

# {FRESH} HOME EXTERIOR COLORS

*5 Steps for Finding the Perfect Hues for Your Home*



By Kate Smith, CMG, CfYH



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You've Got Color!



# YOUR HOME MAKES A STATEMENT

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It tells the world something about the personality of the people who live inside. Whether you're building new or renovating, each product and color choice you make is an opportunity to develop your personal style statement while enhancing the curb appeal and resale value of your property.

The problem is that if you are like most homeowners, choosing the materials and products is easier than picking the color. Having to choose color for one item can be difficult; having to choose several colors can be a daunting task.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be difficult. All it takes is some **FRESH** thinking to select the right color for each element of your home - roofing, siding, doors, windows, shutters, trim and accents.

**FRESH** is the approach I use as a certified color professional when selecting colors for a home exterior --- and now you can use this same process for choosing colors for your home. By following the steps in this guidebook you will be able to pick the perfect colors for your home exterior.

**F**ixed Features

**R**egional Colors

**E**nvironment and Surroundings

**S**tyle of the Home

**H**istoric and Have-to-Use Colors

*A well-chosen color scheme can bring out architectural details, downplay flaws and enhance the look of your home.*

## DETERMINE YOUR DIRECTION



**BEFORE** you begin using the **FRESH** approach to find your perfect colors, think about the personal statement you want to make on your home's exterior. Do you want your home to look stately and elegant, or storybook cute? Does a natural, toned-down color fit your vision or is a beachy bright hue a better fit? Having a clear idea of the overall style you are going for will go a long way to guiding you to the best material and color choices.

Start by looking at the type of homes that appeal to you. Whether found in magazines, on the Internet or as close as next door, one of the easiest ways to figure out what you like is to look at other homes. Determine what it is that you like about each house. Is it the overall color scheme or historic style? Maybe you like that it looks friendly and welcoming.

Walking or driving around close to home is often the best place to start your search. You bought your home because you enjoyed the surroundings and neighborhood. Homes within an area are also often similar in style. Looking at what your neighbors have done with their homes can serve as inspiration for your own home's exterior.

An easy way to identify what you like is to snap pictures of the houses you like. Once you have many images, look at the homes side-by-side. You'll begin to see similarities that you may not have noticed as you looked at them individually. These pop-out colors and features may help guide you to your own choices.



Walk around your neighborhood and make note of homes that you find appealing. What is it about the color or color combination that appeals to you? Do you find that you are drawn to the homes that have contrasting shutters and front door or do you prefer a scheme of closely related colors?

Once you have honed in on your style, the next step is to consider the five keys to **FRESH** exterior colors.



*Taking pictures is a good way to have an instant reference library as you begin planning how you will apply colors to your own home. You will be able to find your perfect exterior color scheme more easily if, before you even start thinking about specific colors, you figure out the types of schemes that you find most appealing.*

## FIXED FEATURES



**UNLESS** you are building a house from the ground up, no home is a blank canvas. There are many things to consider as you select your colors, with the most influential being the fixed features. These include items such as:

- Foundation materials: brick, stone, stucco, concrete, etc.
- Roofing shingles: style, color, and material.
- Chimney structures: brick, stone, or stucco.
- Porch, steps, retaining and walkways: brick, stone, cement.
- Decks and patios: wood, brick, concrete, composite, etc.

Your features may be constructed of different materials but they will usually have a common color or color cast. Once you identify that common color, it is a sure bet that another element that has the same color, color cast or undertone of that fixed feature color will work well for your home's overall color scheme.

Your new colors don't need to match existing colors, but do need to harmonize with them. Take inventory of the colors in your home's fixed features. What color is your roof? Are bricks or stones on your facade? Will doors and railings remain their existing colors? What about the window frames? The color of each of these areas of your home will become part of your overall color plan.

Look at the fixed features of your home and more than likely you'll begin to see some repetition of color tones. It is this repetition that allows different materials and textures to all work well together. When choosing colors for items such as your roof, find a color or variety of colors that also includes the predominate color or color cast of the existing permanent elements.

### { *Begin With the Largest Fixed Feature* }

Unless your home is brick or stone, the largest fixed feature is probably the roof, so start there. Roofing materials are rarely a flat or solid color. Even a standard gray roof often has a hint of blue, green, or red. Look closely and see what you can detect up close that isn't apparent from a distance. With premium roofing products you will usually be able to see the variations in color even more clearly since they are part of the beauty of the product.

### { *Evaluate Other Fixed Features* }

If your home is brick or has a partial brick exterior, at first glance you might think of the brick as just red. However, if you take a closer look you'll begin to see that there is more to the surface color than first meets the eye. Many bricks are essentially red, but have a golden yellow or beige cast. Make note of both the main color and color cast. Either one or both of these colors could possibly be included in the color you choose for your roofing, siding or accents.



If stonework is prominent on or around your home look at the overall color tone first. Is it gray, brown, green, peach, etc.? Next look at what colors stand out from the other stones. A deep shade of this color might work for your front door or shutters.

*The fixed features usually remain the same for the life of the home. This makes them a better source of color direction for your siding color, which is likely to change over the years.*



DaVinci Shake®, Mountain Blend

*Consider all of the colors currently existing on your home's exterior. Then, select a color for the roof and accent pieces that will stand out while simultaneously blending into every element of your home.*

By repeating the colors or color cast from the fixed features it begins to visually tie your color scheme together. **If all of the permanent elements from the roof down harmonize, then you are well on your way to creating an appealing exterior color scheme.** Plus you'll have a great deal of flexibility if you decide to change the siding or accent colors on your home in the future.

When all of the fixed features have a cohesive color story it opens up your options when it comes to siding color. If your fixed features are gray or have a gray color cast just about any color family will work. Brown or warmer color casts often work well with siding colors that are also warm. This doesn't just mean tan or brown however. Any color with golden or reddish undertones can work.

### Warm Colors



### Cool Colors



*Will your trim be a light neutral or white? Looking at the mortar between the bricks or stones can help you to confirm you have found the right color. Look at your light neutrals next to the mortar. If the color seems too bright you may want to look for a neutral that is more "grayed down." If the mortar doesn't visually blend with your neutral, it may not blend with the brick or stonework.*

## REGIONAL COLORS

**LOOK** at your geography to influence the color scheme of your home's exterior. For example, a brighter terra cotta color that would seem garish in northern climates may be an excellent choice for areas where the sunlight is intense.

East Coast? Midwest? South? Regional color preferences come from a blend of the region's natural characteristics -- climate, topography, landscape and quality of the natural light -- together with the housing styles, available materials and cultural history of the area.



In the Northwest, natural gold-based and green hues that reflect the colors found in the natural environment are popular. Nature also influences home colors in the mountain states where the colors of stone, rock and natural woods are incorporated into the color schemes.

The Southwest trends towards neutral sandy or sun-drenched terra cotta colors accented with coral, turquoise, brown and green. These colors are still rooted in nature but they use more vibrant hues that will not pale in the bright sunlight.



Across the country, homes in the Northeast tend to be clad in traditional colors with deeper or brighter accents. White with black shutters, gray with a red front door, or natural stain with green trim are examples of the schemes you might find in the New England region. In the Midwest, white, tan and gray are popular color choices. These same colors are found in the Southeast, with more emphasis on tans, greens, blues, and grays in coastal areas.

*Suburban, urban or rural? Wooded, desert, waterfront? Balance the colors with your setting.*

## ENVIRONMENT & SURROUNDINGS

**AS** you determine colors for your home, you'll want to take into consideration the overall look of your neighborhood. While you won't want your home to be a twin of another home close by, you will want your home to blend in with the surrounding homes. Consider the context of your home within the neighborhood and choose colors that will stand out while still fitting in. Find colors that express your individual style and complement the other homes in the area.



The natural setting and landscaping surrounding your home are other elements to keep in mind when selecting exterior colors. If you have beautiful flowerbeds or flowering shrubs, your home should be a backdrop for their colors. A prize-winning selection of red and pink roses can help you select a cream or natural color to “frame” your horticultural creations. Keep in mind, if you use a color that is too dark, like deep blues or greens, then the plants and shrubs may go unnoticed.

*If your lot has no trees, natural hues will work best. For a home surrounded by trees or on a wooded lot contrasting colors will allow the home to stand out.*

The opposite can also be true. If your home is a mid-tone green, tan or even gray, then surrounding trees could camouflage your home most of the year. If you want your home to stand out from the trees, choose a contrasting color such as barn red or Williamsburg blue.

Heavily wooded lots will make colors look darker due to being shaded. If you would like a medium color, try sampling both the mid-tone and a lighter variation of the same color. You might be surprised by how much darker the color looks when it is viewed in a shady area.

Keep in mind seasonal changes when you select your colors. When leaves are off the trees, or the sun is low in the sky, these change the look of the colors on your home.

## STYLE OF THE HOME

**THE** architectural style of your home is the next part of the color equation to consider. You want your color scheme to fit both your neighborhood and the design of your home.

Color and materials support the home's look and architecture, not vice versa. Determine the style of your home. Traditional, Tudor, Cape Cod, Ranch, Split Level, Colonial, Victorian, Southwestern, or Coastal?

### *What Style is Your Home?*

*Art Deco - Bungalow - Cape Cod - Colonial  
Contemporary - Craftsman - Creole  
Dutch Colonial - Federal - French Provincial  
Georgian - Gothic Revival - Greek Revival  
International - Italianate - Monterey - National  
Neoclassical - Prairie - Pueblo - Queen Anne  
Ranch - Regency - Saltbox - Second Empire  
Shed - Shingle - Shotgun*



Colors can vary depending on the style: generally, trim colors for the Tudor and Craftsman style houses are dark -- brown, maroon, deep olive and green. Georgian and Colonial revival houses are generally light: white, gray, gray-blue, gray-green, or yellow on the body, with white trim and window sashes along with dark shutters and doors. You'll find more modern houses in light neutrals with dark sashes and bold accents of bright, primary colors.

The lines and forms of Federal style houses are usually painted with pale or light colors such as whites, pale gray, or off-white. Greek Revival houses are also often painted white, off-white, or gray but with shutter and window sashes painted in a dark contrasting color such as green or black.

During the Victorian era, homes were most often painted with a three-color paint scheme with one color for the siding, another for the trim and a third for the door and shutters. It was only later that homeowners took to adding color to Victorian homes. With their detailed trim work, these “Painted Ladies” can stand up to elaborate multi-colored schemes with ease.

## HISTORIC OR HAVE-TO-USE COLORS



**WHILE** you want your home's exterior to reflect your personality you may not have carte blanche with your color choices. Both older and newer homes may be subject to regulations of a homeowner association (HOA) or historic district. Some neighborhoods have pre-approved color palettes for homeowners to use in order to keep a similar look to all areas of the community. You will want to make sure you fully understand any rules these organizations impose or any approvals you need to gain before you make your final color selections.

Having to follow guidelines may limit your creativity since they are generally intended to keep some uniformity in the neighborhood or protect the historic nature of an area, but you will usually have enough options to choose from so that your home doesn't look just like the one next door.

Often a designer puts the approved color palette together for the HOA with colors that harmonize with one another and work well with the materials and fixed features. The colors are selected with an eye towards what would be popular with the majority of homeowners.

Whether your home is old or new, using historic colors allows you to create the same design excellence found throughout history. Traditional color schemes have a sense of stability and permanence because they have been around and feel like they will continue to be in style for years to come. The good news is that most, if not all, of the popular exterior paint colors have their roots in the past. Even if your home isn't in a historic district, you might be inspired by the schemes, styles and elements that have stood the test of time.

## EXPLORE HISTORIC COLOR SCHEMES

*(click on the links below to view historic colors)*

**Historic Colors of America**

**National Trust Historic Paint Colors**

**Exterior Preservation Palettes**

**Historic colors inspired by 18th and 19th century U.S architecture**

**Colors of Historic Charleston Paint Palette**

**Carolina Lowcountry Collection Paint Palette**

**Newport, RI Restoration Colors**



### Classic Color Combinations



**California® Paints**  
Raging Tide  
Violet Clues  
Baby Seal



**Valspar Paint®**  
Betsy Ross House Blue  
Betsy Ross House Brown  
Betsy Ross House Moss



**Sherwin-Williams®**  
Bunglehouse Gray  
Bottle Green  
Copper Red



**Sherwin-Williams®**  
Roycroft Bronze Green  
Birdseye Maple  
Hammered Silver



**Benjamin Moore®**  
Weston Flax  
White Dove  
Yorkstown Green



**Benjamin Moore®**  
Kennebunkport Green  
Dunmore Cream  
Mink

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

*BY* following the **FRESH** approach you have considered the top five areas that most influence the colors that will look best on your home. You've begun to get ideas for your color scheme. Now it's time to bring all of what you have learned about your home and potential color options together and create the perfect color palette for your home.

### { *How to Choose Your Colors* }

**1.** Begin by looking at your roof. The roof covers a large section of the visual field of your home's exterior and even if you aren't replacing it, the color needs to be part of your overall color scheme.

**2.** Then move on to looking at the main body color of your house. Look for a color that harmonizes with the roof. The roof and siding cover the majority of area immediately visible on your home so these two colors must work together.

**3.** Next, move on and find a trim color that works with both your roof and main color. Focus first on getting these three colors right. If you do, the color decisions for your window frames, entry door and accessories will fall into place much more easily.



*Bellaforté®, Cambridge Blend*



It is okay to research, gather and start to think about all of your color and product choices all at once. However, when you are ready to make your final decisions you need to make them one at a time and in the order above.

### { *Work From The Top Down* }

Whether you are choosing one new color or completely renovating your home's exterior, you will want to consider your options against the five **FRESH** factors to determine the color that is both right for you and your home.

In this next section you'll learn how to select colors for each of the individual parts of your home and how to make sure your colors will work together. Let's get started.

Begin by getting an idea about what you think you would like. Set out to find lots of information, look at all of the products and colors available, and then give yourself enough time to live with the possibilities for at least a short time before you have to make the final decision.

Professionals often make selecting color look easy. What's their secret? They have a plan for how they pick colors and in what order.

### THE ORDER FOR SELECTING YOUR COLORS

- Roof*
- Siding*
- Windows*
- Front Door*
- Trim*
- Garage Doors*



*Therma-Tru® Classic-Craft® Canvas Collection™*

{ *If you attempt to choose the colors for the front door or trim before the siding or roof color it can lead to frustration and shake your color confidence.* }



DaVinci Slate®, Aberdeen Blend

*{ Start from the Top Down with Your Roof }*

When choosing colors for your home's exterior begin by looking at the roof. Unless you are going for a very specific style or historically accurate scheme, having the roof color blend with the other fixed features is the best approach for most homeowners because it allows for the most flexibility in choosing the color for siding, trim, accents and door.

Have you determined what color or color cast your fixed features have in common? If not, now is the time to take a close look at each element. Include the current roof color in the mix if you won't be replacing it at this time. Now look for what it is that makes these elements work together on your home. Do they all have a tinge of green? Is there a sandy beige cast to each surface? Or maybe they are all basically variations of gray?

If you are selecting a new roof, select one in a color that will blend with the other fixed features of your home. Look for materials and colors that, when added to your group of fixed features, will look like it has been part of the home all along. And, make sure you look for roofing products that have a **strong product warranty**.

Most manufacturers have images of their products on their company websites, so you can begin to get an idea of what colors are available. Some of the best companies even offer you the ability to visualize their products. For example, if you would like to get an idea how an imitation slate or shake roof tile will look on your home you can use the **DaVinci Color Designer**. DaVinci Roofscapes offers 49 colors and 28 standard blends. Their free Color Studio tool shows you all of your options and even allows you to customize your color blend.

*Bellaforté® roofing tiles are available in a full spectrum of authentic slate colors.*

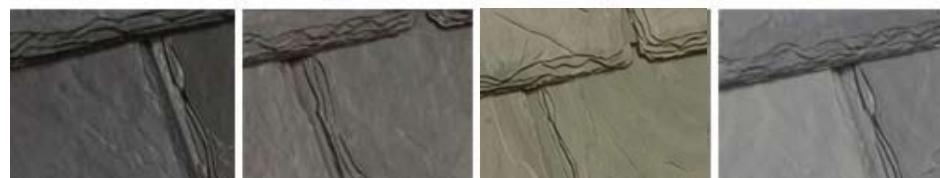


Cambridge

Milano

Sabino

Sedona



Slate Black

Slate Gray

Verde

Villa

For example, if your home has fixed features that are all gray, you have a broad range of choices since so many roofing choices are also basically gray. Even if what your fixed features have in common is as specific as gold with a hint of burgundy, you will still be able to find more than one option that will blend well with these colors. After you have honed in on one or more colors that you think will work well on your roof you will want to think about the other elements of FRESH to narrow your selection.

*Color Shy?*

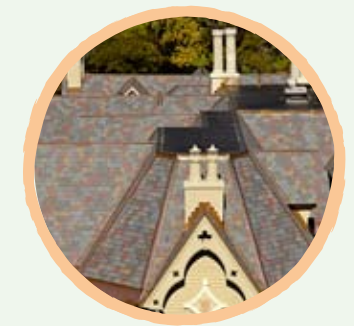
*Selecting a roofing blend that includes more than one color can point you to harmonious exterior colors for your home.*



DaVinci Slate®, Castle Gray



DaVinci Shake®, Tahoe Blend



DaVinci Slate®, Vineyard Blend

Think about which type of roofing tile will work best for your home's style, region and setting. If the home is a Tudor style you might decide to look only at slate tiles because they were traditionally used with that style of home. Even among the slate tiles there will be several colors or blends that could work well. This is where the other factors such as environment, region or even personal taste will influence your final selection.

You might like the subtle color variations of **Castle Gray**, but the touch of eggplant in DaVinci's **European blend** may be more appealing to your desire to add color to your home. You can carry through that burgundy tone as a great accent color for your trim or as a focal point by painting it on your front door.

*{ Fixed Feature = Permanent Design Element }*

If a new roof isn't in your plans, you still need to take a good look at the color of your existing roof. The roof color is an important fixed feature, and we will refer to it along with the color of the other permanent elements of your exterior in the next steps.

## { Choose Your Main Color }

One of the reasons I recommend selecting or evaluating the fixed features of your home first is that these are the design elements that generally remain the same even when the colors of your siding, trim or front door change. Another is that fixed features such as the roof, along with stone or brick accents, are a large part of the visual field when looking at your facade. This makes them an influential element in your color plan.



For example, if the brick on your facade and your roofing tiles both have a muted gray cast, the best color for your siding will be one that is slightly “grayed down” rather than bright and clear. If your stonework has a gold cast and your roof is **New Cedar** then golden beige will be a better choice than rose beige for the body of your home.

If you have your heart set on green for example, looking at the fixed features doesn't necessarily change your color direction but can provide you a reference that will help you decide whether Mountain Sage is perfect or if Heathered Moss would be a better green for your home. There are many shades of green ... you just need to find the one that best harmonizes with your fixed features.

If you don't have a color in mind for your siding, start by thinking about which colors might work with the colors of your fixed features and look for products that will be long lasting in the weather conditions of your area.



*The great news is that by using the FRESH approach once you've narrowed your choices down this far, whichever your final decision, it will be a good choice.*

Another way you can approach this decision is to move on to another part of the **FRESH** equation and start there. For example, you might think about the colors that work well in your region. Think back to the colors you saw as you were driving around your neighborhood or those you see on the homes in your area. Some paint retailers and siding suppliers also offer information on colors that are popular in the area.

Consider the colors of your environment. Was your home built on sandy soil, dark brown dirt or red clay? Is the foliage in the area lush green or golden tan? These natural colors permeate the landscape and may be one of the reasons you love the area where you've chosen to live. Finding a hue for your home that blends with the surroundings is another way to find your perfect colors.

One fun way to find a color that suits you is to take a color personality quiz. Of course you'll want to look at the resulting color using your FRESH thinking but it can give you a bit of insight into the type of color you might like even if you don't go with the exact shade recommended.



## TRY A COLOR QUIZ

*(click the links below to discover a colorful you)*

*Pratt and Lambert® Exterior Personality Quiz*

*PPG Pittsburgh Paints® Color Sense Game*

*House Beautiful Color Numerology*



*{ Frame Your Windows With Color }*

When it comes to the windows on your home, the frame colors may already be set. And, in some older homes, you may have existing frames made of wood (which are often painted) or aluminum.

If you're selecting new windows or replacement windows for your home, you have many options for harmonizing the colors of the frames with the home.

If the window frames will remain as they are today, think of the color in the same way you think about any other fixed feature. You want to work the color into your overall plan. However because the color doesn't stand out as much as the color of your roof or siding features you don't need to give the color of your window frames as much weight in your decision making.

*Energy-efficient windows with vinyl frames -- like those in the Decorum® by Simonton product line -- can come in appealing colors such as brick, pine, chocolate, bronze and driftwood.*

That might be good news if you love the existing color and don't plan to change it. However, if you are replacing your windows with a product with color that will last for the life of the window you will want to choose wisely so that the window frames blend with the other fixed features and main body color of your home.

Decorum® by Simonton replacement windows and patio doors allow you to have color-coordinated frames and grids within the windows to add to the visual appeal of the home's exterior. And, on the interior, you can select from a variety of woodgrain options and premium finishes on the locks and hardware. Some products, like Simonton ProFinish® Brickmould 600 windows for new construction projects, actually have the Brickmould built into the window frame.

*For window frame and trim color, lighter colors will highlight the window while darker colors will outline and call more attention to the frame.*



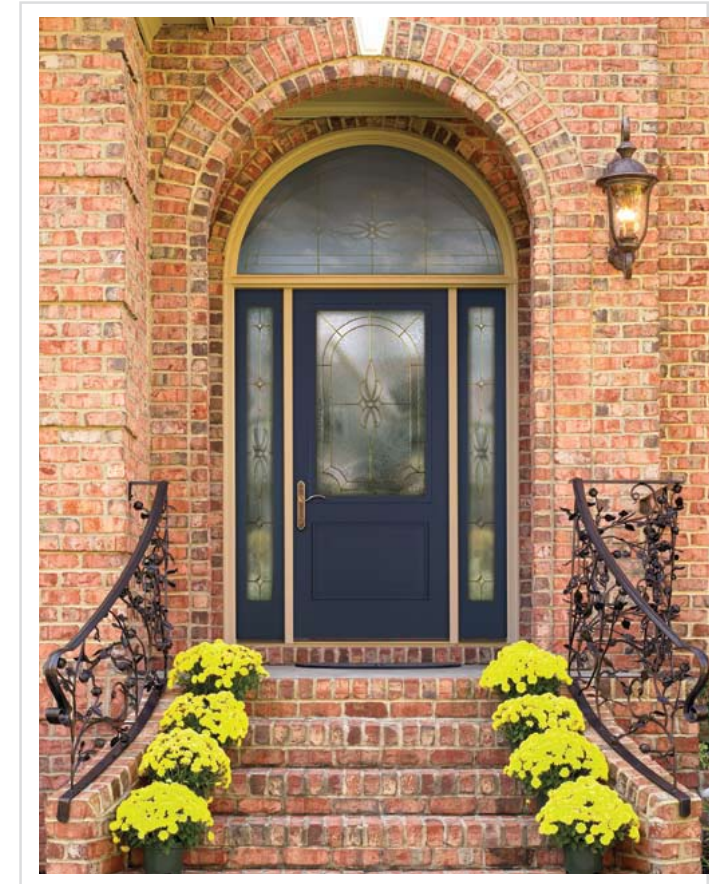
*Decorum® by Simonton colors*

*{ Color Your Front Door Welcoming }*

The color you choose for your front entryway system may seem like a small detail but it can impact the overall appearance of your home. Your front entrance welcomes your guests and conveys the warmth, happiness, and comfort that fill the inside of your home. It is a focal point for the front of your house. You want your entry door to stand out; to clearly call attention to your front entrance.

The good news is that today's manufacturers are offering doors that can easily be painted and customized for your exact needs. Therma-Tru® offers a Classic-Craft® Canvas Collection™ of doors that have a smooth, paintable surface. These energy-efficient fiberglass doors come in 14 different door styles and can be matched up with 13 unique glass designs --- many of which can also add color to your entryway!

If you aren't sure about what color you want to go with this is the perfect time to get back to your **FRESH** thinking. Look at those fixed features again. Is there one color in the siding or roof that stands out that you'd like to accent on your entryway? Often a richer or more colorful variation of that color makes a perfect color for the door. For example, if your sandy beige stone features on the front of your home have an orange tint, you might like to select a burnt pumpkin or terra cotta paint color for your door.



*For a front door that is in an alcove, shaded by a wide overhang or porch roof, lighter or brighter colors often work best; for a door in full sunlight choose rich, deep hues. Therma-Tru® Classic-Craft® Canvas Collection™ allows you to choose the color that is perfect for your home.*

And, if you'd like to go a more traditional route of having a woodgrain exterior, you can still play off those stone features by selecting a stained **Classic-Craft® Oak Collection™** door. However, if you're matching up a brick exterior home the **Classic-Craft® Mahogany Collection™** of fiberglass doors with the rich appeal of mahogany might be your best option.

When it comes time to select a new front door consider all of the options you have for making this not just a focal point but also a strong design element for your home's exterior. The free online **Door Designer** allows you to select a house style that matches your own home. You can select a door style that will be electronically inserted on the sample house. You can customize the on-screen entryway by "trying on" different door styles and glass packages, along with selecting various colors for the sample home's exterior, roof and facade.

*{ The Trim and Details Add the Finishing Touch }*

Going lighter for your trim is a standard practice. White, off-white and beige are all popular trim colors, but so are light pink, yellow, blue and green. The reason light colors work well is that the eye is attracted to the lightest colors on a home first. This is why traditionally lighter colors have been used to accentuate the architectural details, trim and the features people wish to emphasize on their homes.



Fypon® window and door trim and column wraps

*Trim includes window and door trim, fascias, vents, details, posts, railings, shutters, balustrade systems and louvers.*

You might want to reverse the siding and trim color so that you have lighter siding and darker trim. This can be an effective way to create interest for a home without mature landscaping or one that is on a rather small parcel of land. Rather than colonial blue with cream trim go with cream-colored siding with colonial blue trim.



Therma-Tru® Classic-Craft® Canvas Collection™

*Using a deep, rich or even a bold color on your front door can take your home from nice to knockout. This is the time to spread your wings and go for color or a beautiful finish rather than simply default to the same color as the trim or siding.*

Another nifty tool you can use to actually see what your home will look like with a new entry door is to use the free **My Saved Doors** tool. You can upload a photo of your home to the site and then add in different door options on screen. Best of all, you can save and print out your selections to share with family and friends via e-mail, Facebook and Twitter.

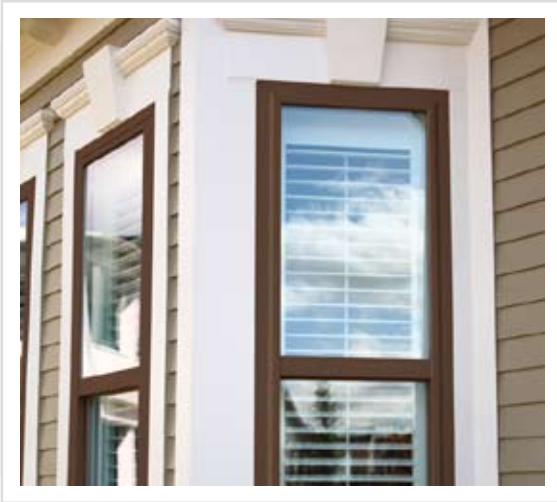


All trim does not have to be the same color. Use a second color to call attention to interesting features or paint your trim the same color as the body in places where you want to disguise a feature.

Fypon, a manufacturer of urethane millwork pieces such as mouldings, shutters, door and window trim, and louvers, offers low-maintenance exterior pieces with a smooth, paintable surface that arrive pre-primed. They also offer options of urethane pieces that have a precast concrete look or timber, woodgrain look that can be stained or painted to accent your home.

The shutters are usually one of the darkest elements in a home's color scheme, which helps anchor the windows in the facade. Even though they may be as dark, or darker, than the door, your front entranceway should still stand out more than the shutters.

Matching your shutters to the roof color can be a good choice. If your roof is light gray, dark gray or black, use black or deep gray on your shutters. If your roof is a multi-color blend like **Chesapeake** choose a darker tone of one of the colors in the blend.



Simonton ProFinish® Brickmould 600 windows, Bronze

*To keep the windows looking as large as possible or to enlarge small windows, match the trim color to the color of the window frame.*

*Remember that color can accent or disguise. Think about color placement that accentuates the positive features of your home and disguises features such as garage doors, gutters, downspouts, etc.*

### { Tips For Color Placement }

Think about how you want visitors to experience your home. Their eye will travel from the strongest or brightest colors to the lightest, then the middle tones and on to the darkest colors. For this reason, you will want to place your brightest and lightest colors on the best features to catch attention and create exceptional curb appeal.

Here are a few quick tips to help you decide which colors should go where on your home's exterior:

- Your front door color should punctuate the facade of your home. Use your brightest or strongest color for your main entrance.
- Light colors on trim highlight your window while dark shutters or frames anchor the windows in the facade.
- Lighter colors on a porch can make a home feel more approachable and welcoming.
- Painting the upper portion of a tall house in a deeper tone than the bottom portion can scale down the height of the home. A darker color on the lower portion grounds the house to the earth.

### { A Perfectly Hued Garage Door }

Your garage doors can occupy a large portion of your home's facade and choosing the right color can be a little tricky. Garage doors usually look best when they blend in so if you are unsure, paint your garage doors in the same color as the body of your home rather than the trim or accent colors.

Painting the garage doors in the same color as the front door or shutters can draw too much attention to the garage and chop up the facade of your home.

Don't highlight the details of a standard garage door by painting it more than one color. There are historic or special doors where this may be appropriate. However, for the majority of garage doors this detracts by drawing attention away from the front door and the best features of your home.

*Painting the garage doors the same colors as the body of the house can make your home appear larger.*



## GETTING IT RIGHT

**DETERMINING** how a color and finish are going to look on your home is difficult if not impossible when you are only looking at a small swatch or viewing the product on a computer screen. It is always best to get actual samples whenever possible to give you an idea of the full impact of the blending of colors and patterns.

1. Arrange to get samples of paint options and exterior materials. If it is not possible to arrange for actual samples, visit a manufacturer showroom.
2. Sample paint by applying large swatches directly on all four sides of your home. Paint each color on the section of the house where you plan to use it. Find a location that is clearly visible and gives you a view of the body, trim and accent colors that can be viewed together. Look at each side because the direction of the light, amount of shade and other elements can make the color look slightly different on each side.



3. Look at your colors in the early part of the day because this will give you the truest idea of the color. Later in the day the more intense sun may wash the colors out and in the dimmer evening light the colors will appear toned down.
4. Live with the colors for a few days, viewing them up close and at a distance during different times of day. You might discover that a color that you thought was your final selection during the morning looks entirely different in the waning afternoon light. Keep in mind colors will also vary due to weather conditions, seasons and time of day.
5. Once you are pleased with the actual samples, you are ready to move forward.



*Once you have your samples don't make your final color choices inside under artificial light. Colors will generally look lighter outdoors. Look at each sample outside in the natural light and location where you plan to use it.*



*Color needs to be viewed where you plan to apply it. For example, roofing tiles should be placed on a section of the roof that you can see from the ground while the front door color should be placed on the front door.*

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## YOU'VE GOT COLOR!

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*Congratulations, you've selected your colors!*

Color has the power to communicate, to affect your mood and influence your environment so it is important to choose wisely. By following these simple steps you have made good choices and found a color scheme that works beautifully for your home and reflects your personal tastes.

Doesn't it feel great to know in advance that you are going to love your new color scheme? That you are going to be happy with the colors for the life of the quality exterior products (some with warranties up to 50 years) that you are purchasing?

*All it took was a little  
FRESH thinking!*

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### *ABOUT KATE SMITH*

Color is her passion. Helping you to enjoy it - understand it - have fun with it - go wild with it - and use color confidently is her purpose.

Kate Smith is a color expert and career color trend forecaster. Kate is a design lover, and color inspiration maven. Above all, Kate is an inspirational keynote speaker and seminar leader, blending color theory and psychology into entertaining and informative talks that bring color to life.



{ [sensationalcolor.com](http://sensationalcolor.com) }

