



CLIENT'S GUIDE
**HOW TO
PREPARE FOR
YOUR DESIGN
PROJECT**

the design brief



STUDIOGRAF
ARCHITECTURE
INTERIORS
DESIGN

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CONTENT

- // WHERE TO START
- // WHAT TO CONSIDER
- // ANSWER THE WHYS
- // WHO WHERE WHAT
- // THE NEXT STEP

HELLO

Congratulations on embarking on one of life's greatest journeys - designing and building your very own dream home.

It can be both exciting and daunting to navigate this process. We created this guide to help you get started, sort your thoughts and make the important first steps. You will learn about the importance of following a systematic process to make it an enjoyable journey, sort your thoughts and ideas to create a compelling design brief.



*Fabian Graf
Founder / Studio Graf*

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WHERE TO START

YOUR SITE: SCRUTINIZE YOUR PROPERTY AND GET A REAL FEEL FOR IT.

// Where is the sun in summer?

// Where is the sun in winter?

// Where are the views you want to enjoy every day and those you want to exclude?

// Where are the surrounding houses, other buildings and trees you may or may not want to see?

// Which parts of the site are most/least noisy?

// Does the site slope?

Put all the information you have about your site in a file to share with your architect (legal paperwork/covenants, existing plans or previous site information).

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I DON'T DIVIDE
ARCHITECTURE,
LANDSCAPE AND
GARDENING; TO ME THEY
ARE ONE.

- LUIS BARRAGAN -

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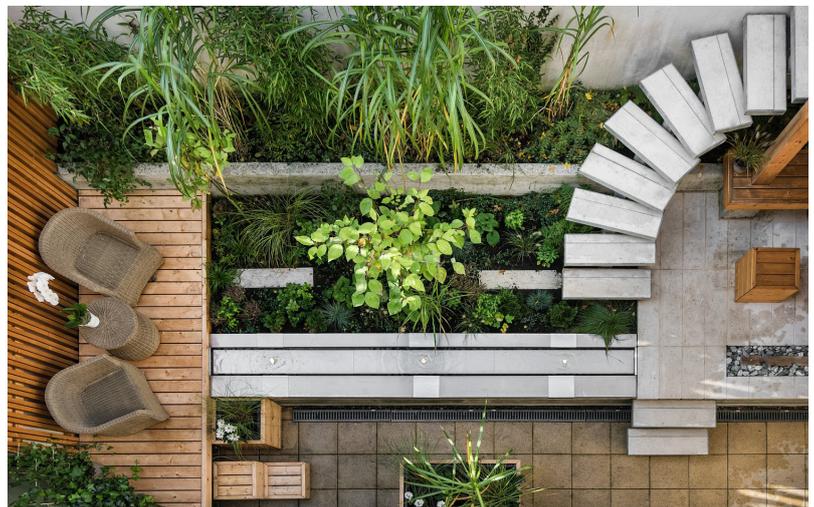
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INDOOR SPACES

A good design can transform the way that we live. Think hard about your family's current and future needs. Map out your daily routine. How many people live in the house? How old are they? Who does what, where? Don't forget your children's rapidly changing needs! Do you want to 'zone' spaces, separate family members, functions and/or pets? Consider the number of floors, rooms and other spaces and describe their use. Make a list of who needs rooms to sleep, work and relax in.



Where do you cook and eat? Is the kitchen like a constant thoroughfare for teenagers and large family gatherings? Is your lifestyle formal, casual, relaxed or active? Do you need spaces to entertain at home – indoor and outdoor? What type of home entertainment do you want to include e.g. music, television, projector or areas for storage of equipment? List any special requirements you have, e.g. accessibility, extra storage areas, garage loft space, built in furniture/shelving, home office. What method of heating do you want? What do other family members want from the whole project?



OUTDOOR SPACES

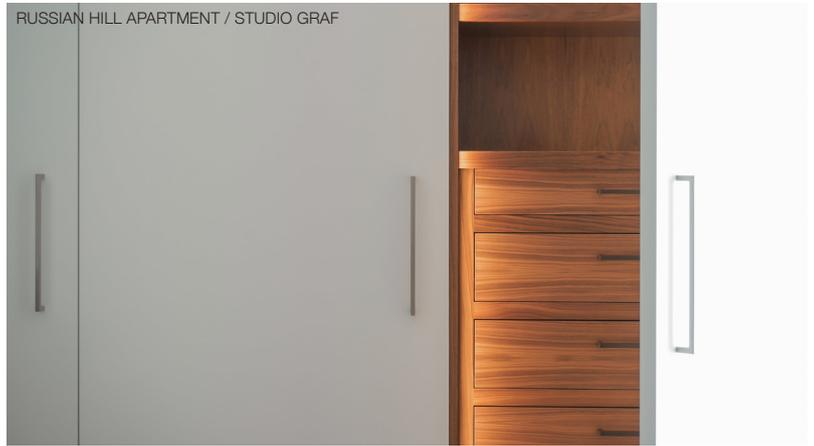
What do you want to do outdoors? Entertain? Relax? Play? Swim? Supervise children? Grow enough vegetables to be self-sufficient? Do you want a high or low maintenance scheme? What features are important to you? Think about the indoor/outdoor flow of spaces, where the morning sun lands, where its exposed to and sheltered from the wind. Have you always dreamt of an exterior fireplace?

Think of your external areas as outdoor rooms, and consider privacy and connections between spaces. Listing your requirements (perhaps using our List of Rooms and Spaces template) will help both you and your architect quickly understand your priorities.

WHERE TO START

DESIGN / MOOD / FEELING

This is important. This is your home, where your children and other loved ones are, where they're going to grow up and you're going to have all your family memories.



Think about the 'feel' of your project, do you want it to be bold, low-key, industrial, traditional, minimalist, contemporary or organic? Think about your feelings - yes really! For example, what is your favorite time of day? Do you worry about shutting the curtains to protect the furniture from the sun, or do you like to enjoy coffee on the terrace? Is curling up with a good book your favorite hobby, or is it taking the dog for a walk no matter what the weather?



Describe spaces, design features and styles that appeal to you and those that don't. Create a 'mood board' or scrapbook of fabric swatches, photographs, magazine clippings and anything else that can help your architect understand who you are, how you live and what you want from your project. Use web-based photo sites to assemble and share your ideas.



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THE BEST ROOMS HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THEM

- DAVID HICKS -

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WHAT TO CONSIDER

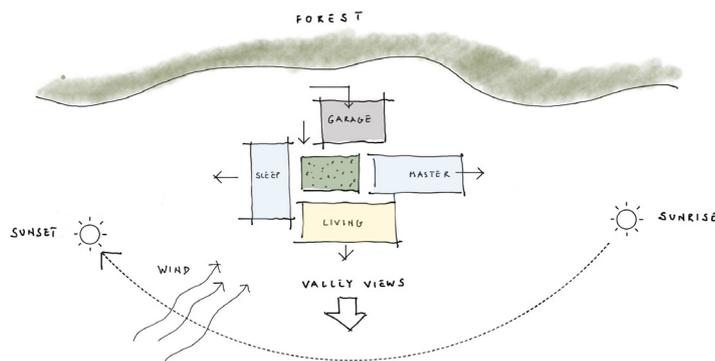
THE DETAILS

List major appliances you already own or are considering buying and any preferences you have about where you want to put them. Do you really want that fridge next to your double steam oven? Do you have lots of gadgets that need sockets in your island unit? Is your washing machine on 24/7 and do you want your drying and ironing space right next to it? These details can make a big difference to the way your kitchen and utility space is planned.

Note major pieces of furniture or artwork you want to showcase so your architect can provide spaces and sockets for them in the new plans. Better to include it in your planning from day one, than to move in and wonder where you are going to hang your Picasso.

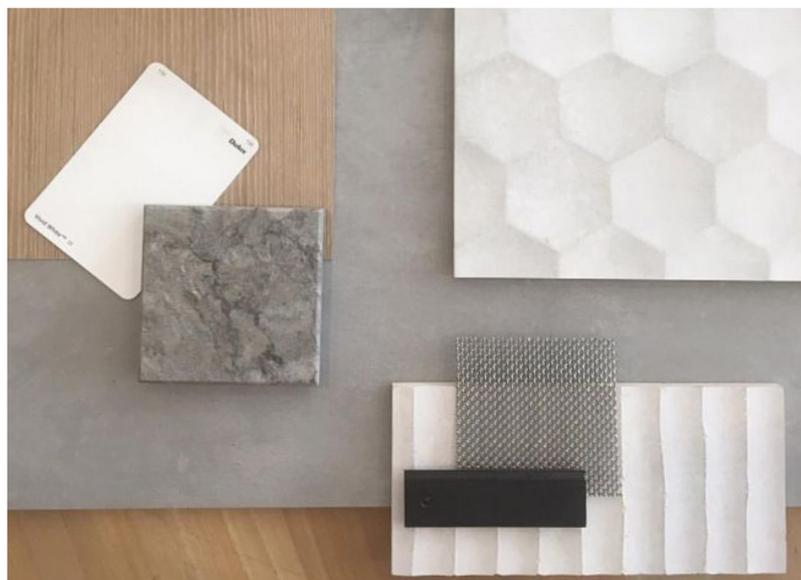
SKETCHING

Sketch out your thoughts, but don't get too wedded to them. If the work involves altering an existing house you'll be constrained by existing structures and services and if it's a listed building, there will be lots of limitations on what you can change. If it's a new house, let your imagination flow, but be prepared for your architect to suggest other approaches. That is, after all, why you are hiring one!



MATERIALS

List materials you like and dislike (inside and out), but be aware that your budget will be a determining factor in your final choice. Do you have any specific wall, ceiling and floor finishes in mind? Do you like plaster, timber cladding and tiled elevations? Stone, slate, rubber, glass, steel, aluminum... the list is endless. Timber windows or aluminum? Much will depend on the style of building, but there are choices to be made that will determine how much you spend upfront, and how much you spend on maintenance in the longer term.



“

A ROOM SHOULD FEEL COLLECTED, NOT DECORATED.

- ALBERT HADLEY -

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ANSWER THE WHYS

I WANT TO BUILD/RENOVATE
MY HOUSE, WHY?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____



WE SHAPE OUR HOMES,
AND THEN OUR HOMES
SHAPE US

- WINSTON CHURCHILL -

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WHO WHAT WHEN

THE NUTS AND BOLTS

Having listed the whys, we have dealt with the big elephant in the room. Now it is time to dwell on the nuts and bolts. The following is a series of questions that will further elaborate on your brief.

WHO WILL LIVE IN YOUR HOME NOW AND IN THE FUTURE?

WHAT DIFFERENT NEW ACTIVITIES WILL YOU NEED TO ACCOMMODATE?

HOW DO YOU WANT YOUR HOME TO FIT WITH THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT?

ARE THERE ANY HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES YOU NEED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF?

WHAT ARCHITECTURAL STYLE DO YOU PREFER?

WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR HOME INTERIOR TO LOOK LIKE?

WHAT COLORS WILL IT HAVE?

WHAT FACILITIES FOR COOLING AND HEATING DO YOU WANT?

DO YOU WANT TO INSTALL OR UPGRADE EXISTING SECURITY AND/OR AUDIO SYSTEMS?

DO YOU WANT A TOTAL MAKEOVER OR A STAGED PROCESS?

WHAT IS YOUR BUDGET?

DOES YOUR BUDGET INCLUDE SOFT COSTS (CONSULTANT, PERMIT AND SPECIALIST FEES)?

WHAT LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT DO YOU WANT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUR RENOVATION?



**SIMPLICITY IS THE
ULTIMATE SOPHISTICATION.**

- LEONARDO DA VINCI -

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THE NEXT STEP

CONGRATULATIONS!

You now have the key information that will help you lay a successful foundation for how to prepare for your design project.

Unfortunately, we can't include every important piece of information about this very important step in the design and construction process successfully in this guide.

Actually, that would be impossible because each project is unique and the brief will differ based on a multitude of factors. But with the concepts explained in this guide, you have the critical information to help you create a design brief that will ensure that your project is a success.

If you are in the process of looking for an architect for your project, let's talk. We can help you wade through the necessary requirements and make sure you aren't overlooking a crucial factor that could doom your project to failure. We offer our 'Feasibility Check', a custom needs and options review where we will identify the specific requirements pertaining to your project and your available options.

Typically, the needs and options review saves our clients thousands of dollars and weeks of lost time, not to mention the stress and headache of getting something wrong.

To read more about the 'Feasibility Check' as well as the price for this service and why it is critically important to your project's success, download the brochure with the code below or visit our website. If you are ready to talk now, please give me a call.

Best wishes for a successful project!

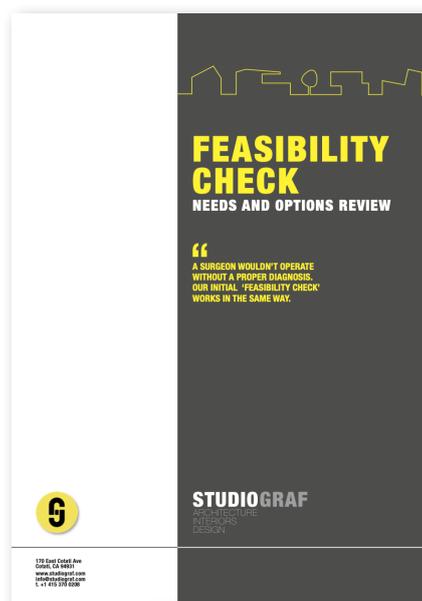
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