Looking to add a little color to your home, but don't know what direction to take? Well, what your eye is immediately attracted to might not be the best for your mind. Believe it or not, color plays a huge role in the human psyche, and surrounding yourself with certain tones can have an affect on your mood, efficiency and outlook. We spoke with color specialist Leatrice Eiseman, who gave us some guidelines on what colors work well throughout the house.

How can color, or lack of color, influence a space?

Since we were children, color has had an enormous affect on us. From the first time we were handed a box of crayons we have expressed ourselves through color. Colors can stress you out if you use anything overly aggressive. Four walls of paint will have the biggest impact of color, and really bright walls can begin to close in on you after a while. If you want to be experimental, do one wall and see how it goes. Conversely, white is vibrant and highly reflective. It can cause headaches and eye strain. It has both a psychological and physiological presence; it can be sterile and cold. If you have a lot of art, then that's another story. But in general, you should be cautious about too much white.

What is your go-to neutral tone?

Taupe, or greige, a mix of gray and beige. It's one of the most perfect neutral colors. Beige brings the warmth and gray cools it down. It works well with any other shade, just like a taupe bag goes with everything, the same thing happens with the home. Even after a year or two it doesn't get old, because you can change up the furniture. You can say, 'I'm going to buy that bright leather chair' and you never have to worry about it fitting in.

What color is best for a bedroom?

The conventional wisdom is that blue is a good color for a bedroom because it's relaxing and tranquil. Blue is calming because that's the color of the sky, which is always there (the sky never falls). It's the feeling of dependability that brings serenity. But if you don't like blue, then I wouldn't suggest blue because of your own feelings toward the color. That said, there are a hundred shades of blue. If sky blue is too cold for you, skew it to periwinkle. Periwinkle is a warmer because a little bit of red is added to it. If one color isn't your personal choice, there's always a solution.

Are there any colors that can improve intimacy in your love life?

Red is all about sensuality, however red is not always appropriate. Bright red can be overwhelming. You can take a variation of red, like a pink, which evokes inherent romance, sensuality. It's far less ostentatious than red is. And there is a feeling of romance and intimacy in pink, and you can find a lot of variation in the pinks and roses.

Are there preferred colors for children's rooms?

Most children's rooms are over-stimulating. There's too much going on. In general, the cool

colors are best – blues, greens, lavenders; they are more calming. You can create a color scheme without too many mixtures of vibrant colors. If you want more calming, cool colors, stick to that theme throughout the decor. And make sure the child likes that color. Parents have an idea of what they want their child's room to look like, but kids need to have input, too. It's only a can of paint. Children change very quickly. If your daughter says, mom I don't want pink, listen to her. She is expressing her creativity.

What if she wants black?
That's an interesting question. Probably, your gut reaction would be, 'Black is gloomy,' so you say 'okay, let's compromise. Let's practice on one wall and see how we feel.' In a few months, they'll want a change. Allowing your children to have a say is important. If the child is choosing black this could be indicative of what the child's needs are. Traditionally, black has signified grief and mourning, but now it seems it's more associated with elegance, class and sophistication. You go to a funeral these days and not everyone is wearing black. But black for a bedroom isn't ideal. It's so dark you'd have to keep the lights on all the time, and is it good to be dark all the time? It could be the need to create darkness. Cavemen lived in caves and there was no natural light. It may seem far-fetched, but so much we know about color is passed down from generation to generation. It could be that your child needs his or her room quiet and dark – a space the child can feel engulfed in.

What about kitchens? Are there certain colors that make you feel hungry?
Warm colors make you feel hungry, orange in particular. They are appetite stimulants. Think about it: red is the first color in nature to entice people to eat berries. Orange is a combination of red and yellow. Yellow equates to comfort food, which encourages you to eat more, so you actually get a double whammy in there.

What do you predict the color trends will be?
Trends in color have slowed down. In this economy people hold onto what they have and let it linger…

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