

Nine/36 The Ultimate Design Guidebook

Vol C1, No. 1 _ August 2025

COMMERCIAL



prepared by
KENURO architects

kenuro.com.au

Introducing Nine/36: The Ultimate Design Guidebook

Why Nine/36?

Because you get:

- *Nine actionable design tips every quarter, 36 a year*
- *Simple, jargon-free advice on layout, lighting, customer flow & more*
- *Strategies to boost appeal, functionality & profitability*

Who's It For?

Business owners looking to:

- *Refresh a café, restaurant, or bar*
- *Rethink a retail store or office*
- *Optimize a healthcare or wellness commercial*

Why Use It?

Nine/36 empowers you with:

- *Quick, impactful upgrades*
- *Expert insights made easy*
- *Tailored design strategies*

KENURO Architects – Designing Spaces That Work

We're a Sydney-based architecture firm creating innovative, functional commercial spaces.

*Explore the tips, experiment with ideas, and watch your space evolve.
Let's design better, together.*



Table of Contents

01 Shopfront: Less is more

02 Avoid Overcrowding Indoor Decor

03 Waiting Area: Clutter-Free Comfort

04 The "Power Wall" - Right-Side Advantage

05 General Lighting: The Mood Maker

06 Mirrors: Strategic Placement

07 Greenery: Biophilic Design

08 Acoustics: Designing for Sound Comfort

09 Softening Spaces with Curtains



Shopfront: Less is more

Your shopfront is your brand's handshake with the public. A cluttered façade can reduce foot traffic by up to 35% (Retail Design Institute, 2023), while minimalist designs increase perceived prestige by 40% (Journal of Consumer Psychology).



Strategic Signage Placement

- Main signage should be placed at eye level or higher for maximum visibility from a distance.
- Illuminated signage (LED-lit letters or backlit panels) ensures readability at night while being energy-efficient.
- Data Point: Businesses with well-lit signage experience 24% higher foot traffic after dark (International Sign Association, 2021).

Clutter-Free Aesthetics

- The 3-Second Rule: Passersby should understand your business at a glance.
- Ideal Element Count: 3 focal max (logo, 1 product display, entrance).
- Avoid: Overlapping signage, promotional stickers on glass.
- Negative Space: 30-40% of façade should be "breathing room" to guide the eye.



Case Study: Retail stores with open sightlines see up to 30% higher conversion rates (Retail Design Institute, 2022).

Avoid Overcrowding Indoor Decor

Cluttered spaces increase cognitive load by 27% (Journal of Environmental Psychology) and reduce perceived brand value by up to 40% (Retail Design Institute, 2023). Minimalist interiors improve customer dwell time by 35% in retail and 22% in hospitality settings.



Functional Aesthetics

- Every decorative piece should serve a purpose - avoid "filler" items that collect dust.
- Example: Muji's retail spaces use intentional product displays as decor, reducing unnecessary clutter.



Spatial Perception

- Fewer large decor items create a sense of openness, while too many small pieces make a space feel cramped.
- Design Tip: Use the "30-70 rule"—30% decor, 70% open space.

Dust-Prone Items:

- Avoid open shelving with small decor (avg. 3.5hrs weekly cleaning)
- Opt for: Glass-enclosed displays (reduces cleaning by 70%), Large ceramic/stone pieces (1x monthly dusting)



Fact: Organized workspaces reduce employee stress by 27% (Harvard Business Review, 2022).

Waiting Area: Clutter-free comfort

First impressions are formed within 7 seconds (Cornell University Study). Well-designed waiting areas increase customer satisfaction by 41% and reduce perceived wait times by 30% (Journal of Environmental Psychology, 2023).



Avoid Overcrowding

- Too many chairs create a cramped, stressful environment. Opt for 1.5x expected occupancy to balance comfort and space.
- Example: Airbnb offices use lounge-style seating to encourage relaxation.

Zoned Seating

- Smaller, intimate nooks (2-3 seats per cluster) feel more exclusive than rows of chairs.
- Layout Tip: Use low tables or dividers to create semi-private areas.

Comfortable Seating

- Ergonomically designed chairs (with armrests and lumbar support) improve satisfaction.



Fact: 86% of customers are willing to pay more for a better experience (PwC, 2023).

The "Power Wall" – Right-Side Advantage

90% of shoppers naturally turn right upon entering a space (Retail Consumer Behavior Studies, 2023). Properly leveraging this instinct increases product engagement by 65% and boosts impulse purchases by 40% (Journal of Marketing Research).



Behavioral Science

- Right-Turn Instinct is rooted in left-brain dominance for spatial processing
- 78% of shoppers scan from right to left
- Exception: Left-handed individuals show 22% less right-side bias

Sector-Specific Applications

Fashion Retail:

- Right-wall "Outfit of the Week" increases full-look purchases by 70%
- Best Practice: Mirrored panels double perceived inventory

Electronics Stores:

- Interactive demo stations on power wall yield 50% more accessory sales
- Tech Tip: Use RFID to trigger product videos when approached

Healthcare Lobbies:

- Right-wall wellness displays improve service uptake by 25%
- Effective: 3D anatomical models with treatment information



Case study: Sephora places bestselling fragrances on the right-side display.

General Lighting: The Mood Maker

Lighting influences 80% of purchasing decisions (Journal of Consumer Psychology) and can alter perceived wait times by up to 25% (Healthcare Design Institute). Proper lighting increases employee productivity by 32% (American Society of Interior Designers).



Kelvin Temperature Guide

1800-2200K

Intimate warmth, best for luxury lounges, spas, wine bars

2700-3000K

Comfortable neutral, best for retail, offices, boutique dressing rooms

3500-4100K

Energetic clarity, best for medical, industrial, dental clinics, workshops

5000K+

Clinical brightness, best for jewelry displays, laboratories, warehouses

Advanced Techniques

- Tiltable Downlights (25°-45°): Highlight artwork or merchandise.
- Tri-Color Switchable LEDs: Adjust warmth via app (e.g., warm mornings → cool afternoons).



*Avoid This Mistake:
Mixing Kelvin temperatures in one room
(creates visual chaos).*

Mirrors: Strategic Placement

Mirrors can increase perceived space by 40% and boost retail conversion rates by 30% (Journal of Retail & Consumer Services). Proper placement improves customer comfort while poor placement can increase anxiety by 27% (Environmental Psychology Journal).



Mirror Technology Comparison

Standard Silver type

- 4mm thick, 98% clarity
- Requires film

Low iron

- 6mm thick, 98% clarity
- Tempered

Antimicrobial

- 5mm thick, 95% clarity
- Shatterproof

Smart glass

- 8-12mm thick, adjustable clarity
- Electrically tempered

Quality Matters

- Low-Iron Glass: Eliminates green tint (standard in high-end retail).
- Avoid: Cheap mirrors that distort reflections—linked to 22% lower customer satisfaction (Retail Psychology Journal).

Functional Zones

- Retail Fitting Rooms: Full-length mirrors with 2700K lighting flatter skin tones.
- Trick: Angle mirrors at 15° to create depth in narrow hallways.



Fan fact: Checkout queue mirrors increase impulse purchases by 22%

Greenery: Biophilic Design

Biophilic design reduces stress hormones by 37% and increases cognitive performance by 15% (Terrapin Bright Green Report). Commercial spaces with proper greenery see 26% higher customer dwell time



Spatial Perception Effects

- Vertical Gardens: Make ceilings appear 15-20% lower (cozier)
- Floor Plants: Define pathways without physical barriers
- Hanging Planters: Add depth to narrow corridors

Plant Selection Matrix

Retail

Plants: Ficus lyrata, Zamioculcas
Light needs: Medium
Impact: Low transpiration
Maintenance: Monthly

Offices

Plants: Spathiphyllum, Dracaena
Light needs: Low
Impact: High purification
Maintenance: Bi-weekly

Hospitality

Plants: Orchids, Bromeliads
Light needs: High
Impact: Visual impact
Maintenance: Weekly

Healthcare

Plants: Lavender, English Ivy
Light needs: Medium
Impact: Antimicrobial
Maintenance: Monthly



Avoid: Fake plants in customer reach zones - perceived as cheap (Journal of Consumer Psychology).

Acoustics: Designing for Sound Comfort

Noise levels directly impact customer dwell time, employee productivity, and brand perception. Poor acoustics can reduce sales by up to 28% in retail (Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 2023) and increase stress levels in workplaces by 40% (Gensler Research).



Soundproofing Critical Areas

- Solid-core doors (STC 30+) block 80% more noise than hollow-core.
- Mass-Loaded Vinyl (MLV) between drywall layers reduces sound transfer by 70%.
- AC noise. Install duct silencers and rubber isolators for vents.

Quick Fixes for Existing Spaces

- Add heavy drapes (12 oz/sq.yd fabric) to windows.
- Place bookshelves against noisy walls—books scatter sound waves.
- Install decorative acoustic panels (available as art prints or moss walls).

Absorptive Materials:

- Fabric Panels: Reduce echo in open offices (NRC 0.8+ rating ideal).
- Acoustic Ceiling Tiles: Drop ceilings with 0.9 NRC cut reverberation time by 50%.
- Carpets/Rugs: Reduce footfall noise by 15 dB (vs. hard floors).



Why Invest?

Customer Retention: 60% of diners leave noisy restaurants prematurely (Cornell University)

Softening Spaces with Curtains

Textiles absorb 60% more sound than hard surfaces (Acoustical Society of America) while reducing perceived crowding by 40% (Journal of Environmental Psychology). Proper curtain implementation can lower HVAC costs by 15-20% through improved insulation.



Curtain Configuration Matrix

Open Offices

Ideal Fabric Weight: 450-600 gsm
Hanging style: Ceiling track
Light control: 50-70% filtering
Acoustic benefits: 8 dB reduction

Retail Fitting

Ideal Fabric Weight: 350-400 gsm
Hanging style: Wave-fold
Light control: Full blackout
Acoustic benefits: 5 dB reduction

Restaurant

Ideal Fabric Weight: 500-650 gsm
Hanging style: Swag & Cascade
Light control: 30 % filtering
Acoustic benefits: 6 dB reduction

Healthcare

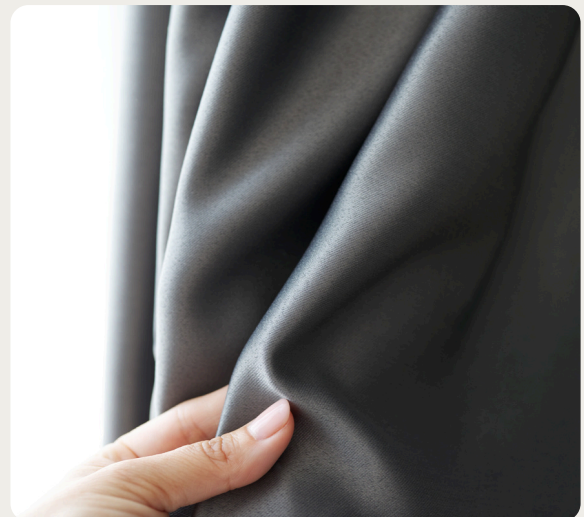
Ideal Fabric Weight: 400-550 gsm
Hanging style: Motorized
Light control: UV-blocking
Acoustic benefits: 7 dB reduction

Visual Perception Effects

- Soft materials create a cozy, inviting atmosphere—ideal for salons, cafés, and clinics.
- Vertical Stripes: Increase perceived ceiling height by 15%
- Horizontal Draping: Makes narrow spaces appear 20% wider

Color Temperature:

- Warm tones (ochre, terracotta) feel warmer
- Cool tones (sage, slate) create cooling illusion



Color Tip: Neutral tones (beige, gray) promote relaxation; bold colors add energy.



Loved What You Read?

If “Nine/36” sparked ideas for your space, why not get the next edition delivered straight to you?

Subscribe now to keep unlocking design insights and who knows, we might just be collaborating on your future project.

To subscribe, visit kenuro.com.au

Nine/36
The Ultimate Design
Guidebook

Vol C1, No. 1 _ August 2025

Level 5 (suite 55)
106 High Street
North Sydney
NSW 2060

info@kenuro.com.au
kenuro.com.au
(02) 8880 0448
0490 051 207



KENURO
architects