

The benefits of using an interior designer



A new addition prompts some serious action by our serial renovator Carly Flynn, who has experienced first hand the benefit of calling in an interiors expert.

COLUMN by Carly Flynn

I always thought people who called in interior designers or interior architects had to have plenty of money. That this was a privilege reserved for those who had more money than sense, and needed help with style. Those that needed things to look good, had no idea where to start, but had the money to pay.

That was until I met Janice Kumar Ward from JKW.nz. A regular guest on my Saturday radio show, Janice was instantly warm and friendly and is highly respected. She works along the lines of not being slave to following trends. If you love something, then have it.

It got me thinking because when it comes to interiors, I can be very indecisive. We have stark white walls throughout the entire house and the same colour curtains and blinds everywhere. It's bland.

I love the idea of incorporating some colour, some texture, but am too scared to spend the money and time, committing to something, just in case I don't love it.

I also care about what other people think, an unenviable trait I haven't been able to completely shake over my 30-something years. I don't want anything to be offensive. I guess I'm a bit of a "perfectionist" which doesn't serve me that well in the real world, or really allow me to take risks.

But a good interior designer will tell you perfectionism is also overrated. It's all about combining what you love, with form and function, and hope that things will work for a good decade before you do the process again. This has never been more true for me since becoming a busy family of four.

What worked home-wise when the kids were babies, doesn't work now. I can't even begin to imagine the changes that will be required once they become young adults. At the moment, they take up minimal space, but it's spread far and wide, and the noise that goes with a four and a half and a six year old is enough to make me crave a sound proof room, or at least sturdy locks on the external doors!

When they were babies, I could contain all that was needed in a baby bag and buggy. Now we have school bags, dance bags, gym gear, soccer shoes, gumboots and raincoats and homework to house. Don't get me started on the seemingly millions of pieces of lego. It inevitably all ends up in the front entranceway, the kitchen bench or on the floor.

Janice is also a busy working mum to two kids, so I knew that she'd "get" me when we talked about family life. I had an hour with her for the first consult and the things she came up with blew me away. She's also an interior architect, and suggested the addition of a clever doorway in our super long passage way that I'd never considered. It would cleverly hide a row of cool coat hooks for the aforementioned stuff to hang out of the way. We'd been planning to cram a much needed beer fridge into our already over-crowded laundry. She told us to remove some excess drawers in the kitchen island and pop it there. Genius.

We covered lighting and window dressing, changing of rooms, wallpaper, wardrobe design, reappropriation of lounge furniture, among other things.

I came away buzzing and confident that, that one-hour of expertise was worth more to me than any hour I could get in an interiors shop or spooling through

Pinterest on my own.

I haven't talked about this much yet, as I'm still a little bit in denial, but the Flynn four are going to become the Flynn five, all going well, early next year. This really prompted the decision to call in Janice, to help me reorganise our home, and make way for a fifth member. There are a whole heap of changes to come, including a new nursery. And no doubt more bags and gumboots and buggies to house.

Regular readers will know I love a good plan to follow, a starting point, and now I have one. My white walls will no longer be bland, I've picked my colours and wallpapers with confidence, and know that they'll work in harmony with the other things planned for the house, which I'll be again spending much more time in with a new bubba around, hopefully without a white wall in sight. ■