

## Put Your Walls on a Diet! Illusions of Space from the Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute



Did you know that paint color can actually alter the dimensions of a room? Well, it can't literally do that. But it can alter how the dimensions are perceived, which is the next best thing. Debbie Zimmer, PQI's paint and color expert, states, "By taking a cue from fashion, one's living space can be viewed as larger or smaller, taller or shorter."

A light-colored paint will make a small room appear bigger, for instance. And darker shades will make a large room seem much more intimate. These types of paint-induced optical illusions can be used with excellent results in almost any space.

Zimmer offers several simple tips to "adjust" your own living area:

### 1. Raise or Lower the Ceiling

If a ceiling feels too low, bright white can "raise" your perception of its height. By taking a cue from clothing designers, adventuresome homeowners can paint their walls with vertical stripes to enhance the sense of height.

On the other hand, dramatic high ceilings may cause a living space to feel cavernous. Add a mid-tone to deep hue on the ceiling to visually lower the height. Another alternative is to paint horizontal stripes on the walls.



### 2. Shrink or Expand Rooms



Just as a dark monochromatic outfit can visually "slim" an appearance, a monochromatic paint scheme can do the same in a large space. Choosing a darker shade for the walls will reign in a large room and create a cozy and intimate space. And, as mentioned earlier, a light-colored paint will make a small room appear bigger.

Is your room too narrow and long? Just widen it by painting the shorter walls a deeper color than the longer walls. If color alone isn't enough to change the perceived dimensions, use color combinations to create visual breaks. Divide your wall space horizontally with a chair rail and paint the upper and lower portions

different hues.

### 3. Don't Forget the Sheen

For both visual and practical reasons, selecting the right sheen of paint is just as important as the actual color. Glossier finishes lend greater warmth and depth to surfaces than do flat paints. For example, a room with white gloss paint on the ceiling will seem larger than a room whose ceiling is painted with a white flat paint.



For additional tips on choosing hues that can impact room dimensions, visit [www.paintquality.com](http://www.paintquality.com), where every great paint job begins.

#### **About the Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute**

The Paint Quality Institute (SM) was formed by Rohm and Haas Company in 1989 to educate people on the advantages of using quality interior and exterior paints and coatings. The Paint Quality Institute's goal is to provide information on the virtues of quality paint as well as color trends and decorating with paint through a variety of vehicles, including television appearances, newspaper and magazine articles, and instructional literature. Please be sure to visit the Paint Quality Institute at [www.paintquality.com](http://www.paintquality.com).

#### **About Rohm and Haas Company**

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