

## It's All in the Mix

### Mingling Many Patterns in One Space

By Red Barrinuevo

*Toronto-based, award-winning interior stylist Red Barrinuevo is an interior decorator and principal of Redesign4more, serving clients in Toronto and the GTA. The firm is known for enhancing and creating stylish yet functional spaces through its creative home staging and interior styling services. [www.redesign4more.com](http://www.redesign4more.com)*

Whoever said less is more hasn't seen the stunning prints and patterns on the market today. And try your best, you can't pick just one – nor should you have to. One of my favourite interior styling trends right now is mixing and matching different patterns within a space. I use pattern to set the mood and tell the residents' story, whatever that may be. It's also a great way to instantly modernize a home with the motif du jour.

But despite these pluses, pattern is often misconstrued as too complicated, too overwhelming and downright scary. I say more is definitely more – when it's done right. Here are a few tips to simplify the pattern-picking process for a home that is warm, inviting and interesting.

You may have heard about the power of odd numbers in interior decorating. This rule also applies to your patterned paradise. If you're working with a small space or are just getting your feet wet with this trend, start with three patterns and go from there.

Some of the most successful pattern groupings involve mixing different scales to create interest. Too many similarly sized prints confuse the eye. The more subtle designs naturally act as the neutrals in the room, and are often incorporated in larger doses. Meanwhile, the larger, bolder patterns naturally stand out as the focal points.

**A handy tip:** Use the 60-30-10 rule to mix patterns in the right doses. The primary pattern gets 60 per cent of the coverage, the secondary pattern gets 30 per cent and the accent pattern gets 10 per cent. This results in a well-balanced and pleasing composition.

Now for the patterns themselves. Choose what you love is rule number one. From there, opt for patterns that strongly contrast with one another – for example, a floral, a geometric and an organic print in one room.

Colour is another important consideration in your pattern palette. Make sure all your prints have common hues in terms of both colour and vibrancy. The pat-



terns will complement one another and work together, rather than wash out some of them.

I'm a purveyor of pattern, but it is possible to have too much of a good thing. Incorporating white into your design gives the eye a place to rest and makes those amazing prints and patterns pop. And be sure to balance patterns with some solid colours as well.

Patterns are a fun and easy way to bring life to your interiors. It can be as simple as a new chair, rug and some pillows to completely change the look of your space. Forget your fears and give pattern a try. You'll never look back.

