

House Beautiful

Please Stop Buying Matching Furniture Sets

Rooms in a box are the antithesis of what makes decorating fun.

There's a reason we love looking at other people's houses. Besides the aesthetic inspiration that can be gleaned from a well-decorated interior, houses intrigue us because they are *personal*—they're peeks inside the private world of their homeowners. That's why the best homes are the ones that tell a story, that eschew trends for personal expression and monotony for a little bit of messiness. That's also why, in my opinion, there may be no greater sin in the world of interior design than the matching furniture set.

The concept of making a single purchase to "one and done" your decor is a one-way ticket to a boring home. Buying your furniture as a complete set takes all the fun, personality, and visual excitement out of a room's design and turns it into a mass-producible, cookie-cutter cul-de-sac McMansion version of design.

And if I can't convince you, just take it from designers: They're pretty much all in agreement on this topic. "They're like hitting a Thanksgiving buffet and getting a plate of only potatoes," opines Leah Alexander. "Why reduce creativity when there are so many options out there to mix and match?" Indeed, buying a premade set removes an opportunity to shop an exciting new brand, or support an emerging designer.



"I like spaces to feel collected and curated—to tell a story," says Dallas-based Eddie Maestri of Maestri Studio. Camila Pavone agrees: "A room needs layers," she espouses.