

# INTERIOR TRANSFORMATION, INC.

## Frequently Asked Questions

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[Why should I hire an Interior Designer?](#)

Hiring an Interior Designer can not only save you time, we can actually save you money. Most people who do any type of remodeling or new construction do it maybe once or twice in their lifetime - learning as they go. The process can be very overwhelming and very costly if the project is not planned correctly.

We know the problems that can arise and we understand what needs to be done to avoid them. As independent designers, our loyalties are with you. We don't represent any builders or favor any of their suppliers. Our goal is that in the end you are delighted with the finished project and that you had a positive experience with your remodel or new construction.

Since we plan for the future, we will incorporate into today's design where you want to be in 5 years. This way you can enhance rather than replace down the road. We also know how to work within your budget and have the resources to accomplish your goals.

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## What qualifications should I consider when I'm looking for a design firm?

When you're hiring a design professional the qualifications will depend on the scope of services (see below). Typically you will want a designer who has the combination of education, training and experience. [Illinois law](#) states that no individual may call themselves an Interior Designer without completing the [NCIDQ](#) exam and receiving a Registered Interior Design License. You should also consider how well you relate to the designer and ensure that the person you hire listens to your goals and understands that ultimately the space that is designed is for you and should function according to your lifestyle.

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## Is there a difference between an Interior Designer and Decorator?

Absolutely! Interior Design is professional service that requires education, experience and talent. Illinois (and many other states) requires professionals using the title Registered Interior Designer to meet specific requirements. These professionals must be licensed and have a current [NCIDQ Certification](#).

To become licensed in the State of Illinois the Interior Designer must complete a combination of 6 years of education and experience. They are trained in space planning many times utilizing computer aided design software. Designers and decorators can both be proficient with artistic style and, style and atmosphere, the Interior Designer will also have a comprehensive understanding of:

- NFPA Fire Codes related to Flame spread ratings, smoke, toxicity and fire rating classifications and materials
- Other National, State and Local building codes
- ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities Standards
- Life Safety and Ergonomics
- Lighting quality and quantity
- Audio and sound transmission

A decorator works only with decoration - paint, fabric, furnishings, lighting and other materials. Because no license is required, upholsterers, housepainters, and other trades people also claim the name "decorator."

*All work products supplied by Interior Transformation, Inc. are provided by or under the direct supervision of a Licensed and Certified Interior Designer.*

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## What is the difference between an Interior Designer and an Architect?

Architects and Interior Designers work very differently. Many Architects work with structure and building design and prefer not to work with details of interiors, such as kitchen and bath design, custom cabinetry and built-ins, color schemes, flooring specifications, and wall and window treatments. Designers can create a master plan for the interior of the entire space, which can be implemented in stages, as your budget allows. The ideal design team consists of both an

Architect and an Interior Designer in order to cover all aspects of your internal and external spaces.

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## **How long does it take to complete a project?**

The bulk of the work of the for the interior designer happens well in advance of any actual construction or realization of a finished project/product. The total time for the designer on a project has many variables and each project is unique. However, a typical timeframe is represented below:

- Initial meeting after 1st contact – 1 to 2 weeks
- Design portion of the project start date – this will depend on our current workload (we do provide a project timeline for you when our proposal is accepted).
- First presentation – design concept presentation is normally within 3 to 4 weeks after you project start date. This gives us time to create the design, order in any samples and put together the first presentation.
- Second presentation – design development presentation. This the presentation that will include all of the details of the project that have been finalized based upon the design concept presentation. This typically takes about 2-3 weeks to complete.
- Final steps include interviewing and hiring contractors, placing orders for specified items and periodic site visits to ensure the work is being completed to specification.

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## **Do you hire and manage contractors?**

As professional designers, we know that hiring and managing sub-contractors is best left to the professional general contractor. However, we have a general contractor that we work with and we would be more than happy to hire him on your behalf. There would be an additional fee for this service and Interior Transformation, Inc. makes no additional warranty, guarantee, or any other assurances, other than those provided by the general contractor for the products and/or services supplied.

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## **Can I hire my own contractors?**

Of course, we understand that the work being completed will be in your home and we encourage you to interview and hire any contractors you're comfortable with.

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## **How do you charge for your services?**

We charge a hourly rate for the design and a mark up for goods that we purchase on your behalf.

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## **Why do you have an hourly fee and a mark-up on the product?**

The design fee is for design concepts, solutions to the problems and advice on any purchases. When a product is ordered through the Designer, there is a great deal of time spent on producing purchase orders, ensuring the correct materials have been received, coordinating deliveries and generally ensuring that the whole process runs smoothly until the item is delivered to the your location. The mark-up covers this entire process and assures your peace of mind.

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## **Do I have purchase product through your company?**

Of course not! While we offer a very good value for your purchasing dollar, we are happy to work with you as a consultant. You can either use us for the entire process, or simply for the design allowing you full flexibility for making your own purchases.

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## **Do you offer any discounts from your normal hourly rate?**

No but we do offer very good discounts on the products that you purchase from us. Many times our pricing is better than you will find elsewhere.

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## **Is the retainer fee refundable?**

The retainer fee is non-refundable if the project is cancelled by the client or the client does not comply with the letter of agreement. The reason for this is as soon as we receive your signed letter of agreement and retainer check, we add your project to our calendar and that time slot become unavailable to another customer. The retainer fee is your guarantee of our availability to perform the services on the date that was agree upon. However, once the client has complied with the letter of agreement, the retainer fee will be applied to the final invoice. Please remember that the final invoice is for the total amount you have agreed to for both design and purchasing.

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