

Creating Your Home Style File

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Getting Started

Whether you are starting a home project on your own or you are hiring a professional to help with the desired results, getting organized is your first step for a successful outcome. Now, I can hear the collective groans at the thought of *another* item on your to-do list, but I promise you this activity will be well worth it, and even fun.

1. **Begin with a large expandable file folder** (pick a file folder that is fun and inspirational, like something in hot pink!) and a bunch of individual file folders.
2. **Label the individual file folders** with the rooms in your home – for example, Living Room, Family Room, Dining Room, Master Bedroom, Master Bath, Guest Room, etc.
3. **Label a second set of file folders** with the rooms in your home, followed by the word Dream Home – for example, Living Room – Dream Home.
4. **Place each of these folders in your expandable folder**, with the Dream Home folders behind the others.

What you now have in front of you is an expandable folder with an individual folder labeled with every room in your home, as well as labeled for your Dream Home. Ok! The hard part is over – now for the fun!

Recreating Your Room

Begin by working in the room that is most important for you to finish decorating. Often, this is the most “lived-in” room in your home, such as your Family Room. **What you want to do is recreate the room for your file.** Take digital pictures of the room, including close-ups of fabrics, carpets, and flooring. Gather any fabric samples that you may have, such as the window treatment fabric and the furniture upholstery. Get paint chips of the paint that has been used, or compare the pictures that you took to your actual room to verify that the color is accurate. If you are feeling especially adventurous, draw a to-scale layout of the floor plan on graph paper, noting entryways, windows, fireplaces, and furniture. Repeat this process for every room in your home, being sure to include your entryway and large hallways. These folders will represent your home as it is today.



Your Dream Home Folders

Your Dream Home folders will help identify your likes and dislikes, and define your personal style. Are you traditional, modern, contemporary, eclectic? Knowing this can even help you decide what magazines are right for you.

Begin with that big stack of decorating magazines in your family room. You know, the magazines you barely got through the first time, and that you will never have time to go through again. Now, begin ripping out pages. **Rip out anything that you like and anything that inspires you.** But! Keep it specific. If you love that flooring and think it would be great in a kitchen, place that picture in your dream home kitchen folder. If you don't have a sun room but want one, create a file labeled Sunroom – Dream Home - and begin collecting pictures. If you see window treatments that would look great in your living room, rip the picture out! Mark these pages for the item that is inspiring you – if you don't, in two months you may not remember why you pulled the picture out. On occasion, rip out a picture that you hate. Be sure to mark what it is you dislike – this will be especially helpful if you ever work with someone in the future, and you need to describe your likes and dislikes. **A picture is worth a thousand words.**

Your Home Style File

What you have created is Your Home Style File. Now, the most important step – place your Style File in your car. Yes, your car. Have it with you every time you go out to run errands. Why? How many times have you run into a store to pick up a home décor item, and you see something that just might work on that corner table in your living room. You *think* it'll work.... you *think* that's the right shade of blue... so you buy it! And then you get home and that blue couldn't be more wrong?! The Style File is here to help! When you see that perfect item – pull out your style file. Everything you need will be right there at your fingertips – never again will you pick up the perfect item in the perfectly wrong shade of blue!

You are now ready to tackle that project. Have you been desperate to re-do your Master Bedroom? Your Style File will help lead the way. Pull out your existing Master Bedroom File, look at your Dream File, and begin the **plan to get you from today and oh so blah! to dreamy and ooo-la-la!** And you will be pleased to see that just as Your Style File helps define your style, it will only be a matter of time before your *home* depicts your style. **And every home has a story to tell... yours.**



What To Do Next

I hope you have found the ideas that I have shared with you in this article helpful. If you haven't reviewed my website, there are design articles and other great resources there.

You can find them at

http://www.marylarsendesigns.com/free_stuff.htm

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Readers say they love the information.

If you already subscribe to my newsletter and have worked with me in the past, I thank you. Please visit my website often to find out about new services and products that can help **your home tell your story.**

To your continued success,

-Mary

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