



O at Home
Winter 2005

NATE BERKUS

Knock, Knock, It's Nate

from *Home Rules* by Nate Berkus

Give a person a fabulous room, and She'll be thrilled for, oh about a decade. Teach a person to design her own fabulous living room, and she'll be thrilled for life. Nate Berkus' beautiful new book, *Home Rules*, Helps you focus on what you want and need.

Everyday, human beings the world over somehow manage to get up, feed and clothe themselves, analyze their options, and make dozens of wise decisions. And yet when faced with an ordinary paint chip or fabric swatch, we are often reduced to the fetal position. There is nothing sadder than seeing a razor-sharp mind blathering incoherently, all because she needs to choose between a pedestal and vanity sink...

Enter Nate Berkus. Oh, quit trying to fluff your hair and apply lip-gloss. The man does not have time to personally drop by and angle your sofa. But *Home Rules*, Nate's exceedingly user-friendly guide to "transforming the place you live into a place you'll love" is the next best thing to having Oprah's favorite design expert at your side. A trusted friend, excellent shrink, and wise philosophers, Nate not only walks readers through inspiring before and after photos, he leads you into a series of questions created to get you thoroughly acquainted with the one person who, like it or not, has to live with your style choice for the long haul—you.

What's Your Style?

- What kind of surroundings make you happy? A simple, airy space that feels like the beach, or a cozy room filled with books and memories?

- Do you respond to neat and organized or crowded and cluttered?
- Which is your favorite room in the house? Which is the least favorite?
- Where do you feel most at home? Are you a city-sleek or country casual at heart?
- How much time, energy and money are you willing to spend right now? Next month? In a year?
- If you could change one thing about your home today what would it be?
- Do you have a favorite piece of furniture or art that could be a starting point?
- Where would you take a dream vacation? Could you translate that feeling to your home?
- Which people inspire you? How do they live?
- Do your decorating dreams mirror the way you actually live? Does a formal living room really fit in with your casual entertaining?

Which Hue Is You?

- What's your favorite color? Open a box of crayons and pick the first color that catches your eye.
- How do you react to colors? Do the warm shades of the sun move you? Or is it the clean clear coolness of a winter landscape that speaks to you?
- What's in your clothes closet? Does that one red sweater get passed over time after time for neutrals?



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- How big is your space? Do you want it to feel larger or cozier?
- If your decorating more than one room, do you want to vary shades or match them?
- How do you want to feel in the room—laid-back and relaxed or excited and energized?
- What's the current scheme? Are you already living with colors you like, or are you looking for a radical change?
- How much available light is there? What time of the day will you use the room?
- Is there a color memory you want to call up? A place you want to re-create?
- Are you decorating a room with a view? Do you want to use the colors in your surroundings?

Whose Room Is It Anyway?

- What's the purpose of this all-purpose room? Do kids play her or is it more for formal entertaining?
- What kind of feeling do you want—handsome library or more of a homespun hangout?
- How much seating do you need? Where will the sofa have the best view?
- Are you plugged in to all your electronic needs (computers, music, movies)?
- Does the room need to work as a home office? Does homework get done in here?
- Is this a spot for a small happy hour? Or are you planning for party central?

- Ottoman or coffee table? Feet-up or fancy? Does this piece need to move easily?
- Have you got lighting in the right places? Overhead or lots of lamps?
- Traditional or modern? Would you consider playing the sofa against type—a traditional piece in a modern setting, or vice versa?
- Is it a TV-guided room? Do you want it to be?

What's Your Idea of Luxury?

- Do you actually need to gut the space to get what you want, or can you simply pamper the place a bit?
- Do you have room for a separate tub and shower?
- How do you light the bathroom right? Could you use close-up lighting around the mirror? How about some mood lighting?
- His and hers? Are double sinks right for you?
- Pedestal sink or vanity? Do you need extra storage space or are you working with a small room that calls for smaller than standard fixtures?
- Do you have a lot of cosmetics and skin-care products? Will a single medicine chest hold them?
- Are the fixtures the wrong color? Are they cracked or discolored?
- Could a quick fix brighten the day? Take stock of your towels and see if they should be freshened up.
- Would you like to upgrade the shower? How about two showerheads or a handheld shower?



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- Do you have room for a small seat or a few extra towel bars and shelves?

How Do You Sleep Easy?

- Do you like a bright, sunny welcome in the morning, or is dark and enveloping more your style?
- What color makes you feel calm? What hue on your bedroom walls would be soothing?
- How do you like your linens? Are you tucked-in and tailored or down-filled and fluffy?
- How about waking up to something soft under your feet? Wall-to-wall carpeting or an area rug? Or are wood floors still right?
- Can you make room for extra pampering—a full-length mirror, a chair so you can sit and put on your shoes?
- Would you like a bed to climb up into—or should you keep it at the usual height?
- Can you fit a bench or an ottoman for extra seating? A basket for magazines or books?
- Do you read in bed? Can you install bedside sconces? Do you have enough to on your nightstand for a lamp?
- What do you keep by your bedside? Those items can help determine the size of the night table you use.
- Do you watch TV in bed? Is movie night your idea of a weekday vacation?

What's Cooking In Your Kitchen?

- What's your kitchen's mission? Is it just for cooking, or is it for dining and family gatherings as well?

- What is your goal—to update or renovate? Is it realistic in terms of budgeting and time?
- Are you a serious cook? Do you need professional-grade appliances? A marble countertop for baking? An oversize freezer?
- Do you prefer open or closed storage? Are you neat enough to let it all show?
- Do you have enough counter space? Can you stow away small appliances?
- Do you entertain a lot? Need extra storage for dish- and glassware?
- Is this the family office? Do you need a place to do paperwork, bills, and homework?
- Do you have sufficient light to work and dine by?
- Want to eat in? Would a table with chairs be best, or are you a more casual island-style family?
- Do cabinets allow maximum storage? Could drawer dividers double the duty?

Is There Order In Your Court?

- Are you a pack rat or just plain disorganized? Quantity of life is not quality of life—get to the bottom of the pile and decide what you really want to live with.
- Which rooms needs the most help?
- Is your home office set up for efficiency? Do you waste time looking for files and supplies? When was the last time you cleaned out your clothes closet? When was the last time you wore that outfit?
- What's in the attic? If you can't remember, you probably don't need whatever's up there.



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- Are you keeping a gift that doesn't suit you? Can you pass it on to someone else who might enjoy it?
- Are your photos sitting in boxes? (They should be framed or put in albums.)
- Can you carve out a space, however small, dedicated to specific needs, such as ironing?
- Are your bed linens still a set? Do your towels match?
- Have the children outgrown some of their toys? Would a few playthings find a better home with a favorite charity?