

Feng Shui

Winter's water element

By Michele Duffy



Water flows in this local creek.

Photo provided

Winter's yin and crisp dawn breath invites the dazzling dew left each morning only to retreat with the morning sun and clear blue skies. Water's qualities inform winter days with the gurgling of streams on a brisk hike, and winter blankets our psyches with chilly and dormant seasonal change that invites going deep, getting toasty next to a fireplace, bundling up for long nights of clear starry skies and greater efforts to rest, take a breath, store our energy, and most importantly recharge the kidneys sufficiently before spring arrives.

According to the Feng Shui BAGUA map, the water element rules the Career area which also includes life path, emotions, intuitiveness and spirituality. Water symbolizes the flow of life, freshness and freedom. Water's qualities and water symbolism also include financial well being or being well off, life-force, spirituality, rejuvenation, courage, mystery and depth.

At home, well-placed water elements also include the areas of the Bagua that are first and foremost, ruled by the water (Career) element, but placement in the Bagua areas ruled by the wood element, located at the middle left and the far left area from the main entrance door, is a wise choice as well.

Usually placing an actual water feature, such as a fountain or an aquarium, are the best ways to activate the water element. Water is also activated by correctly placing wavy or flowing art, blues and black colors, or images of waterfalls, calm seas and gentle forest streams. Layering mirrors skillfully will activate the water element in your home office space as well. Placing water literally and symbolically, and the flowing abundance that is associated with the water element, is not recommended in any bedroom, since it's too activating, but placement at the front entrance, backyard, or left area of Wealth &

Abundance is a good choice. I recommend placing an image of water in the master bedroom versus an actual water element so sleep is not disturbed by too much movement or yang energy.

Luckily water allows life to flow and like each of the other five elements contains both yin and yang properties, and reflects the slow growth of winter with quietness and calm (yin) that accompanies a winter season's snowfall (yin) or conversely, the fierce and icy winter storms (yang) that can stop humans in their tracks. It's lively spirited essence must lend enough abundance to pave the way for the new beginnings of a spring that deeply blooms.

The best Feng Shui of all is to choose homes and offices with existing vibrant FengShui, such as those with ample natural light and placement above the road. Avoid homes on sharp angles, dead ends, and roundabouts or cul-de-sacs, unless a fountain or planted garden is in center for all to enjoy. Recognizing at home and in the moment that winter can be left outdoors and with a few small adjustments to our homes' interior can help you spend longer winter days inside, here are nine Feng Shui tips to create your cozy winter retreat:

- 1) Switch all blankets, sheets, decorative pillows textiles to fuzzier, warmer versions.
- 2) Fill baskets with blankets in family or living rooms, near a fireplace.
- 3) Contrast the coolness of the season with a warm glow of red hues.
- 4) Use your kitchen stove often and make tea with local honey.
- 5) Light soy candles, especially in the kitchen.
- 6) Turn up the lights and ignite your fireplace.
- 7) Set a fresh dining table.
- 8) Display fresh flowers in a vase near your front door.
- 9) Spruce up the guest room using Feng Shui for holiday visitors.

Making small changes has a big impact and by adding small, deeper layers, the spaces you redo begin to blend and feel more comfortable as the Feng Shui also improves. Understanding the balance symbolized in the well known, black and white Yin-Yang symbol, water's fluidity plays a unique role in the natural ebb of seasonal flow. Water feeds the thirsty plants, flowers and trees and lays the underlying foundational planning for the re-emergence of spring. At home, it's not as important to remember all of the specifics of the water element as it is so timely to learn how to stay warm this winter, since now the majority of our time is spent indoors with family and friends. Have a wonderful holiday season and happy New Year! See you in 2019, the abundant Year of the Earth Pig!

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