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# FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

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## FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

28 May 2012



### JANE PRICE-STEPHENS

We often spend lots of time and money making the interior of our homes beautiful but, as a consequence, we sometimes neglect the exterior. First impressions count and nowhere more so than on your front door. Not only it is the first thing that greets you when you get home after a hard day at work, it's the first thing that people see close up when they visit your pad. According to some estate agents (the honest ones), the finest front doors can add up to 10% to the value of a property! So, with that little stat in mind, it's worth investing in making your front door a focal point of your home and as grand and welcoming as possible.



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(Image from *The White Book*)

Here are my top tips for making a great first impression with a smart front door:

- When choosing a front door, consider the style and size of your home - stating the obvious here, but as an example, you are not going to put a traditional Victorian door on a modern house...
- Door colour is about personal preference, however it is worth considering colours that complement the existing exterior house colours and brickwork. You can really make a statement with your choice of colour, but it is worth bearing in mind that you are choosing something that you (and your neighbours) are going to see pretty much every day. So, while bright luminescent orange might seem like a great idea after a few glasses of wine (and you decide that it would be a great way to find your way home from the pub...), your love for your door might wear off pretty quickly. General rules are that glossy black looks great on a grand stucco building and on townhouses, but is much less effective next to red brick or on smaller houses or cottages where soft greys work well. A soft green or blue can look beautiful on your country home (if you are lucky enough to have one!) because they fit well with the natural surroundings. If you live in a Victorian terrace it might also be worth having a look at door colours on other

houses in your street and deciding whether you want to follow the prevailing trend.

- Irrespective of what colour you choose, your front door needs to provide protection against the elements, hence if it is being repainted it requires a primer and undercoat before the gloss (and for a more natural look, bare wood can be varnished or given a finish with a suitable wood preserve). Also, it is really worth spending the money on a very good quality paint to avoid cracking or flaking over time.
- When you are choosing your door colour, you also need to think about your door furniture. This includes the door handle/knob, letterbox, eye hole, door knocker, locks, security chains and doorbell. A smart letterbox and door knob are, in my opinion, a must. In recent years polished and brushed chrome has taken over from brass as the discerning choice. However, it is worth bearing in mind that you may have to buy different bits and pieces of door furniture from a range of suppliers, so colour matching is important to ensure a consistent overall result. Also remember that door furniture will feature on the inside of your home as well so you may need to think about how well a finish complements, for example, your interior door handles and window latches.
- If you have glass panels in your front door, consider personalising them with a frosted film with your house name or number.



(Images from *Willow and Stone* and *HomeShoppingSpy*)

- Also consider lighting your porch - this will make it more welcoming for guests on dark nights, but also make both yours and their approach safer. Lighting the path to your front door with floor-level lights is another really effective way of creating a great first impression and placing an emphasis on your door.

It's amazing how a fresh coat of paint and new door furniture can work wonders on the exterior of your home. I recently refurbished my own front door, replacing all the door furniture with brushed chrome and painting it a lovely French Grey - a great

G44 in Hall 1 – open to both exhibitors and visitors.

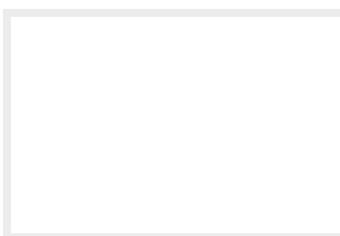
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door furniture with brushed chrome and painting it a lovely French Grey - a year on it still makes me smile when I put my key in the lock (my smile grows even wider when I also remember that I didn't have to spend a load of money on a new door to achieve the result). So go on, give your front door a new lease of life and you never know, those honest estate agents with their stats might just be right...

Jane Price-Stephens runs her own interior design business, to find out more visit: [www.janepricestephens.com](http://www.janepricestephens.com), <http://janepricestephens.blogspot.com/>, follow Jane on Twitter [@jpricestephens](https://twitter.com/jpricestephens) or call 07970 547433.

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