

Design Session Tools

Below are all of the tools that we have gone through so far in the Design Sessions. The tools I used to design the Beach House's master bedroom are in bold. Watch these Sessions to get a fuller understanding of the tools and how they apply to your own design process when designing a master bedroom.

Tool 1	The Key Principles of Accessorizing	Tool 17	Moulding and Wall Treatments
Tool 2	Budget Friendly Ways to Buy Accessories	Tool 18	How to Use Fabrics to Pull Things Together
Tool 3	How to Lay Out Your Furniture	Tool 19	Tile for Your Home
Tool 4	Tablescapes and Entertaining for the Fall Season	Tool 20	The Business of Built-Ins
Tool 5	Lighting a Home Perfectly	Tool 21	How to Refresh Your Home
Tool 6	Beautiful Window Treatments	Tool 22	All About the Flooring
Tool 7	Bedroom and Closet Decluttering	Tool 23	The Art of Stone Countertops
Tool 8	Accessorizing for the Spring Season	Tool 24	BONUS: Lighting Trick
Tool 9	Selecting Paint Colors for Your Home	Tool 25	Project Management
Tool 10	Selecting, Placing and Arranging Art	Tool 26	Discovering Your Design Style
Tool 11	Hanging and Placing Wall Decor (3D)	Tool 27	The Transitional Design Style
Tool 12	Furniture Arranging - How to Get it Right	Tool 28	Small Space Design
Tool 13	Tips for Area Rugs	Outdoor 1	How to Boost Your Curb Appeal
Tool 14	Tips for Beautiful Bedding	Outdoor 2	Outdoor Planting with a Pro
Tool 15	Accessorizing to Personalize Your Home	Outdoor 3	Outdoor Decorating Tips
Tool 16	How to Decorate with Throw Pillows		

The Design Process

1. Assess Your Situation and Your Budget (Tool 25)

Take a hard look at your room and try to answer the following questions:

- Define what you want (cozy, open and bright, smoky and moody, etc.)
- Do you need a dresser, chest of drawers or an armoire?
- Do you want a television in your room?
- Do you have room for extra furniture beyond a bed and nightstands?
- Do you want a retreat, a place to sit and read and/or a desk area?
- Do you have a view that you want to see from your bed?
- Do you have high or low ceilings?
- Do you have an adjoining master bathroom?
- Do you have a walk-in closet or need to create a closet space?
- Do you have any art you want to prominently display?
- Do you want window treatments for privacy?
- What, if any, are problems or challenge with the shape of your room?
 - Does your room have natural symmetry or if not can you create symmetry?
 - Do you have any vaulted ceilings or soffits you have to deal with?
 - Do you have good insulation for noise and privacy?

2. Determine the Style of the Room (Tool 26 & Tool 27)

I love designing a cohesive home where every room relates to one another. That being said, I believe that your master bedroom is one room you can get away with a change of pace if you want to! Personally, in my home all of my walls are painted Simply White by Benjamin Moore, but in my bedroom the walls are a deep muddy grey with espresso floors. My bedroom is the one room that is dark and smoky and it's relaxing to me! I'm able to achieve a cohesive look by keeping my furniture and bedding styles consistent with the rest of my home.

Note: if you have an adjoining master bathroom and/or closet, I like to tie the three spaces together with like-minded styles, colors, textures and finishes.

3. Go Shopping (Only Window Shopping Though)

At this early stage it is good to see what's out there! Before you go though, make sure you take photos of your room in its current condition and take measurements. On this window shopping mission you should be looking for inspiration - a headboard you love, a fabulous hero pillow and/or an area rug you can't live without!

In the Beach House, I found a pendant light by Holly Hunt that served as my inspiration for the master bedroom. I had no idea where it would end up at this early stage, but at least I had a start with something fabulous that I could build a room around!

4. Make a Floor Plan

My M.O. is to use the 3D modeling program Sketch Up Pro. If you are interested in learning this program you can download a free version of it, and also take an easy beginners class I teach on UDEMY. [Click here to check out that course.](#) If you don't want to deal with Sketch Up, no problem! Grab some graph paper and start measuring!

I began making the floor plan for the Beach House with the construction issues that needed to be fixed. This will depend upon your actual space, but for today's Session I will walk you through the odd, quirky issues I had to deal with in the Beach House. Here were some of my main issues when designing the Beach House master bedroom:

- **Fix #1:** The closet was tiny - tiny for any bedroom, much less a master bedroom! By using my Sketch Up model, I was able to identify how to better divide the closet space in guest bedroom one and the master. By simply moving a dividing wall between the two closets I was able to create a more functional space for both bedrooms. The closet in guest bedroom one now has a pocket door and the master has double doors and much more space!
- **Fix #2:** The clients wanted a television in their room and the existing armoire with a tube television was not the answer. Instead, I had my contractors recess a niche in the wall so the television could mount flush with the wall! This freed up the corner where the dated armoire sat.
- **Fix #3:** I addressed the wide spacing between the windows on either side of the bed through my window treatment application.
- **Fix #4:** Because there was an overall feeling of cramped-ness in this master bedroom, I had my ceiling raised above the bed by 11 inches.

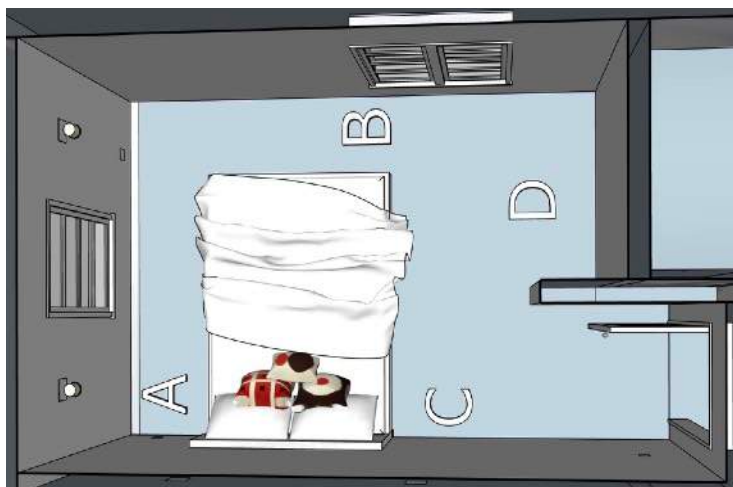
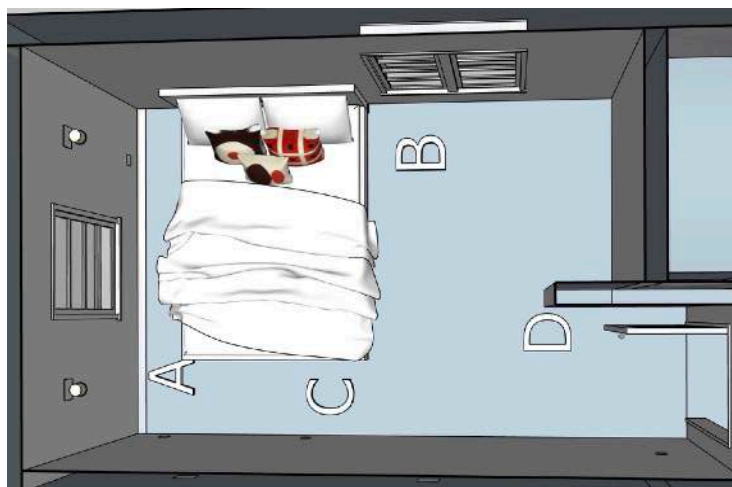
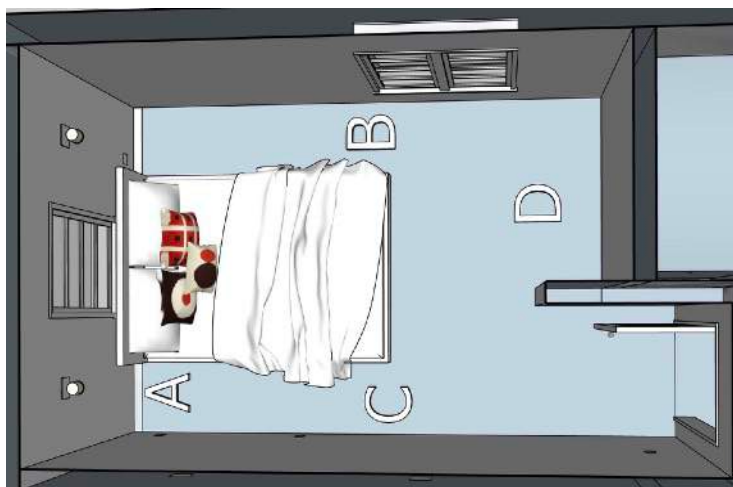
After you fix the construction issues on your floor plan, it's time to determine what will actually fit in your master bedroom. Here are some key things to think about:

- **Furniture Placement (Tool 3 & Tool 12):** The first step in determining your furniture placement in your master bedroom is to determine what is your focal point wall. This is the wall that your bed should be placed on. On the next page you will find a guide that labels the ideal wall that your focal wall should be on. Wall A is the most ideal wall to have as your focal point wall, the next most ideal is wall B, then wall C and finally wall D is the least ideal wall to have as your focal point wall.
- **Focal Point Wall:** Behind your bed on the focal point wall, do something fabulous! An accent wall, a great piece of art, some mirrors, stone or tile - all are great options to really make your focal point wall, well, a focal point wall!
- **Bed:** I'm not one for bedroom sets. I prefer a less contrived look. Obviously a bed with a headboard and footboard is essential! One exception would be if you are exceptionally tall, then a footboard might be out of the question. Either way a nice headboard sets the style in your room!
- **Nightstands:** I like nightstands with ample room, and typically buy oversized ones that sit higher than the mattress. I also prefer a matching pair of nightstands for some nice symmetry on either side of the bed!
- **Dresser:** If your dresser is low (about waist high) place on wall C or D. If your dresser is tall it should ideally be placed on a wall B because it is away from the door. Ideally, if you have room in your closet for folded clothes omit the extra furniture pieces and store your clothes in the closet.
- **Seating:** I like to place a bench at the end of the bed or on a side wall if there is enough room. A chair in the corner is nice as well! It is always nice to have a place besides your bed to sit down and put on socks and shoes. If you have extra room for a retreat, a chaise lounge or a pair of chairs creates a welcoming area for chats, reading a book or having a coffee in the morning! I find a coffee table or side table adds to the cozy feel of a retreat too!

- **Lighting Plan (Tool 5):** Here's where you can add both light and drama! A hanging pendant at the foot of the bed is a fabulous addition to any master bedroom. A ceiling fan is often used over the bed, but I suggest if you do want a ceiling fan that you omit the light portion and choose a stylistic fan to match your design. For functional lighting, add canned lights around the bed and above the bed making sure to install individual reading lights 24"-30" away from the back of the wall for optional spot lighting. Finally, request dimmers on all of your light switches and art locations (trust me, they make a world of a difference)!

- **Television and Electronics:** If you like having a television in your bedroom try to conceal it if possible. As I mentioned, in the Beach House we recessed the television right into the wall. As for technology, if you are lucky to have a smart home a low profile iPad mounted to the walls is a pretty neat addition to a master bedroom! You can operate your lights, shades, temperature, music and home security all from one location. One exception is your reading lights. I prefer those to be controlled by a remote that you can store in your nightstand. Decisions like these need to be made early so your electrician can make them happen!

- **Flooring (Tool 22):** If at all possible, try to continue the flooring from the hallway into the bedroom.



The Shopping Process

Now that you have your floor plan and layout in mind, it is time to go shopping for real!

1. **Window Treatments (Tool 6)**

For window treatments you can either buy readymade window treatments or design custom window treatments. If you want custom window treatments you will have to go fabric shopping. You also need to select rods, rings, brackets, etc. for your window treatments. Remember to always bring your window treatments as high as you can and all the way to the floor!

In the Beach House project, I actually used the window treatments to camouflage an architectural challenge. The windows were spaced way to far apart. By covering 50% of the window, I was able to achieve a better balance and more symmetrical look on the focal point wall. Most people would not cover half of a window, but in this case the clients never opened their shades to see the window anyway.

2. **Flooring (Tool 22)**

If possible, try to continue the flooring from the hallway into the bedroom to ensure a cohesive look throughout your home.

3. **Area Rug (Tool 13)**

If you are using wood, stone or tile add an area rug to enlarge the feel of the room. Having an area rug also provides you with a cozy experience when getting out of bed in the morning! An area rug can also add to the style of the room and the color scheme. In the Beach House, I found the area rug for the master bedroom early on in the design process and it set the color scheme of the entire room!

4. **Furniture**

While your contractor is busy getting your room ready, now is the time to actually buy your furniture. Your previous homework will tell you the sizes that your room can handle.

5. **Mattress**

The nicest gift you can give yourself is a comfortable mattress! I have a Tempur-Pedic and it is absolutely dreamy. Some people swear by the Sleep Number bed. Whatever mattress you buy, make sure you try it before you buy it. I also highly recommend looking into an adjustable mattress. It's actually not the mattress, but the support system underneath the mattress and it is amazing!

As for the size of mattress, I was able to gain four valuable inches in the room by switching from a California King (72" x 84") to an Eastern King (76" x 80"). If you're on a budget, a good trick is to buy an inexpensive mattress and add two layers of 3" memory foam top. Your bed will still be comfortable and at a fraction of the cost!

6. **Pick a Paint Color(s) or Wall Treatment (Tool 9 & Tool 17)**

One thing I hope you've learned from me is that it is best to select your paint color(s) last! Once you've selected any wallpaper, accent wall color, furniture pieces, stone, tile or anything else you plan to use in the room you will have a clear picture of your design. Selecting a paint color for your walls, ceiling and trim should be easy at this point! Keep in mind what you've selected for team colors throughout the rest of your home to avoid an abrupt change.

7. **Bedding (Tool 14)**

Here's where your style can really start coming in! In a master bedroom always go for the highest quality sheets you can afford in all white for a clean look. You'd be surprised at what a difference 600 thread count sheets make in your overall comfort. The same goes for your pillows! If you have no allergy issues with down feathers, get a medium fill pillow that's king sized. Ask for the pillows that are 100% feathers without the quills to avoid those poky parts that stab right through the pillows.

On top of the sheets, I place a down comforter slipped into a beautiful duvet cover. I roll down the duvet cover about 18" - 20" to leave just enough room for the pillows. I often add a coverlet to the bottom of the bed or at the top just under the rolled duvet cover. This adds another layer, some color and additional warmth! There are tons of bedding options out there and to help you navigate through all of your options I highly recommend watching the Design Session all about bedding (it is one of my personal favorites)!

8. **Hardware**

By hardware I mean door handles, hinges, knobs and/or pulls on your furniture pieces. As I've said in previous Sessions, drawer pulls can be like adding jewelry to your room! Keep in mind all of your selections thus far and have some fun. In the Beach House, I scouted vintage shops for drawer pulls that would aid in the assumption that the nightstands were a vintage find.

9. **Light Fixtures (Tool 5)**

Find a pair of matching table lamps to place on the nightstands and a buffet lamp to place on a desk or a side table. Hang a fabulous pendant light, fan or chandelier above the foot of your bed. Get creative here and add some style!

10. **Accessorize (Tool 1 & Tool 15)**

My absolute favorite step of the process! This is where you have the chance to pull everything together. Remember to repeat colors and finishes throughout. This step also includes choosing some art (**Tool 10 & Tool 11**). Select art pieces you love, family photos and/or an Aura frame so you are surrounded by your loved ones and happy memories! Just make sure any art is framed well! Candles are also always a great addition to a bedroom for the ambiance and fragrance they provide. Remember the basics too when accessorizing! Find a coordinating trashcan and clothes hamper so your room really feels put together. Just remember, if you're going for a restful feel in your master bedroom, less is best!

In the Beach House I designed a custom mirror to mount above and to the sides of the bed that served as my art piece. The antiqued mirrored added selection and drama to the room - a focal point indeed!

