

Applying Feng Shui Principles to Interior Design

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Abstract:

The main goal of interior design besides creating a beautiful residential building is to establish a comfortable, happy environment for people, allowing space for the ease of movement. This goal corresponds with the Feng Shui principles that aim at establishing comfort and happiness by creating a balance between the five elements (earth, water, fire, wood, and metal) with an effort to reduce negative energy and establish positive energy in an environment. Due to the importance and benefits of applying the Feng Shui principles in interior design, this research sheds light on its definition, components and school of thought.

المخلص

إنطلاقاً من الهدف الرئيسي للتصميم الداخلي المتمثل في تحقيق الراحة والسعادة وسهولة الحركة للمستخدمين و الجمال للمباني السكنية، وهذا ما يتقاطع مع مبادئ علم "الفينغ شوي" التي تسعى لتأمين الراحة والسعادة بتحقيق التوازن بين العناصر الخمسة (التراب، الماء، النار، المعدن، الخشب) من خلال توضيح العلاقات المتبادلة بينهم، والعمل على توفير الطاقة الإيجابية داخل المبنى و الحد من الطاقة السلبية.

لهذا، يسلط هذا البحث الضوء على التعريف بعلم "الفينغ شوي" وتوضيح مبادئه ومكوناته ومدارسه المختلفة والعلاقات المتبادلة بينها، لأهميته والإستفادة من تطبيق مبادئه على مخططات المباني ولاسيما المنازل، وذلك بما يخص التصميم الداخلي بشكلٍ خاص.

First: Introduction:

Most people, nowadays, suffer from tension and anxiety as a result of being in the forefront of the rapid technological and scientific progress of our current time. The fast paced changing environment has pressurized people to keep abreast with every new trend creating an increased level of stress among individuals for this reason, levels of tension, anxiety, instability and psychological problems have increased, despite modern facilities and inventions that are supposed to make our lives easier.

Many scientific research efforts were devoted to find solutions to get rid of the state of tension and anxiety that we experience every day. This is by assessing our psychological and physiological needs with our overall living conditions and by taking into consideration the human side of us instead of dealing with ourselves as machines that have to accomplish tasks. One of the most important principle that address this aspect is 'Feng Shui'. It seeks to provide positive energy in buildings, especially houses where people rest, by taking into consideration the location of the building, its surroundings, the impact of the electromagnetic fields, materials used in construction, rooms distribution, their area, level of lighting, exposure to sun and ventilation which all affect the inhabitants' health and psychological energy.

Thus, this research investigates Feng Shui science in the context of the role of interior designers. It will define Feng Shui and explain its foundations, requirements, effects, and mechanisms of application to interior designs and furniture arrangement, especially in houses.

The goal behind this is to establish an interior design of a house that is modern and healthy, to make our houses a safe comfortable refuge after being stressed and tired from work, and to provide positive surrounding energy blocking the negative away.

Second: Research problem:

Drawing attention to the importance of applying Feng Shui principles to engineering drawings, especially to interior designs, providing guidelines that help interior designers in designing beautiful, comfortable, captivating buildings.

Third: Research importance:

This research is probably the only one conducted by Arabs in the field of applying Feng Shui to interior design. However, related research is common among Western academics, as well as in China where this science originated.

Fourth: Research aims:

The research aims are summarized as follows:

1. Defining 'Feng Shui' science linguistically and terminologically.
2. Clarifying the relationship (positive and negative) between the five elements of Feng Shui (Earth, fire, wood, water, and metal).
3. Clarifying the different schools of Feng Shui and their applications.
4. Explaining the ways in which Feng Shui principles can be applied to buildings' interior designs.
5. Explaining color implications according to the Feng Shui rules inside buildings.

Fifth: Research hypothesis:

In order to establish the interior design aims of providing comfort and relaxation, the existence of a positive relation between Feng Shui applications and the skills of an interior designer has to be established.

Sixth: Research methodology:

This research is classified as a case study which is one of the methods used for qualitative research that are devoted to the study and understanding of a specific phenomenon. In such studies, researchers resort to many sources of information to systematically study a case. It is an analytical practical study that depends on several sources and evidence with a focus on one subject to describe it, discover new meanings of it and to finally reach a number of important conclusions and recommendations.

Seventh: Research components:

The research consists of the following:

First- (Theoretical framework).

1:1 General principles of Feng Shui.

1:1:1 Definition of Feng Shui.

1:1:2 Schools of Feng Shui.

First: Form school.**Second: Pyramid School.****Third: Compass school.**

Second- (Elements and components of Feng Shui).

2:1 Feng Shui constituent elements upon which it depends and their interrelationships and applications.

2:1:1 Elements of Feng Shui.

2:2:1 Constituent elements of Feng Shui, their characteristics and meanings.

2:3:1 Interrelationships (positive and negative) between Feng Shui elements.

First: Interrelationships between Feng Shui constituent elements.

Second: The uses of Feng Shui constituent elements.

Third- (The Different ways of applying Feng Shui)

3:1 Ways of applying Feng Shui to interior design plans of residential buildings.

3:1:1 (I Chaing) Lines method.

3:2:1 Grant or eight saturation sections method.

3:3:1 Eight directions method.

Fourth-(Practical applications).

4:1 Feng Shui applications to the interior design of residential buildings. (Furniture, colors, internal divisions)

4:1:1 Applying Feng Shui to internal divisions of a house.

First: Applying Feng Shui to doors and windows.

Second: Applying Feng Shui to furniture arrangement in a house.

4:2:1 Color implications according to Feng Shui rules in a house.

5:1 Results and recommendations.

First: Theoretical framework:**1:1 General principles of Feng Shui.**

“Feng Shui is an ancient Chinese science that dates back five thousand years”.⁽¹⁾ It is concerned with places energy through the arrangement and design of houses and their furniture distribution. It works on balancing power in humans’ surroundings, modifying it and turning it into energy. Feng Shui is an ancient Chinese philosophy that “calls humans to come to terms with themselves and surroundings to live positively away from tension, problems and negative conditions that they might not know their reasons. It basically depends on energy, its movement and influence on people. The art of decoration is an essential part of this science because, similarly, it is concerned with energy and the extent to which humans are affected by their surroundings which influence their life, state, health, mood, and relations with others. Everything is composed out of energy emission and absorption”.⁽²⁾ Feng Shui further

attempts to “achieve balance between the eight areas of life: consistency, family, money, understanding, sublimity, evolution, pleasure, and contentment”.⁽³⁾

1:1:1 Feng Shui definition:

Linguistically: “The Chinese words ‘Feng’ and ‘Shui’ mean ‘wind’ and ‘water’”.⁽⁴⁾

As a term: “Feng Shui is a Chinese ancient art that works on ordering everything around us to make us live in harmony with the environment”.⁽⁵⁾ It is also defined as: “An ancient Chinese art that depends on simple components that help in forming places”.⁽⁶⁾

1:1:2 Feng Shui schools:

Feng Shui schools vary among the following three types: compass, form and pyramid. The three schools have the same base of aiming to achieve balance between the five elements of Feng Shui (Earth, fire, wood, water, metal), but they use different methods of application. Following is a clarification of each:

First: Form school:

It depends on our perception of things through sight since we use our eyes more than any other organ in our bodies to organize the world around us. Therefore, it basically relies on our sense of sight, shapes, colors, texts and explaining their meanings in the context of the humans’ psychological state, For example; the shape of a mountain could be a threat to the human life or a way of protection, and this is related to visual interpretation. Moreover, the top of the mountain looks like a dragon, therefore; living nearby is probable because seeing a dragon is a good thing in the Chinese culture”.⁽⁷⁾

Second: Pyramid school:

This school is an extension of the form school, in addition to the fact that it takes into consideration the reality of our existence and the contemporary Western point of view. "We, as human beings, are the product of synergistic internal stimuli. The components of the human personality include genetic consistency, biological capacity, and the characteristics of its country, and religion. Each one of these components must be taken into consideration.”⁽⁸⁾ In other words, the pyramid school highly prioritizes these components because we live a life that is very different from ancient China’s in which Feng Shui science first appeared.

Third: Compass school:

This school depends on accurate calculations of the signals of the magnetic needle that spins in the center of a compass. This compass differs from traditional ones because it has 36 concentric circles that draw multi-informative signals in order to determine a good place for living. Currently, the compass method is not entirely accurate because metal is a component of many things around us, which negatively affects the compass. Besides, people rarely use compasses these days.

(1) Blonet Annem Arie: Feng Shui: ancient and modern, HOME & DESIGN SPECIAL (London, November27, 2007, p (11).

(2) <http://www.homekw.com/bet/showthread.php?t=6999>

(3) Sharon Kasmira, FENG SHUI-Subtle, Energy, http://www.i-d-d.com/feng_shui_articles_tips_info/feng_shui_article_11.htm.

(4) Nancilee Wydra, Feng Shui- Energy of the place “Creating Harmony and Comfort in the House and the Office”, 2005, P (17).

(5) Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (5).

(6) Nancilee Wydra, Feng Shui- Energy of the place “Creating Harmony and Comfort in the House and the Office”, 2005, P (17).

(7)Nancilee Wydra, Feng Shui- Energy of the place “Creating Harmony and Comfort in the House and the Office”, Dar Attale’a Aljadeda for Publishing, 2005, P (24).

(8) The previous source, P (25).

Second-(Elements and components of Feng Shui)

2:1 Feng Shui constituent elements upon which it depends, their interrelationships and applications.

Feng Shui science consists of five basic elements: (fire, earth, metal, water, and wood) and works on establishing a balance between them through its different schools. Feng Shui also depends on the following elements: (Tao, Yin Yang, Sheng Chi, Tse, and Sha Chi) through which we can understand it and get the required results. Next is a clarification of them:

2:1:1 Elements of Feng Shui.

The constituent elements of Feng Shui are originally derived from basic philosophical concepts in the ancient Chinese culture. They serve as the values by which we live in our current culture, such as happiness, freedom, etc. Below is an explanation of each of them:

First: Tao or Dao:

It means the source of all creation, and it was considered as a hidden stimulus for enormous inconsistent natural events. Followers of this orientation believe that Tao and nature are the foundations of their spiritual life because they think of nature as a stable homogeneous system that creates an organized life. Establishing this is also possible in people's different living places whether they are in a city or a rural area. In rural areas, a complete visual relationship can be established with the nature surrounding the house according to what suits its inhabitants. In cities, such relationship can be established through providing beautiful artificial landscape.

Second: Yin Yang:

It expresses two opposing forces, such as old and young, up and down, hot and cold, etc. Each one of the two forces is complementary to the other. Yin and Yang are "two international terms used to describe the energetic aspects of the stimuli. All the functional aspects are called (Yang) while all the structural aspects are called (Yin)"⁽¹⁾. If the Yin force was greater than the Yang in one's personality, s/he would be an introvert who tends to meditate and has a thick skin. In contrast, if the Yang was greater, a person would be social and active, and loves to entertain him/herself. "Yin expresses the feminine energy while Yang expresses the masculine; through both the energy of life is generated."⁽²⁾ It must be noted that a person needs both Yin and Yang at the same time to establish a personality balance or else s/he will live an imbalanced life that could end with a mental and physical breakdown.

Third: Sheng Chi:

It means movement upwards. This energy exists in refreshing, bright, high areas. It can be found in wood, seas, parks, fields and beautiful natural places. This energy makes people whom it affects feel happy and optimistic.

Fourth: Tse:

The word (Tse) means force and vitality that are required to do all activities. The increase of this energy leads to inertia while its decrease causes chaos. Therefore, Tse energy must flow freely and smoothly in houses without running into any obstacles.

(1) Manfred Pokert, *Medicine in Chinese Thought*, Publications of the Ministry of Culture in the Syrian Arab Republic, 1999, (p. 74).

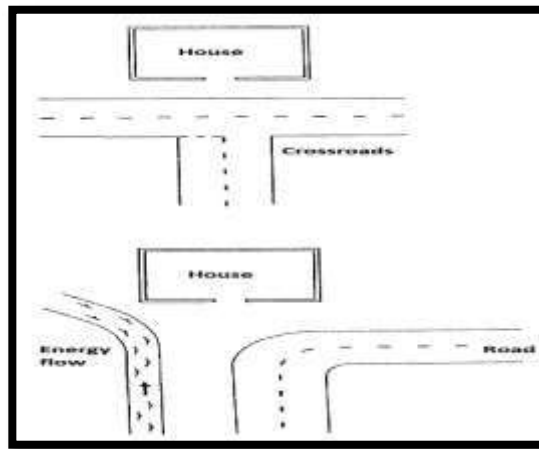
(2) <http://law-of-attraction.hooxs.com/montada-f9/topic-t71.htm>.

Fifth: Sha Chi:

It means harmful energy that accompanies a person when s/he is angry or endangered. The harmful Sha Chi energy can also come from the negative surrounding places which can be above or below ground. This energy coming from underground can affect a human negatively by making him/her sick, consuming his/her energy, and probably making him/her tired for no obvious reason.

Such case happens to houses that are built in locations that are low and so humid, besides; it can happen in places which are generally located where the useful Chi energy is. This energy flows smoothly according to road turns while Sha Chi energy flows in straight lines which make it affect houses in different locations such as houses on roads intersections. (Figure 1).

(Figure 1): Examples of locations where houses can be affected by negative Sha Chi energy.



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (13)

2:2:1 Constituent elements of Feng Shui, their characteristics and meanings.

The five elements: fire, earth, metal, water and wood are the basic elements of Feng Shui. To give their desired positive effect, they must establish a certain ratio of homogeneity, otherwise; they will cause negative effects. Each element of the five gives special qualities for nature and the human personality. The following is a clarification of each:

First: Wood (The tree):

It is known as (Mu). It passes its natural characteristics to humans.”⁽¹⁾ These characteristics include being: strong, flexible, and having leaves' roots that goes deep in the Earth searching for water and food to grow different leaves and fruits.

Buildings with square shapes are compatible with wood. Besides, green and blue are the colors that harmonize with this element that is associated with spring.

Second: Metal:

It is called (Chin), and considered as a source of power. It has many uses in our daily life, such as using it in various jewelry, electrical and industrial machinery, etc. This element is compatible with oval and circular shapes that represent the earth which is the source of metal with its hills, and it uses domes and similar shapes. White, gray, and metallic (i.e. the original metal color) are the colors that harmonize with metal which is associated with fall.

Third: Water:

It is called Philosopher (Shui). Water is the cleaning element and the original source of life.”⁽²⁾ It gives life to places where it exists, such as the riverbed until the water reaches the sea. Undulating shapes that resemble the sea waves’ movement are compatible with this element. Dark shades of colors like black, blue and indigo harmonize with water which is associated with winter.

Fourth: Fire:

It is known as magic (Huo). Fire is clearly full life and glow. It is also hot and dry.”⁽³⁾ Long rectangular shapes that are inspired by the shapes of the high pointed hills are compatible with this element. Shades of red and purple harmonize with fire which is associated with summer.

Fifth: Soil (Earth):

It is known as: The Diplomat (Tu). It is the element that carries all the other elements.”⁽¹⁾ Earth or soil is not the source of life, but it is the starting point of bringing life again and all dead elements are renewed through it. It is compatible with the basic shapes which are flat surfaces like flat grounds with wide buildings on high areas. Brown, yellow and orange harmonize with earth. Since earth is completely balanced, it is not associated with a certain season like other elements.

2:3:1 Interrelationships (positive and negative) between Feng Shui elements and their uses.

To be able to use Feng Shui elements appropriately and effectively inside our houses, we must first understand their interrelationships according to Feng Shui principles. Then, we must understand what this science recommends regarding how and how much of these elements should be used to establish balance between them and psychological comfort to humans.

First: Interrelationships between Feng Shui constituent elements.

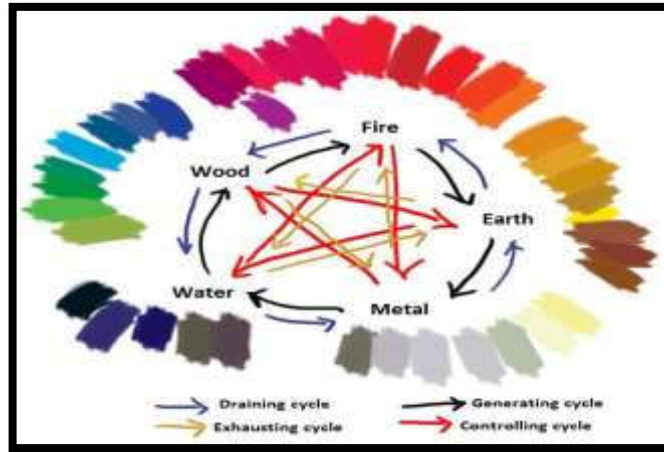
The five constituent elements of Feng Shui (earth, wood, water, metal, and fire) have a group of positive, negative and neutral relationships (Figure 2). These relationships are the base upon which Feng Shui scientists rely to establish balance between the elements where they exist and to use them in our daily life.

(Figure 2): Positive and negative relationships between Feng Shui constituent elements and the colors related to each one.

(1) Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (20).

(2) The previous source, P (23).

(3) The previous source, P (22).



www.bahrainforums.com/printthread.php?t=508719

On the other hand, these relationships determine the shapes and colors that are compatible with each element in order to use them in their right places and establish balance between them that leads to human psychological comfort.

The following tables (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) illustrate these relationships:

Table 1: Interrelationships between wood (The tree) and the other elements:

Element	Interrelationship	Positive effect	Negative effect	Neutral effect
Wood (The tree)	With fire	Wood is a fuel for fire	-	-
	With water	-	Wood absorbs water	-
	With metal	-	-	Wooden materials' quality gets poor when used with metal

Table 2: Interrelationships between metal and the other elements:

Element	Interrelationship	Positive effect	Negative effect	Neutral effect
Metal	With water	Like parent-children relationship	-	-
	With earth	-	Metal absorbs soil for reproduction	-
	With wood	-	-	Metal is harder than wood, but the tree stands above metal
	With fire	-	-	Fire heats metal and hot metal warms people in cold weather

(1) Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (25)

Table 3: Interrelationships between water and the other elements:

Element	Interrelationship	Positive effect	Negative effect	Neutral effect
Water	With water	Water is the source of life for trees	-	-
	With metal	-	Water causes corrosion of metal	-
	With earth	-	-	A swamp can be dried by adding soil to water
	With fire	-	-	Water extinguishes fire

Table 4: Interrelationships between fire and the other elements:

Element	Interrelationship	Positive effect	Negative effect	Neutral effect
Fire	With earth	Remnants of fire produces soil	-	-
	With wood	-	Fire eats up wood	-
	With metal	-	-	Metal is a good conductor of heat; it heats and cools down quickly which makes warmth less in cases that require a strong fire.
	With water	-	-	Water can extinguish fire in a burning house and can also put out the fireplace that provides warmth in cold weather

Table 5: Interrelationships between Soil (Earth) and the other elements:

Element	Interrelationship	Positive effect	Negative effect	Neutral effect
Fire	With metal	Soil has compounds that produce metal	-	-
	With fire	-	Soil extinguishes fire	-
	With water	-	-	River currents wash away soil
	With wood	-	-	Soil supplies trees with nutrients required for their growth

Second: The uses of Feng Shui constituent elements.

The five constituent elements of Feng Shui (earth, wood, water, metal, and fire) have a group of positive, negative and neutral relationships (Figure 1). These relationships are the base upon which Feng Shui scientists rely to establish balance between the elements where they exist and to use them in our daily life.

First: Wood (The tree):

Through green that represents growth, life and health, we can feel the existence of wood (The tree). We can also do that through the rectangular shapes inspired by the shape of the trees' shadows, leaves and general appearance. Several effects can result from having wood (The tree) in a place; they include:

1. Being urged to persevere because trees are the largest plants and they point upwards.
2. Encouraging growth and development regardless of the pain that accompanies them.

Second: Metal:

The white color or the absence of color represents metal according to Feng Shui, and this is further represented by mirrors and reflective surfaces. Besides, molten metal accumulates in circular shapes, therefore; these shapes became associated with it. Metal exists in our houses in many of the electrical household appliances, such as refrigerators, TVs, computers, etc. Several effects can result from having metal in a place; they include:

1. Expressing a free lifestyle through gold and silver.
2. Sensing restrictions and imprisonment since metal is used to make prison bars, handcuffs, etc.

Third: Water:

Water can be expressed through the curved lines that simulate wave movement during a storm. Glass is like water; it has the properties of liquids. Expressing water can be done

through big windows, tables, fish tanks, and glass sinks. This would result in having the desired water effects which are:

1. Getting rid of idleness.
2. Sensing true satisfaction through uniting with the water stream in the place.

Fourth: Fire:

The influence of fire in a place can be provided through using embroidery with red threads or using red bricks in part of the house's construction. This would result in having the desired fire effects which are:

1. Filling the place with energy and movement.
2. Causing inner and outer warmth.
3. Folding table napkins in triangular shapes helps in secreting digestive juices because their shapes resemble fire flames.
4. Sharpening creative, mental, and spiritual feelings through the presence of fire flames since they are a stimulating inciting factor. An example of how to do this is placing a candle on the dining table.

Fifth: Soil (Earth):

The influence of soil in a place can be provided through using any element that is characterized by stability, monotony and uniformity because these are the characteristics of earth. They can be expressed through square shapes that resemble the spirit of soil. Providing square shapes such as trays, square tables, computer screens, TVs and other stuff leaves a sense of stability, monotony, and similarity with earth. The presence of soil in a place results in the following:

1. Creating a sense of protection and safety.
2. A low square house, a square room, a low deep chair, and a square table are all soil environmental shapes that imply stability.

Following are some solutions to problems we might face wherever we are:

Table 6: Solutions to some problems we face wherever we are

Typical problems	Solutions through adding an element or more of the five elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong noise or hyperactivity • Necessity to communicate ideas • The need to relax • The need for safety • The need to reduce the feelings of fear • Too much quietness and boredom • The need for creativity • The need for clear thinking • The need to overcome narrowness (narrow mindedness and limitations) • The need to feel happy • The need to socialize • The need to gain knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add water • Add water • Add water and soil • Add soil • Add soil • Add fire • Add fire • Add fire, wood, and metal • Add wood • Add wood • Add metal • Add metal

Nancilee Wydra, Feng Shui- Energy of the place “Creating Harmony and Comfort in the House and the Office”, 2005, P (55).

Third- (The Different ways of applying Feng Shui)

3:1 Ways of applying Feng Shui to interior design plans of residential buildings.

Specialists use several ways to identify buildings' problems and to find the necessary solutions for them through the application of Feng Shui principles. The first method is (I Chaing) lines method which is usually applied with a Chinese navigation compass. Then, there is grant method, and finally, there is octagram method that is applied on building plans. All these methods have one aim: to establish balance between the five elements in a building in order to provide convenience and happiness by guidelines and advice that facilitate good energy flow and prevents negative energy flow in buildings. All the methods will be clarified below. Octagram method will be discussed in details as a scientific example, however; the other two methods will be only mentioned due to insufficient space in this research.

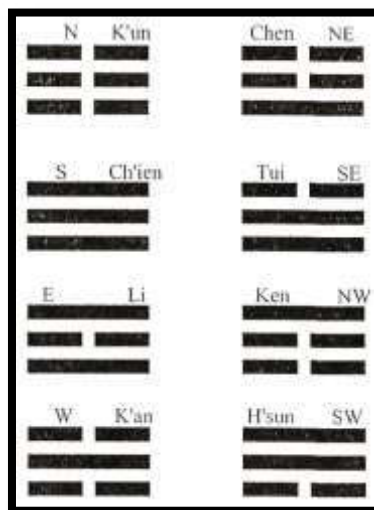
3:1:1 (I Chaing) Lines method.

The double quartet (I Chaing) lines are considered an evolution of Yin and Yang. The treble lines are called: Trigrams (Figure 3), and they are an evolution of the double lines that have only two lines instead of three with different meanings. These lines symbolize what happens on earth and in the sky. It is believed that they move steadily from one line to another, therefore; they represent the permanent and temporary relations in the real world. By applying these lines to a Chinese compass, something called (Pah Kwa) results. Based on the meanings of these lines that are related to the four seasons, the eight directions, the special meaning of each one of the lines, and their own schedules we can identify problems and develop solutions once the lines are applied to a building plan (Figure 4).

3:2:1 Grant or eight saturation zones method.

The eight directions method is one of the most important ways of applying Feng Shui to buildings. It depends on placing an octagram (Figure 5) on a whole building plan (an office, a house, etc.) or on the plan of each room separately. Through the intersection of the octagram lines with the building walls, we can identify the different zones according to the distribution of the octagram directions. Then, they are interpreted and applied to the house according to a special schedule with the eight directions and their meanings.

(Figure 3): (I Chaing) lines' meanings



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (41-42).

The following is a clarification of the meaning of these symbols:

(K'un): Earth which is the opposite of (Ch'ien). It demonstrates negativity, femininity, mildness and sincerity.

(Ch'ien): Sky- creative and inspiring with energy and vitality. It also demonstrates authority, possession, and coldness.

(Li): Fire. It demonstrates beauty, spiritual enlightenment and cohesion.

(K'an): Water. It represents deep thinking, concentration and danger.

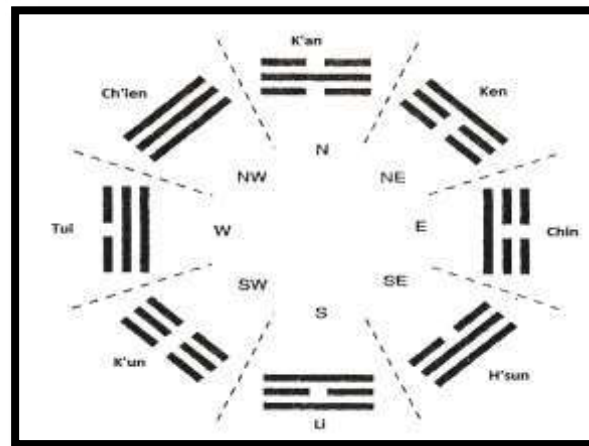
(Chin): Thunder. It is related to movement and represents growth and being exuberant.

(Tui): Swamp. It demonstrates growth, playing, success and sensation.

(Ken): Mountain. It stands for calmness, cautiousness and perfection.

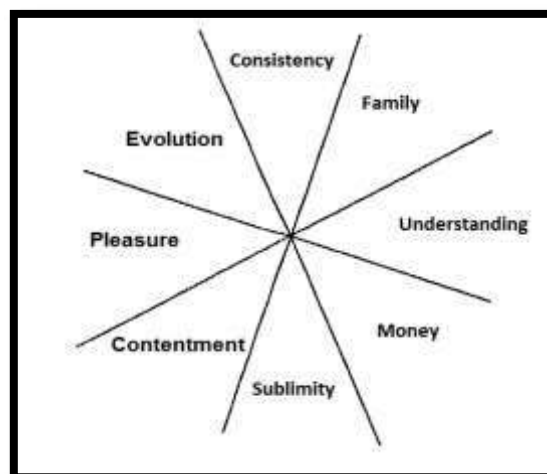
(H'sun): Wind. It represents growth, animal life, and flexibility.

(Figure 4): The Chinese compass (Pah Kwa) in a pattern called (Later Heaven Sequence)



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P(51).

(Figure 5): The eight directions of the octagram (Saturation sections or grants)

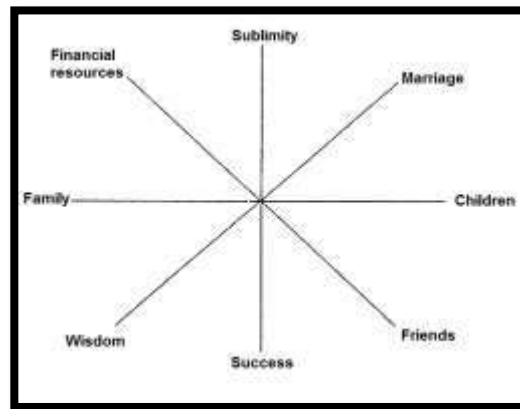


Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P(66).

3:3:1 Eight Directions Method.

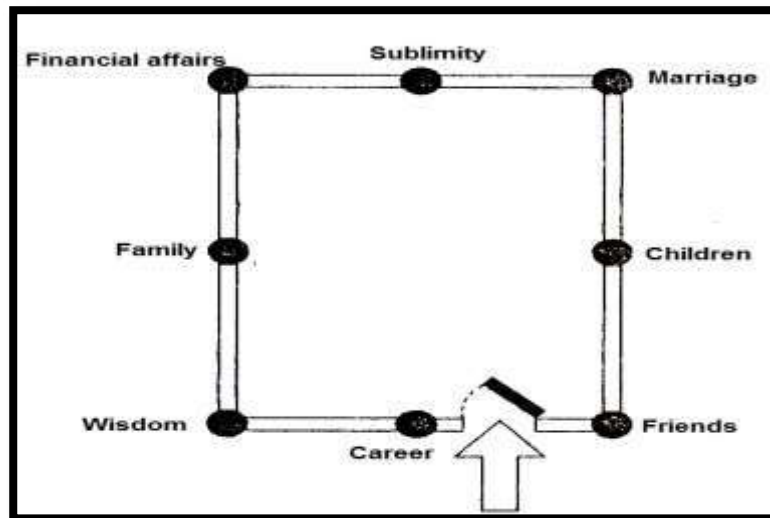
The eight directions method (Figure 6) is similar to the previously mentioned grant method in terms of application and how to deal with it. It is applied by placing the eight directions on a building plan as if we are looking through the main door of the building, so that sublimity is in front of us (Figure 7). In case the room plan did not take a regular shape, it can be modified into a square shape (Figure 8). If the plan was like (Figure 9), there would be no place for financial affairs and wisdom because they are located outside of the room. Any extra space in the plan can be dealt with as separate rooms.

(Figure 6): The eight directions



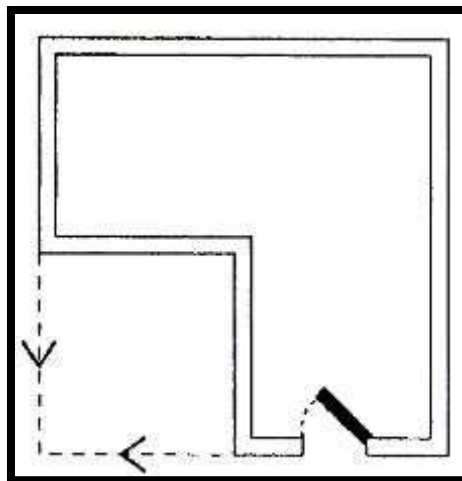
Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (68).

(Figure 7): How to place the eight directions on the building plan.



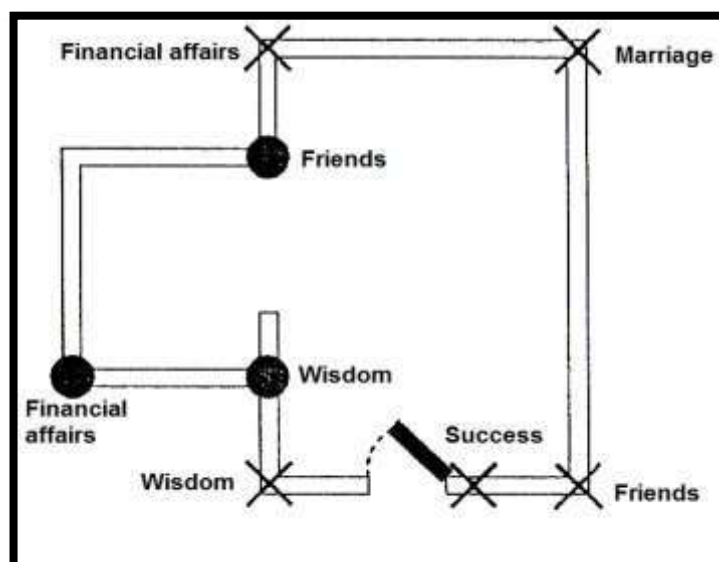
Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (69).

Figure 8: Modifying a building plan to make it of a regular shape.



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (69).

(Figure 9): Some of the eight sides not occurring within the same room.



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (70).

Fourth-(Practical applications).

4:1 Feng Shui applications to the interior design of residential buildings. (Furniture, colors, internal divisions)

We will study Feng Shui applications inside buildings which include furniture arrangement, color implications, and the necessary internal divisions to prevent the negative energy flow and provide positive energy. It should be taken into account that each case must be treated independently according to the rules and the school used to apply Feng Shui principles, and that these applications are fixed guidelines that resulted from experience in applying Feng Shui principles by specialists over the past years. We can benefit from these guidelines since they can be considered the solid foundations of interior design that aim to provide

convenience and tranquility. We will divide them into two sections: the first section is related to buildings' internal divisions, and the second one is related to color implications and uses. It should be noted that “scents (perfumes) have an important role in stimulating positive energy in the house” (1), but we will only focus on the field of interior design in this research.

4:1:1 Applying Feng Shui to internal divisions of a house.

It should be noted that we can enhance positive energy in the house in several ways that include: “putting plants inside and outside the house because they help in bringing balance and positive energy” (2), and using mirrors. However, we will study Feng Shui applications to interior design, which are divided into two parts: the first part is allocated for entrances, windows and doors while the second part looks into furniture arrangement inside the different rooms of a building.

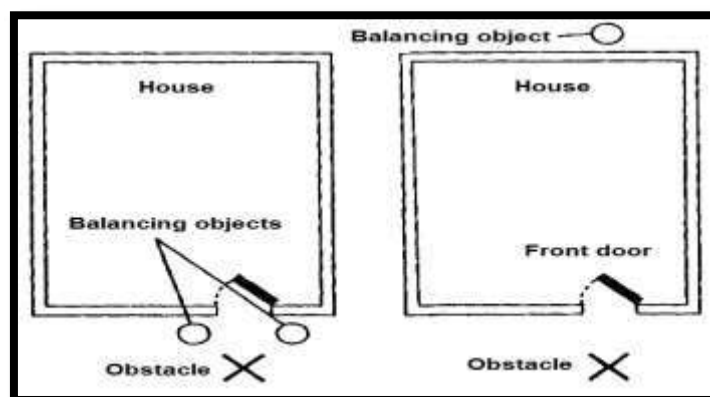
First: Applying Feng Shui to doors and windows.

1/Doors:

The front door of a building is considered the most important door in it. Large doors allow the passage of a large amount of Chi and vice versa. It is not recommended to change the place of the door, instead; its size can be reduced or increased if needed. It is advised to hang bells or any similar objects to slow the Chi flow, prevent it from going out and returning it back to the house. Objects like (trees, lampposts, etc) must not be placed in front of the door. If this happens, the problem can be solved by either removing the object or using another balancing object such as a tree (Figure 10).

It is also preferred to have doors that open towards walls. If the front door was parallel with the back door (Figure 11), Chi energy will flow out of the house quickly. To solve this problem, a barrier can be put in the way of the Chi energy flow.

(Figure 10) : Having obstacles in front of a building entrance



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (72).

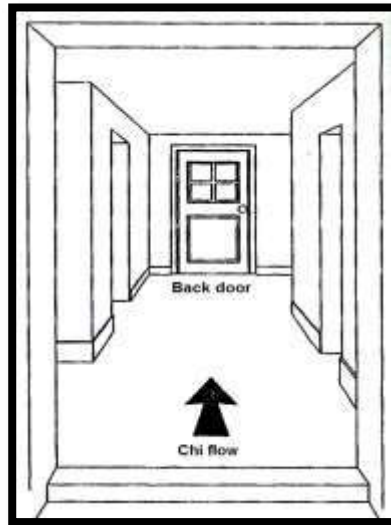
(1) Julie Holycross, FENG SHUI - Living Plants

http://www.i-d-d.com/feng_shui_articles_tips_info/feng_shui_article_6.htm

(2) Sharon Kasmira, FENG SHUI: Using Scents,

http://www.i-d-d.com/feng_shui_articles_tips_info/feng_shui_article_31.htm

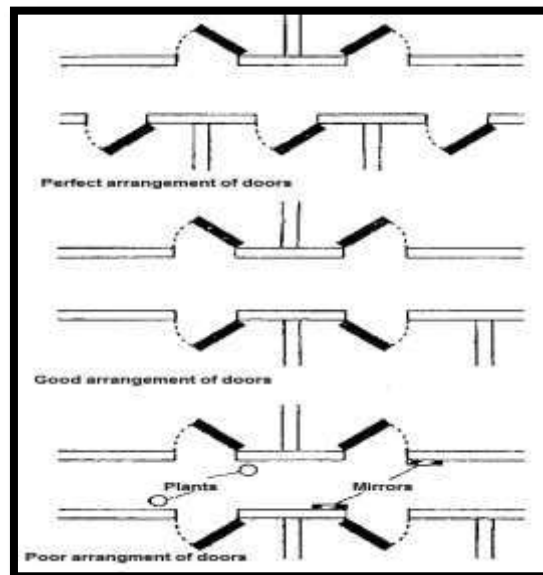
(Figure 11) : The front door being parallel with the back door of a building.



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (74).

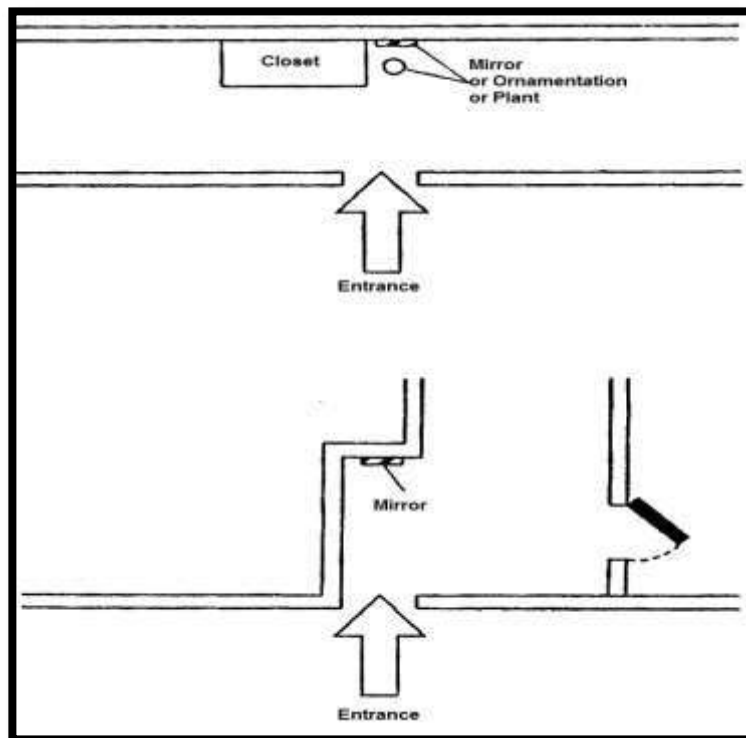
As for the internal doors, (Figure 12) demonstrates their (good, perfect, and poor) distribution. The problem of entering a building that has a poor entrance because of a wall or an angle can be solved by putting a mirror that reflects the main entrance and faces it (Figure 13). Placing the doors in front of each other without being parallel should be avoided because it generates a sense of imbalance for the person who sees them. Besides, having a door behind the stairs that are going up (Figure 14) hinders the smooth flow of Tse energy inside the building.

(Figure 12) : Doors arrangement (perfect, good, poor)



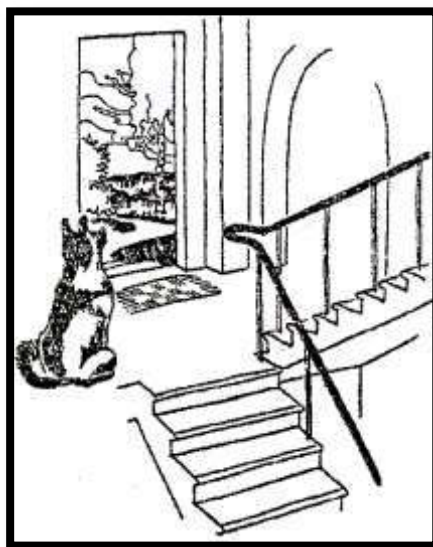
Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (77).

(Figure 13) : Solving a main entrance problem.



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (76).

(Figure 14) : Stairs in front the main entrance.

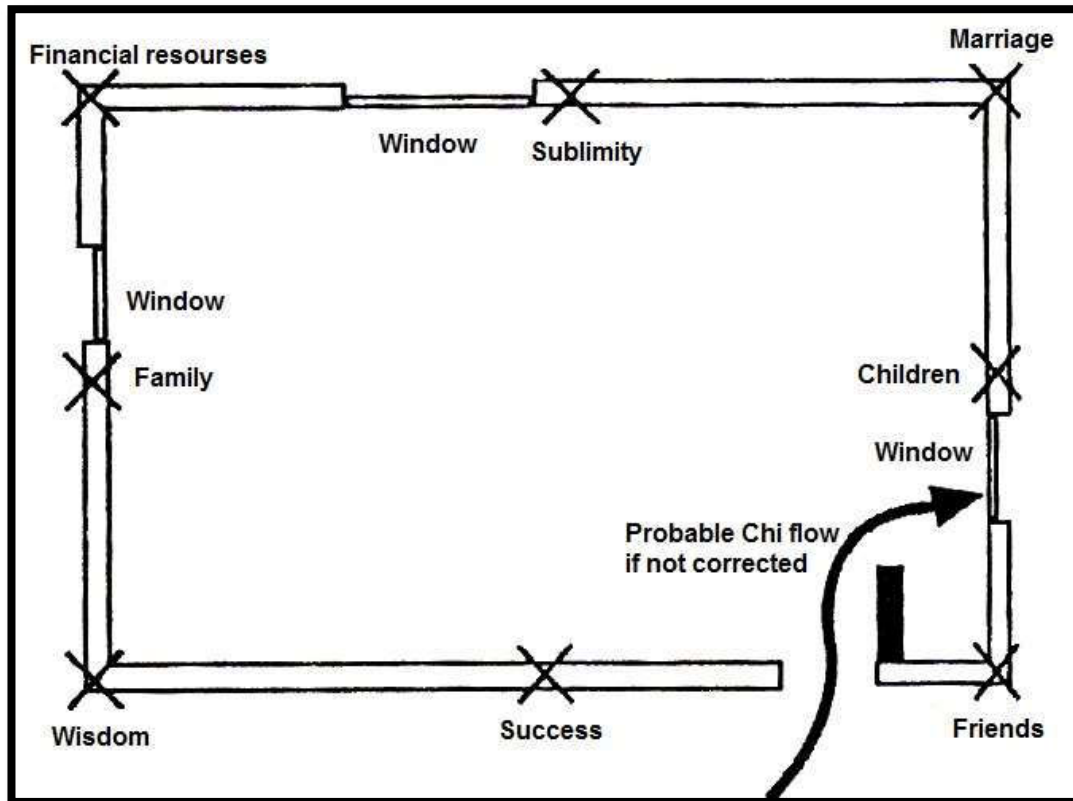


Anastasia Simeonova, Feng Shui- The House and Its Invisible Powers, Ed. 1: Dar Alladin Publications, 2006, P (124).

2/ Windows:

Like doors, it is important not to place windows near rooms' angles because it leads Chi energy out of the house quickly (Figure 15), which requires fixing this according to the previously mentioned guidelines.

(Figure 15) : Chi energy flow in case a window is placed incorrectly.



Research committee at Goods and Grost Foundation, Feng Shui, Syria, 2008, P (79).

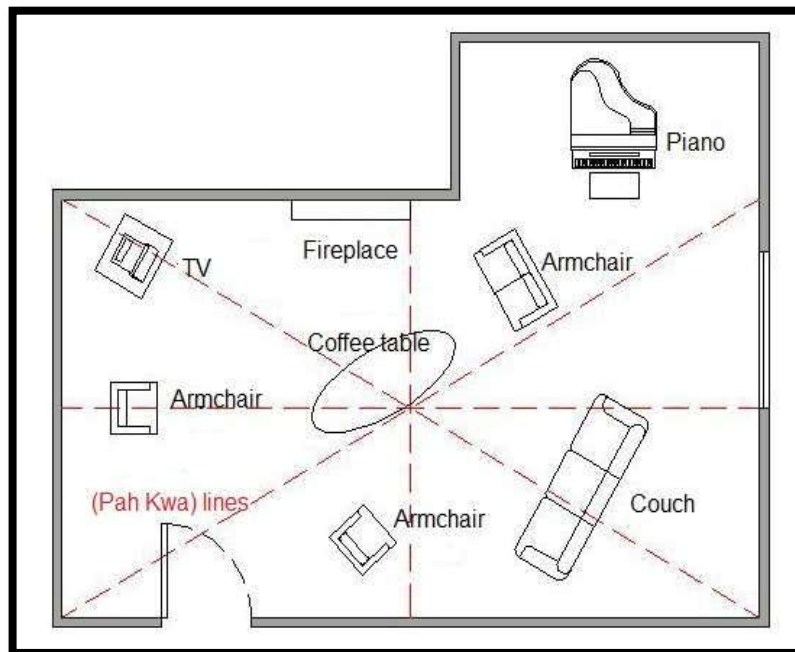
Second: Applying Feng Shui to furniture arrangement in the rooms of a building.

1/ Living rooms:

To arrange furniture in a living room, it should be placed diagonally according to (Pah Kwa) octagram (Figure 16). The chair facing the door of the room is called (guest of honor). The person sitting on this armchair should face the TV properly or face the window to watch a beautiful view outside. It should be noted that the chair should be placed diagonally and not straight forwardly. At the same time, the back of the chair should face the wall to give a sense of safety.

Putting two chairs facing each other on an angle with the couch gives a sense of comfort and harmony (Figure 16). It also helps in establishing a good Chi flow in the room which can be further enhanced by putting plants in the empty spaces of the room, some lights hanging over the paintings on the walls, and a fish tank. In case the dining room and the living room shared the same space, the dining room should not be seen once the living room is entered. If the dining table was placed in the living room, it is preferable to separate it from the rest of the room with plants or any other thing. It is also advised that the walls' color be a light one such as white or beige, and the floor should be of a light color as well.

(Figure 16) : Good arrangement of furniture in a living room.

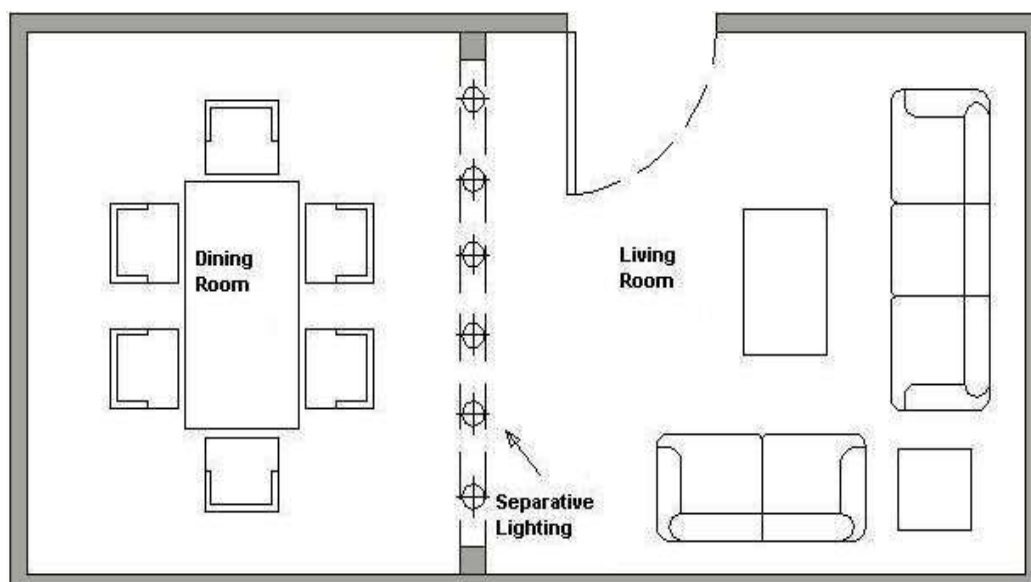


Resource: Researcher's drawing, May 2010.

2/ Dining rooms:

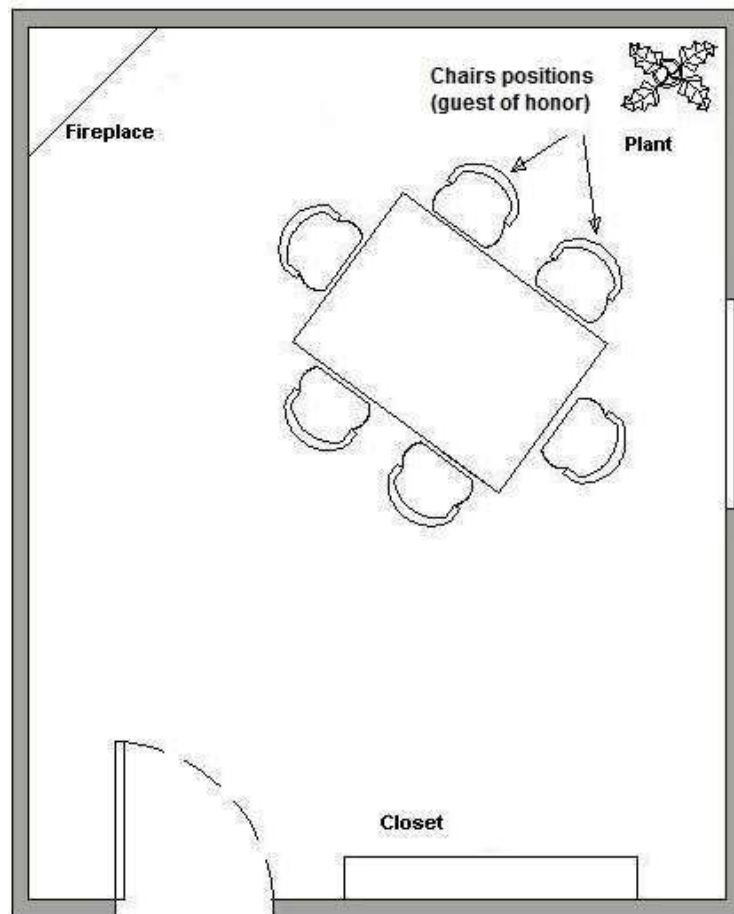
In addition to following the previously mentioned guidelines regarding the placement of doors and furniture, separating the dining room from the living room with plants or lights (Figure 17), placing the dining table diagonally and having an even number of dining chairs if possible have a positive influence. The two chairs facing the door have the best position in relation to Chi energy flow (Figure 18). However, this does not mean that we should not have an odd number of dining chairs. It is also advised to use a circular table for big families.

(Figure 17) : Separating the dining room from the living room.



Resource: Researcher's drawing, May 2010.

(Figure 18) : Furniture arrangement in a dining room.

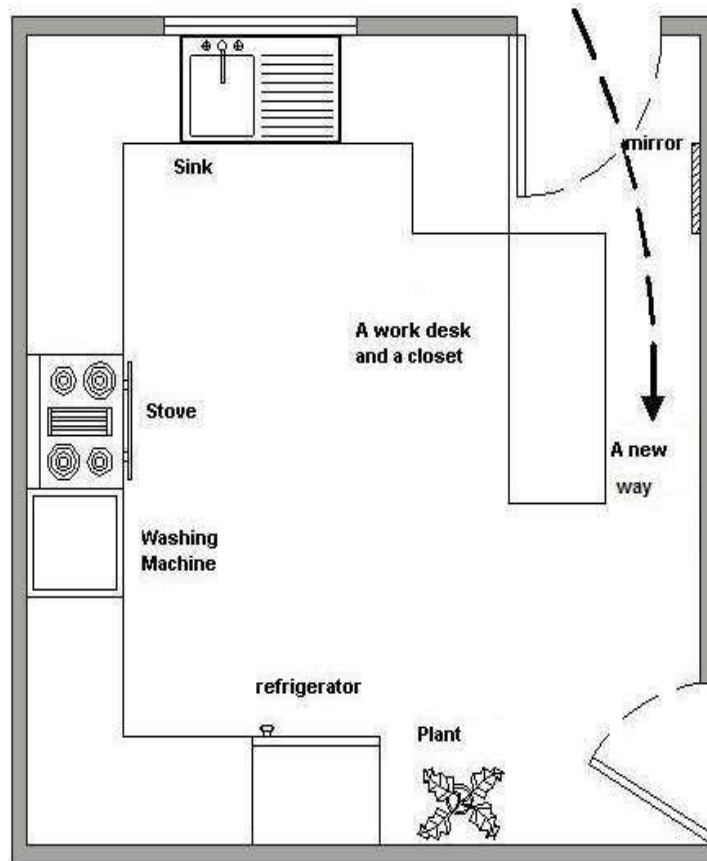


Resource: Researcher's drawing, May 2010.

3. Kitchens:

The kitchen is the most important room in the house because housewives spend most of their time in it as well as being part of the living or the dining room according to the American design of kitchens. It is necessary that Chi energy flows easily in it. Therefore, the kitchen must be separate instead of being a passage, which hinders movement and work in it. To further establish this, the back door should be reversed in order to determine the direction in which people walk in the aisle. A mirror can also be put near the door to reduce the feeling of restriction (Figure 19). Mirrors can be placed on the kitchen cabinets to make the kitchen look more spacious and to increase the feeling of comfort.

(Figure 19) : Furniture arrangement in a kitchen.



Resource: Researcher's drawing, May 2010.

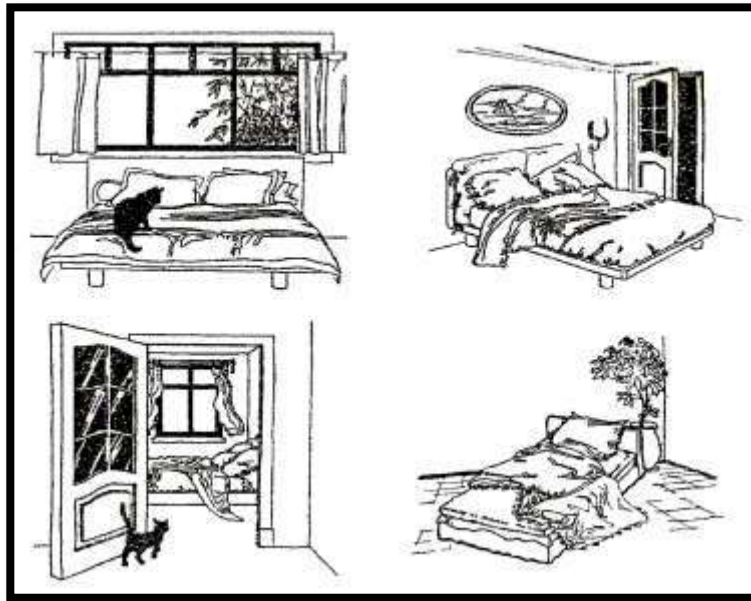
4. Bedrooms:

The bedroom is important because of the time we spend in it sleeping and resting after toiling during the day. Therefore, the highest level of convenience and Chi flow should be established in it. To do this, the bed should be positioned correctly, i.e., in any place that does not face the door (Figure 20) because of the Chinese belief that when a dead person lies in the room, the first thing to be seen of him/her is the feet, which is very similar to the bed position facing the door. This position also hinders Chi energy flow in the room and above the bed. Besides, it is important not to place the head or the foot of the bed under or in the direction of a window. Enough space must be provided around the three bed sides, and the fourth side should be against a wall. On the other hand, the rest of the bedroom furniture must be placed in a way that limits crowdedness, and sharp edges of it must not be pointed towards the bed (Figure 21). It would be uncomfortable to have a mirror that allows a person to see his/her reflection while being in bed because it would cause anxiety and frequent waking up during the night. If necessary, another mirror, other than the one that already exists on the bureau, can be added to the room according to the previously mentioned guidelines as in (Figure 22) that also shows “the best position of a bed”⁽¹⁾. Finally, it is preferable to have a bed that is made of wood rather than metal, and to avoid placing the lights above of the bed since side lights should be sufficient”⁽²⁾.

<http://www.aljsad.net/t153193.html>.

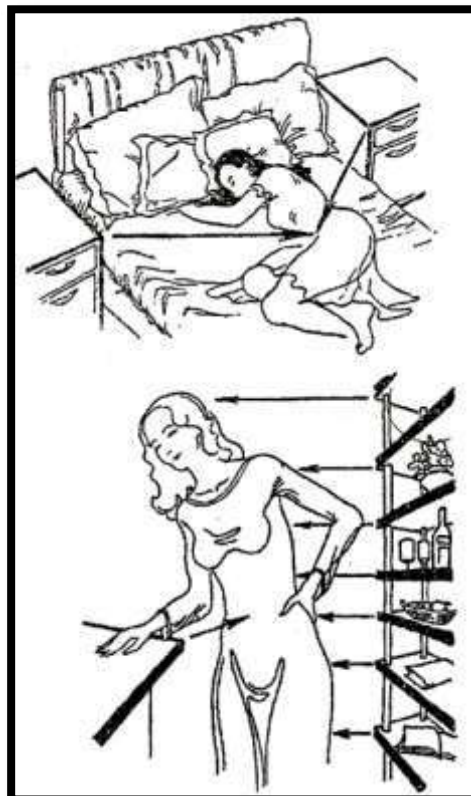
(2) Nancy Santopierro, Feng Shui and Health-the Anatomy of Home, 2002, P (192).

(Figure 20) : Problems with bed position in a bedroom



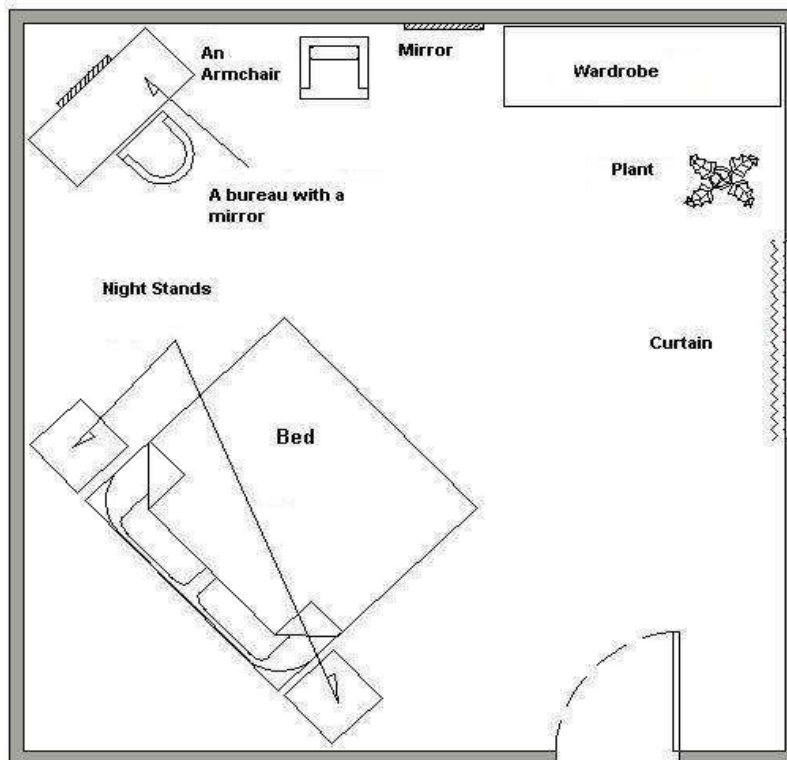
Anastasia Simeonova, Feng Shui- The House and Its Invisible Powers, Ed. 1: Dar Alladin Publications, 2006, P (110).

(Figure 21) : Sharp edges pointed towards the bed in the bedroom.



Anastasia Simeonova, Feng Shui- The House and Its Invisible Powers, Ed. 1: Dar Alladin Publications, 2006, P (112).

(Figure 22) : Suitable arrangement of bedroom furniture.



Resource: Researcher's drawing, May 2010.

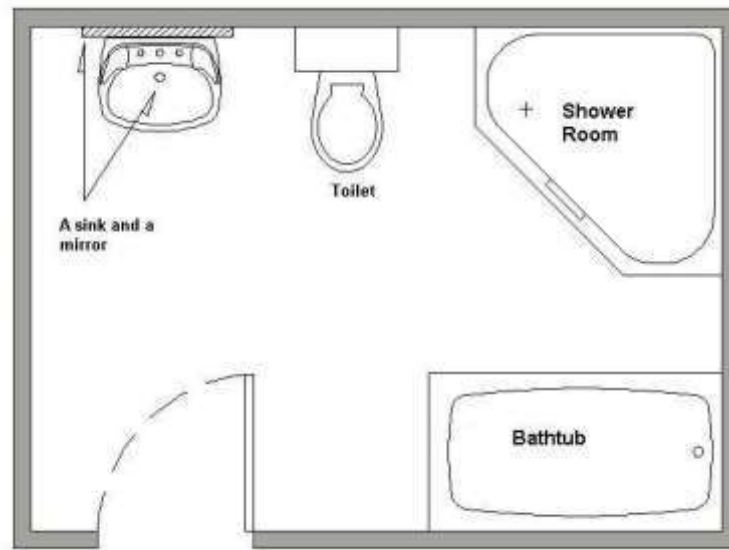
5. Bathrooms:

The bathroom is one of the most important facilities in the house. All the previous guidelines for arranging furniture apply to it. For example, it is important that a person who is using the bathroom can see anyone coming towards the bathroom from his/her position inside. Moreover, when someone is bathing, others should not enter the bathroom. The point is that all bathroom instructions should be followed.

It should be noted that all the bathroom elements should not be positioned in a way that makes a person's back face the door. Besides, the bathroom door should open in a direction that allows it to cover the toilet and not vice versa. The toilet should not be the first thing a person sees when entering the bathroom (Figure 23).

The bathroom should not be positioned in the middle of the house to avoid the negative Sha Chi energy. If this happened, the problem can be solved by putting mirrors on the external walls of the bathroom.

(Figure 23) : Perfect bathroom arrangement.



Resource: The researcher

4:2:1 Color implications according to Feng Shui rules in a house.

Dealing with colors is part of the basics of an interior designer's work since there is a lot of scientifically proven information about their psychological and physiological effects. The effects and implications of Feng Shui colors are as important as its other rules. Therefore, Feng Shui colors' guidelines must be followed as an indispensable basic part of Feng Shui science. In other words, following them is not optional if we wanted to apply Feng Shui. The different color implications are explained below:

1. Blue:

It is the color of harmony, peace, devotion, and sincerity. It has various shades. Some of them are related to peculiarity and some to royalty and wealth while the rest are related to extreme simplicity. In general, it is a calm color with pale and light shades that adds space to houses and new dimensions to thinking (Figure 24).

Greenish blue is a very stimulating color that generates vitality and implies strangeness at the same time. It is associated with rare gemstones like turquoise.

Feng Shui encourages using blue in houses' designs to reduce anxiety, stress, high blood pressure and to get rid of insomnia and spasms.

(Figure 24) : A blue bed room.



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2. Purple and violet:

These two colors imply royalty (royal violet), luxury, sensitivity, good taste, art, music, and philosophy.

Violet is a sublime color that is associated with maturity and aging. It also symbolizes mourning. Its shades can be really powerful, especially reddish violet. Therefore, they should be chosen carefully and combined with calm colors (Figure 25).

(Figure 25) : A purple bedroom.



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3. Red:

It is one of the warmest colors and it is associated with vitality and adventure. It also symbolizes danger. It is preferable to use it in cold rooms like living rooms. The strong red has a stimulant effect on nerves, therefore; it should be used moderately and not excessively. Although it creates a cozy comfortable atmosphere in any room it is used in, it makes rooms look small. Red increases appetite and the desire to eat; who would not feel like devouring the red strawberries or the red cherries? Many restaurants use red in their design so that customers would enjoy the food. Choosing red for dining rooms implies the generosity and hospitality of the house owner provided that the color will not be heavily overused in the room (Figure 26).

(Figure 26) : Red atmosphere in a sitting.



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4/ Orange:

It combines the physical energy of red and the intellectual energy of yellow. It can be used in designing houses just like red because it creates a vital atmosphere if it was used in its strongest shades or with other contrasting colors like black and white or with colors complementary to blue.

It is advised to use this combination of colors in children's bedrooms and in entrances where guests are received although Feng Shui practitioners do not recommend combining these colors. Light orange shades like apricot create a warm welcoming effect. They can be used like pink. As for the dark shades of orange like sorrel and chestnut, they are decorative colors that are suitable for different uses which fit with several designs. When they are used as main colors with white or off white, they create a very warm comforting atmosphere (Figure 27).

(Figure 27) : The effect of orange on a sitting.



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5/ Yellow:

It is an uplifting color that spreads happiness. It is synonymous with summer, and it symbolizes creative energy, intellect, intelligence, power and richness. The very light yellow is a very strong stimulus for activity and excitement. Thus, it is better used with calm colors in small rooms. The negative side of this color is that it is associated with diseases, such as jaundice (Figure 28).

(Figure 28) : A yellow bedroom.



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6/ Green:

It is the color of the always renewing nature and hope. It is associated with the return of life, youth, and spring to the embrace of nature after cold dry days, which brings back joy to the souls and revives their hope after winter. Many cultures consider green as a symbol for

fertility and youth. Nowadays, green symbolizes rejecting environmental pollution, calling for conservation of nature and taking good care of it. Green is the color of harmony, peace, and balance. It creates a quiet atmosphere that encourages relaxation and meditation. When green is combined with red, they have a stimulating effect that denotes movement and hyperactivity.

7/ White:

It is the color of winter. It symbolizes innocence, purity, and honesty. It is also associated with good deeds, chastity, and happiness, consequently; white is wedding dresses' color in many communities around the world. Because white could also mean resignation and submission, white flags are used to declare truce or surrender. In terms of interior design, white is associated with hygiene and health. It is used to imply cleanness and maintain it in hospitals, kitchens, bathrooms, shops, dentists' clinics, etc.

8/ Black:

It refers to the fading of light, nightfall, and the absence of colors. It denotes sorrow, death, and mourning in most countries. Black is also related to darkness, witchcraft, sorcery, and evil. On the other hand, it is a very common color in Western fashion since it is associated with sophistication and softness. As for Feng Shui, black means affectation, strength, and money.

9/Gray:

It is associated with wisdom and aging, but it also means shadows and partial darkness. Black and white suit offices, institutions, and companies' designs because, together, they have balance and harmony. Gray is suitable for dining rooms' design, for it has a peaceful calm effect.

5:1 Results and Recommendations.

After defining Feng Shui science by understanding its different schools, elements, principles, applying it to establish comfort and happiness in buildings (especially houses), explaining the most prominent design mistakes of an interior designer, and finally applying its principles to practical examples using various parts of the house, the following results and recommendations are reached:

- 1/ The study of Feng Shui science is one of the important things that should be a part of every interior designer's knowledge because it corresponds with the principles and bases of interior design that aim to achieve comfort, happiness and beauty through designs.
- 2/ Interior designers, especially Arabs, should do more research in the different fields of Feng Shui since, unlike Western studies, they have shown little interest for this science in their studies.
- 3/ The principles and recommendations of Feng Shui do not contradict the principles and rules of interior design. Sometimes, it is recommended to choose one option over another when studying different suggestions of a design. This helps the interior designer make the most correct choice due to his/her reliance on scientific references.

4/ Applying Feng Shui principles requires the interior designer to do a lot of studying. This should be done by first: understanding Feng Shui principles and components, and second: adopting one of its schools as a method of application.

5/It is important to design houses according to Feng Shui principles since we live in a world that depends on machines and technology which causes fatigue and stress. Feng Shui helps reduce these problems.

6/ Feng Shui science is not only related to interior design, but also to architectural engineering, landscaping design, and other fields which make its application to other areas of science important in order to get its desired impact.

7/ Feng Shui science should be included in the study programs of interior design, architecture and landscaping design at universities.

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