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# Elements Of Style: Designing A Home & A Life



## Synopsis

From the rising-star designer and author of the hit blog, *Elements of Style*, a full-color, fully illustrated book packed with honest advice, inspiration, ideas, and lessons learned about designing a home that reflects your personality and style. *Elements of Style* is a uniquely personal and practical decorating guide that shows how designing a home can be an outlet of personal expression and an exercise in self-discovery. Drawing on her ten years of experience in the interior design industry, Erin combines honest design advice and gorgeous professional photographs and illustrations with personal essays about the lessons she has learned while designing her own home and her own life—the first being: none of our homes or lives is perfect. Like a funny best friend, she reveals the disasters she confronted in her own kitchen renovation, her struggles with anorexia, her epic fight with her husband over a Lucite table, and her secrets for starting a successful blog. Organized by rooms in the house, *Elements of Style* invites readers into Erin's own home as well as homes she has designed for clients. Fresh, modern, and colorful, it is brimming with glamour and style as well as advice on practical matters from choosing kitchen counter materials to dressing a bed with pillows, picking a sofa, and decorating a nursery without cartoon characters. You'll also find a charming foreword by Erin's husband, Andrew, and an extensive Resource and Shopping Guide that provides an indispensable roadmap for anyone embarking on their first serious home decorating adventure. With Erin's help, you can finally make your house your home.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Honestly, the best part of the book is the cover. As a regular blog reader, I was really looking forward to getting a glimpse into Erin's client work. While her projects are certainly pretty and suitable to my taste, I am unimpressed at the diversity throughout her portfolio. Let me spare you the purchase if you're on the fence and tell you what a project consists of: Greek Key trim on curtain panels, roman shades with an accent band, a sunburst mirror, Amanda Talley artwork, X-benches in the foyer, Hermes/Prada labels, staged Hunter boots, the repeated Target gold frame, gray gray gray, Bengal Bazaar, Jiri Ikat, and a sputnik chandelier for the win. The redundancy is apparent. Would I love my house to incorporate all of those things? Sure - and I do, and I love them. I'm not saying she has bad taste. The book simply exhibits a lower level of design innovation, and I do not consider this to be even close in the ranks of other published designers. I want to be inspired by unexpected design applications when I read a design book. I don't want to recognize every trendy product, or read something that I, an amateur, would already think to do myself.

This book is beautifully produced with many high quality photos and good text. Why don't I love it?? Because it seems that all the rooms featured are pretty much the same formula: a statue, a couple of nice trays, good traditional or semi-traditional furniture. I don't consider myself incredibly avant-garde, but I would have enjoyed seeing a bit more variety and experimentation.

The book has beautiful pictures and good ideas for someone like me who doesn't know anything about design. However, the author sounds immature, arrogant and superficial. For example, she describes herself as a "raging perfectionist with a serious grass-is-greener complex" and she feels "sweaty and panicky when there isn't a Starbucks within a three-block radius." Really??...she also taps her foot and sends eye daggers to the waiter when her wine order isn't taken 5 seconds after sitting down... She seems to pride herself on such anecdotes. Experience, maturity and improved emotional-control will certainly make Erin Gates a better designer and writer.

Now what I had expected. I had heard so many things about this book and expected the text and pictures to be higher quality.

I used to read this author's blog. She has shown her true colors as of late, and I've quit reading her blog and unfollowed her on social media. As other reviewers pointed out, this book reads like an autobiography of the author's own home renovation, with a couple of photos from her other projects thrown in. Save your money; you can read about her own home renovation on her blog for free. The

other photos look like they were taken on a phone - unimpressive quality. Maybe I'm accustomed to other design books, which all seem to have much higher photograph quality than this book. As to the content, it's all the same - a console table with matching lamps and two x-benches, greek key trim on everything, etc. Nothing new here. As to the author's writing, she's very opinionated and many of her blog posts are off-putting (complaining about having it all whilst having a book deal and a nanny on staff), and she and her husband write extremely rude comments to those who disagree with anything she says (as other reviewers here have pointed out.) It's very bizarre and dramatic. I read the book and got a few ideas but it's in my donation box. Not one to keep as a "forever" book.

If you have ever looked at this woman's blog you would not want to buy her book. Any time anyone leaves a comment on a blog topic, differing from her own opinion she gets upset and her husband verbally attacks the person leaving the comment.

Fun read & beautiful book!

I follow Erin's blog daily and was very excited to get my hands on this book. Although I thought the writing was well done and funny- I just didn't feel as though this was something I wanted on my coffee table. Preppy new england style pretty much sums up all of the photos. Great for some, just not for me. I returned it.

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