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**NEWS FROM  
THE HOME FRONT**

## Feng Shui basics for the family

Presented by Juanita Swain from the Coral Homes *Clever Living* team

No, it's not a superstition, philosophy or religion. And yes, it does provide some useful insights on decorating your new home. Let's do a crash course in Feng Shui and take a look at some practical tips to help you along your way. You might be pleasantly surprised at what it has to offer.



In short, Feng Shui is an ancient Chinese practice of the placement and arrangement of space to achieve harmony with the environment. Practitioners of Feng Shui say that, if done correctly, it can increase your "chi", or energy, and help with a happier lifestyle, personal wealth and enrichment of social status. Even if you don't quite believe in the seemingly more far-fetched side of it, Feng Shui decorating principles definitely offer some great ideas for the practical home owner.

We won't go into too much detail here, as Feng Shui can be used in almost any area of your home. Instead, let's focus on the main family areas, as these are the areas which matter the most. The first cab off the rank is your family room.



### The family room

The energy ("chi") in your family room should be both relaxing and fun. Your aim is to set this room up to allow positive energy to flow throughout so you have a space where family togetherness and joy will flourish.

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In terms of colour, light and medium greens are recommended for the family room, as they promote family and health. Feng Shui advises that “U” or “L” shaped furniture configurations are a no-no, as they don’t allow the chi to move freely.



The positive energy from plants placed in the corners of the family room counteracts any negative energy emitted by electronic equipment. If you have a TV or sound system in your family room try to enclose this equipment in a cabinet with shutting doors and position it against the western wall. Your family photos should be hung on the eastern wall of the room to support family harmony.

Natural light should be encouraged to keep your family areas well lit. If need be, add lights or even mirrors. Never use dark curtains or darkening shades that block the flow of natural light into the room. Also, Feng Shui says that clutter is another big no-no because it makes it difficult for energy to flow in the room.

### **The bedrooms**

Feng Shui can be applied to the bedrooms to create sacred spaces where parents and kids can retreat and regenerate. It is important to maintain balance and serenity in the bedrooms.

Don’t position your bed so you are directly facing the door to your bedroom. In the master bedroom there should be no mirrors opposite or at the side of your bed. Feng Shui says this may attract a third party to the relationship.

Also, if you can convince the kids, try not to have TV’s in the bedrooms. TV’s activate energy flow, which is counteractive in a restful, peaceful area. But if you really can’t help yourself, you could cheat and just cover the TV up at night before you go to sleep.



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### The kitchen

The kitchen serves as the heart of your home. Your kitchen should be an inviting space for the family to spend time together, and it should encourage a warm atmosphere throughout the entire home.

The most important aspect of the kitchen is its functionality. Tables, chairs, stools and cabinets should be positioned to allow easy flow of movement through the kitchen. The biggest enemy to functionality is clutter. As in the family room, clutter in the kitchen blocks the flow of energy and brings energy levels down.

When you walk into your kitchen for breakfast each morning, you should be exposed to bright and lively décor which radiates energy. You can easily add a spark of colour with crockery, window shades, wall art or a bowl of fruit. The stove is an important part of the kitchen. When standing at the stove, you should be able to see the entrance to the kitchen. You can install mirrors in your kitchen to see the entrance and also other people in the room.

### The dining room

Your formal dining room should serve as a social gathering place for friends and family. Separating the dining area from the family areas is ideal because it creates a more intimate atmosphere. Your dining table should be in the centre of the room with equal space on all sides. Round tables are best.

Mirrors are useful to encourage the flow of energy into the dining room. The décor in this room should be simple apart from a centrepiece on your dining table, which should be the most visually stimulating piece of décor in the dining room.

There are many other areas of your home which Feng Shui could also be applied. At least now you have the basics for the family areas of your home. Give it a try – you might be pleasantly surprised by the results!



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