

# These Are the Colors You Should Never Paint Your Ceiling, According to Real Estate Experts

BY GRACE CASSIDY | MAY 8, 2020

Choosing a paint color is no easy task. It's practically its own branch of science: You have to consider the furniture in the room, the natural lighting, the artificial lighting, and the mood that you want to evoke in the space.

Then there are ceilings, otherwise known as The Fifth Wall. Is there an ideal paint color for those? And on the flip side, are there colors that should be avoided altogether? Real estate agents across the country weighed in. Here's their best advice.

## Steer clear of pastels

"People should never paint their ceilings a pastel color," says Mia Cottet, an agent with Sotheby's International Realty in Los Feliz, Calif.. "It comes across as indecisive at best, preschool at worst."

Cassandra Svolis, a Douglas Elliman real estate agent based in Boston, echoes that sentiment. "Primary, neon, even some pastel colors tend to cheapen the appearance of a home, even if it's on the walls. So imagine that on the ceiling!"

## Avoid exceedingly bold tones

"It's much more difficult to style a room with bold colors on the ceiling," Svolis says. "Once you put a primary color on the ceiling, the next question becomes: What wall color is going to best pair with this ceiling? Ultimately, it's bound to feel

more like a circus than a well-designed home."

Red, in particular, is a no-no.

"In the world of design, there are never any hard and fast rules," says Stephanie Malcolm, a design consultant and realtor for Island Sotheby's International Realty in Hawaii. "That said, if you are thinking of a contrasting color, then I would stay away from red. Red can feel aggressive as opposed to something more subtle and calm."

## But don't feel beholden to white

Real estate agents agree that white is the least controversial color you can paint your ceiling. That being said, it's not always a bad idea to go against the grain and play around with design choices that can make a space a bit more interesting.

"Dark colors can make a room feel smaller," says Pablo Alfaro, a Douglas Elliman agent in Miami Beach. "But it can be used to achieve more of an intimate and cozier look."

Malcolm agrees. "If you are looking for something drastic, then perhaps you'd consider a darker hue for a bathroom as to help the small space feel more intimate," she says.

Svolis even suggests adding wallpaper to a ceiling for an interesting and unique visual pop.

"Wallpaper will wow guests," she says. "When it comes to the resale value of your property, however, I would not recommend doing wallpaper on the ceiling. Save that pop of personality for your forever home."

She also suggests those keeping resale value in mind should try neutral or muted tones if white won't cut it.

And finally, be sure to put some thought into the shade that you're choosing, rather than just opting for the default color. That's right—even the wrong shade of white could make a difference on the way that a room looks and feels.

"I think the one color a ceiling should never be painted is a random white," says Noelle Queen, a sales associate with Golden Gate Sotheby's in California. "It is a common misconception that painting a ceiling white will make it disappear. But when there is too stark of a contrast between the ceiling and the wall color, it can actually be distracting and unflattering."



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