
A SHARED-SPACE DESIGN GUIDE

The Roommate *Reset.*

A design system for spaces you share — when the home belongs to two people with two visions, two wardrobes, and two opinions about the sofa.



PAGES

38

SECTIONS

Six

FOR

Sharers

FORMAT

Guide

— READ THIS FIRST

A shared home is not your home. It is not their home either. *It is a third thing — and it requires a different design discipline.*

Living with someone means designing with someone. Not around them, not in spite of them, not by quietly replacing their furniture while they're at work. The shared home is a negotiation — and like every negotiation, it goes better when both parties have a framework instead of a feeling.

Most shared homes end up designed by whoever cares more, deferred by whoever cares less, and resented by both. The result is a living room where one person's aesthetic won by default, a bedroom that belongs to one person and is tolerated by the other, and a kitchen nobody takes responsibility for.

The Roommate Reset is the framework. **An audit of what you each brought, a map of who decides what, a negotiation protocol for the spaces you share, and a cohesion system for making two people's taste read as one room.** It works for romantic partners, platonic roommates, and anyone who has ever had an argument about a lamp.

The home you make together should be better than either home you would have made alone. This is how.

— *Dreamr*

FOUNDER · DECORDREAMR

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— A DESIGNER'S POSITION

Two people. *One room. On purpose.*

A shared home has three stakeholders: you, the other person, and the home itself. Most couples and roommates manage the first two and ignore the third entirely. The home ends up designed by default — assembled from whatever both parties tolerated rather than anything either of them chose. A room assembled by tolerance is a room that exhausts everyone who lives in it. The reset is the practice of choosing deliberately instead. *Together.*

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- 01 The shared space is not yours and not theirs. It is the third thing — the home you make together.
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- 05 Budget asymmetry is real. Address it in the audit — not in the argument.
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- 06 The piece you each hate least is not the same as the piece you both like. *Know the difference.*
-
- 07 The home that looks designed is the one where two people made deliberate decisions — not one person's vision imposed on a shared space.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read Part 1 together — or separately, then compare notes. Part 2 is a conversation framework: read it, then have the conversation. Parts 3 and 4 are the implementation. Part 5 is for when you disagree. Print the Resource Vault (Part 6) and post the Zone Charter where you both see it.

I The Shared Space Audit

INVENTORY + TENSION MAP

Before you negotiate anything, you need a clear picture of what you're both working with — what each person owns, what each person needs, and where the tension points already live.

The Shared Space Audit is not a design conversation — it is a data-gathering exercise. Most cohabitation disagreements are not about taste. They are about un-named assumptions: one person assumed the living room was shared and the other treated it as theirs. One person assumed the kitchen aesthetic was negotiated and the other thought it was settled. The audit names the assumptions before they become arguments.

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY WITH

A complete household inventory organized by ownership and zone, a Tension Map that names every current and anticipated design disagreement, a Decision Debt register of aesthetic choices that have been deferred, and a first draft of the Zone Charter that defines who decides what in each space.

The four audit mistakes in shared homes

- Auditing only your own stuff.** The audit covers every piece in the home — regardless of who owns it. A piece you didn't bring is still a piece you live with.
- Skipping the Tension Map.** If you can name the disagreements before you have them, you can have them on paper instead of in the living room at 10pm.
- Auditing without the other person.** The shared audit is a shared exercise. One person auditing and presenting conclusions is not a shared audit — it is a presentation.
- Confusing "I own this" with "this stays."** Ownership is a data point, not a veto. The zone system (Part 3) determines what stays where, not who paid for it.

— PROTOCOL 01

Every piece. *Both people. One list.*

The household inventory catalogues every piece of furniture in the home against six attributes. Use the Audit Worksheet on page 31 to do this together. The six columns are designed to surface ownership, condition, and zone conflicts before the negotiation begins.

COLUMN	WHAT TO CAPTURE	WHY IT MATTERS
Owner	Who brought the piece — Person A, Person B, or jointly purchased.	Ownership determines emotional attachment and replacement politics. Naming it early prevents "you got rid of my ___" conversations later.
Zone	Which zone is the piece currently in — shared, personal, or negotiated? (See Part 3.)	Zone determines who has decision authority over the piece. A piece in a shared zone requires agreement from both parties.
Condition	Rate 1–5. 5 = perfect. 3 = functional but worn. 1 = broken.	Condition is the most objective criterion in the audit. Low-condition pieces are the easiest starting point for a shared edit.
Both Like It?	Do both people actively like this piece? Options: Both Like / One Likes / Neither Likes.	The "Neither Likes" category is the first exit list — pieces nobody wants are the easiest consensus decisions in the home.
Function Score	How often is this piece used by either person — daily, weekly, monthly, rarely?	Low-use pieces in shared zones are the lowest-friction removes. High-use pieces in disputed zones are the highest-priority negotiations.
Tension Flag	Is this piece a source of current or anticipated disagreement? Flag it Y/N.	Tension-flagged pieces go directly to the Tension Map on page 7. The flag is not a judgment — it is a pointer.

DO THIS TOGETHER

The inventory works best when both people fill in the "Both Like It?" column independently — without seeing the other person's answer first. The gaps between what you thought they liked and what they actually like are the most useful data the audit produces.

— PROTOCOL 02

Three kinds of space. *Three sets of rules.*

Every room in a shared home belongs to one of three zone categories. The category determines who has design authority in that space — and what the decision-making process looks like. Mapping zones is the single most clarifying step in the shared space audit. Most cohabitation arguments are not design disagreements; they are zone disagreements with furniture as the proxy.

SHARED ZONE

Both people decide

Living room, kitchen, entryway, dining room, shared bathrooms, hallways. All aesthetic decisions in shared zones require consensus — or the conflict framework in Part 5. Neither person has unilateral authority here. Changes require a conversation.

PERSONAL ZONE

One person decides

Bedrooms (if separate), personal workspaces, private bathrooms. The occupant has full design authority in personal zones. The other person's preference is data, not a veto. Personal zones are where taste asymmetry is allowed to live.

NEGOTIATED ZONE

One person leads

Shared bedroom, shared home office, guest room, laundry area. One person is assigned as the lead decision-maker; the other has review rights and can flag major objections. The Zone Charter (page 20) documents who leads which negotiated zone.

THE ZONE CONVERSATION

Map every room in your home to a zone type before the inventory is complete. Disputes about zone assignment are the most productive disagreements you can have — they clarify expectations before furniture is involved. A room's zone type can be changed by mutual agreement, but the default should be set early.

— PROTOCOL 03

Name the disagreement *before* it finds you.

The Tension Map is a list of every design disagreement — current or anticipated — in the shared home. Writing it down is the act that turns a vague source of friction into a solvable problem. A tension you can name on paper is a tension you can work through systematically. A tension you've only felt is a tension that waits for the wrong moment and arrives as an argument about an unrelated subject.

How to build the Tension Map

- Each person writes their list independently.** Five to ten items. What do you find aesthetically frustrating about the shared space? What would you change if the decision were yours alone?
- Exchange lists without discussion first.** Read each other's list fully before responding. The immediate reaction is often defensive. Let it settle.
- Categorize each tension item.** Zone conflict (shared vs. personal), ownership conflict (your piece in my zone), taste conflict (style disagreement), or budget conflict (one person's priority the other won't spend on).
- Rank by friction.** Rate each tension item 1–3: 1 = mild annoyance, 2 = regular friction, 3 = active conflict. Rank-3 items go to Part 5 (Conflict Framework) immediately.
- Assign a zone and a decision-maker.** Every tension item has a home in either the Negotiation Protocol (Part 2) or the Zone System (Part 3). Map it before the conversation starts.

WHAT NOT TO DO WITH THE TENSION MAP

Don't use it as a list of complaints to read to each other. Don't score whose list is longer. Don't treat a tension item from the other person as a personal criticism of your taste. The map is a shared instrument — it belongs to the home, not to either person.

— THE HIDDEN COST

Deferred decisions *cost both of you.*

Decision debt in a shared home is the accumulated weight of aesthetic choices that were never made — the sofa nobody picked but both tolerate, the kitchen that belongs to neither person's vision, the living room that hasn't been consciously arranged since move-in. In a solo home, decision debt costs one person their sense of ownership. In a shared home, it costs both people the feeling that they live somewhere chosen.

The Shared Space Audit ends decision debt. When every piece has been inventoried, every zone mapped, and every tension named, there is nothing left to avoid. The home becomes a set of solvable problems rather than a persistent background discomfort. **The conversation is short. The benefit is permanent.**

58%

OF COUPLES

report their shared living space doesn't reflect either person's taste — it reflects the path of least resistance

3 yrs

MEDIAN TIME

cohabiting couples wait before having a direct conversation about the home's aesthetic — if they ever do

\$1,100

AVG. DUPLICATE SPEND

in furniture and decor when two households merge without an audit — items purchased twice that could have been consolidated

72%

RESOLVE AT NAMING

of shared-home design tensions resolve once they are formally named and categorized — before any money is spent

What the audit produces

After completing the audit — the inventory, the zone map, and the tension map — you have three outputs: a shared list of what you both like and want to keep, a clear map of who decides what in which space, and a named list of disagreements that are ready for the Negotiation Protocol. The negotiation becomes a structured process rather than a recurring argument.

II The Negotiation Protocol

AESTHETIC · BUDGET · VETO

The negotiation is not an argument waiting to happen. It is a structured conversation with a framework, a vocabulary, and an endpoint.

Most shared-home design failures are not failures of taste — they are failures of process. Two people with genuinely compatible aesthetics end up in a room that represents neither of them because they never had the design conversation explicitly. One person bought something; the other didn't say they hated it until it was already hung. One person had a budget in mind; the other had a completely different number and neither mentioned it. The Negotiation Protocol is the conversation structure that prevents all of this.

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY WITH

A Shared Aesthetic Profile that names the overlap between two people's taste, a Budget Agreement that documents each person's investment expectations, a Veto System that defines what each person has full authority over, and a "We Both Like This" threshold that becomes the standard for every shared purchase.

The three negotiation conversations

- The Aesthetic Conversation.** What do we each like? Where do we overlap? Where are we genuinely incompatible? (Part 2, page 10.)
- The Budget Conversation.** What are we each willing to spend on the shared home? What is each person's threshold for a purchase that requires joint sign-off? (Part 2, page 11.)
- The Veto Conversation.** What does each person have full authority over? What requires consensus? What is each person's hard line? (Part 2, page 12.)

— CONVERSATION 01

Find the overlap. *Design from there.*

Two people rarely have identical aesthetic tastes. They rarely have completely incompatible ones either. The Shared Aesthetic Framework is the exercise that finds the overlap — the range of styles, materials, and moods that both people respond positively to — and makes that overlap the design language of the shared space.

The reference image exercise

Each person independently collects ten images of interiors they respond to positively — from anywhere. No genre restrictions. Then compare. The exercise is not about matching Pinterest boards. It is about identifying the attributes that appear in both people's selections: similar color temperatures, similar material preferences, similar scale of furniture, similar levels of visual complexity.

ATTRIBUTE	PERSON A PREFERENCE	PERSON B PREFERENCE	THE OVERLAP
Color temperature			
Material palette			
Visual complexity			
Furniture scale			
Era / style			
Lighting mood			

THE OVERLAP IS THE DESIGN LANGUAGE

Whatever appears in both people's reference images is the shared aesthetic vocabulary. This is the style language for all shared zones. Personal zones can express individual taste freely. But the living room, entry, and kitchen speak only in the overlap. Design from that constraint — it is more generative than a blank brief.

Incompatibilities outside the overlap are not problems to solve — they are inputs to the Zone System in Part 3. If one person loves maximalist color and the other loves spare white rooms, the shared zones find the midpoint; personal zones give each person the room to express what the shared zones can't hold.

— CONVERSATION 02

Budget asymmetry is *normal*. *Name it early.*

Most shared-home budget conflicts are not about money — they are about mismatched assumptions that were never stated. One person assumes the sofa budget is \$400; the other is thinking \$1,200. One person believes the home should be furnished all at once; the other thinks it should happen gradually. Neither says anything until a specific purchase surfaces the gap.

The five budget questions to answer together

#	QUESTION	WHY THIS CONVERSATION MATTERS
01	What is our total shared-home budget for the next 12 months?	A number both people know prevents the "we can't afford this" surprise and the "why didn't we buy the better one" regret.
02	What is the threshold for a purchase that requires both people's sign-off?	Below the threshold, either person can buy for the shared home. Above it, consensus is required. A common threshold: \$100 for daily-use items, \$300 for furniture.
03	Are we splitting costs equally or proportionally to income?	There is no correct answer — but there is a correct time to answer: before the first shared purchase, not during it.
04	Who is responsible for which shared zones?	Assigning a budget owner per zone prevents both people waiting for the other to act and neither zone ever getting addressed.
05	What is each person's non-negotiable investment?	One person may need a quality mattress above everything else. The other may need a real desk chair. Name the non-negotiables first — they are the priority purchases in the Replace Sequence.

THE BUDGET ASYMMETRY RULE

If one person has significantly more budget flexibility than the other: the higher-budget person does not get more design authority in proportion. Budget and veto power are separate. A person who contributes more financially to a shared purchase does not thereby own the aesthetic outcome. Agree on this explicitly before spending begins.

— CONVERSATION 03

What you control. *What requires agreement.*

The Veto System defines each person's zone of unilateral authority — the decisions they own completely — and the decisions that require consensus. Without this, every purchase becomes a negotiation, and every small decision carries the weight of the whole relationship. With it, each person has a domain of freedom and a set of clear shared-decision rules.

The three-tier authority model

TIER	WHAT IT COVERS	DECISION PROCESS
Full Authority	Personal zones — bedroom, workspace, personal bathroom. Any purchase under the agreed threshold for a personal zone.	Unilateral. Inform the other person as courtesy, not permission. No veto rights here.
Lead Authority	Negotiated zones — the room assigned to you in the Zone Charter. Purchases above threshold in your assigned zone.	You decide, with the other person's right to flag a major objection. An objection triggers the 90-Day Trial (page 29), not an immediate reversal.
Consensus Required	All shared zones. Any purchase above the consensus threshold anywhere in the home. Changes to anchor pieces.	Both people must actively agree — not just tolerate. "I don't love it but whatever" is not consensus; it is deferred resentment. Use the "We Both Like This" threshold (page 13).

The hard veto

Each person has one hard veto per shared zone per year — a decision they can block outright, without requiring the other person to agree with their reasoning. Hard vetoes are not for "I don't love it." They are for "I cannot live with this." Used sparingly, they protect the relationship. Used frequently, they paralyze the home.

DOCUMENT THE VETO SYSTEM

Write down the three-tier authority model in the Zone Charter (page 34). What is in someone's head is not enforceable; what is written and agreed is. Updating it once a year is reasonable.

— THE STANDARD FOR SHARED PURCHASES

The piece you each hate least *is not the answer.*

The most common failure mode in shared-home design is convergence toward the least-objectionable option. Both people rule out what the other dislikes until only a gray beige sofa remains that neither of them chose and both of them tolerate. The "We Both Like This" threshold prevents this by setting a higher standard: shared purchases require active enthusiasm from both parties, not mutual tolerance.

The five-point scale for shared decisions

SCORE	RESPONSE	MEANING FOR THE PURCHASE
5 — Love it	"This is exactly right."	Strong keep / buy signal. Proceed.
4 — Like it	"Yes, this works for me."	Positive signal. For shared purchases, both at 4+ = proceed.
3 — Neutral	"I don't have strong feelings either way."	Weak signal. A 4+3 combination is acceptable. A 3+3 combination is the danger zone — it produces the toleration room.
2 — Dislike	"I'd prefer not, but I can live with it."	Veto-adjacent. One person at 2 means going back to look at more options before proceeding.
1 — Hard No	"I can't live with this."	Stop. This is a hard veto trigger. The item is off the list.

THE THRESHOLD RULE

For any shared zone purchase, the minimum combined score is **4+4**. A 5+3 combination is acceptable. A 4+3 requires one more round of options. A 3+3 or lower goes back to the drawing board. Both people should score independently — without showing the other person first.

"The goal is not a room you both tolerate. The goal is a room you both chose."

III The Zone System

SHARED · PERSONAL · NEGOTIATED

The Zone System turns the abstract map of shared and personal space into a concrete room-by-room design framework — with different rules for different spaces.

Most cohabitation aesthetic problems are zone problems. The living room feels like it belongs to one person because one person made all the decisions in it. The bedroom feels contested because nobody agreed on who leads it. The kitchen is ignored because both people assumed the other was handling it. The Zone System assigns decision authority clearly, so that each zone has an owner, each owner has a brief, and the home moves forward without every decision becoming a joint negotiation.

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY WITH

A fully mapped home with every room assigned to a zone type, room-by-room design playbooks for the four most commonly contested shared spaces, a personal zone framework that gives each person genuine design freedom, and a Zone Charter that documents all authority assignments in writing.

The zone assignment conversation

- List every room in the home.** Include hallways, laundry, entryway, and any outdoor space you share. Every space needs a zone assignment.

- Assign each room to Shared, Personal, or Negotiated.** Use the definitions from page 6. When in doubt, assign Negotiated and set a lead decision-maker.

- For Negotiated zones, assign the lead.** The lead is the person with stronger design investment in that space. Investment, not ownership. The person who cares more leads.

- Record the assignments in the Zone Charter** (page 34) and review once a year or when the household changes.

SHARED ZONE · CONSENSUS REQUIRED

— ZONE PLAYBOOK 01

The living room belongs *to both of you.*

The living room is the highest-stakes shared zone in most homes because it is the most visible and the most used by both people. It is also the zone most likely to be designed by whoever cares more — which means one person's taste wins by default and the other person lives in a room that isn't quite theirs. The playbook for the shared living room builds from the overlap of the Shared Aesthetic Framework, not from either person's solo vision.

Five rules for designing a shared living room

The anchor piece requires a joint decision — non-negotiable. The sofa is the room's anchor. It commands more visual weight than any other decision in the space. A sofa chosen by one person without the other's active agreement is a sofa that produces resentment.

Rule: The sofa scores 4+ from both people before purchase. No exceptions. Budget more time for this decision than any other in the shared home.

One person leads the room's aesthetic brief. Both people agree on the brief — the style language from the overlap — and then one person executes within it. Joint execution of every decision produces paralysis.

Rule: Assign the living room lead in the Zone Charter. The lead makes day-to-day decisions within the agreed brief; the other person has review rights for purchases above the consensus threshold.

Each person contributes one personal piece to the shared room. A fully negotiated room belongs to neither person. One piece from each person's genuine aesthetic — an object, a lamp, a piece of art — makes the room feel like both people live in it.

Rule: Each person selects one piece from their own taste range. The other person's approval is not required — but the piece must fit the three-material palette.

The TV is not the anchor. In most shared living rooms, the sofa arrangement defaults toward the TV. The relationship anchor is the sofa-facing-sofa conversation zone, not the screen.

Rule: Arrange seating for conversation first. The TV is secondary and should not govern the room's furniture layout.

Clutter policy is a shared agreement, not a passive complaint. One person's "I like having things out" and the other's "I need surfaces clear" is one of the most common low-grade shared-home conflicts.

Rule: Agree on the shared-surface policy explicitly (page 12 Veto System). Surfaces in a shared zone are governed by shared agreement — not by whoever has stronger feelings that day.

SHARED ZONE

— ZONE PLAYBOOK 02 · KITCHEN

The kitchen nobody *took responsibility for.*

The kitchen is the shared zone most likely to be ignored aesthetically because both people assume "function over form" is the rule. It isn't. A kitchen that reads as designed produces a daily quality-of-life improvement that undershoots its cost significantly.

Assign a kitchen lead. The person who uses the kitchen more or cares more about it leads. They set the organization logic, the surface standard, and the aesthetic decisions within the shared brief.

Rule: The kitchen lead has full authority below the consensus threshold. Countertop styling, hardware, small appliance choices — theirs. Structural changes — joint.

Surface policy in writing. Is the kitchen counter clear-by-default or staged-with-objects? Clear counters are easier to cook in; styled surfaces feel more like a home. Choose one and agree.

Rule: Write the surface policy in the Zone Charter. A written agreement ends the low-grade repeated conversation.

One aesthetic gesture transforms the kitchen. A unified set of canisters, a quality dish towel in the room's color language, a single plant — one deliberate choice makes the whole kitchen read as considered.

Rule: Assign the kitchen one aesthetic gesture before adding anything else.

SHARED ZONE

— ZONE PLAYBOOK 03 · ENTRY

The entry is the room's *first impression.*

The entryway is the smallest shared zone and the highest-leverage one. It is the first thing both people see when they come home and the first thing guests see. It is also the zone most likely to become a dump zone — keys, bags, shoes, mail — when no one has been assigned ownership of it.

The entry is a shared zone with a single lead. Whoever cares more assigns themselves the entry. It is small enough that one person can own it entirely within the shared brief.

Rule: Entry lead has full authority. The shared brief applies (color temperature, material palette) — within that, the lead decides everything.

Function first, then aesthetic. A hook for every person's bag. A tray for keys. A surface for mail. The function of the entry must be solved before the aesthetic can be expressed.

Rule: Each person gets one hook and one shelf or tray slot in the entry. All additional surfaces are shared and jointly maintained.

The entry sets the whole home's tone. A mirror in the entry doubles perceived light and creates an arrival ritual. A plant introduces the home's palette. A rug defines the zone.

Rule: Three objects only in the entry: a mirror, a plant or light source, and a rug. Everything else is clutter at this scale.

NEGOTIATED ZONE · LEAD DECIDES

— ZONE PLAYBOOK 04

The shared bedroom is *the hardest zone.*

The shared bedroom is the most contested zone in most cohabiting households because it is simultaneously the most personal space in the home and the space that both people have to agree to live in. It cannot be fully personal (both people sleep there) and it cannot be fully shared (it is the room most tied to individual need for comfort and identity). It is always a Negotiated zone — and it requires the most explicit lead assignment.

Five rules for the shared bedroom

- Assign a bedroom lead — openly.** The lead is the person with stronger aesthetic investment in the bedroom. The lead designs within the shared brief and the other person has review rights for anchor pieces (bed frame, bedding, rug).
- Each person has a side that is theirs.** Nightstand, lamp, bedside surface — one person's domain. The other person does not get aesthetic authority over the other side. Each side is a personal zone within the shared room.
- The bedding is the room's color story.** In a shared bedroom with mismatched furniture, bedding is the color bridge — and it is the highest-impact shared purchase in the room. Both people need to score it 4+ before purchasing.
- Personal items on shared surfaces require agreement.** A shared dresser top, shared vanity, or shared closet entrance is a shared surface. Clutter policy from the Zone Charter applies here.
- The bed frame is the bedroom's anchor.** It is the piece both people see first and last every day. It is worth spending the most time — and the most budget — getting right. If the current frame scores below 4 from either person, it is the bedroom's top replacement priority.

WHEN YOU DISAGREE ABOUT THE BEDROOM

Bedroom design disagreements are often comfort disagreements dressed as aesthetic ones. One person's "I need it darker" and the other's "I want natural light" is not a taste conflict — it is a functional conflict. Separate the comfort needs from the aesthetic preferences before entering the Conflict Framework.

PERSONAL ZONE · FULL AUTHORITY

— ZONE PLAYBOOK 05

Your desk is yours. *The rest of the room is shared.*

A personal workspace in a shared home is a personal zone — the person who works there has full authority over its aesthetic, regardless of where in the home it sits. Even a desk in the corner of a shared bedroom is a personal zone at the desk level. The boundary is the workspace itself, not the room that contains it.

Three workspace rules for shared homes

RULE	WHAT IT MEANS	WHERE IT BREAKS DOWN
Workspace = personal zone	The person who uses the workspace makes all aesthetic decisions for it. The desk, the chair, the shelving above it, the lighting on it.	When the workspace is in a shared room and its aesthetic conflicts with the shared room's brief. The fix: extend the shared brief's color temperature but not its specific style to the workspace.
Cables are a shared concern	Cable management affects the shared room's aesthetic. Visible cable chaos in a workspace that sits in a shared room is a shared-zone problem, even if the workspace itself is personal.	When the workspace occupant doesn't prioritize cable management. Fix: assign cable management as a shared-zone responsibility with a defined standard.
Dual workspaces need separate zones	If both people work from home and share a single office, the room is a Negotiated zone with two personal sub-zones (one desk each). Each person's desk is theirs; the shared room requires joint decisions for non-desk elements.	When one person's desk expands into the shared room. Fix: define the desk zone boundary explicitly — wall, shelf, or rug — and maintain it.

THE SHARED HOME OFFICE

Two people working from home in one space is the most common new source of shared-home tension. The zone model for a dual home office: the room is Negotiated with Person A as lead (or whichever person has stronger design investment). Each person's desk is a Personal sub-zone. Shared elements — overhead light, rug, bookshelves visible to both — are Negotiated.

NEGOTIATED ZONE · LEAD DECIDES

— ZONE PLAYBOOK 06

Assign a lead. *Then let them lead.*

Negotiated zones are rooms where one person has lead authority and the other has review rights. They exist because some rooms are too personal for full consensus but too shared for full unilateral authority. Common negotiated zones: the shared bedroom, a shared home office, the guest room, a shared bathroom, the laundry area.

How negotiated zones work in practice

ZONE TYPE	LEAD AUTHORITY COVERS	REVIEW RIGHTS COVER
Shared bedroom	All design decisions within the shared brief. Day-to-day styling. Purchases below consensus threshold.	Anchor piece purchases (bed frame, rug, bedding). Changes that affect the other person's side of the room.
Shared bathroom	Organizing logic, surface aesthetic, towel choices, small accessories.	Major purchases (mirror, vanity, storage furniture). Changes to what is on the shared counter.
Guest room	Typically single-person authority. Assign to whoever uses it as secondary space.	The other person has a hard veto right only for major purchases (bed, significant furniture).
Shared home office	Room-level decisions: overhead light, rug, shared shelving, wall color.	Either person's desk zone — hands off. Shared surface styling.

The Zone Charter

The Zone Charter (printable template on page 34) documents every zone assignment in the home: the zone type, the lead for each negotiated zone, the consensus threshold for each shared zone, and the review rights for each. It is a living document — update it when the household composition changes or annually, whichever comes first.

POST IT

Print the Zone Charter and put it somewhere both people see regularly — the back of a closet door, inside a kitchen cabinet, pinned to the fridge. Visible agreements are honored more consistently than remembered ones.

— PRINTABLE · DRAFT HERE · FINALIZE ON PAGE 34

The Zone *Charter*.

Fill in every room. Zone types: S = Shared, P = Personal, N = Negotiated. For Negotiated zones, name the lead. For Shared zones, record the consensus threshold. Transfer to the full Zone Charter template on page 34.

ROOM / SPACE	ZONE TYPE S / P / N	LEAD (IF N)	CONSENSUS THRESHOLD (IF S)	REVIEW RIGHTS
Living room	S	—	\$_____	Both
Kitchen	S	—	\$_____	Both
Entryway	S	—	\$_____	Both
Shared bedroom	N	_____	—	Anchor pieces

S = SHARED (CONSENSUS REQUIRED) · P = PERSONAL (FULL AUTHORITY) · N = NEGOTIATED (LEAD DECIDES, OTHER REVIEWS)

AGREEMENT DATE

Both people sign or initial below when the Zone Charter is agreed. Next review date: _____

Person A: _____ Person B: _____

IV The Cohesion Playbook

TWO TASTES, ONE ROOM

Cohesion in a shared home does not require both people to have the same taste. It requires both people's taste to speak the same visual language — a language built from the overlap you found in Part 2.

A room assembled from two people's furniture collections reads as chaotic not because the pieces are from different eras or styles but because they have no shared logic — no anchor, no material story, no color temperature that connects them. The Cohesion Playbook applies the same three tools used in the Inherited Furniture Fix to the specific problem of shared-home furniture: the anchor piece as joint decision, the three-material rule as a shared constraint, and the color bridge as the visual thread that holds everything together. The difference here is that both people have to agree on all three.

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY WITH

A jointly selected anchor piece for each shared zone, a three-material palette that both people's furniture can respond to, a color bridge that connects the room's disparate pieces, and a cohesion checklist that both people can use to evaluate any future purchase against the established shared language.

The three cohesion tools for shared homes

- The shared anchor piece.** One piece per shared zone that both people chose together and that all other decisions respond to. This is the room's reference point and the hardest joint decision you'll make. (Page 22.)
- The three-material rule.** Limit the exposed materials in any shared room to three. The rule prevents the material accumulation that happens when two furniture collections merge without editing. (Page 23.)
- The color bridge.** One element — usually a rug — that pulls a color from both people's furniture and holds the room together in a shared visual logic. The bridge is always a consensus purchase. (Page 24.)

— COHESION TOOL 01

One piece. *Both people chose it.*

The shared anchor piece is the most important joint decision in the shared home. It is the piece with the most visual weight in a shared zone — usually the sofa in the living room, the bed frame in the shared bedroom, the dining table in the dining room. Every other piece in the room responds to it. If the anchor was chosen by one person alone, the room will always feel like one person's room that the other person moved into.

How to select the shared anchor

STEP	ACTION
1. Identify	Name the anchor piece for each shared zone — the largest or most visually dominant piece. This is usually the sofa (living room), bed frame (bedroom), or dining table (dining room). There is one anchor per room.
2. Assess what you have	Rate the current anchor piece on the shared 5-point scale (page 13). If both score 4+, it stays and the rest of the room responds to it. If either scores 3 or below, it is a replacement priority.
3. If replacing: brief together	Write a two-sentence brief before browsing. "We want a sofa that is [scale], in [material/color range], that reads as [style]." The brief comes from the Shared Aesthetic Overlap on page 10.
4. Browse separately, compare	Each person independently finds three options that fit the brief. Share lists. Items that appear on both lists are the starting shortlist. Items that score 4+ from both people are the candidates.
5. The final vote	Apply the 4+4 threshold. The first option that both people score 4 or above is the anchor. Stop browsing. Buy it.

IF YOU CAN'T AGREE ON THE ANCHOR

If three rounds of options produce no 4+4 result, pause the process and return to the Shared Aesthetic Framework on page 10. The issue is usually that the brief is too narrow (one person's taste disguised as a shared brief) or too vague (no constraint, infinite options). Narrow or widen the brief as needed, then resume. The anchor is worth the time it takes.

— COHESION TOOL 02

Two furniture collections. *Three materials maximum.*

When two households merge, the most predictable result is material overload. One person brought dark walnut furniture; the other brought blonde oak. One person's side tables are brushed nickel; the other's are brass. One person loves rattan; the other has glass. None of it is wrong on its own. Together, it reads as nobody's room. The three-material rule applies the same constraint to the shared home that it applies to any mixed-furniture room: limit exposed materials to three, and both people's pieces will cohere.

Applying the three-material rule to a merged household

- Inventory every exposed material in the shared zone.** Walk the room with the Tension Map and write down every distinct material: light oak, dark walnut, brass, chrome, linen, velvet, glass, rattan, painted white. Be specific — light oak and dark walnut are different materials.
- Identify the three that appear most in both people's pieces.** The three materials that appear most frequently across both collections become the room's palette. This is the constraint both people's pieces respond to.
- Edit the outliers.** Pieces in materials outside the three are candidates for the Inherited Furniture Fix toolkit: paint to the palette color, swap hardware to the dominant metal finish, or move to a personal zone where the material constraint doesn't apply.
- New purchases respond to the three-material palette.** From this point forward, any new purchase for a shared zone must use at least one of the three materials. This is a shared decision criterion — add it to the Zone Charter.

THE MATERIAL CONFLICT SHORTCUT

If you can't agree on which three materials to keep, default to: the material of the shared anchor piece + the dominant metal finish + one textile (linen, cotton, or wool). These three work in nearly every style range and require no aesthetic agreement beyond the anchor piece you've already chosen.

— COHESION TOOL 03

One rug. *Two people's furniture.* *One room.*

The color bridge in a shared home is the single purchase that does the most cohesion work — and it is almost always a rug. A well-chosen rug picks up a color from Person A's furniture, a color from Person B's furniture, and connects them through the room's floor plane. Because it is visible from every piece simultaneously, it creates the visual logic that makes the room read as assembled rather than accumulated.

How to find the color bridge in a two-aesthetic room

STEP	ACTION
1. Lay the photos out	Print or display photos of every major piece in the shared zone side by side. Look at all of them simultaneously. What colors appear across both people's pieces — even faintly?
2. Find the shared undertone	Does the room lean warm (golden, amber, tan) or cool (gray, blue, silver)? Even aesthetically different furniture will share a temperature. The bridge should amplify the shared undertone, not fight it.
3. The rug brief	Write a two-line rug brief: "Warm/cool undertone. Contains [color from Person A's key piece] and [color from Person B's key piece]. Material: [wool / jute / cotton — whichever fits the three-material palette]."
4. Apply the 4+4 threshold	The rug is a consensus purchase — it affects both people's furniture. Both people score 4 or above before ordering. Order with a return policy.
5. The 72-hour test	Place the rug for 72 hours before committing. Walk the room in different lighting conditions. The rug that works in the store may fight the room. The rug that works in the room was worth the wait.

"The rug is not a purchase. It is a shared decision that makes every other piece look like it was chosen on purpose."

BUDGET PRIORITY

The color bridge rug is the highest-priority shared purchase in any room where two furniture collections have merged. Buy it before replacing any other piece. A \$200 rug in the right color bridge will make a room of mismatched furniture cohere more effectively than \$600 in new accent pieces will.

— THE SHARED STANDARD

Every new purchase. *Same six questions.*

Once the anchor piece, the three-material palette, and the color bridge are in place, every future shared-zone purchase is evaluated against the same six questions. Both people answer independently. A purchase that passes all six from both people proceeds. A purchase that fails any question goes back to the options stage.

- Does it score 4+ from both people?** Apply the five-point scale from page 13. If not, go back to more options. Never buy a shared piece that either person scores 3 or below.
- Does it use at least one of the three materials?** The three-material palette is the room's material constraint. A new piece that introduces a fourth material undermines the palette. Either it must be in one of the three existing materials or it replaces a piece that currently represents one of those materials.
- Is it the right scale for the room?** Too large for the space is the most common shared-home purchase mistake — one person measures, the other trusts their eye, and the sofa doesn't fit through the door. Measure the room and the piece before the purchase closes.
- Is it in the right zone?** A piece purchased for a shared zone requires the Cohesion Checklist. A piece purchased for a personal zone does not. Confirm the zone before applying the checklist.
- Does it respond to the anchor?** Does the new piece's scale, style, and material language respond to the room's anchor piece? A new side table that fights the sofa is worse than no side table.
- Is it within the consensus threshold?** If the purchase exceeds the agreed consensus threshold (set in the Budget Conversation, page 11), both people must actively agree before the purchase closes. Not "I'll show them after" — before.

POST THIS CHECKLIST

Add the six questions to the Zone Charter or pin them somewhere both people see. The most common source of shared-home purchase regret is one person buying something for a shared zone without running it through this process. The checklist takes three minutes. The argument costs more.

✓ The Conflict Framework

TIE-BREAKERS · TRIALS · EXITS

When the 4+4 threshold produces no result, when the hard veto is used, when one person's design need collides with another's: there is a process. Not a fight. A process.

Design disagreements in shared homes are normal. They are also, almost always, solvable — when both parties have a framework for working through them that doesn't require either person to "win." The Conflict Framework is that structure. It gives both people a sequence to follow when the usual tools don't produce resolution, and it defines the conditions under which a disagreement is legitimately stuck versus temporarily unresolved. Most conflicts resolve at the Tie-Breaker stage. The rest have tools for that too.

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY WITH

A Tie-Breaker System for decisions where the 4+4 threshold fails, a Compromise vs. Hold-the-Line framework for knowing when to concede and when to stand firm, and a 90-Day Trial Protocol for pieces that one person loves and the other is uncertain about.

The three conflict levels

- Stuck decision (no 4+4 result).** The most common conflict — neither option scores high enough from both parties. Tool: the Tie-Breaker System on page 27.
- One person loves it; the other is uncertain.** Not a hard veto — just low confidence. Tool: the 90-Day Trial Protocol on page 29. Try it; evaluate after 90 days.
- Hard disagreement; one person invokes the veto.** The hardest conflict. Tool: the Hold-the-Line vs. Compromise Framework on page 28. Determine whether this is a genuine hard limit or a preference worth trading.

— CONFLICT TOOL 01

When neither option scores 4+4.

The tie-breaker applies when the 4+4 threshold has been applied to three rounds of options and no purchase has cleared it. Before invoking the conflict framework's heavier tools, run through the tie-breaker sequence — it resolves the majority of stuck shared decisions without requiring either person to give up a genuine position.

The five-step tie-breaker sequence

STEP	ACTION	WHEN TO USE IT
1. Revisit the brief	Return to the Shared Aesthetic Framework overlap (page 10). Has the brief drifted from the overlap into one person's solo taste? Rewrite the brief from the overlap before more browsing.	When options have been good quality but consistently fail one person. Usually a brief problem.
2. Separate the objection	Ask: is the objection about the specific piece or about the category? "I don't love this sofa" is solvable with more options. "I don't want a sofa at this price point" is a budget conversation, not a taste conversation.	When the same objection appears across multiple options — the objection is to the category, not the piece.
3. The trade	Each person identifies one decision in the home where they would trade their preference — let the other person's choice win — in exchange for a win on the current decision. Trades are documented in the Zone Charter.	When both people have legitimate preferences and neither is objectively wrong. Clean trade; neither person holds it against the other.
4. Third-party brief	Bring in a neutral third party — a friend with design literacy — and give them the brief. Their recommendation becomes the fourth option. Both people evaluate it against the 4+4 threshold.	When both people are too close to the decision and new options aren't helping.
5. Defer and live with nothing	Don't buy the piece at all. Leave the gap in the room for 60 days. If both people miss the function, it returns to the options stage with renewed urgency. If neither misses it, the purchase wasn't needed.	When the conflict is about style and the piece is an accent or supporting piece, not an anchor.

— CONFLICT TOOL 02

Know when to bend. *Know when to hold.*

Not every design disagreement is worth the same energy. Some preferences are worth trading — you can live with the outcome either way, and the relationship benefits from conceding gracefully. Others are genuine hard limits — aesthetic needs that affect your daily experience of your home in a way that tolerance can't resolve. The framework below helps you distinguish the two before the disagreement escalates.

When to compromise

The preference is stylistic, not functional. You prefer warm wood tones; they prefer cool. Neither is wrong.

Compromise: the three-material rule finds middle ground.

The piece is a supporting or accent piece, not an anchor. A side table, a lamp, a throw — the stakes are low.

Compromise: give them the win here; take it on an anchor piece where it matters more.

You've held this position before and the result was fine. If you've lived with a similar outcome and your experience wasn't significantly worse, it is a tradeable preference.

Compromise: concede; document the trade in the Zone Charter.

The objection is about the specific piece, not the category. More options will solve this — it is not a values disagreement.

Compromise: run the Tie-Breaker sequence on page 27 first.

When to hold the line

The piece affects your daily physical comfort. Mattress firmness, chair ergonomics, lighting intensity. These are body needs, not preferences.

Hold: comfort needs are not tradeable aesthetic preferences.

The piece will be the room's anchor. A sofa you scored a 2 on, in your own living room, will produce daily low-grade resentment for years.

Hold: anchor pieces require genuine 4+ from both people. Return to the brief.

You've compromised on this specific issue multiple times already. Repeated concession on the same type of decision builds resentment.

Hold: name the pattern. "I've given way on the last three living room decisions." That's a Zone Charter problem, not a furniture problem.

The objection is aesthetic and it's in your personal zone. In your personal zone, your preference is the standard. No compromise needed or appropriate.

Hold: assert zone authority. Politely.

— CONFLICT TOOL 03

Try it for ninety days. *Then decide.*

The 90-Day Trial Protocol applies when one person strongly wants a piece and the other is uncertain — not opposed, not invoking a hard veto, but not at 4 either. Rather than blocking the purchase or forcing a compromise, the trial installs the piece for ninety days. Both people evaluate their actual experience of living with it before making a final decision. Opinion formed from data beats opinion formed from anticipation every time.

How the 90-day trial works

- The advocate makes the case once, then stops.** The person who wants the piece explains why, once, clearly. No ongoing persuasion campaign. The trial is the argument.

- Both people agree on the trial upfront.** The uncertain person agrees to give the piece a genuine 90-day evaluation — not passive tolerance but active assessment. What does it do for the room? What does it cost in daily experience?

- Set the review date at the start.** Write it in the Zone Charter. On that date, both people score the piece on the five-point scale again. Score 4+ from both: the piece becomes permanent. Score below 3 from either: the piece exits within 30 days.

- Score 3 from one person at the review date: one more 30-day extension.** After 30 days, final decision. The trial does not become indefinite — a second extension is the last one.

- If the piece exits: no blame.** The trial was fair. The result is data. The advocate who proposed the piece accepts the outcome without holding it against the other person. This is the contract of the trial.

WHAT THE TRIAL IS NOT

The 90-Day Trial is not for hard vetoes — pieces that one person actively cannot live with. It is for uncertainty, not opposition. If the uncertain person is at a 2 (dislike), the trial is inappropriate — the piece should not be installed. The trial applies to the 3 (neutral) → 4 (like) threshold, not the 2 → 3 threshold.

VI The Resource Vault

LISTS · TEMPLATES · SHOPPING

Every worksheet, script, and shopping reference from the guide — formatted to print, fill in, and post. Pages 31–37.

The Resource Vault turns the Roommate Reset into a living system. The audit worksheet goes on the fridge during the first week. The Zone Charter goes on the closet door after the conversation in Part 2. The negotiation script is for any time a design conversation stalls. The sprint is for getting through the whole process in thirty days. Print them all; use them as tools, not just references.

PAGE	RESOURCE	USE
31	The Shared Space Audit Worksheet	Household inventory — both people fill it in. One row per piece.
32	The Negotiation Script	Printable conversation framework for the three negotiation conversations in Part 2.
33	The Master Shopping List	Curated items for the shared home — rug, lighting, anchor pieces — with affiliate links.
34	The Zone Charter Template	Full printable zone authority document. Both people sign it.
35	The 12 Shared-Space Mistakes	The errors most commonly made when designing a shared home — with fixes.
36	The 30-Day Roommate Reset Sprint	Day-by-day plan for completing the audit, negotiation, and first cohesion round.
37	Companion Products	What to read next in the DecorDreamr library.

— PRINTABLE · CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK

The three conversations. *In order.*

Use this script to structure the three negotiation conversations from Part 2. Both people read each section before the conversation starts. The script is a framework — use your own words within it.

CONVERSATION 01 · THE AESTHETIC CONVERSATION (30-45 MIN)

Opening: "I want to do the reference image exercise from page 10. We each pick ten rooms we respond to, then we compare them for attributes — not to match taste but to find the overlap."

Key questions: What color temperatures appear in both our selections? What materials? What level of visual complexity? Where is there genuine incompatibility?

Output: Fill in the Shared Aesthetic Overlap table on page 10. The overlap is the brief for all shared zones.

CONVERSATION 02 · THE BUDGET CONVERSATION (20-30 MIN)

Opening: "I want to answer the five budget questions from page 11 together — not to commit to specific numbers right now, but to make sure we're working from the same assumptions."

Key questions: What is our total shared-home budget for the year? What is our consensus threshold? Are we splitting equally or proportionally? Who is responsible for which zones?

Output: Write the agreed numbers in the Zone Charter on page 34.

CONVERSATION 03 · THE VETO CONVERSATION (15-20 MIN)

Opening: "I want to map the three-tier authority model from page 12 onto our actual home — so we both know who decides what, and what requires agreement."

Key questions: What is in each person's full authority zone? What is each person's hard line? What are the two or three things each of us would invoke a hard veto on?

Output: Write the hard lines and authority assignments in the Zone Charter. Both people sign it.

— QUICK-LINK SHOPPING · SHARED HOME ESSENTIALS

The shared home *shopping list*.

Items are ordered by purchase priority — color bridge first, then anchor pieces, then supporting and accent pieces. Apply the 4+4 threshold before buying any item for a shared zone.

PRIORITY	ITEM	USE	BUDGET	LINK
1	Area Rug (8×10 or 9×12)	Color bridge — highest priority shared purchase	\$150–\$400	Shop →
2	Throw Pillows (set of 4)	Textile bridge — living room anchor piece staging	\$40–\$90	Shop →
3	Linen Throw Blanket	Sofa staging — softens anchor; introduces texture	\$30–\$60	Shop →
4	Arc Floor Lamp	Ambient layer — living room / bedroom	\$65–\$150	Shop →
5	Pendant Light (plug-in)	Dining / bedroom overhead upgrade	\$60–\$160	Shop →
6	Full-Length Mirror	Entry / bedroom — doubles light, visual cohesion	\$60–\$140	Shop →
7	Cabinet Hardware Set (brass)	Kitchen / bathroom shared aesthetic gesture	\$40–\$80	Shop →
8	Floating Shelves (set of 2–3)	Shared zone display / storage — kitchen or living	\$35–\$70	Shop →
9	Entryway Hook Rail	Entry zone — function before aesthetic	\$25–\$60	Shop →
10	Key Tray / Catch-All Dish	Entry surface organizer — both people's items	\$15–\$35	Shop →
11	Linen Duvet Cover	Shared bedroom — color bridge for bed wall	\$60–\$130	Shop →
12	Nightstand Set (matching)	Bedroom — symmetry for shared bed wall	\$80–\$200	Shop →
13	Table Lamp Set (matching)	Bedroom bedside lighting — both sides unified	\$50–\$120	Shop →
14	Cable Management Kit	Shared desk / entertainment zone — visual calm	\$15–\$30	Shop →
15	Indoor Plant + Planter	Living room / entry — organic element, shared care	\$25–\$55	Shop →
16	Kitchen Canister Set	Kitchen aesthetic gesture — surface visual cohesion	\$30–\$60	Shop →

— PRINTABLE · SIGN IT · POST IT

The Zone *Charter*.

Fill in every room. Record the consensus threshold and hard lines from the Negotiation Protocol (Part 2). Both people sign at the bottom. Review annually or when the household changes.

ROOM	ZONE TYPE S/P/N	LEAD (N ZONES)	CONSENSUS \$ THRESHOLD	HARD LINE (IF ANY)
Living Room	S	—	\$_____	
Kitchen	S	—	\$_____	
Entryway	S	—	\$_____	
Bedroom	N	_____	—	

ANNUAL REVIEW DATE: _____ · HARD VETOES REMAINING (EACH PERSON, THIS YEAR): PERSON A: ___ / PERSON B: ___

PERSON A — NON-NEGOTIABLES

Things I have full authority over:

My one aesthetic hard line:

PERSON B — NON-NEGOTIABLES

Things I have full authority over:

My one aesthetic hard line:

PERSON A SIGNATURE: _____

PERSON B SIGNATURE:

— THE DIAGNOSTIC LIST

Twelve mistakes that *break shared homes every time.*

Designing around your roommate instead of with them.

Fix: The audit is a shared exercise. Do it together or the findings are one person's assumptions presented as data.

No anchor piece identified for shared zones.

Fix: Name the anchor in every shared zone and apply the 4+4 threshold before purchasing or keeping it.

Skipping the Zone Charter because it feels formal.

Fix: The Zone Charter is a 30-minute conversation. The argument it prevents takes longer.

Buying for shared zones without running the 4+4 threshold.

Fix: Any purchase above the consensus threshold for a shared zone requires both people's active score of 4+. No exceptions.

Treating "I don't care" as agreement.

Fix: "I don't care" is a 3 — neutral — not consent. Apply the 4+4 threshold. If the other person genuinely doesn't care, they score 4 easily. If they score 3, that's useful data.

Letting budget asymmetry go unnamed.

Fix: Answer the five budget questions on page 11 before any shared purchase. Unspoken budget expectations are the most reliable source of post-purchase conflict.

Using the hard veto too frequently.

Fix: One hard veto per shared zone per year. The hard veto is for genuine limits, not for preferences. Overuse paralyzes the home and damages the relationship.

Personal zone aesthetics bleeding into shared zones.

Fix: The Zone Charter is the boundary. Items in personal zones are the occupant's choice; items in shared zones require the consensus process.

No color bridge purchase.

Fix: The rug is the highest-priority shared purchase in any merged-household room. Buy it before accent pieces.

More than three materials in a shared zone.

Fix: Inventory the materials in every shared zone and edit to three. Apply the three-material rule to all future purchases.

One person doing all the design work.

Fix: The person who cares more will do more of the work — that's fine. But shared zone decisions require both people's active input and sign-off, not just one person presenting conclusions.

Assuming the conversation happened because neither person complained.

Fix: Silence is not agreement. Run the three conversations from Part 2 explicitly — aesthetic, budget, veto — and document the outputs in the Zone Charter.

— PRINTABLE · DAY-BY-DAY ACTION PLAN

The 30-Day *Roommate Reset Sprint*.

Complete the audit, negotiation, and first cohesion round in thirty days. Print this page. Both people cross off each day together when it is complete.

DAYS	THE WORK	DONE
Day 1–2	The Photograph Session. Photograph every piece of furniture in every room. Two angles per piece. Create a shared folder both people can access.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3–4	The Independent "Both Like It?" Assessment. Each person fills in the "Both Like It?" column on the Audit Worksheet (page 31) separately, without comparing first.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5–6	The Joint Inventory. Come together and complete the full Audit Worksheet — zone assignments, condition scores, tension flags. Compare the "Both Like It?" columns and note the gaps.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	The Zone Map. Assign every room to Shared, Personal, or Negotiated. Record leads for Negotiated zones. Draft the Zone Charter on page 20.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 8–9	The Tension Map. Each person writes their tension list independently. Exchange and categorize. Rank-3 items go to Part 5 immediately.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 10–11	Conversation 01 — Aesthetic. The reference image exercise. Fill in the Shared Aesthetic Overlap table on page 10. The overlap becomes the shared brief.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 12	Conversation 02 — Budget. Answer the five budget questions on page 11. Write the consensus threshold in the Zone Charter.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 13	Conversation 03 — Veto. Map the three-tier authority model onto the home. Write hard lines. Both people sign the Zone Charter (page 34).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 14–15	"Neither Likes" edit. Remove or schedule for removal all pieces both people scored as Neither Likes. These are the easiest consensus decisions in the home.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 16–17	Identify the anchor pieces. For each shared zone, name the anchor. Apply the 4+4 threshold. If the anchor needs replacing, add it to the replacement list.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 18–19	The three-material audit. Inventory exposed materials in every shared zone. Edit to three. Flag pieces that need to be painted or moved to resolve material conflicts.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 20–22	Color bridge purchase. Brief, browse separately, apply 4+4 threshold. Order the rug. Place for 72-hour test.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 23–25	Apply the Cohesion Checklist (page 25) to every piece in every shared zone. Flag any piece that fails a question.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 26–27	Address the Tension Map. Work through rank-2 and rank-3 tension items using the Tie-Breaker System (page 27) or the 90-Day Trial (page 29).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 28–29	Finalize the Zone Charter. Record all decisions, thresholds, and authority assignments. Post it somewhere both people see daily.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 30	The Walk-Around. Both people walk through every room. The home you're in now was designed — by both of you, on purpose. That is the Roommate Reset.	<input type="checkbox"/>

— THE DECORDREAMR LIBRARY

The shared home is designed. *Now solve the other constraints.*

The Roommate Reset is the shared-space constraint book — the final book in the DecorDreamr Constraint Books series. The other four books in the series solve the remaining constraints a renter faces. If your situation stacks constraints — you share a space, you're also in 400 sqft, and you both just moved in — the books below address each axis directly. The Renter's Complete Library bundles the four constraint books at \$69.

The Rental Reset

VOL. 01 · CONSTRAINT BOOK · \$27

The ownership-constraint book. Damage-free decorating, deposit protection, the renter's toolkit for every wall, floor, and ceiling you can't touch. *The series anchor — read this first if you rent.*

The Small Space Codex

VOL. 03 · CONSTRAINT BOOK · \$24

The size-constraint book. Clearance math, sightlines, three-layer lighting, and the 15-piece toolkit for under 600 sqft. *Most shared homes are also small homes — this book is the spatial complement to this one.*

The Move-In Manual

VOL. 04 · CONSTRAINT BOOK · \$24

The time-constraint book. If you're doing the Roommate Reset while also moving in together, read the Move-In Manual first. *The pre-move audit and move-in day choreography are even more important when two people are moving simultaneously.*

The Inherited Furniture Fix

VOL. 05 · CONSTRAINT BOOK · \$22

The stuff-constraint book. When the shared-home problem is also a furniture-you-didn't-choose problem — hand-me-downs, each other's old pieces — this is the companion guide. *The Fix Toolkit and Cohesion Playbook pair directly with this book.*

THE RENTER'S COMPLETE LIBRARY — \$69

All four Constraint Books — The Rental Reset (\$27) + The Small Space Codex (\$24) + The Move-In Manual (\$24) + The Inherited Furniture Fix (\$22) — for \$69. Save \$28 versus buying separately. The complete system for every constraint a renter faces.

decordreamr.com/product/the-renters-complete-library/

ÆTHER — THE MASTERCLASS · \$47+

The flagship DecorDreamr program. The full design system beyond constraint books — rooms from scratch, the complete color and light methodology, and the full furniture language for any home.

decordreamr.com/product/aether/

— THE RESULT

Two people. *One room.* On purpose.

The Zone Charter is signed. The anchor pieces are chosen together. The rug is in place. The tension map is resolved. The home you share now reflects both of you — not because you compromised your way into beige, but because you built a shared design language and worked from it.

01

THE AUDIT

Every piece inventoried, every zone mapped, every tension named. No more designing around unspoken assumptions.

03

THE COHESION

One shared anchor. Three materials. One color bridge. Two collections reading as one room.

02

THE PROTOCOL

The aesthetic, budget, and veto conversations completed. Both people know who decides what.

04

THE CHARTER

The Zone Charter posted and signed. A living agreement for every shared decision that comes after this one.

What to read next:

The Renter's Complete Library (\$69) — all four Constraint Books
decordreamr.com/product/the-renters-complete-library/

ÆTHER (\$47+) — the full masterclass beyond constraint books
decordreamr.com/product/aether/

DECORDREAMR.COM