

## A big no-no is the latest renovation trend of doing up a dated brick house with trendy dark grey render and dark-coloured roof tiles.

Finally, on the window front, Garry says it's vital to guard against leakage. "You can do everything right but if your windows aren't sealed off properly then every time the wind blows it just blows hot air into the house. You have to be in control of the ventilation," he says.

Material-wise, the ideal building technique to take advantage of thermal mass is reverse brick veneer. That is, to have heavyweight materials on the inside such as a concrete, brick or stone and lightweight materials on the outside such as timber framing lined with weatherboards or corrugated iron. However, this doesn't happen very much in Perth, where there is more focus on the double brick approach.

A big no-no is the latest renovation trend of doing up a dated brick house with trendy dark grey render and dark-coloured roof tiles. "Avoid dark colours such as red, green, black, dark blue and slate," warns Garry – they can absorb up to 60 percent of heat from the outside.

"These colours are really for the northern hemisphere and not very sensible for Australia. Roofs should be well insulated and it can make up the difference if it's a medium colour like a medium grey."

"Dark roofs are definitely a bad move in summer," agrees Fiona. "And I don't like using tiles either because you are basically just putting a big heat bank on your roof. I always try to use lighter coloured tin roofs to reflect the heat – although even then there is heat gain – and I think that traditional tin has a very Australian feel to it.

"The problem is a lot of councils have banned the use of lighter coloured reflective materials like off-white and zincalume because they don't want to reflect glare into neighbouring properties. Some councils down south have put a blanket ban on all light colours because they don't want to see the reflection through the bush – it's just ludicrous."

While all these measures can be extremely effective, there is no substitute for buying or building a house that's oriented properly, something that both architects agree needs to happen on a more fundamental level when developers are planning a subdivision.

"People need to think of using Mother Nature first rather than flicking a switch," emphasises Garry. "By the year 2030 there will be no Arctic left. We have a personal responsibility and the power to solve our own comfort problems ourselves – we don't need the government to supply all this energy. Not only is it cheaper, health-wise we are better off getting fresh air and being naturally comfortable." ■

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