

Styled Spaces

Design Diary

Spring 2014



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Hello Anna,

Just when Ryan and I thought we were wrapping up our Work In Progress DIY Project, another project has leaped to the forefront:

We're expecting our first child on June 20th!

After many months of enjoying visits from our niece and nephew, we are thrilled that we'll soon be welcoming a little one of our own.

After our baby's arrival, I'll be taking the summer off. Come the fall, it will be interesting to see how business 'n baby work together!

Wishing you a beautiful Spring,

Vanessa

Can you believe it? The Millers' personal home renovation is now complete! Well...almost.

In the past several issues of [Design Diary](#), I've been updating you on our own home's DIY projects. Our goal was to improve our home's realistic market value, and get a good return on our reno investment when we decide to sell.

You can see all the photos and explanation of our finishing touches [here](#) on the website.

And what's the one thing that didn't get the check-mark of completion? The fireplace mantel. We just can't decide on this, and Ryan appears impervious to my murmurs of "Trust me, I'm a designer."!



Before and after pictures from Styled Spaces client work appear on [my website](#). I hope you'll stop by!



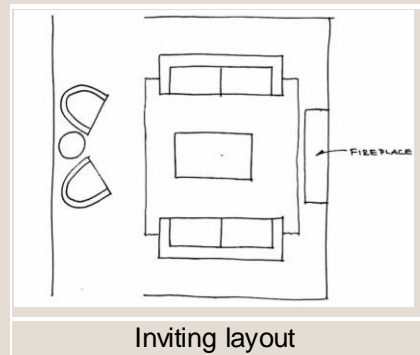
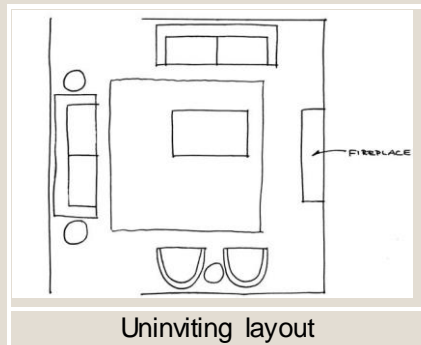
[Fresh Ideas](#) - designer advice for your DIY projects: renovate with confidence.

Design Challenge | conversational seating area

Arranging furniture in a large living room or other open space can be a challenge. First, let me explain the typical main pieces that make up a conversational seating area.

"Primary seating" is the main furniture grouping. Usually it is arranged around a focal point such as a fireplace. "Secondary seating" often includes 1 seat with an ottoman, or 2 seats for conversation, placed just outside the Primary seating arrangement.

There's a natural tendency, especially in large open spaces, to position Primary seating against the walls. The challenge with this is that it creates a disjointed feeling within the space. It also places people too far apart for comfortable conversation. (The optimum distance should measure between 9' to 12' head-to-head.).



If your space still feels empty after placing the Primary seating, add some Secondary seating. A chair and ottoman combination provide cozy seating for reading; two seats provide an additional conversation grouping. My above diagram illustrates this.

Also, remember to consider the room's traffic paths. Ideally the main opening into the seating arrangement is 36". Openings into Secondary seating areas can be 24".

My Life | **Baby BOOM!**

My life these days seems to be all about babies.

The first grandchild on Ryan's side, Adeline Frances, was born February 10th.

My sister, who is Mom to the very sweet Emmeline in the photo below and 2 1/2 year-old Reuben, is expecting her third child in August.

Project | **Mercer family kitchen**

This kitchen/dining area renovation started like most of my projects: getting to fully understand how the clients live and function within the current space, and then helping them identify how they want to function in their new space.

When all was said and done, the Mercers dreamed of having an inviting, open space to entertain and spend time with their three children and furry family member.



Have you had a new addition within your family of late? It's certainly a very special time for parents and doting grandparents, aunts and uncles!



The renovation started by removing two walls to create a more social space.

To support the Mercer's desire for a warm, natural look, we chose wood grain cabinets and beautiful wide-plank oak flooring.

You can [read more](#) about this project, Anna, in Design Diary on line.

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Thanks for reading! Watch for the next issue of Design Diary