

## INTERIOR DESIGNER AND PROPERTY GURU CHRISTINE YORATH

**Design is a funny word. Some people think design means how it looks. But of course, if you dig deeper, it's really how it works. - Steve Jobs**

**Recognizing the need is the primary condition for design. - Charles Eames**



**When I was a teenager studying Art at A Level, we had a young supply teacher who taught me to look at design in everything. At the time my interest was fashion design and I had a wonderful lady who made almost everything I wore just from my drawings and as a young night club going WAG, that meant a new outfit every week. However, I began to see where good design sits in our everyday life and why bad design makes life less comfortable. I now think of it as function and form.**



When I start a new interior design scheme I consider comfort and storage up at the top of my list of 'must haves'. I often see an image of a room which looks striking and attractive but which is merely photogenic because when looking closer it becomes obvious that the seating wouldn't be comfortable, maybe it's too hard or the back support is too low or too straight or the seat is too low, and that's only one element of where it's not working for me.

I have eaten in restaurants where the cutlery, at first impression, is very cutting edge (excuse the pun) but which is very uncomfortable to hold and slips out of one's grip. One of my friends used to have tea spoons where the handle was a spiral of metal, it was impossible to stir a cup of coffee, especially sitting on her three-legged kitchen chairs!

There is one apartment development in Leeds where the door handles selected by the developer looked very modern when the building was first completed but actually using the handle was like holding a razor blade.

We are all consumers and as such we can all influence good design to mean not only pleasing on the eye but something which gives a good feeling to use. I specify lots of bespoke furniture and before my clients even look

at fabrics and trims for a sofa we discuss height (so there's enough back support) width (to suit the available space) and depth (you don't want the front of the seat ending mid thigh) then the shape and size of the arms (do they need to support a cup and saucer) the type and shape of the back cushions (scatter, fixed, box, etc) the incline of the back (is it for a reception area of an office or a TV lounge?) and the incline of the seat (do you want to drop back in to it or sit level) then there's the fillings before umpteen more things to consider. It's hard to think how a ready-made sofa can ever be anything more than a compromise.

If you're going out shopping for home items sometime soon try to think of how you will use the item and if it will be comfortable to sit in for a long time. When you're undecided between two choices, this guideline might help you.

For your little City Dweller quiz, have a look at the images on the left and decide which you feel have been well designed...

**For more advice go to [www.christineyorath.com](http://www.christineyorath.com) or get in touch by emailing [christine@yorathgroup.com](mailto:christine@yorathgroup.com) or ringing 07836 737300.**

*Till next time,  
Christine*

