

Instructional Terminology

Interior Design 50.0408.00



This Instructional Terminology is aligned to both the Program Blueprint for Instruction and Assessment and the Instructional Framework. It corresponds with the technical standards adopted on July 17, 2022. Use of content-specific terminology is provided to help identify consistent definitions.

1, 2, 3

60-30-10 rule - A guideline for distributing colors or patterns in interior spaces, where 60% is the dominant color, 30% is secondary, and 10% is for accents

A

A-frame roof - A roof with steep sides that form a triangular shape, extending to the ground, resembling an "A"

Accent lighting - Focused light used to emphasize specific features or areas and create ambiance

Accessibility - The ease of use and movement through a space, ensuring it is usable by everyone, including individuals with disabilities

Achromatic (Neutral) - A color scheme made of black, white, and gray, devoid of other colors

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) - A federal law guaranteeing equal rights and access for individuals with disabilities

Advertising - The promotion of a product or service

Ambient or general lighting - The main source of light in a room, providing overall illumination

American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) - A professional organization for interior designers

Analogous - A color scheme using three to five hues located next to one another on the color wheel

Anthropometrics - The study of human body measurements and proportions

Appliances - Mechanical or electrical devices in homes designed to perform specific tasks

Architectural detail - Specific design elements that enhance the look and functionality of a space

Architectural lettering - A standardized style of writing used in technical drawings for clarity

Architectural scale - A specialized tool used to measure and create drawings to scale in architecture

Architectural services - Professional services encompassing building and interior space design

Architectural styles - Distinctive design methods that represent historical or cultural periods in architecture, interior spaces, and furniture

Architectural symbols - Standard graphical representations used in architectural drawings to depict various elements

Architecture templates - Guides used to draw common architectural elements to scale

Area - The space within a two-dimensional shape, calculated by multiplying length by width

Area rug - A portable, decorative floor covering available in standard sizes or custom-made

Artificial lighting - Light produced by man-made sources

Asymmetrical balance - When elements are unevenly distributed on either side of a central axis but still create visual balance

Audible texture - The sound quality produced by a texture, such as the sound of walking on gravel

AutoCAD - A computer-aided design software used for precise 2D drawings

B

Backsplash - The wall area around countertops, especially near sinks and stoves, covered with protective material comparable to tile or stone

Balance - The visual distribution of weight within a design

Barstools - Tall chairs used at bars or high counters

Basic stock - Store merchandise that is continuously in demand and always available

Basic weave - A simple pattern where one thread passes over and under another

Bedroom and bath linens - Textiles such as sheets, pillowcases, towels, and bathmats used in bedrooms and bathrooms

Blinds - Window coverings made of vertical slats that can be raised, lowered, opened, or closed

Blueprint - Technical architectural drawings representing a building or interior space

Budgeting considerations - Factors influencing financial planning, material selection, and furniture choices in design projects

Builder showrooms - Display spaces where builders display interior design options including flooring, lighting, and hardware

Building codes - Regulations that establish standards for construction and building occupancy to ensure

Business negotiations - Discussions aimed at reaching agreements in business transactions

Business partnership - A business jointly owned by two or more people who share the responsibility of profit and loss

C

Carpet - A floor covering made of woven, looped, or punched fibers

Carpet pad - The cushioning layer placed between the carpet and the subfloor

Carpet pile - The texture, density, and feel of carpet fibers

Ceiling tiles - Lightweight panels used to cover ceilings

Cellulose fibers - Fibers derived from plant materials

Ceramic tile - Clay-based tiles that are often glazed

Circulation patterns - The paths people take to move through a space

Clearances - The space required around objects for comfortable and safe use

Client interview - A meeting to gather information about a client's design needs and preferences

Client relations - The management of interactions between designers and clients

Color - An element of design produced when light is reflected back to the eye

Color board - A collection of color and material samples used to present a design concept

Color intensity - The brightness or dullness of a color

Color psychology - The study of how color affects people emotionally and psychologically

Color schemes - Planned combinations of colors to create a cohesive design

Color temperature - The perceived warmth or coolness of light, measured in Kelvin (K)

Color theory - The study of how colors are perceived and how they interact when combined

Commercial design - Interior design focused on business or public spaces

Complementary color scheme - A color scheme using two colors opposite each other on the color wheel

Complementary colors - Colors positioned opposite each other on the color wheel

Computer-aided drafting (CAD) - Software used to create precise digital drawings and models

Construction documents - Technical drawings and specifications for building projects

Contrast - The difference between elements such as color, texture, or shape

Cool colors - Colors comparable to greens, blues, and violets

Cost of goods - The price of materials, furnishings, and appliances

Cotton - A soft, breathable natural fiber from the cotton plant

Countertop - A flat surface atop cabinets used as a workspace

Creative eye - The ability to visualize and create aesthetically pleasing designs

Cubic feet - The volume of space calculated by multiplying length, width, and height (L x W x H)

Cultural factors - Societal customs and beliefs that influence design decisions

Curtains - Fabric or material hung from a rod to cover windows or other openings

Curved line - A line that bends, conveying softness and fluidity

Customer's perceived value - The amount a customer is willing to pay based on their perceived benefits and needs

Cut pile carpet - A type of carpet weave where the loops are cut, resulting in a soft and plush surface

D

Dashed line - A line made up of short strokes with spaces in between, often used to indicate hidden elements in drawings

Decorative accessories - Objects used to enhance the aesthetic appeal of a space

Demographics - Characteristics of a population, including age, gender, or income, that influence design choices

Design board - A physical or digital presentation tool displaying design elements and concepts

Design concepts - Initial ideas and proposals to solve design challenges

Design resources - Tools, materials, and information used by interior designers to create spaces

Design styles - Distinct qualities and characteristics of artistic movements that influence interior design

Diagonal line - A line at an angle, suggesting movement or tension

Drafting board - A portable surface with a straight edge, used for creating precise technical drawings

Drapery - Pleated fabric panels used to cover or accent windows

Drapery fabric - Fabrics specifically designed for hanging well and creating beautiful folds and pleats

Drawing space or working space - The area on a drawing sheet designated for technical drawings

Drawing to scale - Using a smaller, proportional measurement to represent real-life dimensions in drawings

Durability - The ability of materials to withstand wear and last over time

Dye lot - A batch of textiles dyed at the same time, ensuring color consistency

E

Electrical systems - The network of wiring and components that distribute and control electricity in a building

Elements of design - The fundamental tools used in design, including space, line, form, texture, pattern, light, and color

Elevation - A two-dimensional drawing showing a vertical view of a building or interior wall

Emphasis - The focal point in a design that draws attention

Energy efficient - Using minimal energy while maintaining high performance

Engineered wood - Wood made from layers bonded together to create a strong product

Ergonomics - The design of equipment and spaces for optimal human comfort and efficiency

Estimating - The process of roughly calculating the value, quantity, or extent of something

Ethics - Moral principles that guide a person's behavior or decisions

Exit - A designated pathway for leaving a building, especially during emergencies

F

Fabric characteristics - The qualities or features of fabrics that determine their performance and suitability

Fabric construction - The process of creating fabric from fibers or yarns using different methods

Fabric dyeing - The process of immersing textiles in dye to change their color

Fabric printing - The application of ink onto fabric to create patterns or designs

Fabric selvedge edge - The finished edge of a fabric that prevents it from unraveling

Faucets - Devices that control the flow of water in sinks, bathtubs, or showers

Felt - A non-woven fabric made by matting and bonding fibers together

Fibers - The basic building blocks of textiles, which can be natural or synthetic

Filaments - Long, continuous fibers that can be spun into yarn or used as-is in textiles

Fire retardant - A chemical applied to materials to reduce flammability and resist burning

Flammability - The ease with which a material ignites and spreads fire

Flat roof - A roof that appears flat but has a slight slope to allow for water drainage

Floor coverings - Materials used to cover floors, including carpets, tiles, and rugs

Floor plan - A top-down view of a space showing the layout of rooms and features

Flooring - Materials used to finish and cover a floor surface

Fluorescent light - Artificial light created from chemicals inside a sealed glass tube

Focal point - The area of a design that is most emphasized and draws attention

Form or shape - The contour, outline, or edge of an object in design

Foundation - The structural base that supports a building

Framing - The skeletal structure of a building, usually made from wood or metal

Frieze carpet - A type of cut pile carpet with highly twisted fibers for a textured appearance

Furniture - Movable objects designed to support activities within a space

Furniture arrangement - The strategic placement of furniture to optimize both function and aesthetics

Furniture template - A guide used to draw furniture to scale when drafting floor plans

G

Gable roof - A roof that forms a triangular shape with two sloping sides meeting at a central ridge

Gambrel roof - A roof with double slopes on each side of a central ridge, often used in barn-style structures

Gestalt principles - Psychological theories that explain how the human brain organizes and interprets visual information

Golden mean/Golden ratio - A mathematical ratio often found in nature, used to create aesthetically pleasing compositions

Gradation - A gradual change in color, size, or shape in design

Graph paper - Paper printed with a grid of lines used for drawing floor plans or technical drawings

Green design - An environmentally friendly approach to interior design that minimizes harm to the environment

Guest circulation - The designated pathways for guests to move through public areas in a home or building

Guidelines - Lightly drawn lines that guide the height and alignment of architectural lettering

H

Hand - The tactile feel of a fabric, namely soft, rough, or smooth

Harmony - The balanced combination of design elements to create a pleasing overall look

Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) - Systems that control indoor temperature, humidity, and air quality

Hip roof - A roof design where all sides slope gently downwards towards the walls

Home furnishings and appliances - Items used to equip and decorate a home, including their features and characteristics

Horizontal line - A line that runs parallel to the ground, conveying a sense of rest or calmness

Hospitality design - Interior design focused on hotels, restaurants, and other service industry spaces

Hue - The name of a color, such as red, blue, or yellow

Human behavior factors - Psychological, social, and environmental factors that influence how people think and behave in a space

Human factors - Considerations related to how people interact with and experience the built environment

I

Imperial measurement (English) - A system of measurement using yards, feet, and inches

Incandescent light - Artificial light produced by heating a tungsten filament with electricity

Industrial Revolution - A period of major industrialization in the 1900s that transformed manufacturing from manual to mechanized processes

Interior decorating - Enhancing the look and feel of an interior space primarily through furnishings, art, and accessories

Interior design - The art and science of creating functional and aesthetically pleasing interior spaces, with attention to safety and well-being

Interior elevation - A two-dimensional drawing of an interior wall, showing it as viewed from a straight-on perspective

Interior latex paint - Water-based paint designed for use on interior walls

Interior moldings - Decorative trim used to enhance the appearance of walls, floors, and ceilings

Interior systems - The various elements and networks involved in designing, constructing, and managing interior spaces

International Building Code (IBC) - A set of regulations that establish minimum standards for designing and constructing buildings, created by the International Code Council (ICC)

Inventory of existing resources - A list of materials, furniture, and features currently available in a space

Invoice - A document listing the items, quantities, and costs for goods or services provided

J

K

Kitchen and bath fixtures - Permanent functional elements in kitchens and bathrooms, including sinks, faucets, and showers

Knit - A method of creating fabric by inter-looping yarns

L

Labor - The work involved in implementing a design project, often factored into project costs

Laminate - A synthetic material made by bonding layers together under heat and pressure, used for surfaces such as countertops

Leather - A durable, flexible material made from animal hides

Legend or key - A guide on a drawing that explains symbols, colors, or abbreviations used

Lettering guide - A template used to create uniform writing in technical drawings

Life safety considerations - Design elements that protect occupants during emergencies, including proper exits and fire safety measures

Light emitting diode (LED) - A type of energy-efficient light created from a semiconductor

Light reflectance value - The percentage of light that a surface reflects

Lighting - The use of natural or artificial light sources in interior spaces

Line - A continuous mark that defines space, contours, and outlines, conveying movement and emotion

Line types - Different styles of lines used in technical drawings to represent various design elements

Line weights - The thickness or prominence of lines in a drawing, used to indicate importance or depth

Linen - A strong, absorbent natural fiber made from the flax plant

Linoleum - A natural, biodegradable flooring material made from linseed oil and other substances

Looped pile carpet - Carpet with loops of fiber that remain uncut, creating a durable texture

M

Mansard roof - A double-sloped roof with different pitches, allowing for livable space in the attic

Manufactured fibers - Fibers created through chemical processes, also known as synthetic fibers

Market research - Research conducted to understand customer needs and preferences

Marketing practices - Strategies used to promote interior design services and products

Maslow's hierarchy - A psychological theory outlining five essential human needs

Material costs - The expenses associated with purchasing materials for a design project

Material samples - Physical pieces of materials such as fabric, flooring, or paint used in design presentations to display textures and colors

Materials - The physical components used in interior design, including wood, metal, glass, stone, and textiles

Measurements - Numerical values representing the dimensions of a space or object

Mental visualization - The ability to mentally create and manipulate objects and environments

Merchandise - Products available for sale

Metamerism - A phenomenon where an object appears to change color depending on the light source illuminating it

Metric - A decimal-based system of measurement used in most countries

Model homes - Display houses that showcase interior design possibilities to potential buyers

Monochromatic - A color scheme that uses various tints, tones, and shades of a single color

Mood board - A collage of images, materials, and text used to convey the style and feeling of a design concept

N

National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) - A professional organization focused on kitchen and bathroom design

Natural fibers - Fibers derived from plant or animal sources

Natural lighting - Light coming from natural sources such as the sun or fire

Natural stone - Tiles or slabs made from naturally occurring rock material

Negative space - The empty or open space surrounding an object in a design

Neutral color scheme - A color scheme primarily using whites, blacks, grays, browns, or muted tones found in nature

Nonwoven - Fabrics made by bonding or felting fibers together without weaving or knitting

Nylon - A strong synthetic fiber known for its elasticity and resistance to abrasion

O

Opposition in design - Creating contrast by placing elements with differing characteristics next to or near each other

Organizational skills - The ability to manage time, resources, and tasks efficiently

Overhead costs - Expenses involved in running a business, including rent, payroll, and utilities

P

Paint - A liquid substance applied to surfaces that dries into a solid layer, used for coloring and protecting surfaces

Paneling - Sheets of material, often wood or synthetic, applied to surfaces such as walls for decorative or functional purposes

Pattern - The repeated decorative design found in textiles, art, or nature

Perimeter - The total distance around the outer edges of a shape or area

Personal vs. public space - The distinction between areas intended for individual use and those meant for shared use

Perspective drawing - A type of drawing used to convey depth and realism, turning a flat 2D drawing into a 3D representation, commonly one-point or two-point perspective

Physical needs - Necessities required for survival, including air, water, shelter, and food

Plain weave - A simple weaving pattern where threads alternate over and under one another

Plaster - A mixture of lime, gypsum, sand, and water used to coat walls and ceilings

Plumbing - The system of pipes, fixtures, and devices used for water distribution and waste removal in buildings

Polyester - A durable synthetic fiber known for its strength, wrinkle resistance, and quick-drying properties

Porcelain tile - A dense, impervious ceramic tile made from refined clay and fired at high temperatures

Positive space - The space an object or element occupies within a design

Primary colors - Red, yellow, and blue—colors that cannot be made by mixing other colors

Principles of design - Guidelines for combining design elements including balance, rhythm, harmony, emphasis, scale, and proportion to create visually pleasing spaces

Private circulation - The pathways used for personal or private activities within a home or workspace

Product development - The phase between conceptual design and manufacturing when a product's design is fully developed

Product markup - A percentage or flat amount added to the cost of a product to determine its selling price

Professional portfolio - A collection showcasing a designer's best work and achievements, often in a visually appealing format

Profit - The money earned after deducting the costs of goods and business expenses

Programming phase - The initial stage of a design project where information is gathered and analyzed to guide the design process

Project timeline - A schedule outlining the sequence of tasks and the duration of a design project

Proportion - The size relationship of one part of a design to another and to the whole

Protein fibers - Fibers derived from animals, such as wool or silk

Proximity - The grouping of related items together to create a sense of connection in design

Psychological needs - Emotional or mental needs, comparable to safety, love, and self-esteem, which influence human behavior

Q

R

Radial balance - A design principle where elements radiate from a central point in a circular pattern

Rayon - A versatile, absorbent manufactured fiber made from regenerated cellulose

Recycled products - Items made from materials that have been previously used and repurposed

Rendering - A realistic 3D representation of a design, often created with the actual materials proposed for the project, either hand-drawn or via CAD

Renewable resources - Materials that can be naturally replenished over time, making them sustainable for long-term use

Repetition - The recurrence of the same element within a design to create rhythm and unity

Residential building construction - Companies that build homes or residential spaces

Residential design - Interior design focused on single-family and multi-family homes

Retail - The sale of goods or services directly to consumers

Retailing - The process of selling products or services to customers

Return on investment - The financial gain from a design project relative to its cost

Rhythm - A visual pattern or movement created by repeating elements in a design

Roof styles - Various roof designs that affect both the visual appearance and functionality of a building

Rule of thirds - A design principle that divides a composition into thirds both horizontally and vertically to achieve balance

S

Sample board - A board displaying the available color or pattern options for a product

Satin weave - A smooth, shiny fabric pattern created by floating warp yarns over multiple weft yarns before passing under one

Saxony carpet - Plush carpet with cut, evenly twisted yarns that create a smooth surface

Scale - A ratio that compares the real-life size of an object or space to a model or drawing

Scale and proportion - The relationship of an object's size to other objects or the space as a whole

Schedules - Organized lists of information about furniture, fixtures, materials, and equipment in a design project

Secondary colors - Orange, green, and violet—colors created by mixing two primary colors

Selling price - The price set for a product, including all costs and profit margins, often referred to as MSRP or MAP pricing

Service circulation - Pathways used by service providers or for specific functions including deliveries, maintenance, or back-of-house operations

Shade - A color mixed with black to make it darker

Sheer window panels - Thin, translucent fabric coverings for windows

Shrinkage - The reduction in size of fabric after washing or drying

Shutters - Hinged window coverings with adjustable slats that can open or close, typically made of wood or plastic

Smart homes - Homes equipped with systems that allow appliances, lighting, HVAC, and other devices to be monitored and controlled through an app

Smoke detectors - Devices that sense smoke and alert occupants of potential fires through sound or visual signals

Sole proprietorship - A business owned by a single person, who is responsible for all profits and losses

Solid wood - Wood made from a single piece rather than composite or engineered materials

Sourcing locally - Procuring materials from nearby suppliers to reduce transportation costs and environmental impact

Space - The area within a room or building that is used or designed

Space planning - The process of organizing furniture and fixtures to optimize the use of space and direct traffic flow, divided into four zones: public, work/service, private, and storage

Spatial envelope - The boundaries that define the space to be designed, including walls, floors, and ceilings

Specialized design - A focused area of interior design, such as lighting or furniture design

Spinneret - A device through which synthetic polymers are extruded to form fibers

Split-complementary - A color scheme using a base color and the two colors adjacent to its complementary color on the color wheel

Sprinkler systems - Automatic fire protection systems that release water when triggered by heat

Square footage - The total area of a space, calculated by multiplying length by width (L x W)

Stain resistance - The ability of a fabric or material to resist staining from spills or dirt, often due to chemical treatment

Staple fibers - Short fibers spun together to form yarns

Structural building components - The essential parts that make up a building's framework

Sustainability - The use of materials and practices that have minimal impact on the environment

Sustainable practice - Design methods that minimize negative environmental effects both now and, in the future,

Symbols - Standardized graphical representations of objects or concepts in technical drawings

Symmetrical balance - A design principle where elements are arranged equally on both sides of a central axis, creating a mirror image

Synthetic fibers - Man-made fibers created through chemical processes

T

T-square - A drafting tool used to draw parallel lines and as a guide for other drawing instruments

Tactile texture - The actual feel of a surface, such as smooth or rough

Tape measure - A flexible tool used to measure distances and dimensions

Target market - The specific group of customers a product or service is intended for

Task lighting - Focused lighting used for specific tasks or activities

Tertiary colors - Colors made by combining a primary and a secondary color, including red-orange or blue green

Tetrad color scheme - A color scheme using four colors evenly spaced on the color wheel

Textiles - Materials made from fibers, yarns, or fabrics, used for various applications in interior design

Texture - The surface quality of an object that can be seen or felt

Tile - A hard, durable surface material available in various sizes and materials for covering floors and walls

Tint - A color mixed with white to make it lighter

Title block - A section on a drawing that contains identifying information about the project and the drawing itself

Tone - A color mixed with gray

Transition - The smooth flow or connection between design elements

Trend awareness - Knowledge of past, present, and emerging styles in interior design

Triadic color scheme - A color scheme using three colors evenly spaced on the color wheel

Trim molding - Decorative strips, usually made of wood or plastic, used to finish the edges of floors, ceilings, or walls

Tunnel test - A test measuring how materials react to flame, such as ASTM E84

Twill weave - A weaving pattern that creates visible diagonal lines by alternating warp and weft threads at specific intervals

U

Units of measurement - Standardized quantities used to express dimensions, area, or volume

Unity - The harmony between all elements in a design, creating a sense of completeness

Universal design - Design principles that ensure spaces are accessible and usable by people of all abilities

Upholstered furniture - Furniture covered with fabric, padding, and springs for comfort

Upholstery - The materials used to cover and cushion furniture

Upholstery fabric - Durable fabrics specifically designed for covering furniture

V

Valance - A short curtain covering only the top portion of a window

Value - The lightness or darkness of a color

Variety - The use of different elements to add interest to a design

Vertical line - A line running up and down, symbolizing height and strength

Vinyl - A synthetic plastic material used for upholstery, flooring, or wall coverings

Visual merchandising - The practice of arranging product displays to maximize sales

Visual spectrum - The portion of the electromagnetic spectrum visible to the human eye, roughly 380-750 nanometers (nm)

Visual texture - The perceived texture of a surface, namely a photograph of a rough surface

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) - Harmful chemicals emitted from some building materials, substances, or furnishings

W

Wall and ceiling coverings - Materials used to finish and decorate walls and ceilings

Wall elevation - A two-dimensional head-on view of a wall showing its features and dimensions

Wallpaper - Decorative material, usually paper, fabric, or vinyl, applied to walls

Walls - Vertical structures that divide or enclose spaces

Warm colors - Colors such as reds, yellows, and oranges

Warp - The vertical threads in weaving

Weaves - The patterns or techniques used to create woven fabrics

Weft - The horizontal threads in weaving

Wholesale price - The cost paid by a business for goods intended for resale

Window coverings - Materials including curtains, drapery, blinds, or shades used to cover windows

Window shades - Rolls of fabric hung at the top of a window that can be pulled down

Window styles - Different designs of windows that affect both the appearance and function of a building

Window treatments - Functional and decorative coverings for windows

Windows - Openings in walls or roofs that allow light or air to enter

Wood paneling - Wooden boards used to cover walls for decorative or functional purposes

Wool - A natural fiber from animals such as sheep, known for its warmth, durability, and self-extinguishing properties

Work circulation - Pathways used for work-related activities in homes or workspaces

Work triangle - An imaginary set of lines connecting the range, sink, and refrigerator in a kitchen to improve efficiency

Wrinkle resistant - Fabrics treated or constructed to resist wrinkles

Wyzenbeek test - A test measuring fabric abrasion resistance, often used to select appropriate fabrics for specific uses

X

Y

Yard - A unit of length equal to 3 feet or 36 inches

Yardage - The amount of fabric, measured in yards

Yarns - Long strands of fibers twisted or spun together to create fabrics

Z

Zoning laws - Regulations controlling land use and building specifications in designated areas