

Using Feng Shui To Bring Harmony Into Your Home



Taken from the book *Feng Shui Tips for a Better Life*
By David Daniel Kennedy
photos by Robin Victor Goetz Photography

You, too, can create happiness, prosperity and more positive relationships – simply by transforming your living space. This 3000-year-old Chinese art combines elements of air, water, sound, even furniture placement to give your home its greatest feeling of comfort and restoration.

Feng Shui Principles and Concepts

These concepts and principles will give you a basic understanding of Feng Shui: its definition, background, and theory. You will learn how to read your home's floor plan so that you can begin applying the Feng Shui tips to your life at once.

What Is Feng Shui and How Does It Work?

Feng Shui is the art and practice of using arrangement and placement to optimize your life. It is a way of manipulating environmental factors to enhance the life energy of the environment and thereby improve your destiny. Life energy, known as ch'i to the Chinese, is the basic force that animates all living things. Your own flow of ch'i will improve and strengthen as you apply Feng Shui principles to your life.

The term Feng Shui (fung shway) means wind-water. It comes from a Chinese proverb describing the most desirable place to live. It begins:

*Where the wind is mild and the sun warm,
The water clear and the vegetation lush*

Feng Shui's aim is to create harmony between man and nature, placing and balancing you in the very best location and circumstances possible.

Feng Shui master Professor Lin Yun gives

another definition of Feng Shui:

Feng Shui is the method people naturally use to choose and locate, build and construct, or adapt and change their working and living environments for maximum health, wealth, and well-being, according to the knowledge then available.

This definition says that humans in all cultures and times have used "personal environmental engineering," to improve their lives whether or not they had a specific term like Feng Shui to describe their practices.

In Chinese tradition, Feng Shui is only one of the key factors affecting our lives. However, Feng Shui is one life factor over which we can have a significant degree of control. By adjusting and improving our Feng Shui, we have the opportunity and potential to improve our luck and nudge our fate toward a more propitious course.

A Brief History of Feng Shui

This ancient art and science has been practiced and refined in China for thousands of years. Many methods have arisen, only some of which are still practiced today.

Feng Shui originally began as the study of optimal places for grave sites. This practice was based on the belief that graves were "houses" for the ancestors. People believed that auspiciously locating the graves of their ancestors and rulers helped to ensure future success for their family and nation.

This practice developed into the study of the most powerful locations and conditions for royal palaces and religious temples. Soon wealthy landowners became interested in acquiring Feng Shui advice for their own homes.

This entryway is enhanced by adding a water fountain and live plants

Priests and sages, many of whom were a combination of minister, doctor, astrologer, and all-around soothsayer, were the original practitioners of Feng Shui. After an extensive site examination, these energy wizards would give detailed advice on how, when, and where to locate and construct the home. Eventually, more of this knowledge became common among the general populace, and secular practitioners began performing Feng Shui as a business endeavor.

How Does Feng Shui Work?

Feng Shui works by balancing and harmonizing the ch'i, or "life force energy," that flows in and around our houses, yards, and offices. Feng Shui theory says that each building receives energy from the surrounding environment, and that energy circulates within its environment. The combination of these environmental energies and their characteristics is the "ch'i state" or energetic health of the building. The early energy masters of China researched and recorded the energy patterns that contribute most to overall balance for living, leading to the accumulation of Feng Shui knowledge.

Every minute of every day your home environment is either supporting and uplifting you or having a draining and de-energizing effect on your life energy. This is true whether or not you are consciously aware that it is happening! This is the inner truth of Feng Shui. Enhancing your home's energy has a direct and immediate impact on your own energy and life. Your personal energy is the basis of your life. Enhancing this energy is a powerful way of maximizing your destiny.

The Theory of Ch'i

One of the most basic principles of Feng Shui is the theory of ch'i. Ch'i is a Chinese word with many meanings including breath, spirit, vitality, life energy. Other cultures also have terms for this vital energy, including ki (Japanese), prana (Indian), mana (Hawaiian), life force (Western), and many others. In this book, the terms "ch'i" and "energy" refer to the same phenomenon.

Ch'i is the inner force that pulses through all living things, invisibly providing them with energy, motion, and vitality. A healthy, strong, and balanced person has "good ch'i"

FENG SHUI CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Feng Shui's aim is to create harmony between man and nature, placing and balancing you in the very best location and circumstances possible.

Your House As Body

Metaphorically, your house is your "second body." How you treat this second body has a very real impact on your physical body and the events that occur in your life. Every element in your home contributes to its ch'i condition. Just as one's physical body can look beautiful, fit, and well dressed, yet still harbor internal illnesses, so can a home be well constructed and expensively decorated, yet have many hidden energy problems that debilitate and hinder the lives of its residents.

The mission of Feng Shui is to match the home's ch'i to the ch'i of its occupants. The ch'i in your home is not some "mysterious force" that occasionally and vaguely affects your destiny. The ch'i of your environment has a deep organic relationship with your own ch'i. These flows of energy continuously affect, condition, and create each other.

The Schwartzmans used a colorful floral arrangement, sentimental photos and mementos to enhance the relationship area of their master bedroom.



FENG SHUI CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18.

or healthy ch'i. A weak or sickly person's ch'i is described as poor or lacking.

Ch'i and the Body

As Professor Lin states, "Your ch'i is the real you, and your body is the vehicle for your ch'i." This ch'i or life energy is what animates your body, gives color to your face,

energy are called dragon lines. Where the ch'i is near the earth's surface, the land is energetic, lush, and rich in vegetation; where the ch'i circulates far below the earth's surface, the land is barren and dry.

Ch'i in Our Homes

In our homes, ch'i flows throughout the structure based on the geometry, layout, colors, materials used, and other factors that constitute the structure. The arrangement of rooms, proportions of the design, and the relationship of the house to the land create energy channels and patterns within the home. The reason that balancing your home's energy flow is important is that the ch'i in your

home is one of the most powerful factors that continuously conditions and affects your own personal supply and flow of ch'i.

How You Feel: Your Key to Sensing Ch'i

It is not necessary to generate a belief in ch'i or to master the ability to sense it in order to receive great benefits from Feng Shui. Ch'i may not be so easy to see, but you can definitely feel its effects. Your personal ch'i is nothing more than your own energy--it is not complicated or difficult to sense. The simplest and easiest way to sense your own energy is simply to be in touch with the way you physically and emotionally feel at any given time. As you become used to paying more attention to how you feel, you will become more attuned to the subtle effects the environment has on your own energy. As you adjust your ch'i with Feng Shui changes, your ability to sense or feel your ch'i and the ch'i of the environment will improve steadily.

New Environments

An easy way to tune into the ch'i of different environments is to pay more attention to the way you feel in your body immediately upon entering a new environment. This physical and emotional feeling is your body response to the environmental ch'i you are experiencing in the new space. This simple personal feeling can give you a good impression of a building's energy character. How do

FENG SHUI CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

causes your limbs to move, and creates the sparkle in your eye. When a person dies, what leaves the body is the ch'i, leaving behind the "empty" body.

According to Chinese medical theory, ch'i flows through meridians or pathways in the human body. The meridians carry vital life energy to the organs and limbs. Traditional oriental medicine is a system for interpreting the health of the body by observing its state of energy. All physical levels of the body -- blood, lymphatic system, nervous system, and skeletal system -- are considered to be superficial to ch'i. They all depend on ch'i for their functioning.

Ch'i and the Earth

Just as ch'i energy flows through our bodies, ch'i energy also flows within the earth. The veins or meridians of the earth's

All these types of ch'i affect our lives. Some may be difficult for us to offset or change, such as natural ch'i or societal ch'i. However, your personal ch'i is one flow you can cultivate or gradually build and strengthen. Some of the methods Professor Lin says people can use to cultivate their ch'i are:

Ch'i Cultivation

Natural ch'i cultivation

Spiritual ch'i cultivation

Ch'i transmission

Self cultivation

Feng Shui cures

Method

Spending time in nature

Spiritual endeavors, such as prayer, meditation, or reading scriptures

Receiving energy healing from qualified healing practitioners

Study, discipline, and self-improvement

Environmental ch'i cures and remedies for the home and workplace

Feng Shui is only one of the categories of ch'i cultivation. The highest life benefit comes from using as many of the ch'i cultivation methods as possible; they work together to create overall improvement in your personal ch'i and life.

Feng Shui practitioners are artists and technicians of the ch'i flow, using any means at their disposal to weave human and environmental ch'i into patterns of nourishing energy, which feed and protect every part of your life.