

Wallcoverings Association 2011 Color Forecast

What are the most important colors in wallpaper design today? Never an easy question, since wallpaper is designed to outlast trends. At a minimum, homeowners leave wallpaper on walls for five years. Moreover, wallpaper isn't about a single color; typically a pattern features a rich layering of pigments and colors intended to unite the many colors in a room.

Yet certain colors are at the forefront for 2011; standouts that reinvigorate wallpaper design. Many fit into Pantone's 2011 Color Forecast and what's going on in other areas of home furnishings as well as on the fashion front.

Purple in all shades reigns supreme. A combination of red and blue – the warmest and coolest colors – purple is believed to be an ideal color. At once cheerful yet calming and meditative, purple provides balance to the palette. On a deeper level, we may gravitate toward this color because in uncertain times we seek balance in all aspects of our lives. Enthusiastically embracing the color, wallpaper designers are now boldly combining several shades – lilac, violet, mauve, plum – in a single pattern. Purple demurs when paired with neutrals like warm beige and gray and plays up its royal heritage with metallic gold and silver.

Also emerging is a range of **Pinks** from dusty rose to raspberry and magenta, which border on the purple family. Since pink is often associated with and relegated to girls' rooms, wallpaper designers boost its versatility by uniting it with strong neutrals and traditionally masculine colors such as brown, olive and navy, and featuring pink in assertive, large-scale designs.

Blues remain as popular as ever but in wallpaper find expression at the extremes of the spectrum. On one side are the barely-there blues – mist, spa, and subtly shimmery pearly blue. On the other side are indigo, ink-blue and navy. Open, delicate designs in beige, taupe and gray keep the lighter blues from being too ethereal and the darker blues from becoming too heavy.

Greens are here to stay but take an unapologetic retro turn. Classic vines, damasks and floral scrolls in avocado, olive and pistachio paired with neutrals such as cream, brown, and gray/silver make us long for an idealized and simple past. Because the word "green" is also associated with sustainability – no longer a trend but a given – green-hued wallpaper designs are almost always printed on non-woven paper, an eco-friendly textured paper.

Grays have been important for the past couple of years but they assert themselves in darker tones – graphite, stone and dark slate. Walls in these neutral colors are the perfect background for all the bright and bold colors – red, yellow, turquoise – found in the decorative accessories market.

In recent years, metallics have been toned down and function like neutrals. However, **Gold** is again expressing its glamorous side – peeking through grasscloths, heavy raised print designs and even moiré patterns. Soft champagne, which is sophisticated and very livable, is expected to be particularly popular. A little gold can go a long way, making the color perfect for a jewel-box of a room.

In the coming year, **Crisp White** is trending. Though not the most practical color in the home, white in all its shades is ideal for wallpaper because of the product's inherent durability. White wallpaper can withstand the wear and tear of daily life like no other home furnishings product – including paint. On its own, crisp white can appear clinical and cold, but add a delicate design in gold or silver or a touch of sparkly crystal beads and a room becomes enveloped in serenity.



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