

THE JAPANDI STARTER GUIDE

5 PRINCIPLES INTERIOR DESIGNERS USE TO
CREATE CALM, CONSIDERED HOMES –

WITHOUT STARTING FROM SCRATCH



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If you've ever saved a Japandi-inspired image on Pinterest and wondered how to actually recreate that feeling in your own home – not just buy the pieces, but get the feeling right – this guide is for you.

I'm Anzella, a certified interior designer and writer for Sabi Home. The question I hear most often isn't "what should I buy?" – it's "where do I even start?" And the honest answer is always the same: start with the principles, not the products.

Get these five right, and every purchase you make afterward becomes easier, calmer, and harder to get wrong. This guide gives you exactly that – five ideas you can start applying to your space this week.





PRINCIPLE ONE: CHOOSE QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

One of the defining characteristics of Japandi design is restraint. Rather than filling a room with furniture and décor, Japandi spaces focus on fewer pieces that serve a meaningful purpose.

Before adding anything to a room, ask:

- Does it serve a function?
- Does it add warmth or character?
- Would the room feel better without it?

The goal isn't emptiness.
The goal is intention.

Quick Win

Remove three decorative items from your living room and assess how the space feels. Most people discover their room immediately feels calmer and more balanced. some times one decorative lighting piece can answer all three questions

check out our top picks on: <https://sabi.japandistylehomedecor.com/japandi-floor-lamps-etsy-review/>



PRINCIPLE TWO: BUILD YOUR SPACE AROUND NATURAL MATERIALS

Natural materials are the heart of Japandi design. They introduce warmth, texture and authenticity. Focus on materials such as:

- Oak
- Ash
- Walnut
- Linen
- Cotton
- Bamboo
- Stone
- Ceramic

Instead of buying more décor, look for opportunities to introduce natural textures.

A linen cushion often adds more character than several decorative accessories.

Not sure where to find pieces that genuinely use these materials rather than imitating them? Our guides at sabi.japandistylehomedecor.com review Etsy and Amazon picks specifically for material quality – not just aesthetics.

PRINCIPLE 3: CREATE A CALM COLOUR PALETTE

Japandi interiors use colour to create a sense of calm rather than excitement.

The most successful spaces are built around neutral foundations.

Designer Formula

70% Neutral Base

20% Natural Timber

10% Contrast

This simple formula creates balance and visual harmony in almost any room.

Quick Win

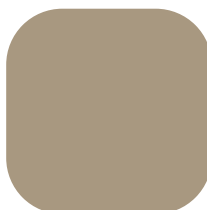
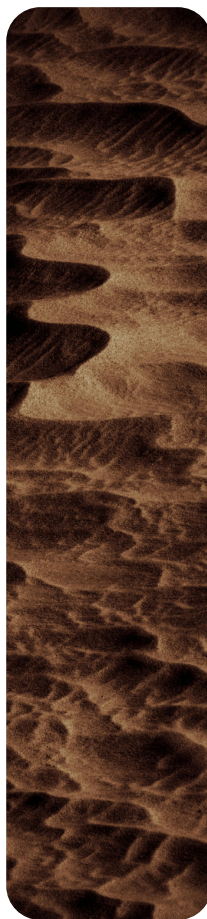
Identify one colour in your room that feels visually distracting and consider replacing it with a softer neutral alternative.



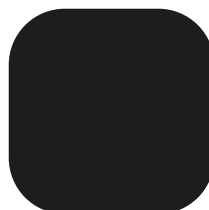
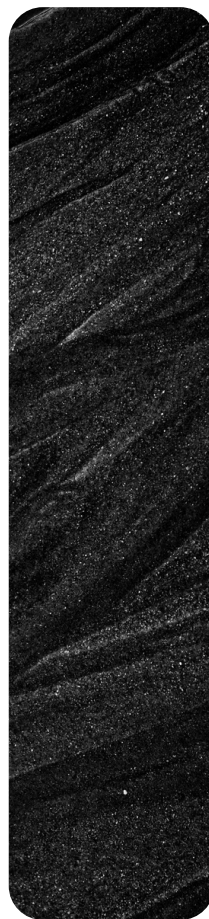
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PRINCIPLE FOUR: BALANCE STYLE AND FUNCTION THROUGH FURNITURE

Japandi furniture isn't chosen because it's trendy.
It's chosen because it improves daily living.

Look for furniture that is:

- Functional
- Comfortable
- Well crafted
- Timeless
- Visually lightweight
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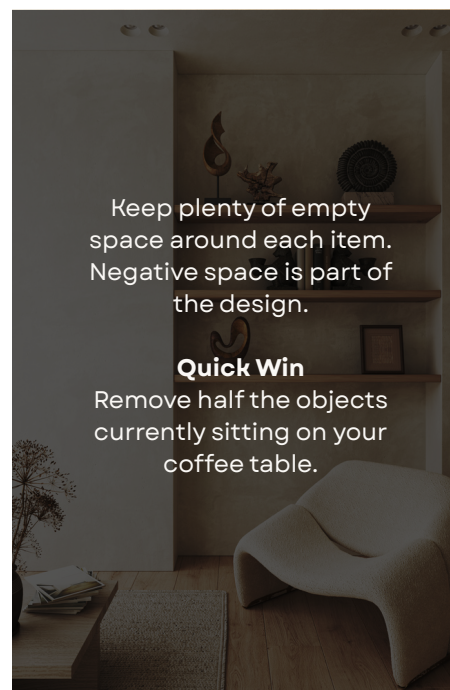
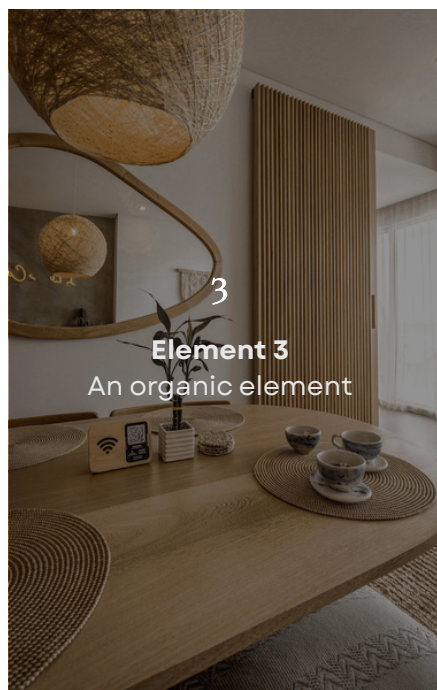
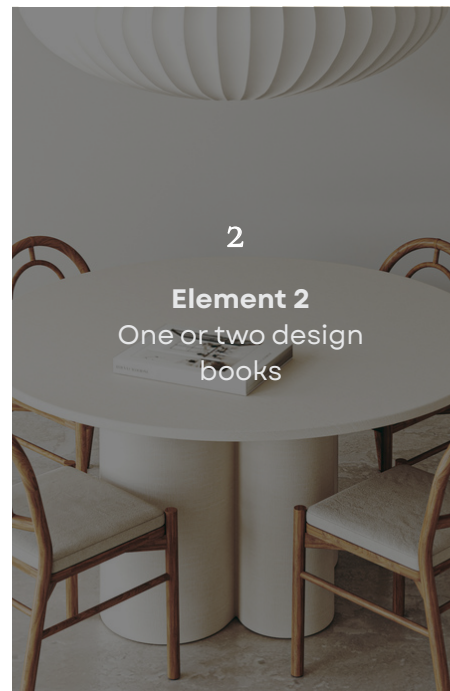
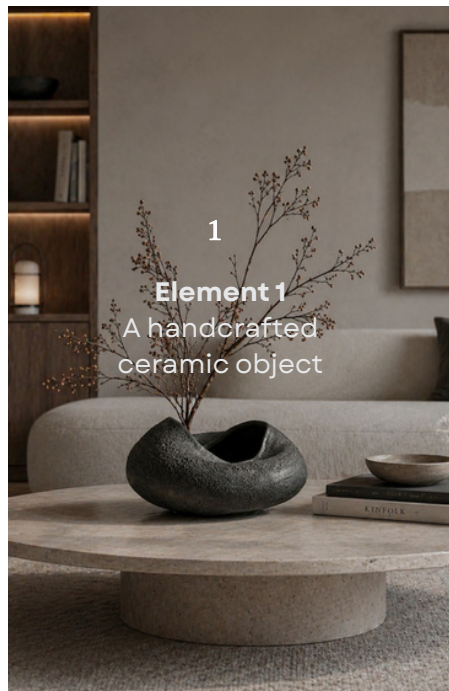
Common Japandi furniture characteristics include:

- Low profiles
- Rounded edges
- Solid wood construction
- Simple silhouettes
- Natural finishes

Our Japandi coffee table guide at sabi.japandistylehomedecor.com applies this exact test to 10 verified Etsy picks – it's the fastest way to see the principle in practice.

PRINCIPLE FIVE: MASTER THE JAPANDI COFFEE TABLE FORMULA

Coffee tables are often the focal point of a Japandi living room. The mistake many people make is over-styling them. Instead, follow the Three-Element Formula.



CHAPTER 6:

THE JAPANDI ROOM FORMULA

The Japanese concept of ma – the beauty of empty space – is not a design failure. It is the most intentional decision in the room. Protect it.

- *Modern aesthetic functional spaces*
- *Design enhances everyday living*
- *Natural materials used elegantly*
- *Warm tones with refined contrasts*

Step 1 Declutter the room.

Step 2 Choose a neutral colour palette.

Step 3 Invest in one quality furniture piece.

Step 4 Introduce natural materials.

Step 5 Add texture through fabrics and ceramics.

Step 6 Leave space for the room to breathe.

The goal isn't perfection.

The goal is creating a home that feels calm, functional and welcoming.



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THE THREE MOST COMMON JAPANDI MISTAKES

Most people who fall in love with Japandi design make the same three mistakes – not because they lack taste, but because the aesthetic looks deceptively simple from the outside. The rooms that feel genuinely calm and considered aren't the result of finding the right products. They are the result of understanding why certain decisions work – and resisting the ones that don't.



MISTAKE 2:

Buying Japandi products before applying Japandi principles. The principles come first. Products serve them – not the other way around.



MISTAKE 1:

Styling for the photo, not the room. The most beautiful Japandi rooms don't photograph well because they're designed to be lived in, not looked at.



MISTAKE 3:

Treating negative space as something to fix. Empty surfaces are not unfinished rooms. They are the most deliberate design decision you can make.

TEN QUESTIONS EVERY JAPANDI HOME SHOULD PASS

Does every furniture piece serve a purpose?

Are natural materials present?

Is the colour palette calm and cohesive?

Is there sufficient empty space?

Have I prioritised quality over quantity?

Is clutter hidden or removed?

Does the room feel warm rather than sterile?

Is lighting soft and inviting?

Are decorative objects meaningful?

Would I still love this room in ten years?

If you answered yes to most of these questions, you're well on your way to creating an authentic Japandi home.

CONTINUE YOUR JAPANDI JOURNEY

CREATING A BEAUTIFUL JAPANDI HOME DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT.

CONTINUE YOUR JAPANDI JOURNEY

Creating a beautiful Japandi home doesn't happen overnight – but it does start with one decision, not ten.

Your next step: the coffee table. It's the single highest-impact first purchase in any Japandi living room, and the one piece that sets the tone for everything else in the space.

We've already done the hard part – reviewed 10 verified Etsy picks for natural materials, honest proportions, and genuine craftsmanship – so you don't have to guess.

[See the 10 Coffee Tables →] <https://sabi.japandistylehomedecor.com/10-stunning-japandi-coffee-tables-to-elevate-your-living-room/>

Ready to go further? Floor lamps, dining tables, rugs, and lighting guides are all waiting at sabi.japandistylehomedecor.com.

Your calmest home starts with the next intentional decision.

