

## Feng Shui

# Common Feng Shui missteps

By Michele Duffy



Living plants, like these succulents, are good Feng Shui.

Photo provided

Spring is definitely in the air, ruled by the wood element, and the “It” color of 2017 is emerald green, symbolizing new beginnings. Instead of beginnings, however, I’m going to the past, sharing some of my local client adventures to help illustrate fixing the less-than-favorable Feng Shui solutions I’ve often run into and to help clarify some of the misconceptions I’ve encountered in my travels.

While Feng Shui is not a dualistic design modality — there’s no right or wrong — we can certainly speak in terms of “less favorable” or “less auspicious” Feng Shui. Feng Shui is a holistic approach, so often what I discover is that the big picture has been overlooked or was not factored into the specific recommendation or “cure.” One example is, when I find an abundance of crystals (earth) in the Wealth (ruled by wood) area (wood struggles to get through earth) or other cures that seem arbitrary or just plain silly. Sometimes our sources are neighbors, family or well meaning friends but as a professional it is easy to spot what is not working on several levels.

So, this is just a sampling of common missteps I have encountered out in the field and hopefully it will inspire your efforts to create energy-rich, nature-inspired Feng Shui in all of your environments.

### 1) The foyer is not a dumping ground.

Certainly after last month’s front entrance Feng Shui column this area is now sparkling with lively chi of healthy plants flanking the front door, working porch lights, no cobwebs, a new welcome mat, and zero clutter. As you enter your home, the foyer is an extension of the front door and the “mouth of chi” so it should be healthy energy in this “heavenly gate” area too.

The foyer should not include multiple pairs of shoes, personal photos, stained rugs, coats or piled up backpacks. Instead your foyer should be an open, well-lit, tidy, clean space so life-force chi will waft through your entire home unobstructed. The foyer does well with a fresh wall color, abundant lighting, lively art, a mirror or a bubbly fountain.

### 2) The furniture does not fit the space properly.

If your furniture from your last home doesn’t work in your new home, if it’s too big or too small, the energy (chi) in your home simply will not create a nourishing flow. If you are tripping over chairs or angling your furniture to fit, it’s time to rethink the spatial arrangement and let some pieces go. Think of regifting cumbersome or nonfunctional pieces back to the universe and donate to others who perhaps need it more than you. Reconnect with making comfort a priority!

### 3) Release broken items and clutter.

Feng Shui won’t be as effective if your home and yard are beset with cluttered or broken items. We are all part pack rat! Most of us have too much “stuff.” So, without judgement, just set aside a half day and work on your yard and garage, bagging old, broken, dirty, cracked, chipped items to toss out or donate, then see if some of the items strewn around your yard can now find a home in your garage.

Next, go room by room, starting with your master bedroom so you have a clutter-free haven to rejuvenate each night. It’s truly liberating to release clutter from inside and outside of your home which creates the lasting freedom to get unstuck in your life. If you need help, there are pros that can make short work of the stuff that is overwhelming you!

### 4) Artwork is a downer draining the life force of your space!

I’m very visual and so are many of my clients, so the images we surround ourselves with are so much more than subliminal messages. Remove low energy, sad, lonely, depressing, sick or unhappy art images and place art that supports your highest intentions of happiness, health, abundance and joy. Better yet, place the Five Elements of water, wood, fire, earth and metal strategically to strengthen the Feng Shui of your space. ... continued on page D14



De clutter like the kitchen drawer in this Moraga home, as even drawers and closets matter in Feng Shui.