

CONTROL THE ENERGY *in your home*

At the start of the Year of the Rabbit, feng shui practitioners suggest ways to attract positive energy to your home.

Story by **Jennifer Chapman** and **Laura Nolan**

When Peter Wolff planted some striking red flowers around the front of his Hendra-based coffee shop, it wasn't just for visual effect. He was practising the Chinese art of feng shui to rid his business of bad energy. "We have an electrical pole outside our shop which is giving us a lot of negative energy," Wolff says. "One of the ways that we can deflect that is by putting red flowers in front of the building."

Although many believe it's all superstition, Dandelion & Driftwood owner Wolff says that feng shui has contributed to the harmonious atmosphere in his store that is felt by everyone, even if they aren't aware of it.

Brisbane feng shui consultant Derelle Ball supports Wolff's theory. She says feng shui is a way of creating balance between people and their surroundings. "What it comes down to is learning to live in harmony with your environment," Ball says. "It helps you reach a state of synchronicity so you're at the right place and the right time when opportunity presents itself."

But don't think there is a list of simple rules to follow; feng shui is complicated. There are a number of different techniques to encourage qi (pronounced chee), that

is positive energy, in our homes, workplaces and gardens. Derelle Ball is a member of the Association of Feng Shui Consultants Australia. Through her business, Centaine Consultants at Cleveland, she assesses the type and amount of qi or energy in a space and advises clients on the best ways to organise their homes and workplaces to reduce negative energy. Ball uses a compass and floor plan to determine the gravitational centre of the home and maps out eight sectors which contain different energies.

"Each sector spreads out from the gravitational centre like eight giant pieces of pie," Ball says. "It begins in the centre of the building and extends to the borders of the property and each compass sector corresponds to a compass direction."

There are two types of energy found within these sectors: one that relates to the health and relationship aspect of the home; the other which attracts positive opportunities your way. Consultants use advanced mathematics and probability to determine where the energy is and whether it is good or bad.

The Association of Feng Shui Consultants, which has more than 150 members nationwide, supports a traditional approach to feng shui and Ball warns that many modern

Avoid an open corridor between front and back doors which is bad for finances

feng shui “tips” are more superstition.

“There’s a lot of feng ‘phoey’ out there,” she says. “The new age approach to feng shui is a feel-good way to inspire positive thoughts and intentions. It has very little to do with the ancient practice of authentic feng shui.”

Serious feng shui practitioners believe that harmony and energy in the home changes just as people change over time. For example, Peter Wolff believes positive and negative energy areas in his home and business change after every Chinese New Year and he changes his environment to suit.

Derelle Ball cautions to be particularly wary of east and west sectors of a home or building in the Chinese Year of the Rabbit which has just begun. “People who are substantially renovating their homes, digging up ground, building a pool or digging up trees in the east or west sectors



Meaningful objects displayed in the entry promote positive energy

of their property are going to experience a lot of negative energy and a lot of negative luck.” And the north sector could see an increase in quarrelling or legal issues. But Ball says you can calm the quarrelsome aspects of this energy with a fire element such as something red in colour or a lamp that is regularly turned on.



Some people plug up sinks to stop energy flowing out

How to attract positive energy inside the home

- The front and back doors of the house should not be directly aligned with an open corridor between them. This is bad for your finances. Place some furniture between the areas to stop qi leaving too quickly.
- Plants are great in the home, but leave them out of the bedroom as they remove oxygen and prevent a good night’s sleep.
- Keep electrical appliances in the bedroom a safe distance away from the bed so they don’t zap energy from you during the night.
- In the home entryway, hang an artwork or arrange a hall table with meaningful objects. This represents what you want your house to embody and will promote positive energy.
- Because the floor of the house represents earth, it should be a darker colour than ceilings and walls. Square shapes and patterns are also useful in harmonising a floor design.
- The greatest defence against negative health energy is metal, in either gold, silver, white or copper colours. Place a ‘gourd’ (narrow neck and large belly) metal vase in a room for protection.
- Avoid having the stove or oven directly opposite any doors to stop the pathway of negative energy affecting the healthy quality of food being cooked.
- The pathway leading to the front door should be curved rather than a long straight line. If it is straight, soften it using pot plants or foliage to make the front entrance feel more inviting.
- The toilet lid should always be closed because you don’t want prosperity to go down the drain. But don’t nag - people yelling at other people in the house to keep the lid down is very bad feng shui
- Some people put stoppers in every sink hole. The energy of the bathroom is all about exiting the house. The pipes slope down away from the home, which is good for a room of elimination, but not good for qi.