

A little learning

Crash courses in interior design can be an enlightening experience

ALITTLE learning is a dangerous thing; drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring: there shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, and drinking largely sobers us again,' wrote Alexander Pope in his *Essay On Criticism* (1709).

I beg to differ; when negotiating the vexed business of interior design, a little knowledge is far from dangerous; consider the transformative power of nuggets of information such as the fact that you can't have too many dimmer switches, that chairs look better in pairs and that small rooms are more inviting when painted in dark colours, rather than light. Oh, and that symmetry rocks. I could go on.

Anyone considering a career in interior design should consider enrolling on one of the brilliant courses offered by schools such as the mighty Inchbald, but many non professionals need little more than a few pointers on space planning, lighting, paint colours to kickstart the design process.

There are a growing number of designers who are sharing their knowledge with anyone prepared to fork out for a day in their homes or studios. One of the first was Abigail Ahern, a north London style icon, who has singlehandedly emboldened a new generation of home owners to paint all their walls black (*'Black beauty'*, May 10, 2017). Recently, others have joined the fray; Rita Konig, the interior designer and *House & Garden* columnist, former Sotheby's Islamic art expert Alidad and the interior design duo Nicole Salvesen and Mary Graham all offer one-day courses either at home or in their studios.

This new style of course offers an opportunity to harvest pearls of wisdom, ask burning questions and, in some cases, get a rare opportunity to have a sticky beak around a designer's home. Prices range from a little over £200 to £500. Both the Inchbald and the KLC also offer short courses that offer a more comprehensive introduction to the subject. 



The interior designer and columnist Rita Konig hosting a course at her London home

The COUNTRY LIFE edit: short design courses

Design schools offering short courses

As well as offering a range of courses to suit every level of experience, the following also offer introductory courses, ideal for anyone planning a personal project or considering a career in interior design.

- The Inchbald** (020—7730 5508; www.inchbald.co.uk)
- The KLC** (020—7376 7400; www.klc.co.uk)

Designers' one-day courses

- Abigail Ahern Design School** (www.abigailahern.com)
- At Home with Alidad** (020—7384 0121; www.athomewithalidad.com)
- Rita Konig Workshops** (020—3735 7280; www.ritakonig.com)
- Salvesen Graham** (020—7967 777; www.salvesengraham.com)

Clockwise from top right: Rita Konig, Alidad and Salvesen Graham

