

darkness vs. *light*

Create drama in your space by combining a dip into the dark with a walk in the light. The moody hues at either end of the spectrum allow you to play with lots of colour – without actually being ‘colourful’



From left Eggshell Acrylic interior **paint** in Squid Ink, \$105.97 for 4L, Porter's Paints. Marcel Wanders 'Mad Chair' **armchair**, \$8920, Poliform. Chapel round **coffee table**, \$4700, DesignByThem. Agra **rug** in Midnight (2.4m x 3m), \$4300, Armadillo & Co. **Books**, stylist's own. Pebble **vase** in Oxide, \$24 for medium, Curious Grace. Tania Rollond 'Black Water' **vase**, POA, Skepsl Gallery. ClassiCon 'Roattino' **floor lamp**, \$3655, Anibou. Eggshell Acrylic interior **paint** in Plaster of Paris, \$114.50 for 4L, Porter's Paints. Cassina 'LC7' swivel **chair**, \$4955, Space. Livorno round **dining table** in White Speckle, \$3220, GlobeWest. Mayu 01 **pendant**, \$1650, Coco Flip. Lucie **vase** in Lava & Bone and Stevie **vase** in Lava & Bone, \$250 each, Marloe Marloe. Cambio **sculpture** in Nero and Bianco, \$1121, Greg Natale. **STOCKISTS** page 150.

DARK MATERIALS
A dark natural palette creates a serene and welcoming mood in this project by Andrew Simpson Architects.



don't be afraid of the dark

Painting walls black still feels slightly shocking in this day and age of white-wall worship, but if you can brace yourself to commit to the darkness, the opportunities to create a warm, moody cocoon – even in just one room – are endless.

The myth that making rooms dark makes them feel cold and cramped is exploded by Rachel Lacy, Taubmans' colour category manager. "It is such a common misconception. A small room will not appear bigger by painting it white, it can have the opposite effect. With white you can see where a surface starts and finishes; the edges of a space can become very defined," she explains. But a dark room doesn't need to be flat and stark. "Very dark and infinite blues that verge on the colour of midnight, such as Taubmans Night Blue, are gentle to the eye."

True black can be tricky, so choosing the right shade is crucial. Go for the mid-dark spectrum and investigate deep charcoals, inky blues, earthy, muddy browns and also rich grey tones, which can deliver depth and strength as well as warmth.

Sarah Stephenson, brand and communications manager for Watty, is leaning towards ink blue and

dark green. "Ink blue is so versatile, while dark green can make a great backdrop for lighter greens, wood and foliage," she says.

And if you're ready to experiment with darker tones, consider the parameters of your existing room. "It's all about the space itself, including natural light and the other materials used in the room," says Wendy

“Very dark and infinite blues that verge on the colour of midnight are gentle to the eye”

Rennie, Haymes colour expert. "Natural flooring in wood can really help warm up the space and carry off a dark wall instead of a lighter carpet."

This means south-facing rooms may need a little more consideration, as natural light plays a huge role in introducing warmth into a darker space.

Contrast is key: light carpets and rugs and mid-toned upholstery are pivotal, becoming framed pieces on a backdrop within a dark room. And one last tip before you start: dark walls can show imperfections, so invest in scrupulous wall prep and high-quality paints.

DARK HUES
Market Editor Natalie Johnson created this colour edit with an eye on a deeper level of sophistication than flat black can deliver.

- 1. Interior Expressions low-sheen acrylic paint in Impact, \$74.90 for 4L, Haymes. 2. Matte Finish Interior paint in Classic Navy, \$55.50 for a quart (946ml), Jolie Home. 3. Matte Finish Interior paint in Graphite, \$55.50 for a quart, Jolie Home. 4. Endure Interior low sheen paint in Night Blue, \$89.40 for 4L, Taubmans. 5. Colour Natural Limewash Interior paint in Onyx, \$120 for 4L, Bauwerk. 6. Pure wall flat Interior paint in Boro 2, \$103 for 4L, Murobond. 7. Matt Emulsion Interior paint in Tattoo, \$100 for 2.5L, Graham & Brown. 8. Chroma Acrylic flat Interior paint in Scope, \$119 for 4L, Axolotl Paint.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SHANNON MCGRIATH

light... not white

Everybody loves a white room, but if there's one thing colour experts will tell you, it's that not all whites are created equal, as Sarah from Watty explains. "All whites carry an undertone of one colour or another." And Rachel from Taubmans agrees. "White is not the absence of colour. The most coloured of all light is daylight – while appearing white, it is in fact made up of all the colours of the spectrum. There is no such thing as a pure white."

Three shades on our radar right now are creamy pale greys, soft cloudy pinks and fleshy neutrals that are all in the light-not-white colour scheme that adds brightness as well as depth and warmth. "We see a trend toward white tones that are from a stonier palette – think of brick mortar shades," says Emmaline Cox, design director at Axolotl Paint. "These can still

be leaning towards the grey or brown base and are softer than a stark white. Flat and textured finishes work best with these tones as they give a relaxed feel."

Light paint is your ally. "If you're looking to make your space bright, open and create the illusion of space, then I would recommend opting for a lighter shade," says Lisa Rickert, founder of Jolie Home.

The intensity of your chosen paint shade is another consideration. Many whites and neutral colours are available in different colour percentages – full, half or quarter-strength. Use this to your advantage, taking into consideration that not all spaces receive the same amount of light. Select paints that will incrementally brighten a space: for instance, painting a dark hallway in quarter strength, leading into a bedroom with good daylight in the full-strength shade to get a similar tone throughout your home. □



LIGHT HUES
This collection of creamy greys and taupe are both cool and warm, but all of them add brightness to a room, says Natalie.

- 1. Endure Interior low sheen paint in Crisp White, \$71.90 for 4L, Taubmans. 2. Eggshell Acrylic Interior paint in Rubble, \$105.97 for 4L, Porter's Paints. 3. Pure wall flat interior paint in Bristle, \$88 for 4L, Murobond. 4. Matt Emulsion Interior paint in Glimmerous, \$100 for 2.5L, Graham & Brown. 5. Interior Expressions low sheen acrylic paint in Greycology 1, \$74.90 for 4L, Haymes. 6. Matte Finish Interior paint in Antique White, \$55.50 for a quart (946ml), Jolie Home. 7. Colour Natural Limewash interior paint in Whitewash, \$120 for 4L, Bauwerk. 8. Chroma Acrylic Flat Interior paint in Cumulus50, \$119 for 4L, Axolotl Paint.

PHOTOGRAPHY: RUSCOTE INTERIOR DESIGN; ALEXANDRA KOPCHIK; CHURCH; DECUS INTERIORS; ARCHITECTURE; LUGI ROSSOLI; ARCHITECTS; BOLDER; PAUL WINE

OPPOSITES ATTRACT
This contrasting stairwell by Decus Interiors makes a punchy entry in a neutral space.