

# The evolution of the home

by LISA KOOISTRA

As our lives **change**,  
our home should evolve  
in its style or function or  
a combination of both  
to meet those changes

**Y**ou’ve undoubtedly heard the term “forever home,” but does it actually exist? Every few years in our lifetime, whether on purpose or not, our circumstances change – a new job, a new spouse, a new child, a change of scenery. All this to say, our lives change and in turn, so do our homes.

At least, that’s what should happen. Think about all the milestones you’ve enjoyed through the last 10 to 15 years, big and small. If your home hasn’t changed in that time, then it’s probably not working for you anymore. Our homes should evolve, whether in its style, function or more likely, a combination of both.

How do you endure all that change? And more importantly, how does your budget survive? Whether you’re building, renovating or updating, here are my two tips to lead your home through life’s paces.

### >>>Timeless appeal

The most painless way of surviving change is by choosing timeless finishes and furnishings for your home from the get-go. Neutrals never seem to go out of style, and there’s a very good reason for that. Neutral colours have universal appeal because, if you think about it, there’s not much about this palette to offend. It is subtle, simple and frankly, it doesn’t have a lot to say. While this last point might sound somewhat negative, it’s actually a good thing — especially in relation to longevity. Rather than making a bold statement, neutral hues tend to hang back and let the other elements do all the talking. Focal points and pops of colour can come in small but potent doses, and then when it’s no longer in style, it’s relatively easy and cheap to update. Think upholstery and bedding, window coverings, area rugs, artwork, and small pieces of furniture. Meanwhile, go neutral for larger-scale elements that are also generally more expensive, including flooring, countertops and cabinets, backsplash, appliances, walls and even larger pieces of furniture. By going neutral, you won’t have to update these any time soon.

### >>>But change does happen

Whether you like it or not, change happens. Some of my clients’ first instinct is to resist change, and that never works out well. Instead, it’s best to embrace it. The “timeless” tip above admittedly requires some forethought when planning, designing and outfitting your home. But if you haven’t thought quite that far ahead in the past, don’t be afraid to make some changes as life happens, to enhance your home’s function and ensure it performs the way you



need and want it to. This is the main reason the home decor and renovation business is such a booming one.

Try to get ahead of life’s changes. We don’t always know what’s coming down the pipe, so when purchasing something new for the home, always look for a multi-functional option. Aside from performing its primary function, multi-purpose pieces will always give you a lot more mileage by virtue of their design. For example, an ottoman that doubles as storage and triples as extra seating or a table-type surface gives the standard foot-rest-only ottoman a run for its money. The great news is, multi-functional design has found its way into every room, so there’s no excuse!

I believe the “forever home” is more about adaptability than a particular property with a set style. As our tastes evolve and our household structure changes and grows, a home’s interior needs to bend to meet those needs. A well-designed home can meet every need, and look great at the same time.



Lisa Kooistra is the creative director and principal designer for Lisa Kooistra Design. This multi-disciplinary design firm has become known for creating exceptional well curated interiors and custom builds. [lkdesigns.ca](mailto:lkdesigns.ca) [@lisakooistradesigns](https://www.instagram.com/lisakooistradesigns)



## Bedroom

"Bedding and colourful throw pillows are one of the easiest ways to reintroduce a colour into a bedroom. If you aren't sure which pillow colours best fit your space, look around your room and see what is already there. Think about if you're drawn more to earth tones or vibrant hues. Keeping your main pieces in neutral shades helps with longevity, while creating impact in the smaller details."

– **Designer Lisa Kooistra, Lisa Kooistra Designs**



Photo: Blynda DaCosta

## Bathroom

"When you think of adding colour to your bathroom, wallpaper may be the last item on your list. However, adding wallpaper is a great way to brighten up a small powder room. The powder room is self-contained, so you can go bold with colour and pattern. If the idea of covering the entire room is a bit too much for your taste, you can accent one wall. Your powder room will not only feel stylish, but also cozy and inviting."

– **Designer Brenda Danso, Brenda Danso Interior Design**



Photo: Janelle Gokule

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