



Coastal Design Guide

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Coastal Design Guide

Coastal style is inspired by the beach. This leaves a lot of room for creative inspiration, but the basics are ample light, natural materials, breezy spaces, and a casual feel. Coastal style comes in numerous versions, depending on the region of coastline you're inspired by (or live near).

A nautical twist on coastal style is especially associated with areas like New England that have a long history of seafaring.

Inspired by turquoise waters and lush landscape like the tropics? A laid-back, tropical approach to coastal style with bold, citrus colors might be right for you.

In the south, think breezy fabrics and staying cool with an airy look, ceiling fans and colors that reflect light.

Although Coastal is considered a style, I prefer to think of it as a mood that can be created using several different styles such as Transitional, Contemporary, Farmhouse and even Traditional. We visit the definition of each of these styles below.

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But the point is to think soft, easy furniture, woven accents and the colors of sea and sky that create a comfortable, relaxing, casual living space.

Hallmarks of coastal style:

- Whitewashed surfaces and painted furniture
- Bare wood floors
- Natural materials with texture such as sea grass, jute, wicker, rattan, linen, and cotton
- Furniture built for relaxation, such as sectional sofas, hanging chairs and easy, breezy slipcovered pieces
- Colors inspired by the coast

Let's Talk About Coastal Colors. Does Coastal Have to Be Blue?

Most of the pictures you will see for Coastal Décor will include a lot of blue. Inspired by the ocean and the sky, blues certainly speak Coastal, but your room doesn't have to be blue. If you think of a coastal landscape, depending on the time of the day, you are likely to see yellow, orange, red, greens, beige, brown, purple, grey, white as well as blue. So, get creative!



Color is a great way to set the mood and can be done easily with paint, pillows, art, and accessories, so use it in a way that represents your personality. Are you naturally attracted to bold colors, bright colors, or neutrals? Did you know every color comes in each of those saturations? So, the first thing to decide is which saturations draw you in. Neutrals are calming, Brights are like a clear, sunny day, and bold colors are full of energy.

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Beyond saturation is the actual color or hue. Picking a palette of colors that go well together is easy if you use basic color theory. You probably learned color theory in art class in school. It's about picking colors that are pleasing when put together in certain ways, such as directly across from one another or next to one another on the color wheel. Color is an important part of your design, but it doesn't have to be typical.



Let's Look at the Styles That Can Be Used to Create a Coastal Look.

Transitional Style

Transitional style pairs the classic, time-tested appeal of a traditional look with the clean silhouettes and understated color palette of contemporary style. By avoiding the extremes of either style — like the elaborate scrolling and embellishments of traditional style or the most cutting-edge contemporary pieces — transitional style walks an elegant line between the two while carving its own distinct niche. This is a great style for creating a coastal look.



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Transitional style is:

- **Refined ease.** It's embracing comfort without sacrificing elegance — like the room equivalent of business casual.
- **Updated classic.** Imagine a slimmed-down wingback chair or marble counters paired with simple wood cabinets and table accents.
- **Understated.** In a transitional space, nothing jars the eye. The colors, patterns and textures play in harmony.

Hallmarks of transitional style:

- Sophisticated furniture
- Serene hues
- Updated classics
- Less-is-more accessories
- Luxurious materials like marble, quartz, and plush rugs

Traditional Style

More than any other style, traditional decorating embraces a sense of history, with heirloom-quality antiques, rich woods, plush carpets, and pretty patterns. Although traditional style sometimes equates to formal, it doesn't have to be. It often has symmetrical arrangements and refined materials. The goal is comfort, warmth, and a welcoming feel. There's nothing out of place in a traditional home; each room and nook is designed with a purpose. Traditional furnishings easily translate into coastal style.

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Traditional style is:

- **Comfortable.** Pillows are plump, edges are rounded, and textiles are soft and luxurious.
- **Formal.** While comfort is key, that doesn't mean traditional spaces are casual. Look for symmetrical arrangements, gleaming surfaces, and high-end materials.
- **Time-tested.** Traditional style is inspired by history. Furnishings have a timeless look and may include antiques.

Hallmarks of traditional style:

- Antiques and new pieces with a timeless feel
- Refined color palette
- Classic comforts such as a crackling fire on the hearth and floor-to-ceiling bookshelves
- Luxurious materials like marble and rich woods
- Intricate architectural details

Contemporary Style

Contemporary style is about being current and new. Newness isn't the only defining feature of this look. If you think of a spectrum of ornament, with the most embellished being traditional style, contemporary will sit firmly at the opposite end. This style embraces negative space, strong shapes, and clean lines, while leaving room for experimentation. Contemporary spaces are *often* minimal and white — but not *always*: They can also be vibrant, playful, and full of color and patterns.



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Contemporary style is:

- **Clean.** Think crisp, clean and sculptural. Shapes are strong, with clearly defined lines, curves, and planes. Excess embellishment is considered a distraction and is to be avoided.
- **Current.** Contemporary style is of-the-moment, incorporating cutting-edge designs and ideas. Exploring trends is a possibility but not a requirement.
- **High-contrast.** Because the focus is on line and space, this look tends to be high-contrast. Black and white is a classic combination that works well here.

Hallmarks of contemporary style:

- Up-to-the-minute trends and designs
- Sculptural furnishings
- Open space
- Cutting-edge technology
- Minimal embellishments

Farmhouse Style



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Farmhouse style, nods to the satisfying simplicity of regional, rural architecture while embracing modern comforts. Hardworking furnishings and natural textiles are invitingly down-to-earth, creating a look that's easy (and practical) to live with, no matter which end of the rustic-to-modern spectrum your interpretation of the look lands on.

Farmhouse style is:

- **Utilitarian.** At its core, this is a practical style, both in form and function. Furniture and textiles are chosen for their ability to stand up to frequent use while looking good.
- **Simple.** Furniture and accessories share a clean, pared-back aesthetic. Think of Shaker peg rails, ladder-back chairs, and whitewashed walls.
- **Imperfect.** Farmhouse style finds the beauty in imperfection — worn floorboards, weathered metal, shabby chic, and antiques with a hardworking history have a place here.

Hallmarks of farmhouse style:

- Simple, functional furniture
- Wall paneling
- Sliding barn doors
- Natural and historic colors such as golden wheat, sage green and robin's-egg blue
- Imperfect and patinaed finishes

Conclusion

As you can see, a coastal look can be achieved with various styles. Everything doesn't have to be blue and white. You probably have several pieces in your home today that can be repurposed in a Coastal Design, and I would encourage you to explore that option, especially with the pieces you have that you love or those that have sentimental value.

Almost any furniture piece can be easily refinished to a professional look with today's products. Gone are the days of the need for nasty stripping chemicals and the need to sand pieces that are in good condition just to repurpose them to get that coastal feel.

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It is difficult to find solid wood furniture on the market today and the lead times to purchase are lengthy sometimes as much as a year. I'm a firm believer in using the pieces you love, repurposing them if needed to create the look you are going for. All it takes is a little planning and that's what I do.



When moving from one home to another, a lot should go into planning your new space, beyond just style and color. What pieces to pay to move and store, versus rid yourself of, where to place the pieces, you want to keep, and what you might want to purchase to create a cohesive look

Take The Next Step

I invite you to book one of my FREE Video Design Discovery Calls. Let's look at your style and your current furniture and accessories to see how they might fit into your new home and get a jump on the planning process. It can be overwhelming to organize your move and end up with just the right pieces in your new home. Believe me, I have been there after living in the same home for 43 years, planning what I wanted to bring to my new home and where I was going to put it saved me a lot of time, money, and aggravation. Most of all, it was fun in anticipation of moving to my new Margaritaville home.

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