

The Armchair (October 2008)

In feng shui, we look for ways to capture “life-giving chi” so that it can nourish us. Last month’s tip looked at terracing hilly land as one way to “slow down” rushing chi. Early feng shui practitioners developed another solution that also had its roots in living on hillsides—the “armchair” formation. The armchair still has powerful implications for us today, both at home and at work--whether we live on a hillside or not.

Picture an armchair. Now picture a home sited a third to halfway up a mountain (forming the seat of the chair). It is stabilized by the mountain behind it (the back of the chair). This site protects the home from the winds that blow on the mountaintop and from flooding by water flowing at the base of the mountain. The home is further protected by hills or trees that embrace it on each side (the arms of the chair).

Ideally, we want to live within this natural “embrace” in our everyday lives. One easy method is to work at a desk or sleep in a bed that has a wall firmly behind it so you can benefit from the stability of the “mountain.” To give you additional support and strength, hang a picture behind your desk or bed of a mountain or another solid, earthy scene. An investor I know of had a picture of the Titanic behind his desk—going down! He has experienced two financial crashes so far.

Also, be aware that if the front of your home looks out on to a wall or tall trees, the mountain is actually in front of you, thereby blocking chi from entering your home. Cut down or trim your trees to open up the space. In the case of a wall, hang a picture or paint a mural on it that offers deep perspective. If possible, re-site the front door.