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LESSONS IN LAYOUT

**TRANSFORMING
A LONDON
TOWN HOUSE**

**CLEVER DESIGN
IDEAS FOR
LARGE SPACES**

**AN ARCHITECT'S
RETHINK OF
A FARMHOUSE**

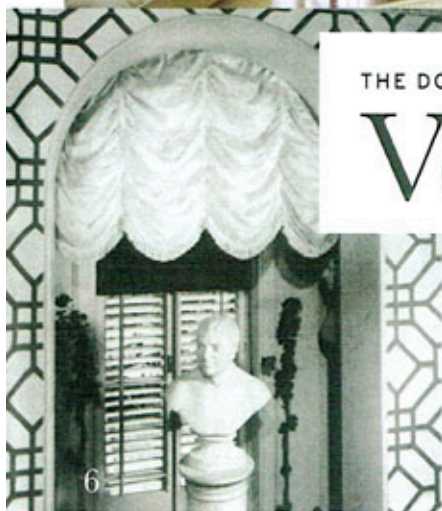
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THE DOS AND DON'TS OF DECORATING, ACCORDING TO

Veere Grenney

Do everything with commitment. Nothing irritates me more than lack of commitment. Even sill-length curtains are acceptable in context, and when done with confidence. • **Look for furniture with a sense of history.** My favourite piece is my writing table, which was commissioned by Billy Baldwin for Villa La Fiorentina and made by Maison Jansen (1). • **Appropriateness, comfort and harmony are essential.** I refer back to these three yardsticks throughout a project and check whether I have drifted from them. • **My favourite decorating colour is 'Temple',** a pink by David Oliver for Paint Library (2). • **Navy-blue rooms are a no.** Navy blue should be reserved for clothes and cars. • **Listen to the house and listen to the client.** A person can kill a house by not understanding it, and can kill a relationship by not respecting the client. • **My default choice for floors is wood,** wood and wood (3). • **It is important to have your go-to shops.** The showrooms of Gordon Watson, Rose Uniacke, Jamb (4), Lamberty and Edward Hurst never fail to inspire me. • **Become absorbed in your early influences.** I idolised David Hicks (6), Billy Baldwin, John Fowler, David Adler and Raymond Erith. • **Recognise when you do not know something.** There is little to be gained by bluffing. I always leave kitchens to other designers. • **Bring your places of happiness into your work.** I couldn't live without books or the English countryside. Veere Grenney; 020-7351 7170; www.veeregrenney.com □



Choose your priorities. If I am on a budget, I save on fabrics and spend more on art and books (5)



Veere Grenney in one of his New York interiors (top left). 1 and 5 His London home. 2 'Temple', £36 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Paint Library. 3 A bleached-oak floor in the Hamptons. 4 Jamb, 95 Pimlico Road, SW1. 6 An Eaton Square Interior by David Hicks

DESIGN IDEAS | large sitting rooms

RIGHT In the library of this Tudor house, there is the luxury of enough space for a generous seating arrangement around the chimneypiece. Designer Gavin Houghton has used cosy, high-sided chesterfields to create an inviting space within the larger room. www.gavinhoughton.co.uk

BELOW The interior designer of this house outside Madrid, Isabel López-Quesada, has revelled in large-scale furniture, using long matching sofas, two repurposed daybeds as ottomans and a large wooden table to display the owner's collections. A clever use of symmetry is also at work here: one side of the room appears to reflect the other, echoing the architecture and emphasising the grand space. www.isabellopezquesada.com



DESIGN ADVICE Using light from floor and table lamps is a useful way to define a smaller area within large spaces, creating a clear point of focus.



BELOW In the Long Room at Aubrey House in London, designer Chester Jones has created a warm and comfortable sitting room, using rugs to divide the space. A clever touch is the use of several smaller, lighter chairs, which allow the conversation areas to be flexible rather than fixed. www.chesterjones.com



ABOVE American designer Michael S Smith loves the 'volumes of space' that allow for 'sculptural compositions' in his modernist Los Angeles home. Two separate seating areas absorb floor space in the grand sitting room but, thanks to the armless sofas, one seating arrangement doesn't totally exclude the other. www.michaelsmithinc.com □