



Welcome Home:

Feng Shui design & your home's entrance

By Jini Rayne

The front entrance of your home is the face you present to the rest of the world. Having the most opportune face gives you an advantage in much the same way that an attractive appearance eases one's interactions with others on a social level. Each of us has our own idea of what constitutes curb appeal, but feng shui has some specific ideas of what is and is not beneficial in the approach to a home.

In addition to a yard which is maintained in good order, with trees and plants healthy and well pruned, it is desirable to have an easy, obvious, and clean approach to the home with the front door being clearly visible. In feng shui, the front door is seen as the "mouth of the chi", the portal through which all good energy and opportunities enter. Therefore, a door on the front of the house that is attractive, larger than any side or back door, and in proportion to the rest of the house is vital as it makes it easy for the chi to

If there is a hidden entrance on the side or back of the house so that finding the entrance is confusing for visitors (and chi), and it makes it difficult to see who is approaching, then landscape with a pathway, plantings, and even lighting to draw visitors to the main entrance. You could also use a strategically placed convex mirror so that you can see who is approaching from your front door or window.

The front door being lower than street level is seen as negative in feng shui. It means that you must always climb up in order to go out into the world. Over a period of time it may become more and more difficult to leave home. People who live in houses lower than street level are typically less successful than those who live at, or slightly above, street level. Here in the mountains, houses with the entrance below street level



are fairly commonplace. To offset this circumstance, plant tall bushes or plants with upward thrusting branches or leaves on either side of the front door to raise the chi. Also have a good light by the front door. It is even better to have lights that follow the pathway all the way to the street to help lift the energy.

If the entrance to a house faces oncoming traffic as found at a "T" intersection, the house is pounded with oncoming energy. The degree of the problem depends on how busy the street is, but it is always a negative circumstance. Often you can use a hedge or a strategically placed tree to block the oncoming rush of energy. Sometimes you might also want to use a mirror or brass door knocker or other shiny decorating device to reflect the energy away from your house.

On the other hand, a home that is hidden from view because of excessive vegetation is also a feng shui no no. The vegetation is coming between you and the world, blocking out your incoming energy and opportunities. Unless you wish to be hiding from the world or in retreat for this period in your life, trim the bushes, tangles or trees. Make sure that you can see out of your windows, and that the pathway to your house is not obstructed.

There are multiple symbolic meanings to the front door in feng shui. Some of these are: interaction and relationship with the world, inner and outer world, first and last impression, ability to get in and out of situations, flow and opportunity, safety and security, entry, life, career, closure, voice of the adults, and the house itself. Taking hold of the front doorknob to

open the door is like shaking hands with the house, so it is important to have good quality, substantial hardware on your front door.

Because the door is so fundamental to feng shui, and has so many symbolic meanings, it is vital that it be kept in good repair. If the front door scrapes, it is symbolic of frustration or blocked energy. If it is hard to open, one is likely to experience career problems. If it is hard to close, there will be difficulty getting paid or completing tasks. Squeaks indicate fears and worries. If it does not fit properly in the frame, life may seem unbalanced or "off". A broken window or screen indicates decaying life energy. A loose or wobbly knob makes for instability. If the door swings open or shut by itself, one will experience an unstable life. Chipping paint shows decaying or depressed chi.

In general, because that you will have to work harder to make the things you desire happen, and that opportunities will be hard to find. It is a good idea to fix the front door so that it works easily. It is also a good idea to use it every day even if it is just to go out to get the mail or walk the dog.

A summary of the ideal feng shui attributes of the front door includes it being: bright and clear; well lit and luminous; in balance to the house; easy to approach, free, open, and clear; obvious; positive and cheerful; in good condition; well functioning; and unblocked. Since it is so important in feng shui, drawing positive attention to the front door with good lighting, a colorful door, seasonal flowers or decorations and perhaps a wind chime or fountain can

The front door is where energy and opportunity enter your life; so one that is hard to use means you will tend to have difficulty in your life.

pay dividends in bringing good fortune for the whole family.

Just as the front door is the gateway to your home, the driveway is the entrance to your property, the "mouth of the chi" for the whole property. As such, you want to invite optimal amounts of healthy chi onto your site. It is advantageous when your driveway gently curves or meanders toward your house. It should be visible as you look out the front of your house and be of uniform width for most of its length. It is fine to have a wider spot for turning around or parking. A circle at the end of the driveway is considered to be very auspicious.

A driveway that comes straight in toward the house causes some of the same problems that the street of a "T" intersection causes: excessive energy pounding at the house. If it comes straight in toward the front door, use a bagua mirror, shiny door knocker, or other similar decorating device to reflect some of the excess energy away. If it is not aimed at the door but merely comes straight into the property, give it the illusion of curving by staggering plantings on either side of the driveway.

If the driveway faces oncoming traffic, seeming to be an extension of the street at a "T" intersection, too much energy will be rushing into your driveway. Reflect some of it back toward the source by using a strategically placed mirror or other shiny object. A

driveway of uneven width chokes the flow of chi in the narrow areas, much like having to merge two lanes into one often causes traffic jams. If it is possible to even it out, do so. If not, make the edges appear to be even by landscaping beds of plantings on one or both sides to make a uniform width. If it narrows toward the street, it chokes off or limits some of your opportunities as you go out into the world. Remove the restriction if at all possible.

Just as a front door below street level makes it more difficult over a period of time to get up the energy to go out into the world, a driveway that goes downward from the street to the house is seen as problematic in feng shui. Lighting that goes all the way from the base to the entry point of the driveway helps the energy climb back up, although it won't do much on a practical level on the few icy winter days here in the mountains. Sometimes it is nice to have an excuse to take a day off!

These are some of the main issues a person looking at a property through feng shui eyes would consider in evaluating the curb appeal and suitability of a home. You can keep them in mind as you evaluate a prospective property, or seek to improve your present home to bring optimal energy to your life.



Jini Rayne is a feng shui consultant based in Asheville. For more information, visit fengshuiasheville.com