

A painting of a woman in a white dress standing in a field of red and white flowers under a blue sky with white clouds. The woman is in the middle ground, looking towards the horizon. The field is filled with red poppies and white daisies. The sky is a vibrant blue with soft, white clouds. The overall style is impressionistic, with visible brushstrokes and a focus on color and light.

Should Artwork Match Your Walls?

By Amy Wax, Color Consultant

Should Artwork Match Your Walls? Here's the Answer!



When decorating a home with artwork, a lot of people choose pieces that exactly match the color palette of their home. There are many theories on this topic, and people come to this with very strong opinions!

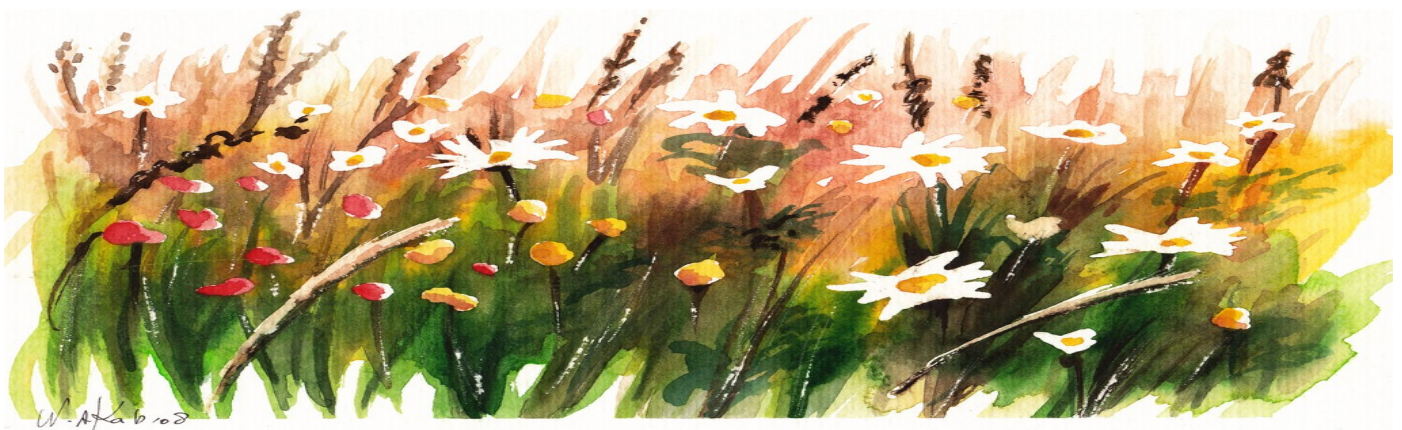
Understandably, if a homeowner recently completed an extensive renovation or redesign of their home— either on a new home, or doing up an old one – then they will have spent a good amount of time and money on furnishings, paint or wallpaper. They would also have spent hours pouring over catalogs and in home improvement stores matching window treatments, blinds, furniture, and soft furnishings to their chosen color scheme.

Not surprising then, that they extend this “must match” attitude to artwork. They assume that if the walls are pale pink, for example, then the artwork must be a shade of pink too, especially one that matches any cushions or rugs in the room. Well, experts say that if you’ve been trying to match artwork color to the room, it’s possible that you’ve been doing it all wrong.

Should it match? Here's the answer.

1. The most important reason to hang artwork on your wall or bring it into your home is because you love it. By limiting yourself to pictures that match, you are denying yourself of the fulfilling experience of hanging art because you find the piece satisfying, or exciting to look at.
2. Hanging up artwork, is a way of showing off your personal style. It can be difficult to find artwork that uses the exact color scheme you are working to. Then, if you do find a piece or two that “matches,” you may not like the piece itself, or it may be out of your budget. Don't go ahead and buy it, this is definitely not an efficient or satisfying way to express your style.
3. Artwork is not “supposed” to match. Hey, it's your wall. You can put whatever you want on it. You can think of hanging art not as decoration, but to draw attention to a focal point in the room. For example, above a fireplace.
4. Matching artwork to your home is seen as “tasteless” by many. Harsh, but many people think this way. Often, pictures that “match” are paintings of flowers or depictions of bland scenes. I implore you not to compromise your artistic preferences in favor of a lukewarm piece that matches a color in your home.

What would you do if you inherited a Picasso or a Gauguin that “didn't match your existing décor?” I don't think that many people would refuse to hang it on the grounds that it featured the wrong colors.



Artwork Is Priceless!

Love your choices

So, when choosing artwork, go for pieces that evoke an emotion. Take home a painting or drawing that makes you smile every time you look at it. The more you love the piece, the longer you will enjoy seeing it hanging in your home. It will be well worth it to look at artwork that pulls on your heartstrings. It will be worth the time to shop for it, and add artwork to your home that you absolutely love, whatever color it is!

A real painting by a real artist that moves you is worthwhile. Artwork is often considered priceless because of the emotional value it adds to your home. It is likely to keep you looking at it for years to come. This is far better than a print of a flower that becomes passé almost as soon as you've hung it on the wall. There's a reason stately homes have their family portraits above a fireplace in the main reception room. It's the place people will gaze at the most, especially during long winter evenings spent as a family in front of the fire. Who wouldn't want a beautiful portrait of their loving family gazing back at them? And unless your family has a particularly rosy complexion, they are not likely to match your blush walls. It is more about the emotion that the image or images provoke, than whether it matches your decor.

About Amy Wax

Amy Wax is an award winning color consultant. She has authored best-selling books on color and helped with color palette development for major paint manufacturers. She has been awarded for her “immense talent and vision” in the world of color by Benjamin Moore. Ms. Wax also served as a Past President of the International Association of Color Consultants of North America. She also created the award winning Color911 app. Her app and Color911 blog have received national recognition. Amy Wax creates custom color palettes for residential and commercial clients across the country and has received “Best of Houzz” recognition several times. You can see a portfolio of her work at www.amywax.com