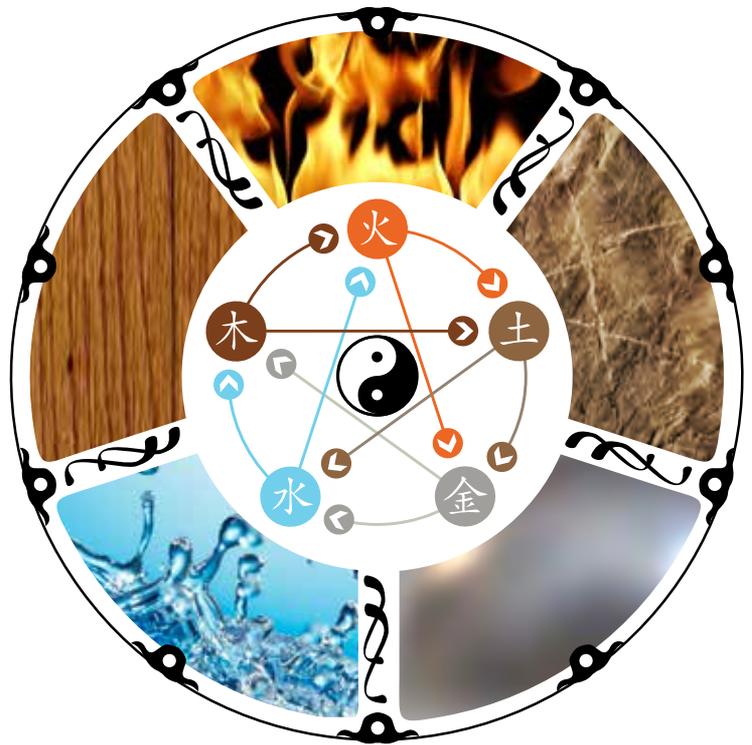


A beginner's guide to good Feng Shui



Use the ancient practice of Feng Shui to better understand the relationship between the energy of a property and potential buyer, and how it can affect your sales.

BY TINA LIPTAI

If you've ever walked into a home and thought 'this just feels right', then you understand the basic principles of Feng Shui. But you might not know the traditional Chinese practice is based on natural scientific principles about energy and space, not superstition.

What is Feng Shui?

Feng Shui is the relationship between a person and their environment and involves analysing and balancing energy to maximise positive benefits while limiting negative effects. 'Feng Shui' means 'wind and water' and the term describes the concept of energy flow, with wind carrying energy and water holding energy. The traditional practice of Feng Shui is based on natural science, not culture or religion, and is relevant to anyone buying a property.

Elizabeth Wiggins is a traditional Feng Shui expert and sales agent at McGrath Estate Agents. "Feng Shui is about your environment and how you react to it," she explained. "It doesn't matter what your nationality is or whether you know anything about Feng Shui; everyone is affected by the energy and flow of their home."

Liz's interest in Feng Shui began more than 20 years ago. She has



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Selling sales agent at McGrath Estate Agents

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” qualifications from the Australian College of Environmental Studies, where she has also taught, and has worked as a Feng Shui consultant in Australia, Singapore and

China. Liz also established the Australian Association of Feng Shui Consultants.

What are the main principles?

Traditional Feng Shui consultants use the age of a property, direction it faces, precise location and floor plan to determine its energy. Some consultants, like Gary Khor, Founder and Director of the Feng Shui Academy of China, may also visit a property as part of the consultation.

Gary, who was raised in a traditional Chinese family and has been practising Feng Shui for more than 35 years, says the ultimate goal of Feng Shui is to create happiness. "The main principle is to balance the energy. Too much of anything is negative - you need sun, but if you have too much you get sunstroke. A good environment equals good energy, abundance and health. If your mind and body function well then you will be successful, happy and at peace."

Traditional Feng Shui involves using the five elements - water, fire, earth, metal and wood - to create balance. "There is no need for your home to look 'Feng Shui-ed', in fact, it shouldn't. You don't need gimmicks or for your home to have anything stereotypically Chinese on display, unless that's a style you want, for it to have good Feng Shui," Liz said.

How does Feng Shui apply to real estate?

In recent years the basic principles of Feng Shui have made it into the mainstream through media, books and websites offering a range of information, with varying degrees of accuracy. Liz explains there is no quick fix or one size fits all approach to Feng Shui and a property that is aesthetically pleasing does not necessarily have good energy.

“Every home is different, every business is different; you do need a qualified consultant if you are serious about getting it right,” she said. “No home is perfect. I just built my home using principles of Feng Shui and even then it’s not ‘perfect’, but being aware of Feng Shui will help keep the energy good and as much as possible minimise the less positive energy.”

Can Feng Shui principles help sell a house?

Though it may have its origins in Chinese culture, the principles of Feng Shui can be applied to any space and when balanced correctly can help improve the chances of a home selling.

“Feng Shui can absolutely help you sell a house,” Liz explained. “For example, you can support the positive wealth energy and work with the other energies to help create opportunities to invite prospective buyers. There are some things that cannot be changed such as the landscape itself, however you can still create an impact that helps support the energy and therefore the occupants.”

Liz is quick to add that the basic principles of selling a property shouldn’t be forgotten. “I always consult a stylist to make sure a property is looking its best, fix things that are broken and remove personal objects to help appeal to a range of buyers,” she said.

Gary said one important aspect of Feng Shui that most people know is proximity to water, but you don’t need ocean views to have a home with good energy. “Being near water is very good, and we know most properties near water are more valuable, but we still need balance and you still need protection from the elements. Having greenery around the home is very good and so is natural light,” he said.

Feng Shui can help you understand why a property might not be selling and can help you make changes to appeal to the right buyer, Gary added. ♦



GARY KHOR

Founder and Director of the Feng Shui Academy of China



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10 TOP FENG SHUI TIPS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

1. Have a certified Feng Shui consultant advise you.
2. Ensure the entrance to the property is unobstructed and inviting.
3. Remove clutter throughout the interior and exterior of the property.
4. Clean water features including fish tanks, water fountains, ponds and pools. Never have stagnant water in or around the property.
5. Fix broken items and anything in disrepair, including painting walls and replacing worn carpet.
6. Have the property styled or at least looked at by a styling professional.
7. If there is a garden, make sure the plants are healthy and lush.
8. Limit unpleasant noise like loud traffic.
9. Where possible keep windows open to allow fresh air and natural light into the property.
10. Remove dust, mould and dirt from all surfaces in the property.

Feng Shui your agency

Good Feng Shui is just as important for an office space as it is for a home. With good Feng Shui in your agency, you can limit days off due to illness, improve sales and enjoy a prosperous career.

Liz’s desk has the best Feng Shui in her office, but there is more to it than just where you sit. “The principles are essentially the same for a house as an office, it’s about the whole space. Think about what the entrance and reception area is like – is it inviting, is it uncluttered? You want it to be a welcoming space free from obstructions, especially near the door. Plants are also good in an office,” Liz said.

“Every office has different Feng Shui and you really need a professional consultant to help balance and work with these energies. Every building is different because energies are based on the age of the building, the direction it faces and also the layout. A cluttered desk equals a cluttered mind so get organised – this includes your inbox. Get an electronic filing system that works.”

Gary advises never having a desk that forces you to have your back exposed to a window or door. “Even if you are not conscious of it, having your back exposed like that will increase your stress levels and you will never be fully relaxed or able to concentrate on your work. This will increase your chances of getting sick and limit your ability to prosper at work,” he said.

“Dust is also quite a problem in the office. You know dust isn’t good for your computer – it can clog it up and stop it working properly, this is the same for people. So keep your office clean and dust free.”

Both Liz and Gary agree there are huge benefits of applying Feng Shui to your office space, including improved productivity and increased sales, greater opportunities to attract and win business, better communication between staff and customers, less sick days and a positive, supportive environment for employees. ♦