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## Home & Garden

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### Can You Repeat That?

*Prints are in. Here's how to make them work in your home.*

By Hannah Bostwick



Photo: Courtesy Schumacher / fschumacher.com

**Here, there, and everywhere** Create balanced but interesting spaces by mixing complementary patterns and sticking to a clear color scheme.

**PATTERNS ARE EVERYWHERE** right now. Plaid Pemberton blankets, once shoved away up in the attic, are being slung over sofas and spread out for picnics in the park; dyed tribal-patterned tote bags decorate shoulders the city over; and every coquette on Capitol Hill has a stripey sailor shirt stretched across her chest. Seattle-based interior designer Faith Sheridan ([faithsheridan.com](http://faithsheridan.com)) has seen an upswing in clients who want to use paisleys and polka dots to enliven their interiors. "They're looking at the same pieces of furniture they've always had and saying, 'Gee, what can I do to make that more interesting?'" Sheridan says. And while splashy floral and geometric prints may test your definition of good taste, experts say sticking to neutrals and solids will result in a blah, incomplete-feeling space. Here are some tips from the pros on how to pull off patterns at home.

**Create Balance** For a clean, integrated look, combine patterns with different scales and textures. If a wall is papered in broad stripes, contrast it with pinstriped pillowcases or accent pieces. Varying the texture of fabrics—placing smooth cotton against nubby chenille, for instance—balances busy patterns and creates depth, Sheridan says.

**Use Color Carefully** Choose a core color and repeat it in each pattern to create consistency throughout a room. If you painted your walls sage green, buy upholstery, window treatments, and throw cushions that have sage-green prints. Color can also determine the lifespan of your design scheme—you may have dug those bright orange and yellow paisley chair covers this summer, but right about now you're wishing for something a little more mellow. To make updating passé patterns easy and inexpensive, Sheridan advises keeping the big stuff neutral and covering smaller pieces with bold patterns.

**Mix It Up** Mixing multiple patterns is scary stuff, but interior designer Wendy Allen ([wendyallendesign.com](http://wendyallendesign.com)) says it is key to creating a complete look. Drapes made from a large-paisley linen can work beautifully with a tight-checked fabric on the couch. Again, maintaining a consistent color scheme is the simplest way to make seemingly incongruous patterns work together, Sheridan says.



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Choose a few colors, and then look for those colors in various patterns—paisley, floral, stripe, plaid—and vary the scale of each pattern.

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