kitchen or laundry area

- Appliance sizes should be kept to an appropriate scale relating to the size of the kitchen and the number of bedrooms within the home. Appliances should be purchased AFTER the kitchen has been designed. Selecting these prior can sometimes limit the functionality.
- Including accessible storage in corner cabinetry can be expensive, therefore to reduce new cabinet costs, avoid using corner cabinets if possible. Try and think of a linear design that will work instead.
- Aim for a minimum of 60cm bench space on either side of your cooktop and sink, including on at least on side of the laundry sink.
- A stool seat height of 640 - 660mm is best used for a standard bench height. If you have a taller bench height of 1m or more, use a stool with a 750mm seat height.
- Consider all uses for the kitchen or laundry space; Do you fold laundry here? Do you pickle every season? Do the kids need space to do their homework while you prepare dinner?
- Do you love a clean and uncluttered aesthetic, or do you prefer items to be easily accessible and on display? The answer to this will dictate some of the cabinetry used.
- Consider the heights that the appliances are installed at. Do you want these at a more accessible height, or are you happy to bend under bench to put your laundry or roast in your appliance?

Key Dining Room Dimensions

Average dimensions allowing movement around furniture, except where minimum's are noted;

A dining table to seat up to 4 people is 1m x 1m or 800mm dia.

A dining table to seat up to 6 people is 1m x 1.6 - 1.8m long or 1.3m dia.

A dining table to seat up to 8 people is 1m x 1.8 - 2.2m long or 1.5m dia.

Allow 700mm around the perimeter of the dining table for chairs to sit and be pulled out and for movement around the dining space.

Pro tips for designing a dining area

- If you entertain frequently you may want to consider a using wider dining table of up to 1.2m wide. This allows for a table runner and food to be placed down the center of the table without it impacting on the dining spaces for each diner.
- If your dining space won't allow 700mm of space for a chair to pull out on either side or either end, consider using a bench seat instead. A bench seat, requires less space, won't be pulled out often and allows extra seating at the table.
- A buffet or console is between 770 - 830mm high. Consider the height of furniture needed within the space if planning on placing your furniture under a window, this applies to all rooms.

Key Hallway Dimensions

Average dimensions allowing movement around furniture, except where minimum's are noted;

A standard hallway is 900mm wide. A hallway of this width will feel very narrow if the hallway is greater than 6m long. If this is the case in your design, consider widening the hallway to 1m or more.

The minimum width of an entrance hallway where a console table can be placed is 1.2m wide.

Pro tips for designing a hallway

- Standard door height is 1.98m high. Consider using a taller door height if your ceiling height is greater than 2.55m, this will keep the ceiling height in proportion with the doors.
- Entrance doors are usually wider than an interior doorway, the average width for a single entry door is 900mm, this means a larger door swing area is needed to be planned for.
- Plan your Interior doorways at a minimum width of 810mm, this allows for accessibility around the home for anyone in a wheelchair or using a walker. This is easy to do when building a new dwelling, yet very expensive to retrofit in an existing dwelling.

To help you put this new found knowledge to work and create your newly defined space, simply answer the questions below.



The Spatial Planning Questionnaire

This questionnaire can be used for every space within your project, simply relate the answers to each individual room.

How many people will use the space?

Plan for the largest group and scale the space to fit. For example, if planning a bathroom, is it for a family of 2, 4 or 6 people to use? Obviously, the more people that use it, the more space is needed, storage is a key consideration in every bathroom!

You may be dictated by an existing floorplan or fixtures, if so, use this information to help guide your decisions on clever storage solutions, using in-built joinery and furniture to maximise the functionality of your existing space.

What are the size and ages of the people using the space?

This is especially important in kitchen and bathroom design. The ergonomics of the space can be designed to make the spaces easier to use and maneuver around for larger or smaller than average people, also for the young, elderly or those who have physical challenges.

To apply this information, I recommend you research this further or ask an Interior Designer for help.

The Spatial Planning Questionnaire

What is the purpose of the space?

Consider that there may be multiple uses for a space. For example, an open plan living room could include children doing homework, space for reading, watching TV or use of devices, dining, working, entertaining guests or doing hobbies. Plan accordingly.

This suggested space will need to be big enough to accommodate all of these activities and possibly have areas separated to do these things without impacting on others using the space at the same time. Consider noise transference in the above example also.

What is in your near future – retirement, a big family or three cocker spaniels?

Planning for the future, either long or short term, is a key consideration in every design. Ascertaining how your needs will change in the future will give longevity to your design and functional uses of each space.

Do you want guaranteed success within your specified budget?

With the knowledge and experience of a committed team working alongside you, you will save time, remove overwhelm, and enjoy the design and installation process. When working with Swift Designs, the outcome will exceed your desires and provide ease of living within your uniquely tailored space. Our promise to you is to interpret your style and understand your needs, use highly qualified craftspeople to create the designs we imagine together and then we'll take care of every logistical challenge – from procurement to delivery.

Our clients get a better design outcome while saving time, and we work within their specified budget.

Yes

No

I need a phone conversation to help me decide



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I've finished my spatial planning, what do I do now?

Congratulations, you're taking steps to ensure a successful outcome. By using the information in this guide, you're well on your way! You can share your findings and planning with the appropriate professionals.

If the information in this guide has brought to mind questions about your specific project that you were unable to answer, consider getting professional help.

At Swift Designs, we specialise in providing comprehensive interior design solutions that cover everything from selecting the finishes and fixtures for new builds or renovations, to designing bathrooms, kitchens and supply of window treatments. Our streamlined processes ensure that all necessary information is communicated to your tradespeople, ensuring a seamless and stress-free installation.

In addition to our design services, we also offer locally manufactured furniture pieces that are exclusively available to Interior Designers and Architects. Our team can also work closely with you to create custom pieces that perfectly match your design style and fit your space.

We understand that finding the right furniture piece can be a challenge, our comprehensive list of suppliers offers all styles and caters to most budgets. In short, we make short time of selected and supplying the right piece for each space and functional need.

Contact us today to schedule your free 15 minute Discovery Call and discover how Swift Designs can help bring your interior design vision to life.

Let's Design

About the author; Treena Swift is the owner and Creative Director of Swift Designs. Respected in her industry, she is a fully qualified & award winning Interior Designer with a growing list of exceptionally happy clients.

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