



Layman's Guide to Property Selection

By Sherry Merchant

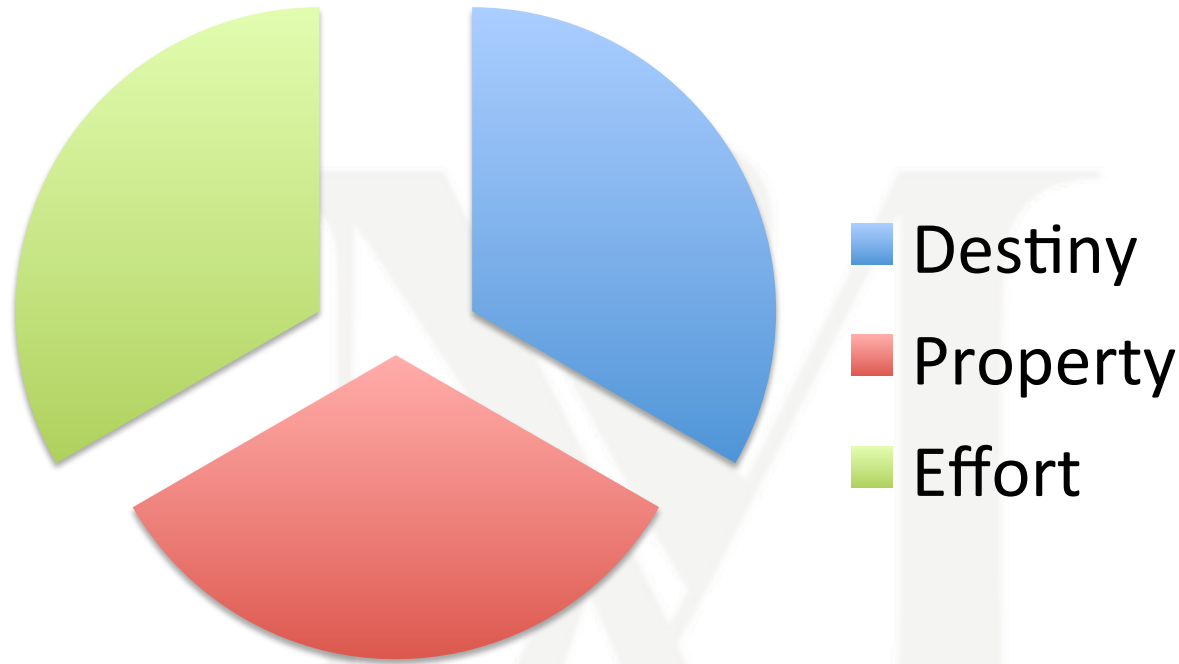
What exactly is Feng Shui ?

Feng Shui is the ancient Chinese practice of assessing property and land.

It is based on the assumption that **Qi**, the lifeblood or “soul” of the universe, is an indestructible force, that changes with time, and affects individuals, land, properties or dwellings (known as yang house Feng Shui) and most importantly, in the Chinese context, it governs burial sites (known as YIN house Feng Shui)

A qualified Feng Shui practitioner knows how to harness and use this Qi to benefit the property and optimise its potential to the maximum.

How relevant is this to us?



We practice with the assumption that the quality of our lives are influenced in three distinct ways.

Feng Shui & the Layman



This presentation is designed for the busy individual who does not have any prior exposure to the subject but is prudent enough not to disregard the relevance of something that may be of some help to him.

Good Design is Good Feng Shui

In both practices we strive to achieve:

- Balance
- Harmony
- Ergonomics
- Smooth flow of energy
- Open spaces and good lighting
- Practicality



How, exactly does one do that ?

Without going into technical detail, one begins with the selection of land based on certain principles.

The footprint of the structure is also decided with these principles in mind, as are the water placements, doors, entrances, room arrangements and kitchens.

If greater details are sought, one could even arrange beds and stoves based on the occupants date of birth, and specific goals.

What can you hope to achieve.

Harmony, easy progress of the site, and no obstacles are some of the benefits that are enjoyed by the developers, architects and contractors.

Increase in profits, detection of wastage and points of possible theft are other factors one can be sure of.

What do you need to do?

A simple regime is all you need to follow:

1. Plan your space using a qualified and recommended Feng Shui practitioner, and stick to the plans.
2. Select a good day to begin.
3. Adhere to recommendations where work should not be done, where it should begin etc.
4. Correctly place your site office.

What do you need to do?

Here are a few **pointers** on how to apply Feng Shui norms in your day to day practice.

Please bear in mind, Feng Shui is not a Do-It-Yourself hobby, but a very serious study.

After all, you would not go to a doctor who was educated by “reading medical books as a pastime” would you?

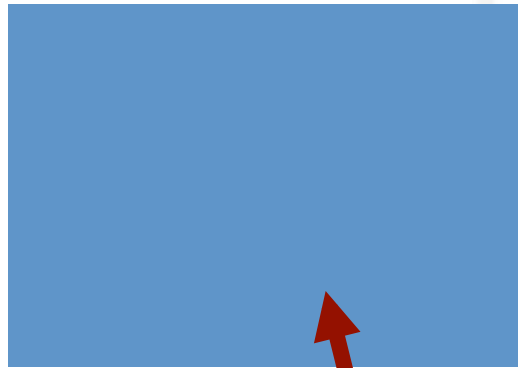
A proper consultation may yield for more input that this presentation offers.

Consider this to be just a “trailer”.

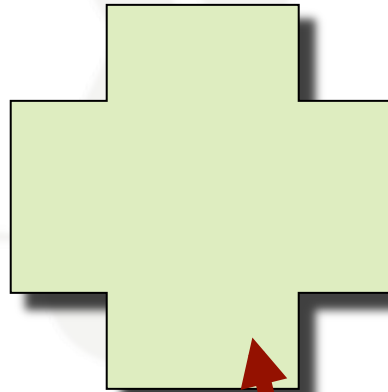
Plot Selection

Plot shapes are very crucial in the success of a property:

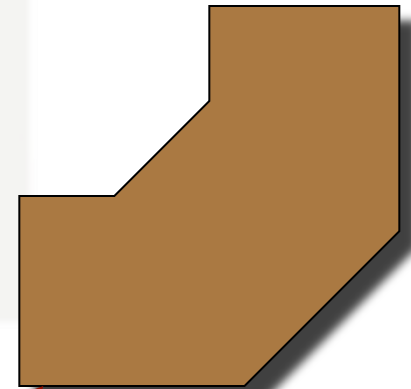
- Look for: Regular shapes, either square or rectangular.
- Avoid: multiple sided plots
- Plots with sectors missing



GREAT!



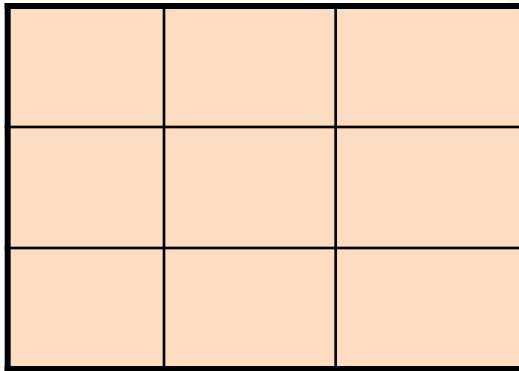
Forget it!



Why? Missing sectors are no good!

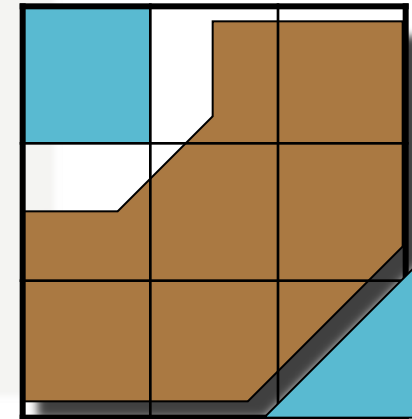
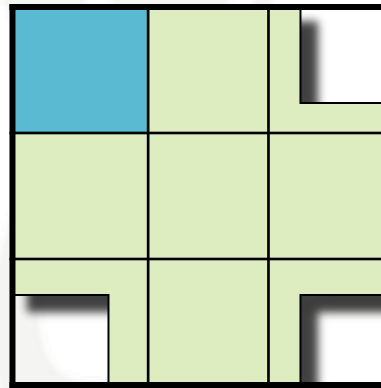
DESIREABLE:

Regular shape; square or rectangular



UNDESIREABLE:

Avoid multiple sided plots



Missing sectors



The rules & reasoning

The FOUR POINT GOLD

It is extremely important to ensure that every plot or building is four sided with all the sectors completely built up or at least roofed.

Each sector that is missing has special significance as per the Bagua, the Feng Shui template.

South East	South	South West
East	CENTER	West
North East	North	North West

Knowing the LOSHU

This is the only technical bit you need to know:

THE LOSHU

This is the basic “magic square” upon which all Feng Shui calculations are based.

Each sector of this basic 3X3 grid has a meaning, so knowing it by heart can be helpful.

It is called the magic square because when you total up the numbers in any direction any which way, the numbers total up to 15.

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU

The loshu forms two groups:

1,2,3 & 4 are part of one group and

6,7,8,& 9 are part of another.

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU

1,2,3 & 4 are where your ground should ideally be lower.

6,7,8,& 9 are where your ground should ideally be higher.

If these criteria are fulfilled you have perfect land. However, this is nearly impossible to achieve, so.....

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 3
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU

1,2,3 & 4 is where you must attempt to locate water, entrances and **activity** (lifts, staircases, kitchens etc.)

We call these areas YANG, essentially areas where activity is desirable.

6,7,8,& 9 are areas that should be kept **quiet**, so one can locate higher structures, bedrooms etc here.

We call these areas YIN, where inactivity, stillness and quiet is desirable.

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU- Water placement

Pools, ornamental water falls, even lower ground where water can collect accidentally in the monsoon, should all be in East, South East, North and South West areas.

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU

Placement of bedrooms

The bedrooms should generally be in the West, North West, South & North East areas of the house.

The choice further depends on which direction the building faces, but that part is best left to a professional.

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU

Placement of kitchens:

There are always preferred in the East or the South East but South and South West too is fine.

Avoid placing kitchens in the West or the North West.

South East 4	South 9	South West 2
East 3	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1	North West 6

Knowing the LOSHU

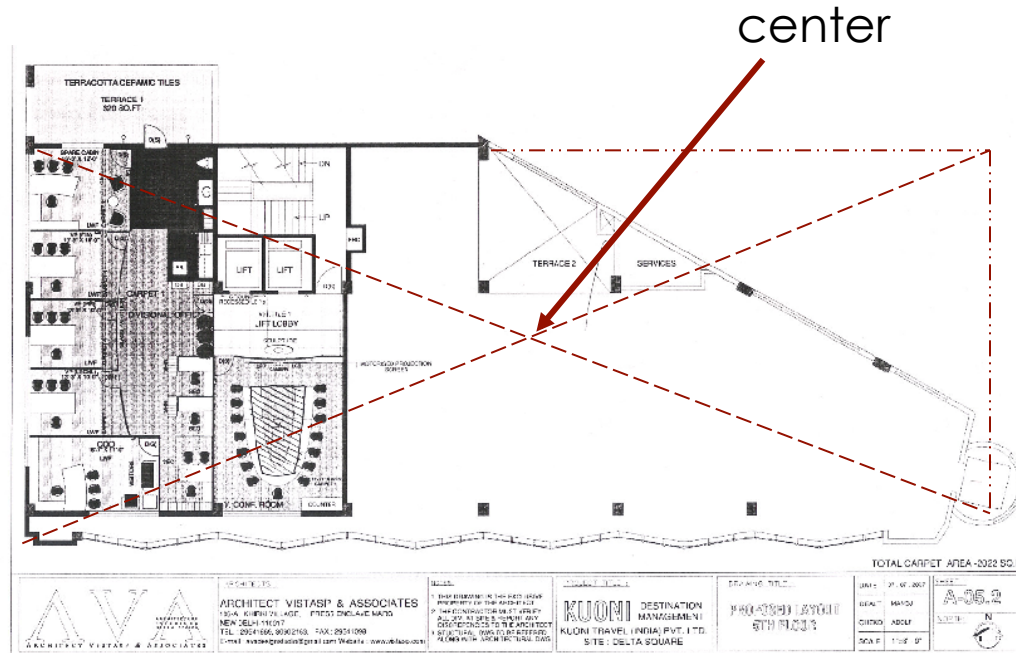
Placement of entrances:

There are always preferred in the East, North, South East and South West too is fine.

Avoid placing entrance doors in the West, North West, North East or South sectors.

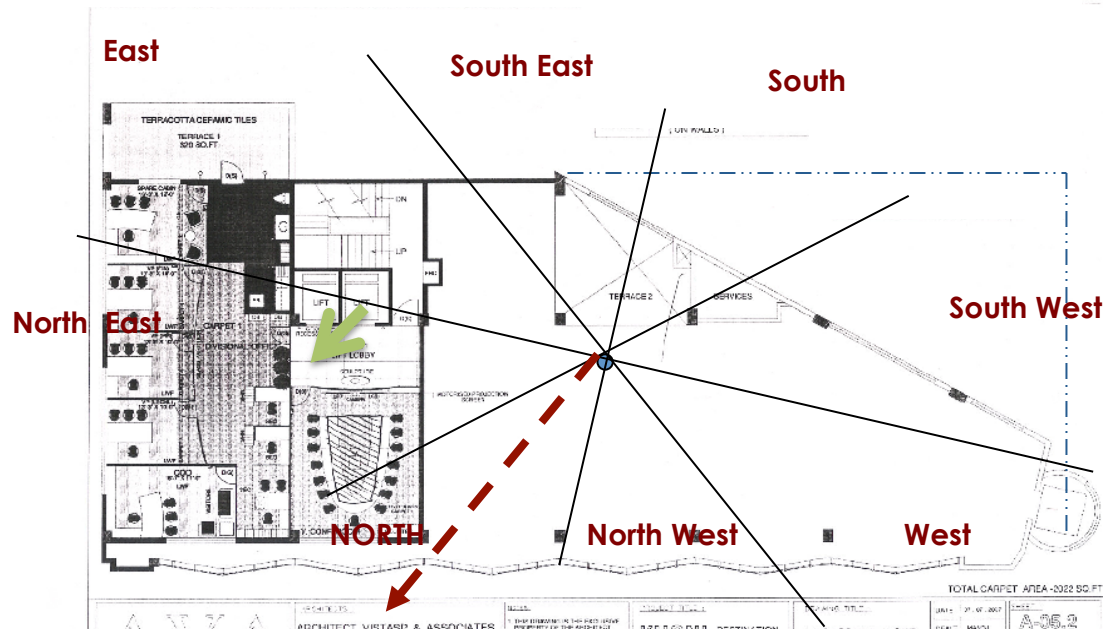
South East 4 ✓	South 9	South West 2 ✓
East 3 ✓	CENTER 5	West 7
North East 8	North 1 ✓	North West 6

What is a Sector?



1. Square off the missing sectors to form a 4 sided image.
2. Find the center by bisecting the plot corner.

What is a Sector?



- You now have a plan which you can use to decipher where your main entrance is located.
- In this case, the office occupies the North and North East sector of the floor with a little bit of the North.
- The main entry point to the office is in the North East sector (green arrow)
- The main cabin is in the North East sector and the desk faces South West.

Entry Points

It is very important to enter from the correct sector.

Like you need just one hole to make a leaky bucket, your wrong entrance can nullify otherwise perfect Feng Shui arrangement and land.

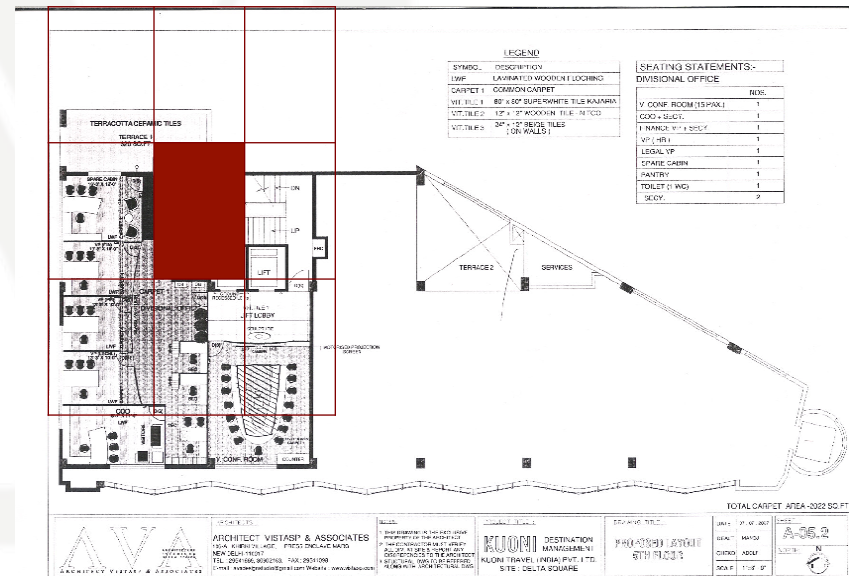
- East
- South East
- South West
- North

In the last example, the entry point was in the North East which is not very good.

Entering from the center, is even worse.

The central portion is marked out to be left unencumbered, meaning, no doors, no lifts or anything requiring movement and no heavy objects.

So does one lift come in the center. Also BAD.



Look after the center

One needs to be careful when planning apartment blocks that have a central atrium, which is fine, so long as it does not contain water. It must also be proportionately spacious not a duct-like dimension.

In fact, an open center, like in ancient houses, is actually good. The problem begins when you place a water body inside. This is specially with respect to pools, fountains etc.

Look after the center

Especially dangerous is placing the bathrooms and kitchens in such a way that they extend into the central part of the house.

Even the ancient Indian system of Vaastu dictated that such placements are wrong.

In fact Vaastu describes that a central open space called the *Brahmasthan* be retained in all properties, as an open area.

Look after the center

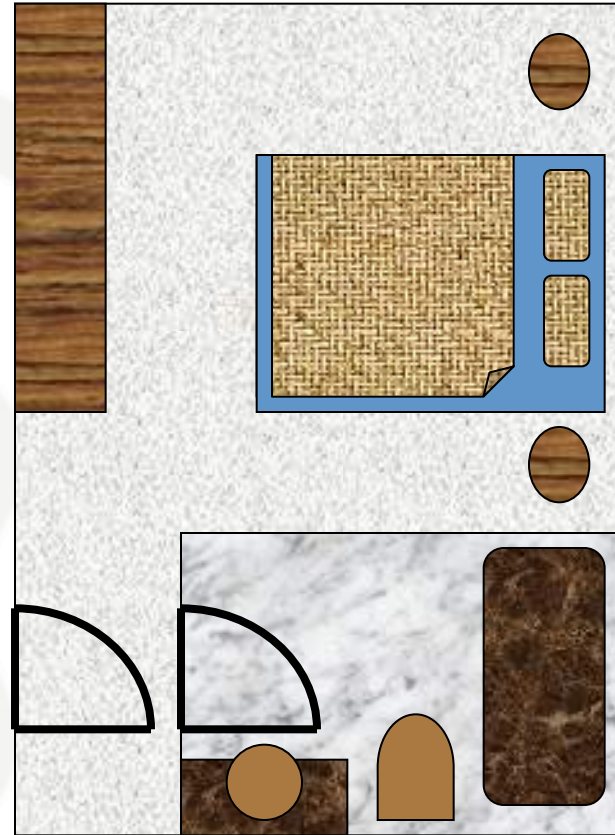
Another example is when two apartments are joined to make one larger one, and the lifts and stairwells end up in the center. This should be avoided at all costs.

If you are planning a space that may merge two apartments into one as an option, make sure the lifts & stairwells are at the side and not the center.

Room Shapes

Each room should be a square or a rectangle. Look out for shapes that are irregular.

A common example is a room which has a passage and bathroom all within one 4 sided shape, like this example:



Room Shapes

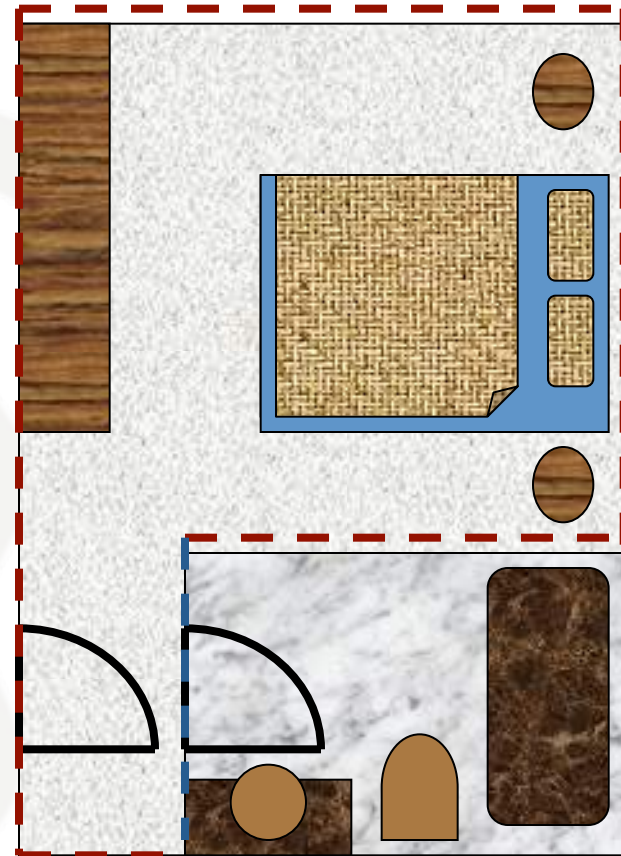
While, at first glance, the room appears to be 4 sided, look carefully, it is not.

The bathroom makes the bedroom “L” shaped, what is known in Feng Shui as a “sickle shape shar”

Such a shaped room gives the occupant bad health as the shar points straight at the bed.

BUT

there is a solution:



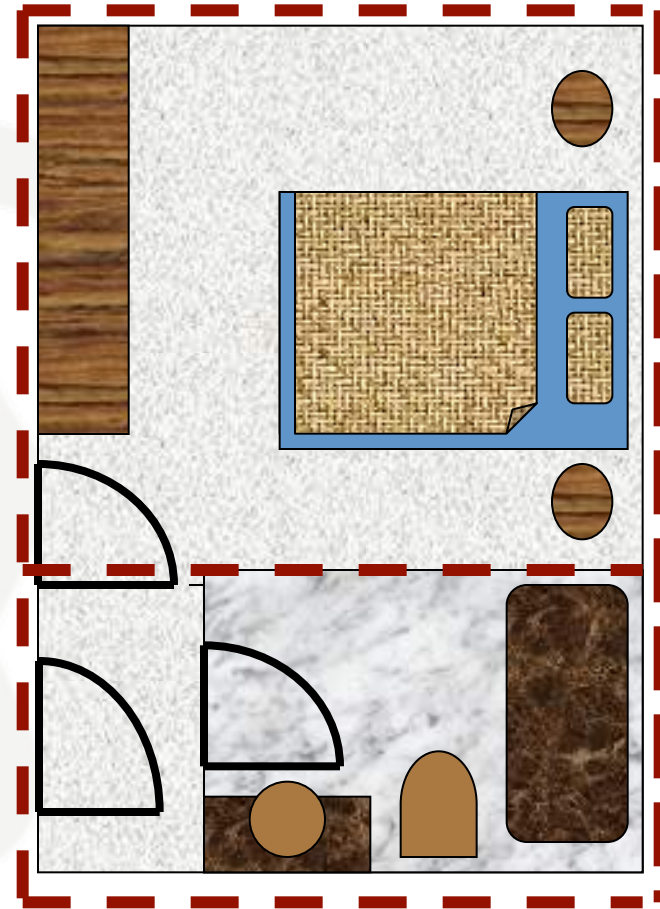
Room Shapes

The solution is very simple:

Add another door and the room becomes regular shaped.

This shape of room occurs commonly in most apartment buildings but the solution is also very simple.

An ingenious designer can come up with their own alternatives.



Four Celestial Animals

There is another factor that we take into great consideration in Feng Shui regarding the manner in which the land around you is positioned, which is devoid of directions.

This refers to the star positioning in the sky that is attempted to be replicated on earth.

However, non-professional Feng Shui enthusiasts take this literally and substitute these forms with real animal “shapes”, which is not the proper form.

The glass tortoise you see behind a persons desk, is not Feng Shui. The effect it will have will be as much or as little as say a glass dog, or a glass statue, in short, ornamental.

Four Celestial Animals

BLACK TORTOISE

It is good to have higher ground behind the property.

WHITE TIGER

A low ridge of land like an arm is good here. The longer it is the more POWER the occupants are said to receive. This is also part of the “embrace”



RED PHOENIX

This is a slight elevation, like a table mountain in front, said to retain the Qi. A pool of water within this position is very beneficial.

GREEN DRAGON

raised ground here is good for wealth. Greenery or a hill is also beneficial, as it forms part of an “embrace”

Importance of a Bright Hall or a Ming Tan

- One very important aspect of Feng Shui is the presence of a Bright hall or a Ming Tan.
- This is the area that is in front of the entrance, which is the place where Qi is received.
- (Qi is the form of energy, much like Prana, in our Indian context, that all Feng Shui studies devolve on)
- The Ming Tan should be clean, clear, slightly lower than the floor of the house, and well lit.
- A Ming Tan has the ability to dissipate the most negative Qi and convert it into benevolent, or at least non-harmful Qi.
- Multiple Ming Tans are very beneficial and you see the use of this method widely in Chinese Ancient Tombs.

Feng Shui v/s Vaastu

An age old dilemma

All I can say on this is, both are sound practices, the efficacy of which depends entirely on the skill of the practitioner.

A word of caution, follow one or the other, but do it completely. Trying to combine the two is like making Chinese food with Indian ingredients.

This is because while there are some similarities, certain ideological differences that are so huge, they cannot be resolved by combining both, under any circumstances, and if anyone claims to do BOTH, you have someone who is inexperienced, and should therefore be avoided.

Feng Shui v/s Vaastu Similarities

- Prefer North & East openings
- Kitchens are fine in the South East
- Center should be unobstructed
- Prefers 4 sided regular shapes, as opposed to irregular shaped plots.
- Prefers land sloping down to East & North
- Prefers land raised in West and South
- Considers roads around plots in similar ways to be good/bad.

Feng Shui v/s Vaastu Differences

1. Vaastu Prefers the South West to be high.
 2. They consider the SW to be the “best” position for master bedroom or cabin, this works in only half the properties, which we classify as West Group houses.
 3. Vaastu Prefers the North East to contain water
- This is fine in certain timing in Feng Shui which Vaastu will not take into account.