



Planning your space is a lot like wearing Spanx to your high school reunion—it's absolutely necessary. Before you buy furniture, before you fall in love with a rug, before curtains are hung by the window with care, before a single candlestick takes up residence on the mantel, you need a plan.

Yikes!

I know, right? Planning? Who has time for a plan when you want to be shopping and dreaming and fluffing and styling? Take it from me and my school of decorating hard knocks—planning is the first step to making your space everything you want and so much more. It's the foundation to build your entire design on. A little planning can help with the overall arrangement for the room, prevent furniture heartbreak, and save you a few pennies (or hundreds of dollars) along the way.

DESIGN *Life* LESSON

If you fail to plan...you plan to fail.



Take Measurements

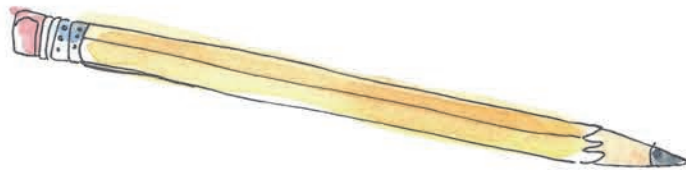
Measure, measure...and then? Measure again. Start with the overall dimensions of the room. Measure the length, the width, and the height of the space. Then, using a pencil, mark these room dimensions on graph paper. Next, draw the lines of your room to scale on the paper and write down the length of each wall. These measurements will help you determine if your furniture will fit. In addition, make sure to record each of these measurements on page 16. That way you have a record of all your room dimensions for future projects.

NOTE

This planner has several amazing tools to help you get started. We've created customized room planning pages (see pages 16 to 21) that will help you as you work through each of these steps. In addition, flip to page 135 for some standard-size furniture pieces you can cut out and move around before you move a single piece of anything into the space.

Mark Features

Before you start adding furniture, it's important to note on the space plan what is permanent to a space. On the graph paper, mark the electrical outlets, light switches, windows, and doors in the space. In addition, make sure to include any permanent fixtures in the room, such as pillars, fireplaces, closets, and built-ins.



Anchor the Room

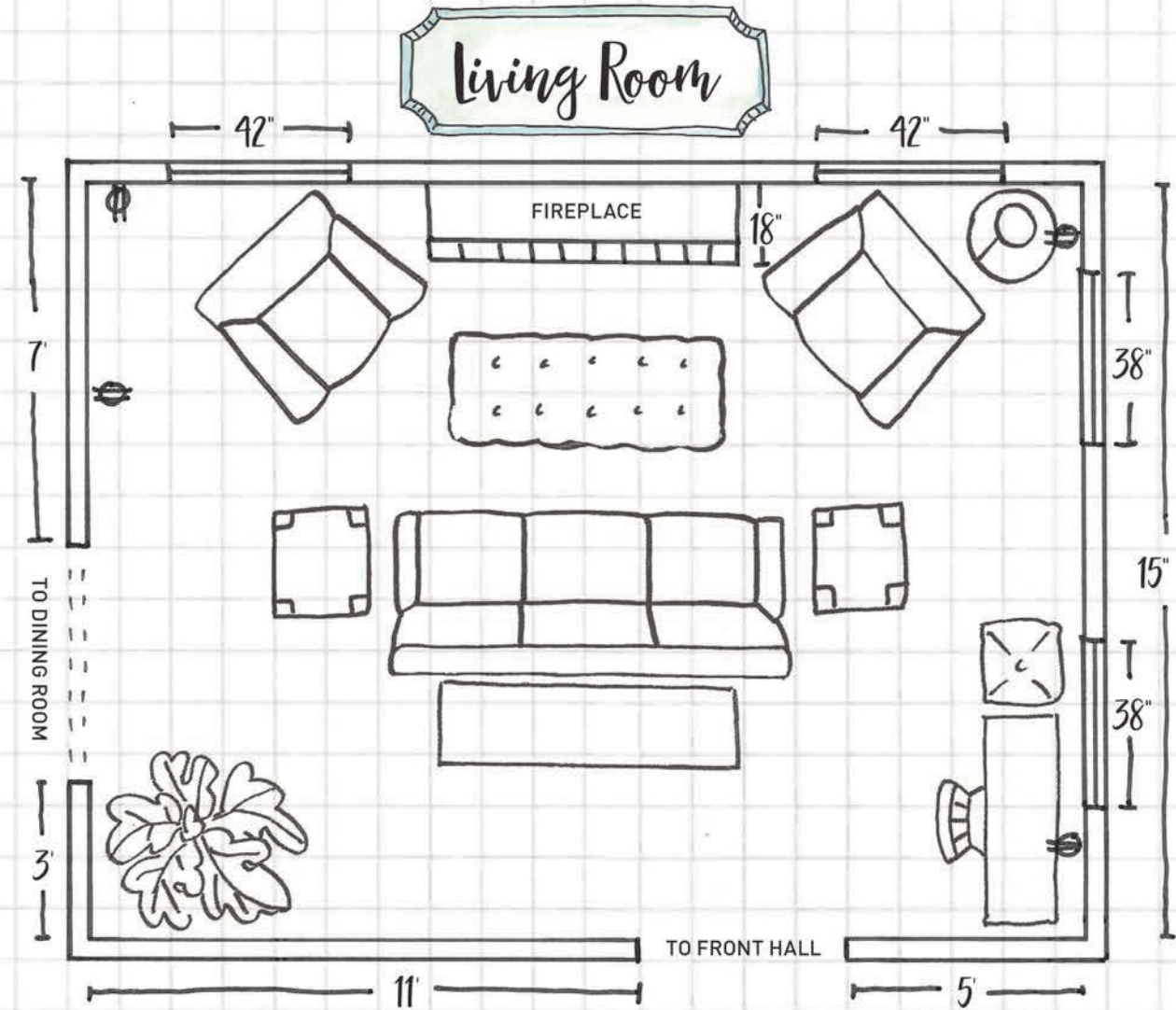
Now you are ready to start moving your miniature furniture pieces around the outlines of the room you have penciled on your graph paper.

Begin with your largest piece of furniture.

In living rooms, this would typically be the couch or sectional; in dining rooms, it's the dining table; in bedrooms, it's the bed. This is the anchor piece for your design.

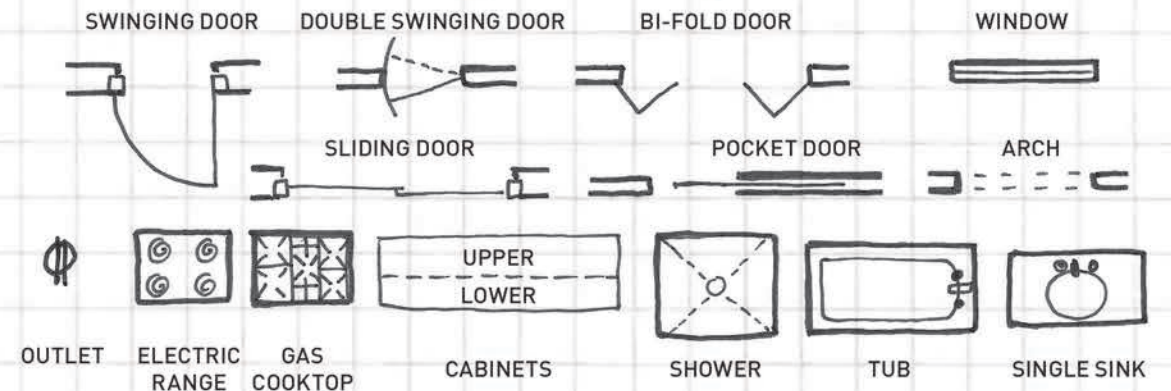
TIP

Many times, with larger pieces such as couches and beds, you want the piece to face the entrance to the space.



□ = 12"

Symbol Key

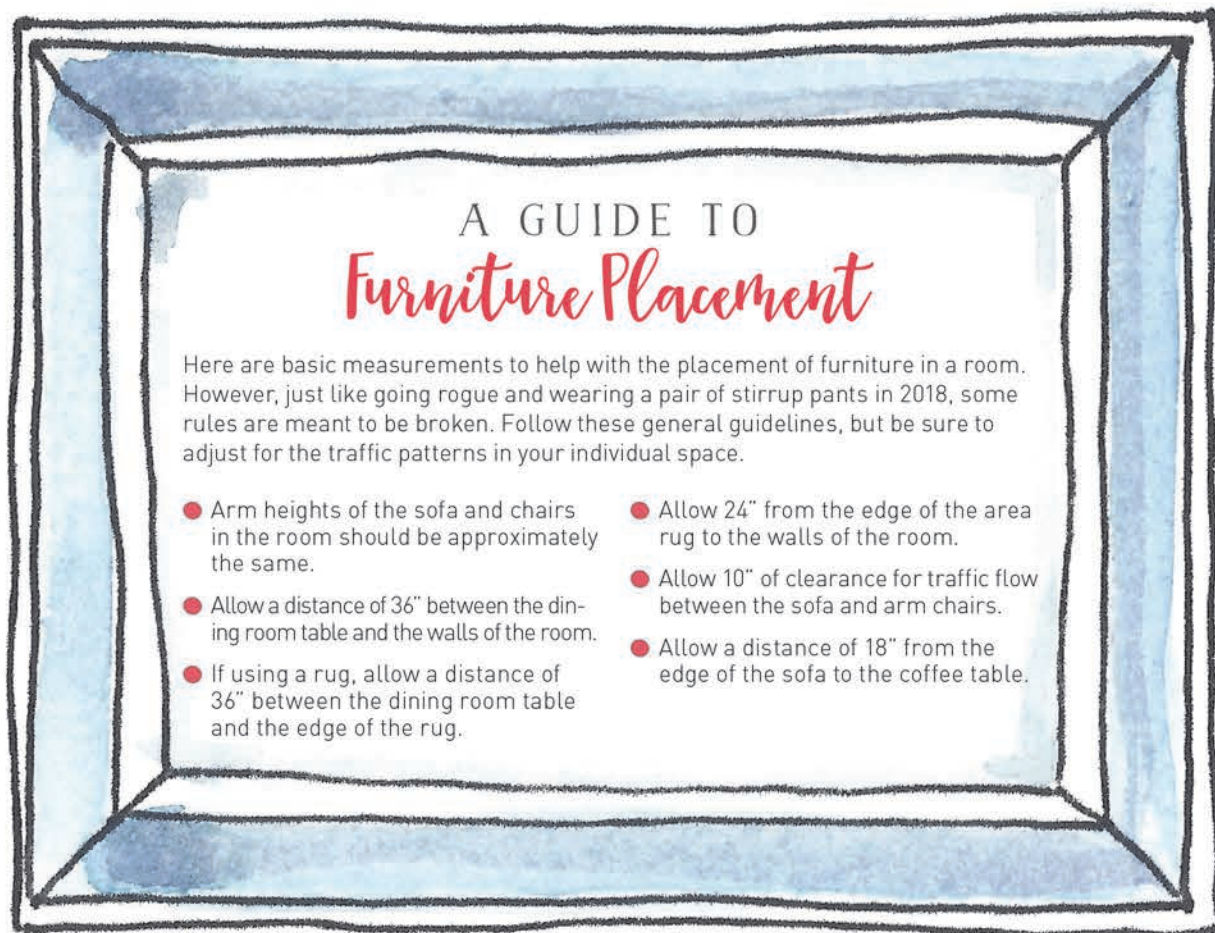


Arrange Your Furniture

Now that your anchor piece is set, add in chairs, sofa tables, coffee tables, rugs, lamps, hutches, and accent pieces to the space. This bird's-eye view of the room will help you see the orientation of different pieces of furniture to each other.

Place furniture slightly away from walls. For example, add a sofa table behind the back of the couch, or angle chairs to create a conversation area instead of lining them up against the wall. Bring your furniture into the space, and the room will instantly feel more welcoming.

Design for comfort. Place tables within easy reach of seating to accommodate drinks. Make sure there are three points of lighting in separate areas of each space to warm up the room. Tuck ottomans and poufs under tables for extra seating. Add oversized baskets next to chairs to store throws and additional pillows.



Add a Rug

Once your room design is completed, you can determine the size of rug you need for the space. Ideally, the legs of the furniture should touch the rug, and there should be approximately 18" of floor between the rug and the wall. In a dining room, the chairs and table should be located on the area rug. Draw in the size of rug needed for the space on the plan.

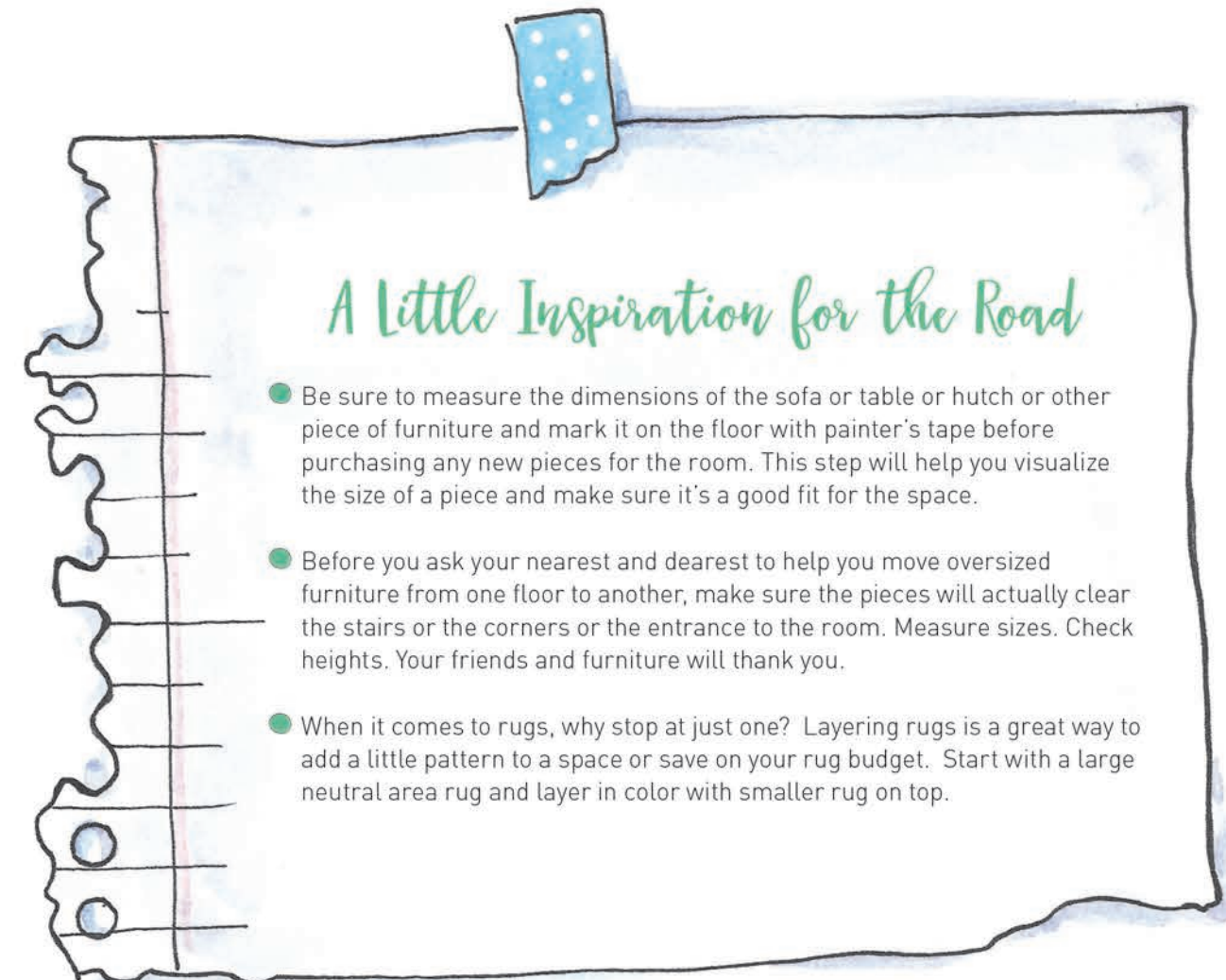
Can you believe it? You've done it!

You are an official design rock star.

You and your space plan and your furniture are ready to party like champions and take on the next steps in designing your space.

TIP

In a larger room, rugs help to establish zones in a space. For example, create a dining area in one part of the space and a seating area in another. An easy way to define spaces in the room is with area rugs.





Measure your couch height

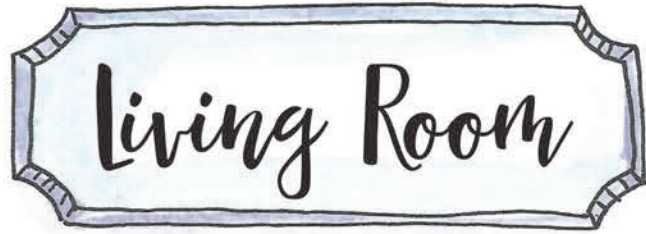
Check your measurements



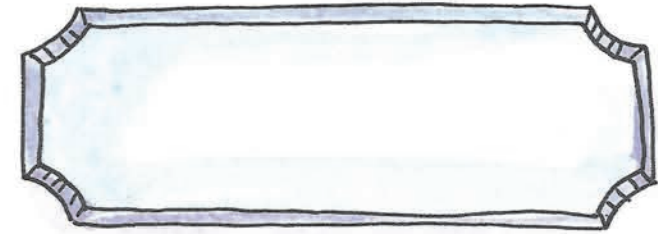
Layer in a rug



Add layers for comfort



← RECORD YOUR ROOM & ITS MEASUREMENTS ↓



LENGTH

WIDTH

HEIGHT

LENGTH

WIDTH

HEIGHT