

SEE INSIDE INSPIRING REAL HOMES

Home Style

DECORATING - SHOPPING - FOOD - MAKING - STYLING

MAY 2024

698 STYLISH IDEAS FOR EVERY ROOM

DECORATING MADE EASY

40

pages of gorgeous real homes & makeovers

10 GENIUS WEEKEND DIYS TO ADD INSTANT PERSONALITY

'We created our beautiful home by breaking all the design rules!'

Stripe up your life!

WIN YOUR NEW BATHROOM

2 lucky readers will each win a stunning £2,700 bathroom suite
Enter inside!



Design the perfect colour palette for your home



Revive your decor with a wave of cool blue hues



Shop designer updates at high street prices

REFRESH FOR LESS

New season switch

DISCOVER THE HOTTEST INTERIORS TRENDS FROM PERIOD SCHEMES TO MODERN MAKEOVERS
PLUS MAKES DISCO BALL MUSHROOMS, WALL FLOWERS & MORE



Banish boring dinners p104

Alright, you're
feeling feelings of
riverbank walks in
knee-high strides
amongst a romp of
friendly otters.

We actually call that **Mallard Green**.



AkzoNobel

IT'S A FEELING



74

Bring *Bridgerton*-style luxury into your bedroom and beyond with our edit of the best royalcore schemes



52

KIRSTIE DUHIG, EDITOR



Get set to switch up **your style**

Welcome to your May issue – it's filled with exciting ideas for the new season, as well as the decorating tips and tricks you need to **bring your design ideas to life**.

Flip to [page 68](#) for our experts' advice on how to **create the perfect colour palette** to suit you and your home.

On [page 62](#) you'll find our **10 affordable DIYs to help you refresh your decor for less** – they're the ideal projects for those bank holiday weekends. And on [page 55](#), discover how to revive your interiors with the shade of the season in our Decorator's Moodboards – from Mediterranean to modern coastal looks, **blue hues will add freshness and a relaxed vibe** to any scheme.

For inspiration on a grand scale, turn to [page 74](#) where we show you how to **bring a touch of *Bridgerton*-era glamour into your home** with our style edit of the enduring royalcore trend. Lady Danbury would approve!

Also in this issue, our three stunning real home tours are bursting with savvy ideas to inspire your next reno. Head to [page 20](#) to explore Katherine's **colourful, retro-inspired revamp**; cover star Louise's eclectic mix of cool Japandi and Art Deco luxe is on [page 32](#) and Lorna's **super-stylish period property refurb** is packed with money-saving hacks over on [page 44](#).

Plus, don't miss your chance to **win a brand new bathroom suite worth over £2,700** on [page 85](#). Good luck and happy decorating!



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Kirstie

PS. Don't miss it

The next issue of *HomeStyle* is on sale 28th May



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PLUS
WIN YOUR NEW BATHROOM!

● Win a brand new bathroom suite worth over £2,700 from Frontline (p85)



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★ ON OUR COVER

FAVE FINDS

Signature stripes

Stripes are *the* pattern of SS24 and these bold pieces will add statement style to any scheme



- 1 Striking stripe ceramic **bowl**, £48, Joe Browns 2 Stripe printed **lampshade** in Blue and Green, £99, houseof 3 Orange striped porcelain **tray**, £18, Joanna Wood 4 Stoneware creamer **jug** in Green stripe, £7.50, Daisy Park 5 Rainbow stripe smiley face beaded **wall art**, £70, Oliver Bonas 6 Multicolour stripe **tumbler glass**, £2.50, Primark 7 Sorbet reverse text **cushion**, £14, Matalan 8 Trevone ceramic **table lamp** in Blue, £125, John Lewis & Partners 9 Signature Luscious Lips two seater **sofa** in Studio Stripe Velvet Sand and Black, £650, Rockett St George x Next
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Feature Kirstie Duhig

HomeStyle

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Shop the high street

Check out our selection of the best bargain buys the high street and web have to offer right now



← Embroidered flower art, £6 for 2

PRIMARK Ditsy prints

Brighten up your bedroom with the latest drop from Primark – the spring range features pretty pastel shades and an array of wildflower designs



← Embossed flower mug, £3

→ Scallop frame, £3.50



↘ Blue throw, £12



↗ Embroidered floral basket, £8

Pink and Blue floral double bedding set, £25, Primark



Style idea
Combine pastel pink and pale blue for this sweet spring look

GET THE LOOK

Scalloped edging is an on-trend look which is showing no signs of going anywhere. Bring it into your bedroom by adding this finish to your bedding, curtains, or even on a rug.

Reversible bedding is an easy way to switch up the look of your bedroom. Simply turn it over to reveal whichever design you're in the mood for! Don't be afraid to pattern clash either – just stick to a tight colour palette for a cohesive look.

Enjoy flowers without having to keep fresh ones alive, by introducing floral prints into your space instead. This could be through fabrics, or with prints on your walls.



← Printed cushions, £10 for 2



→ Flower ceramic diffuser, £6

GET THE LOOK

Create your very own spa-throom by introducing natural textures into the space. A few potted plants and a variety of wooden finishes can help with the transformation.

Enhance your bathroom experience even further by adding calming scents with an array of candles and diffusers. If you need to unwind after a long day, look out for relaxing notes of chamomile, jasmine and eucalyptus.

Keep plenty of cosy towels to hand in your bathroom. Soft shades of blush pink and sage green are popular right now and will look great displayed neatly on a shelf or hung on a towel radiator.



↑ Bathroom rug, £2.50



↗ Wooden diffuser, £9



→ Bodyform faux plant decoration, £3

↓ Gold hand figurine, £2.50



My favourite piece has to be the statement 'face' vase: designer inspired, but at a bargain price.

Holly Mobley, director of general merchandise, Poundland

↗ Faux plant, £4



♥ HOMESTYLE LOVES!

Style idea

Keep colours neutral in your bathroom space for a calm, clean aesthetic



→ Face vase, £2.50



→ Camomile wood wick soy candle, £4



← Rose and jasmine wood wick soy candle, £4

Mini faux plant, 80p; diffuser, £5; large face soap dispenser, £3; product organiser, £2.50; soap dish, £1.50; towels, from 80p each, all Poundland

POUNDLAND Figurative forms

For spa-like style, this collection from Pepco at Poundland is all about creating a bathroom that's good for mind, body and soul – as well as your budget

HABITAT Retro revival

To celebrate the brand's 60th anniversary, Habitat has launched a curated collection with iconic and emerging designers which gives a nod to its past, while celebrating its present and future

→ Twigg oak coat stand, £125

Style idea

Contrast bold hues with pale wooden accents



↑ Yumemi wall shelf in Blue, £20



↑ Ronda embroidered hoop cushion, £20

↳ Ripple multicoloured rug, 120x190cm, £140



The 60 Years of Design collection brings together a historic palette of primary colours, tactility and new materials

Andrew Tanner, head of design, Habitat

Habitat 60 small candle, £8; tall wiggly vase in Orange, £18; medium wiggly vase in Pink, £15; Radica vase with handles, £15; Radica tall vase with wide base, £25; Radica tall cylinder vase, £16; Radica decorative bowl, £20; Yakker sideboard in Oak, £695; Yumemi mirror in Blue, £75; Tuva curved occasional chair, £225, all Habitat



↳ Hana tallboy in Oak, £425

HOMESTYLE LOVES!

→ Klee table lamp, £95

↳ Primario stacking candle holders, £22 for 3



GET THE LOOK

If you're planning a new room scheme, start your colour palette by sticking to the primary colours and pair with neutral, natural tones for a bit of balance.

Much of this collection is influenced by retro designs, particularly those from the Seventies that feature geometric shapes in saturated colours. Look for curved shapes and patterns.

Play around with paint and recreate some of the bold block patterns and line drawings seen in this range – you could use sample pots in your favourite shades to take this look onto your walls.

Meadow wine glasses, £30 for 4;
Meadow champagne flutes, £30
for 4; wipe clean table cloth, from
£32; nibble bowls, £28 for 3;
all Nina Campbell at Next

Curate a collection of beautiful capsule pieces which can be mixed and matched to create a variety of looks

Nina Campbell,
interior designer



NEXT Spring fling

Next has teamed up with renowned designer Nina Campbell for this elegant collection of dinnerware, featuring natural tones, textures and motifs. It's sure to elevate indoor and outdoor tablescape

→ Rosmead
table lamp,
£165



HOME STYLE
LOVES!



→ Meadow dinner
set in Green, £100
for a 12-piece set



→ Napkin rings,
£15 for 4



← Pattern trim
napkins, £18
for 4



↑ Leaf shaped
serving
platter, £20



↑ Batik check cushion, £28



← Debossed
platter, £16



→ Stem
vase, £10

Style idea
Embrace the botanical
trend with plant-
shaped serveware

GET THE LOOK

Bring the outdoors inside by layering botanical prints on your dining table. A seasonal tablecloth will add instant impact, and can be paired with crockery in the same shades to bring the look together.

A little fresh greenery goes a long way to enhance the look and feel of your dining space. A quick and cost-effective way to do this is to cut a few fresh stems from your garden and place in small posy jars along the table.

Setting the table with napkins and napkin rings will really help to refine the overall space – a must if you're hosting family and friends.

→ Get Harry's style

We are just a little bit obsessed with the latest interiors collab between Rockett St George and Next, in particular the Harry's House collection – a kaleidoscope of bright colours, bold pattern, and sassy shapes designed to inject a pop of Harry Styles' exuberant personality into our homes. As well as standout pieces like the Banana side table and Luscious Lips pink velvet sofa, the collection features coloured glassware, maximalist monochrome patterns on cushions, upholstery and bedding, and showy accessories including a statement chandelier in Pantone's hottest shade, Knockout Pink. Flamboyant, fearless and fun, these pieces are sure to boost your mood and your (Harry) style status!



Harry's House Hot Pink chandelier, £540, Rockett St George x Next



Harry's House side table, £145; banana ornament, £16, all Rockett St George x Next



Harry's House Luscious Lips sofa in Harry's Pink velvet, £650; rug, £170, monochrome side table, £250, all Rockett St George x Next

Harry's House cushions, from £25, feather wall light, £100, all Rockett St George x Next



The Wishlist

Welcome to our edit of the latest collections, collaborations and releases. Here's what we're excited about this month...



Water lily and garden rose diffuser, £4.99; Neroli water reactive glaze candle, £5.99; White musk and warm vanilla diffuser, £6.99; Orange blossom and jasmine candle, £3.99; Soft cotton ceramic candle, £4.99, The Range

↑ Sweet seasonal scents

Fill your home with the scents of the season without breaking the bank, thanks to a new home fragrance collection from The Range. These stylish reed diffusers, jar candles and multi-wick candles come in elegant shades of spring yellow, cool green and neutral; the jars themselves can easily be repurposed after use, and with prices starting at just £3.99 for a candle, you can ensure your home is filled with a beautiful aroma day after day. Choose from a selection of uplifting scents including orange blossom and jasmine, and lemon bergamot and basil. therange.co.uk

WE ARE LOVING...

The Happy Blossoms

Whether you gift to a loved one or keep them for yourself, these vibrant, eye-catching dried flower bouquets are just perfect for styling any room of the house with delicate shapes and beautiful colours. Created by a mother-daughter duo based in Dorset, this collection of bouquets will cheer up any corner of the house for the season and beyond, and they're sure to last as long as you need them. thehappyblossoms.com



The Gleeeful Gingham dried flower Baked Blossom bunch, from £42, The Happy Blossoms

BRIGHT GEOMETRIC RUGS

save vs splurge



£45

Villa Geo multi rug, from £44.99, Carpetright



£149

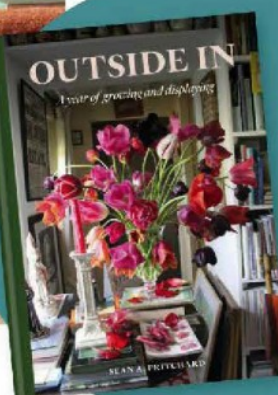
Samba rug, £149, Dunelm

Iconic collab

New this season is a fabulous partnership between Habitat and iconic brand, Scion. Hitting the shelves is an eclectic collection of homeware, lighting and accessories, boasting perfect prints and colourways for a seasonal switch-up. From bedlinen to sweet-smelling home fragrances and tableware, we're loving this Scandi-inspired collection for bringing style and personality to our homes. The collection is available online and at selected Sainsbury's stores, with prices starting at £4 for a mug and £28 for bedlinen. habitat.co.uk and argos.co.uk



Habitat x Scion Family Lohko bedset in Yellow, from £24, Habitat



Blooming marvellous

If you'd love to have displays of beautiful blooms in your home, but aren't quite sure where to start, then take a look at garden designer and RHS medallist Sean A Pritchard's debut book. Season by season, the author shows you how to grow, harvest and arrange your own flowers – no matter the size of your plot – with ease, alongside stunning photography. *Outside In* by Sean A Pritchard, (£30, Mitchell Beazley) is available now.

Designer dupe... Floor-standing mirrors

If you love the look of extravagant floor-standing mirrors, but not the price tag, then check out this latest designer dupe. The effortless chic of a gold, elegantly framed mirror leaning against the wall in a bedroom, living room or even the hallway exudes sophistication and confident styling in a variety of decor schemes. However, large, classical mirrors, such as the beautiful Primrose from Anthropologie, can come with a hefty price that's out of reach, so it's worth looking out for alternative statement pieces. Check out this lookalike arched design from Amazon that's a fraction of the cost – it's definitely going in our basket!

DESIGNER



Gleaming Primrose mirror, large £1,298, Anthropologie

DUPE



WAMIRRO arched mirror, £144.54, Amazon

Feature Lara Berry

Colour crush

Dreamy lilac

Make space to relax with this chilled-out hue that's bang on trend thanks to the 90s revival look



- 1** Claypaint in Lily Lily Rose and Up Up Away, both £57.50 for 2.5L, both Earthborn **2** Matte glaze stoneware dinner set in Lilac, £25 for a 12-piece set, Habitat **3** Safi tumbler glass in Purple, £1.99, Wilko **4** Oasis hand tufted rug in Lilac, from £249, Cult Furniture **5** Double duvet cover set in Purple, £29.99, H&M Home **6** Large fabric rope storage basket in Lilac, £20, Dunelm **7** Lilac Daydream soap dispenser, £6, Matalan **8** Stoneware flowerpot in Lilac, £5.12, Søstrene Grene **9** Sentiments Dream unscented dinner candles, £5 for 4, John Lewis & Partners **10** Lilac Purple artificial flowers in a window box, £35, Next

wren



Luxury for the many

NOT THE FEW



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STYLE INSIDER

Hot lines

Elevate the everyday with this trending texture

Whether it's called ridged, ribbed or reeded, this tactile finish will add much-needed texture to sleek and contemporary spaces, which might otherwise feel a little stark. The clean geometry of these thin, repeating lines is an elegant way to introduce pattern without making your room feel fussy. For a cohesive look, use this effect in more than one area in your space – for example, matching your glassware to the light fittings or cabinetry.



POP IN A PINK-TONED PLANT



- 1** Alfie 800 cabinet with open storage in Reed Green, £776, Scudo Bathrooms
- 2** Aston ribbed glass teardrop pendant, £69, The Cotswold Company
- 3** Ribbed glass highball, £6, John Lewis & Partners
- 4** Ribbed glass tealight holders, 99p each, Home Bargains
- 5** Caleb 4 seat round dining table in Walnut, £549, Cult
- 6** Light Green glass plant mister, £5.99, Gisela Graham
- 7** Ribbed ceramic table lamp, £20, B&M
- 8** Ivyline Athens 10.5cm planter in Pink, £10.99, Happy Houseplants
- 9** Neena bedside table in Grey Wash, £159, Dunelm

Feature Hannah Tribe



Est 1983

Add colour and protection
to your outdoor space

Inside
- Royal
Exterior
China Clay

Outside
- Royal
Exterior
Smoky
Grey



Freshen up
ladder shelf
- Royal
Exterior
Snow

Inside
Stripe
- Royal
Exterior
Clouded
yellow

upcycle old
metal chair
- Royal
Exterior
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Reader homes

Be inspired by this month's gorgeous real homes, packed with stunning ideas to steal!



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CALM & COLLECTED

An extension helped modernise Louise's dream period property

MICHELLE GRADY, HOMES GENIE



Fancy seeing your home here?

Send a snap of yourself in your favourite room to Michelle at homestyle@ourmedia.co.uk.



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SIXTIES STYLE

Mixing new and vintage pieces is key to Katherine's look



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SAVVY RENO

Lorna avoided costly mistakes by trying out paint hacks first

PLUS shop their looks



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SCAN ME
for more real homes inspo at
yourhomestyle.uk



Welcome to my home

A BIT ABOUT ME

I'm Katherine Atkinson, 47, (@theoldforgeincolour on Instagram), and I'm assistant director for the county council. I live with my husband Tom, 47, an electrical engineer, and our children, James, 17, and Charlotte, who's 13.

WHERE I LIVE

My home is a six-bedroom detached house in Maidstone, Kent, built onto the side of an old forge. We've lived here since October 2016.

WHAT I WANTED TO CHANGE

I wanted to make the most of the original features while also showcasing the extended 1960s part of the house.

HOW I MADE IT MY OWN

I love a vintage vibe but don't want my home to feel like an ode to retro living, so I've balanced the look with pieces of sleek, modern furniture.

MY FAVOURITE PART

Our bedroom is my favourite transformation. It feels like the perfect mix of colour and neutrals, modern and vintage, and it's peppered with lots of items that belonged to my mum and my granny.

'Some people are a bit scared of not having sofas against the wall but I love the 1970s sunken conversation pit effect,' says Katherine. 'The vintage coffee table was only £15 from eBay and although it was a little tatty, it just needed a good sanding back and re-varnishing to return it to its former glory'



My story

'I know some people would look around a house that hasn't been done up for years and be horrified, but I saw all the beautiful features and was immediately sold. I particularly loved the beams in the living room and the big 1960s windows, and we all loved the quirky design and layout. As the previous owners had lived here for 28 years, it was ready to have new life breathed into it.

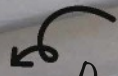
We ripped up the carpets (sadly not revealing any beautiful floorboards!) and took out the old-fashioned fitted wardrobes dominating the bedrooms. I enjoy decorating, so started adding

wallpaper and paint in my favourite colours – yellow, teal and pink – and I also filled the rooms with cushions that I make out of beautiful vintage fabrics.

The house has become more colourful as my confidence in my decorating choices has grown, but lockdown also played a part as we were spending so much longer in the house that I wanted to get more joy from it. We haven't done any major renovations in the bathroom or kitchen yet as I want to strip everything out and start again, which will be a big project. As a quick fix, I've given the kitchen a refresh with bright yellow handles and patterned vinyl, and I've updated our en-suite with new fixtures, fittings and colourful tiles. There's still a way to go, but I love the unique family home that we're creating.'



Feature and styling Lisa Moses Photography Caroline Mardon



Style idea

Dark beams can steal the show so paint them a lighter colour to allow the rest of the room to shine

SUNNY RETRO REVAMP

I GET SO MUCH JOY FROM my colourful home

With her clever blend of vintage and modern design, **Katherine Atkinson** has created a cheerful home full of colour and pattern for an up-to-date twist on Sixties style

I love a pink and yellow palette with accents of teal, and that's the thread you see running throughout my home,

Living room

'We bricked up an alcove where the yellow console table now is and I painted the beams a soft grey. They were black before, which felt too oppressive, but I still wanted to highlight them. I also wanted to include some patterned floral wallpaper in my scheme, but without being too chintzy. This design, called Alice from Mini Moderns, is the perfect balance between modern and retro. I love a pink and yellow palette so painted the rest of the walls in Calamine by Farrow & Ball, which complements the wallpaper beautifully. I wanted to sit on the new sofas and touch the fabric before we bought them, so we waited until the shops had re-opened after lockdown before replacing our old grey sofas. I love contrasting textures, so ended up choosing the same DFS sofa design but in two different colourways and fabrics.'

This was a tricky space to fill as it's near the under-stair cupboard and the kitchen door, but after a lot of research Katherine found a desk to act as the occasional work-from-home spot



Katherine likes to buy vintage curtains and make them into cushion covers, 'though it can be a challenge to cut the fabric to get the perfect part of the pattern in the middle of the cushion,' she says. 'I was never that happy with the console so painted the drawers and replaced the handles with round, retro knobs and now I absolutely love it'



'I ordered a circular piece of pre-cut MDF and painted it yellow to display the small ceramic vintage flowers as they would've got lost on the wall otherwise'

STEAL MY STYLE

Get Katherine's modern-retro look with these finds

→ Floral embroidered tapered lamp shade, £18, Dunelm



↑ Flower ceramic pot, £4.50, Primark

✓ Natural Bloom daisy woven placemats, £6 for 2, B&M



↑ Modern Geometrics poster, from £15.95, Poster Store

↑ Waves cushion, £40, Effortless Trading Co



Katherine felt this wall was the perfect spot for a vintage sideboard and spent a long time keeping an eye out for one the right length. 'There's lots of colour and pattern in here, but keeping the walls white helps it feel curated rather than chaotic,' she says



Conservatory

'This was always going to be a formal dining room, rather than just a conservatory, because it's got French doors out to the garden so it's perfect for entertaining, especially in summer. We had to replace the whole roof as originally it was corrugated plastic and, as well as being incredibly noisy, it constantly leaked. I painted the brickwork in white and because it's quite a large expanse, I gradually created the fun 3D gallery wall, using plants, wooden masks and macramé art. I put colourful tiles on the ledge around the room as a low-maintenance surface to house my plants and then painted the arch through to the living room to link the two spaces and make a colourful statement.'

make this
Disco ball mushrooms
p31



'I love a gallery wall. It's a classic way to display prints, but I also like to have fun with it and include a few things that aren't pictures to add variety. I change this wall up every now and then to bring in new items'

'I thought I'd need two strips of vinyl to cover the front of the worktop but Faye Jennifer made me a bespoke-size sheet so I didn't need to worry about joins, and it's a thick material so was easy to apply,' explains Katherine. The table was from Habitat and the chairs are a budget copy of French Tolix chairs

Style idea
Make a style statement with a brightly-coloured fridge freezer

Kitchen-diner

'These are the original kitchen cupboards and layout from when we moved in, apart from a wall cupboard on the right, which we ripped out – it made the room feel enclosed and I already had my eye on the colourful Amica fridge freezer to take its place. The tiles were black, so I refreshed them with a lick of white tile paint and then replaced all the handles with yellow ones. I also replaced the window blind, which was originally an ugly, vertical office-style design. I didn't want to paint the front of the peninsula as I was worried about knocks and chips in a high-traffic area, so sourcing the vinyl from Faye Jennifer was a game-changer. It's completely elevated the look of the old-fashioned cupboards, and the pattern and colour combo of teal and yellow is a thread running through my home.'

'Painting the tiles and adding yellow handles to the cupboards has made a big difference compared to the cost and time it took to do it!'



EXPERT ADVICE

How to add a copper leaf stripe

Add metallic sheen to your scheme with copper leaf, as Katherine has done on her office walls (page 27). You can use the same technique on furniture and accessories, too

- Start by marking out where you want your stripe to be on your wall using a spirit level, metal tape measure and pencil. Try a large stripe across the middle of the wall to make a bold impact, like Katherine, or play with different height levels to change the look – a thinner stripe further up the wall will help to make your ceiling feel higher, while a lower stripe will give you more space for artwork above.

- You'll need copper leaf, adhesive size, clear sealant or top coat, and a soft paintbrush, plus sandpaper, painter's tape, cotton gloves, a clean cloth, and a dust sheet. Lay out the dust sheet and sand down the area, then wipe with a damp cloth and dry off. Depending on the condition of the wall you're applying the leaf to, you can paint a layer of emulsion or primer as a base, then sand it down as above.

- Next, apply painter's tape all the way along the edges of your stripe, then apply the size in an even coat to your stripe using a paintbrush. Then, you need to wait for the size to become tacky. It should feel sticky, but shouldn't be wet or come away when you touch it. However, if the size is too dry then the copper leaf will not stick to it, so keep checking on it while you wait.

- Once the size is tacky, you're ready to add the copper leaf. Remove the copper leaf from the paper and press it against the surface in position. Then brush it gently in place, and continue carefully brushing to dust off any excess. Continue until you've filled your stripe with copper leaf, then seal it with a clear top coat or sealant for longevity, and carefully remove the tape.



Affordable scaffold board shelves give Katherine a useful place to display charity shop finds – as well as an opportunity to add a pop of her signature shades

Katherine taught herself to wallpaper when decorating this house: 'Although this is only half a wall, because of the brick of the fireplace, it was a bit tricky around the corners.' The vintage fireguard was an £8 bargain from Facebook Marketplace

shop
Retro
florals
p30



Upstairs lounge

'This was the grimmest room in the house as it had a green shagpile carpet, and when we ripped it up there was a black tidemark around the skirting board, but I knew it would be the perfect space for an informal lounge. Our friends assumed we'd rip out the fireplace but it's original to the house and, although it takes up a lot of wall space, it's a cool focal point. I originally painted the walls soft grey, but combined with the grey carpet the room needed some colour, and I felt it was big enough to take a bit of drama, so I wallpapered above the fire with this retro design from Lust Home. I wanted to find some stylish bookcases for all of Thomas' books but they needed to be really solid, so I sourced some from John Lewis and they fit perfectly.'

I do love a rummage around the charity shop. I never spend too much money but I always find something unique,



Office

'Pre-lockdown, this was my craft room, and I designed it without carpet so that I can see pins and thread if I drop them. I chose a large trestle table with space to cut fabric and, although we have loads of bookshelves around the house, I wanted one in here to have my own art and interiors books to hand, and it also displays my collection of turquoise pottery. I had the idea of adding a copper band around the room as a feature, so I masked off the design, painted it with glue and then painstakingly rubbed the copper squares onto the wall. I wanted to paint the ceiling a colour that would complement the copper and finally chose Barcelona by Graham & Brown. Then, during lockdown, this became my office, so I bought a decent office chair that was comfortable as well as colourful!'



'I wanted storage for the kids' DVDs and loved this cabinet with its nod to vintage design, so I contacted the sellers, Vincent and Barn, before I bought it and they sent photos of them putting DVDs in the drawers, so I knew they'd fit'



'Painted ceilings are my current favourite thing as they really help bring a room together, and I firmly believe that it's another surface that shouldn't be forgotten about'



'The vintage coffee table came from a local furniture charity warehouse and when we lifted it up we realised it was a cutlery holder and still has all the spaces to hold silverware,' says Katherine. The cushions are made from Sanderson fabric



The glass-fronted bookcase is a vintage Danish rosewood cabinet but, like the sideboard in the conservatory, Katherine had to be very specific about the exact size for it to fit. The armchair was from Argos and the marble table was from West Elm

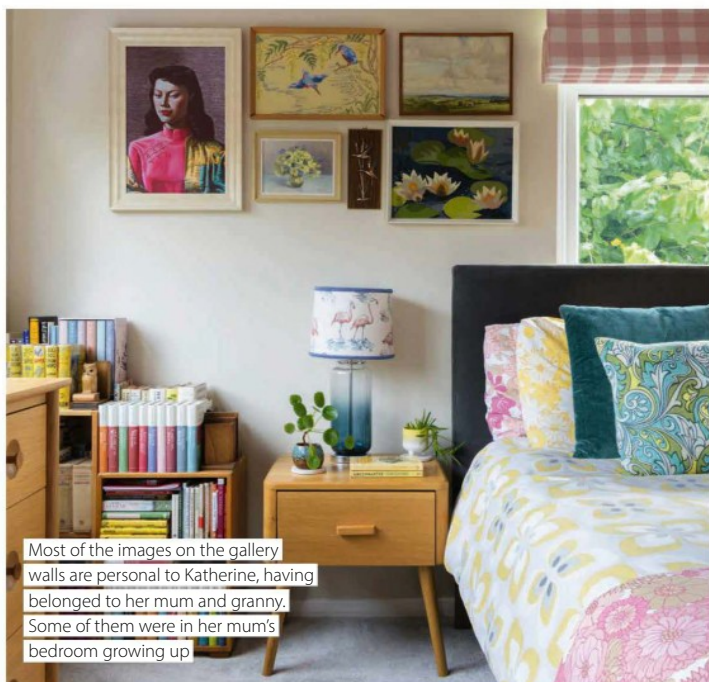


Style idea

Gallery walls aren't just for the living room, create one on either side of the bed for symmetry

Main bedroom

'We ripped out the dated fitted wardrobes, stripped off the peeling wallpaper and replaced the peach carpets with a neutral light grey throughout the whole upstairs as a timeless choice. I'd already painted the en-suite ceiling and loved the look, so I decided to follow it though into here. But despite being a colour lover I wanted a chilled, calm vibe in the bedroom so chose a relaxing, soft pink called Ballerina Dance, which was the closest match I could find to the pink tiles in the en-suite, and I complemented it with Natural Hessian on the walls, both by Dulux. I wanted to free up the longest wall for new wardrobes so moved the bed under the window, which some people find controversial, but I love it there. I've mixed my favourite vintage florals and pictures with mainly modern furniture and a pair of cute pink gingham blinds.'



Most of the images on the gallery walls are personal to Katherine, having belonged to her mum and granny. Some of them were in her mum's bedroom growing up

↑ 'I originally had a really dark grey wall with curtains but it felt a bit fussy so I've recently changed them for the pink gingham blinds, from Blinds 2go, which make the room feel less cluttered,' explains Katherine

→ En-suite

'I wanted the en-suite to feel as lovely as our bedroom, so I had a plan to add my trademark colour scheme of pink, teal and yellow to inject the personality it lacked. We ripped out the bland suite, but the plumber kept finding DIY plumbing problems the previous owners had left, so the makeover took longer than anticipated. But I'd already spotted the patterned floor tiles which became the starting point for the scheme, and I wanted to contrast them with a pink metro tile. I sourced these matt ones from Topps Tiles, which I think look more contemporary than gloss ones. We replaced the dated quadrant shower with an easier-to-use square one and installed a curved, floating vanity unit to make the room feel bigger. The finishing touch was painting the ceiling yellow, which feels like the sun is shining on me when I'm having a shower.'

← Katherine is drawn to vintage florals, especially from the 1960s and 70s: 'I love the colours, the style and the nostalgia, and often find that I dress in them, too. I've incorporated vintage pieces and upcycles into my home, but also quite a few family keepsakes that mean a lot to me. They bring back lots of lovely memories'

↓ Charlotte's bedroom

'We cleared the room of all the up-and-over fitted furniture, which completely overwhelmed the small space, and originally gave it a soft dove grey and baby pink paint job. But recently Charlotte asked for a room that felt more grown up so she gave me a brief. She wanted more natural, earthy colours with a boho vibe, and I felt the room needed some interest, so we decided on a colour-blocked wall. We chose Natural Hessian by Dulux for the top to make the room feel bigger, and Sulking Room Pink by Farrow & Ball for the bottom half, which adds warmth and colour. I'd already invested in classic furniture like the cast iron bed, so it was then just a case of updating the accessories by adding framed film posters, a classic Berber rug and some fun pompoms around the top of the walls.'

'I wouldn't want the whole room painted in Sulking Room Pink as it can look quite brown in certain lights, but using the paint effect works with the soft white to give the room the boho vibe Charlotte wanted. I made the bedside lampshade and sprayed the picture frames to complement the colours in the room'



TURN OVER
to shop Katherine's retro look →



What I learned

- Fresh flowers are a household essential! I love how quickly and cheaply they cheer up a space and in winter they're a reminder of all the colour that will return to our gardens in spring.
- There's always a lot of debate about gallery walls: are they still 'in'? How should you arrange them? Random or uniform? But for me, the truth is that you should simply do what makes you happy.
- Soft furnishings are a colour lover's friend and are easily added on a budget – rugs, cushions, blinds and throws all bring a room together, and even a cheap print can change the look and feel of a space.



The colourful portrait prints are from Margo McDaid (@margoinmargate) and complement Katherine's colour palette

SHOP THE LOOK

Retro blooms

Make your home blooming beautiful with these Sixties and Seventies-inspired floral motifs, and recreate **Katherine's** look



- 1 MissPrint dandelion **tea pot**, £40, Pure Table Top
- 2 Kransmalva **duvet cover** and 2 **pillowcases**, £25, IKEA
- 3 Day Dreamer **wallpaper** in Mustard and Candy Floss on Gluten Free, £50 per roll, Lust Home
- 4 Pastel Power standard **vinyl**, £24 for 1m, Faye Jennifer Vinyl Design
- 5 Retro floral runner **bath mat**, £30, Urban Outfitters
- 6 Orla Kiely Rose small **sofa** in Retro Tile Candy, £1,319, Barker & Stonehouse
- 7 Retro floral **print** in Mint and Coral, from £8, Violet and Alfie
- 8 heya home flower velvet reversible **cushion** in Yellow, £17, furn.
- 9 Orla Kiely Juniper Stem ceramic **table lamp** in Light Pink, £75, John Lewis & Partners
- 10 Heart and Soul floral **throw**, £30, Dunelm
- 11 **Napkins** set, £5.99 for 4, TK Maxx

MAKE THE LOOK

Disco ball mushrooms

Add sparkle to a sideboard display, like **Katherine**, with these funky fungi

Once you've got the hang of this project, you can create several different sized mushrooms to arrange together



TOP TIPS

Applying the self-adhesive vinyl first means that any gaps in the mirror tiles won't show up as easily. Gently flex the mirror tile strips before sticking down

YOU WILL NEED

- craft knife ● Styrofoam cone
- holographic silver glitter self-adhesive vinyl ● pencil ● round dinner plate ● Styrofoam hemisphere (or sphere cut in half) ● 5x5mm self-adhesive square mirror tiles ● scissors ● cocktail sticks ● super glue

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Use a craft knife to slice the top few centimetres off the Styrofoam cone to create a flat surface.

2 Place a sheet of self-adhesive vinyl backing side-up on your work surface. Use a pencil to trace around a dinner plate to create a circle. This will be used to cover the base of the hemisphere and wrap up, so it needs to be bigger in circumference than the Styrofoam hemisphere.

3 Cut out the circle from the self-adhesive vinyl using a pair of sharp scissors or a craft knife. Next, cut slits into the edges of the circle to make it easier to manipulate.

4 Carefully peel away the backing paper from the vinyl and cover the hemisphere. Mark and cut out a smaller circle for the top of the hemisphere, then repeat step 3. Cover the cone in the vinyl – this will form the stem of the mushroom.

5 Use scissors to cut the square mirror tiles into strips to make them more manageable to work with. Working with one strip at a time, cover the entire hemisphere with the mirror tiles. Start at the bottom and press them firmly into position as you work. Repeat this process to cover the cone.

6 To assemble, insert three or four cocktail sticks into the top part of the cone, leaving at least 2cm sticking out. Apply some super glue, then press the flat side of the hemisphere on top to create a mushroom.

'I love having the dining table by the bi-fold doors so we can enjoy the garden when we're eating,' says Louise. 'In the summer we open them up fully to bring the outside in. We chose a charcoal colour for the doors to match the kitchen island'



SHABBY TO CHIC REDO

EACH ROOM FEELS DIFFERENT AS I LIKE TO **mix and match**

With a blend of Art Deco luxe, cool Japandi and breezy Mediterranean, each part of **Louise Landry's** home has been designed with a calming vibe in mind



Welcome to my home

A BIT ABOUT ME

I'm Louise Landry, 36, and I live with my partner Daniel, 35, a painter and decorator, our daughters Bella Crosbie, 10, and Ofelia Berry, three, and our British shorthair cat, Yogi. I work part-time at Penhaligon's perfume shop and have a home styling business.

WHERE I LIVE

A three-bedroom Edwardian semi-detached house in Formby, Merseyside, which we bought in June 2021. You can see more of my home on Instagram @altcar_edwardian_renovation.

WHAT I WANTED TO CHANGE

It hadn't been updated for decades, there was no bathroom upstairs and the kitchen was tiny.

HOW I MADE IT MY OWN

I wanted every room to have a different feel but there's a brass thread that runs throughout the house and a real mix of old and new.

MY FAVOURITE PART

The front living room, which we call the snug. I just love the high ceilings and the shutters. It's so cosy in the evenings with a glass of wine and the fire on. We live mainly in the open-plan room so it's the one space where the kids don't go and there are no messy toys.



My story

'When our daughter Ofelia came along, we soon outgrew our three-bed semi in Huyton, Liverpool. I'd bought the new-build property as a single mum in my early 20s with an inheritance from my sister who passed away, but my lifelong dream was to own a period property. Formby, on the outskirts of Liverpool, ticked so many boxes as it's by the beach and woods, but not too far from the city.

This house had sat empty for seven years after the owner passed away, but it had a wonderful feel and I just fell in love with it. When they finally traced a distant relative who inherited it, we were able to

make an offer. Over 14 months, the whole house was taken back to brick while we stayed in our previous home. Daniel's family have a building firm, (@cbconstruction0495 on Instagram), so they built a two-storey extension to create an open-plan kitchen-diner and family room with an extra bedroom above.

Although we came up with the design and layout, we had lots of help from the Instagram community. My sister, Marcelle, was another sounding board – we're always sharing ideas. I wanted each room to have a calm and relaxing feel. There's definitely a Scandi and Japandi influence in the open-plan areas, while the living room is more Art Deco-inspired and our bedroom has a Mediterranean vibe. I love how these different styles give us the best of all worlds.'



Feature Karen Wilson Photos Katie Lee

Kitchen

'I knew I wanted a kitchen with a floating shelf where I could display accessories. Quartz worktops and gold handles were also on my wishlist. For the kitchen cupboards, I've gone for a very light grey as a neutral colour will go with anything, but I did want the island to stand out a bit more so chose a slightly darker charcoal colour to contrast. It was between Howdens and DIY Kitchens in the end. They were both a similar price, but we chose Howdens as they come out to measure up and there's a depot nearby if there are any problems.'

I really wanted the open-plan space in the new extension to have a contemporary Scandi feel

↓ 'I wanted the extractor fan hidden, so we had it boxed in and painted the same colour as the shelf so it all blends in. The wall lights from Pagazzi create a sense of symmetry,' says Louise. 'My kitchen's quite small with a minimal feel, but there's lots more cupboard space in the utility room along with my washer and dryer.'



shop
Black and gold accents
p40

'The designer at Howdens drew a layout with a peninsula at first, but I felt an island with three bar stools underneath would look better. I found the perfect ones from Nordic Nest'

'The artwork took a little while to find but I eventually discovered a lovely artist called Zarefa Azezi on Instagram (@jvqqx) who created these prints called Sister Duo. They're similar but slightly different and the colours really work with the room. As I'm very close to my sister and have two daughters, it felt quite apt'



Dining area

'It took me months and months to find the right dining table for this space. We even brought the garden table inside for a while. Eventually I came across this one at Tikamoon. It really stood out and I liked the curved shape. If we've got more people around for dinner, we can pull the little bench up and put the other two chairs at the ends. We're lucky to have a south facing garden off this space, although it was pretty wild and neglected when we bought the house, and then the renovation turned it into a building site full of rubble. Since then we've laid a grass lawn and porcelain patio which has transformed the way we live – and next year I want to add a raised deck. We still get daily visits from the two peacocks who were living in the garden when we bought the house!'

↓ 'We got the corner sofa from IKEA, but I regret the light colour now with two young children,' says Louise. 'I wish I'd gone for something darker as it's usually covered in throws to protect it from stains. The ceiling light from John Lewis works well with the black and white photos of family holidays.'



Living area

'I really wanted the open-plan space in the new extension to have a more contemporary Scandi feel. We've kept the walls an off-white called Steamed Milk by Rust-Oleum but painted the door to the hall black to link with the kitchen island and bi-fold doors. It's a lovely warm space in summer, but the underfloor heating is great in winter. The one regret I have is dropping the ceiling height in this part to make it the same as the new kitchen. I think it would've looked better higher, but we had to make a quick decision and it was easier to do.'

'This room was empty for a while before we started buying furniture. I wanted to bring some colour in so chose a teal blue sofa from Wayfair, along with the marble and brass coffee table from Next for a lighter contrast. I love the bolster-style cushions on the sides of the sofa and it's really comfy'



Snug

'This is a little relaxing sanctuary for Daniel and I to enjoy in the evenings when the kids are in bed. I wanted to give the original part of the house – the living room and front bedroom – an edgy Art Deco kind of vibe with a moody palette. To restore it to its former glory, we invested in sash windows from Elmsley Curtains and Blinds for all the front windows and added sills to replicate the original ones. We also re-instated the picture rail to complement the original coving, installed a reclaimed fire surround and put panelling up around the bay window and in the alcoves. At first we went for navy walls but I didn't like it. Instead we chose Charcoal by Rust-Oleum with white above the picture rail to give it a bit of a vintage feel. Daniel is a painter and decorator (@berrydecorating) so he wasn't happy about painting it twice, but he loves the new look now and it helps the TV above the fireplace to blend in.'

EXPERT ADVICE

How to get a neat paint line

- If you want a two-tone wall – for instance a dark shade on the bottom two thirds and a light colour on the top third – you can achieve a crisp straight line even without a picture rail.
- Paint two or three coats of the lighter colour first across the whole wall. Once dry, use a measuring tape and pencil to mark dots along the wall the same distance from the ceiling. A ruler with an in-built spirit level will help you join up the dots and draw the line across the wall.
- Apply masking tape flush above your pencil line, rubbing out any air bubbles carefully. To prevent the second paint colour bleeding through, a top tip is to paint over the masking tape in the original lighter colour first. This creates a seal, so any paint that does bleed through effectively matches the existing paint. Then let it dry before putting your darker paint colour over the bottom half up to the masking tape. Remove the tape when your final coat is still wet for a perfect crisp line.
- For cutting in, pick a two- or three-inch brush. Synthetic bristles are better with water-based matt emulsion paints as they won't absorb too much water and swell up, which sometimes results in tramlines. A natural brush is better for woodwork when you're using oil-based paints and is less likely to leave bristle marks.

'Victorian-style radiators were so important to complete the look. Modern radiators just wouldn't have looked right. The chair and deer canvas are both from Homesense'



'I chose antique brass accessories for a glam look, like this drinks trolley from Homesense. The shutters and large vintage-style rug (from Zara) have that Parisian vibe I was after'



STEAL MY STYLE

Get Louise's chic look with these buys



→ Green small artificial olive tree in concrete pot, £32, Next

↓ Michelle Keegan Home Black abstract candle holders, £30 for 2, Very



↑ White scalloped nibble bowl, £3, Matalan

→ Etta hand woven jute rug, from £189, Cult



↑ Louise loves mixing old and new styles, like the IKEA dressing table which is teamed with an ornate brass mirror from Zara Home and a Homesense rattan chair.

↓ The couple chose a light carpet in a similar shade to the walls for an all-over colour drench feel, and have picked a simple brass bedside table from Zara Home and lampshade from Dunelm. 'We weren't intending to have no headboard, but we broke it when we were moving house,' says Louise. 'I thought about getting another one, but then I started to like it without as it has that villa kind of feel!'



Main bedroom

'I wanted this room to be minimalist with very little furniture and have given it a light and airy Mediterranean feel. It's south facing, so the limewash works really well when the sun shines on it. Lightweight voiles create that holiday vibe, but there's also a blackout blind for practicality. All our wardrobes are in the front bedroom, as we were originally going to have that larger room as our main bedroom. However, we moved in here when the extension was done and Ofelia moved into the front bedroom. I love that it's quieter at the back and we're a bit away from the children.

It feels like having your own hotel suite as we're right by the bathroom.'

'I knew instantly when I saw the Zara Home ceiling light that it would be perfect. It's made from cardboard but looks like stone'



Ofelia's bedroom

'This was going to be our bedroom, then we thought it might be a guest bedroom and the two girls would share the middle bedroom. However, it wouldn't work when one's a teenager and the other one's a toddler.

It's the biggest bedroom so it made sense to have built-in wardrobes in here, but we had to move the entrance door slightly to fit them across one wall. The original coving and ceiling rose were gone so those were re-instated. Then we found a reclaimed fireplace on Facebook Marketplace and put up feature panelling behind the bed to complete the period look. Ofelia has a double bed, which is handy if she wakes up in the night and needs soothing, but it also suits the space better as a smaller bed would look a bit lost.'

'Daniel and I have always loved green so really wanted one fully green room somewhere,' says Louise. 'We picked Green Smoke by Farrow & Ball, which suits the Edwardian era of the house and painted all the skirting boards and doors the same.'

Ofelia loves her play tent from Amazon, where she can play with all her soft toys. The flowers on the wall are from Etsy and the hearth tiles are from Topps Tiles



make this
Paper flower decorations
p41



TURN OVER
to shop Louise's
luxurious
look →



'I've always dreamt of having a luxurious freestanding bath and I chose a clean-lined design from Victorian Plumbing rather than a traditional clawfoot, as I wanted a more contemporary style. The rattan light from JYSK is perfect for the Japandi feel I wanted to create'

Bathroom

'I'm really glad we turned this tiny box room into a bathroom and raised the sloping roof to make it feel bigger. With the window being so big, I wanted a freestanding bath right under it and there was enough room for a walk-in shower behind the door too. I'd always envisaged a Japandi look with a spa feel, so we used a Bauwerk limewash paint on the walls and ceiling. Looking back, I wish we'd gone for white tiles behind the sink and bath though, as the limewash isn't wipeable and you can see splash marks.'

What I learned

- During the reno, we lived half an hour away and weren't on site that much. If I ever do another project, I'd visit the site more often to make sure I pick up on small details.
- Matt black bathroom fittings are a nightmare to clean. My friend Jade, who has her own cleaning business (@cleaningwithjade), did warn me but I didn't listen as I really wanted that look.
- You can't rush things. I wanted everything done before we moved in and the kids started school, but it just wasn't possible. It'll look better if you take your time deciding on the finishes.

SHOP THE LOOK

Black and gold

Add luxury to a Japandi or Scandi scheme with accents of gold and marble, as **Louise** has done



- 1 Black asymmetric wall mirror, £40, Habitat 2 Hennock ceiling light in Brass, £84, BHS 3 White marble ridge plate, £12.99, Homesense 4 Unwind reed diffuser, £5, B&M 5 Gold Valencia bar trolley, £160, Next 6 Michelle Keegan Home Cortes ceramic top coffee table, £299, Very 7 Pleated-shade table lamp in Gold-coloured/White, £84.99, H&M Home 8 Perfect Palm candle holder, £35, Joe Browns 9 Dwell Cade dining set table and 4 chairs in Cosma Black, £1,499, DFS 10 Natural marble soap dish, £2.50, B&M

MAKE THE LOOK

Paper wall flowers

Craft a cluster of paper flowers in your favourite shades for a pretty 3D wall display, like **Louise's**



Use different coloured card to recreate specific types of flowers, such as peonies or poppies

TOP TIP
Create the petal templates on design software and print out if you're making a group



YOU WILL NEED

- stiff scrap card ● lightweight (176gsm) coloured card ● pencil
- scissors or craft knife ● glue gun ● wooden spoon

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Begin by making the templates for the flower petals from scrap card – an old cereal box is ideal. Make your petal-shaped templates to the following measurements, with a curved edge at the top and the sides tapering down to a straight edge at the bottom: extra large petal 19x25.5cm; large petal 14x19.5cm; medium petal 10x13.5cm; small petal 7.5x10.5cm; extra small petal 6.5x9.5cm. You can scale these measurements down to make smaller flowers.

2 Lay your templates on the coloured card and trace lightly around them using a pencil. Draw out the following number of petals for each size: 6-8 extra large (first layer); 6-8 large (second layer); 6-7 medium (third layer); 6 small (fourth layer); 5-6 extra small (fifth layer), then cut them out.

3 To add depth to the petals, cut a 4cm vertical slit at the bottom centre of each one (slightly less on the smaller petals). Starting with the first layer, put glue on the inside edge and overlap the slit, but not too much or your petals will be too tight when assembled. Repeat with each petal, overlapping more on the smallest ones.

4 Gently curl the tops of the petals back by rolling them over the handle of a wooden spoon or similar.

5 Starting with your first layer of base petals, add some glue to the outer edge of one petal and proceed to overlap another petal at about a 45 degree angle and press firmly for a second or two. Continue until all the base petals meet together to form a circle in the centre of the flower. Keep an eye on the angle of placement as you go around, making sure you leave enough space for the petals to come together evenly to form a circle.

6 Cut a small circle of card and glue it to the back of the flower in the centre to cover the ends. Now keep adding layers of petals. Start the second layer alternating between the base petals. Continue alternating petals adding the third, fourth and fifth layers.

7 To create the centre pom pom for your flower, fold an A4 sheet of card in half lengthwise and cut down this fold. Lay the two pieces on top one another and fold in half lengthwise again. Cut slits every 5mm along the unfolded edge of the card, leaving 1.5cm uncut at the folded edge. Separate the two pieces but do not unfold.

8 Holding the folded edge, roll up the first piece of card, adding glue along the uncut edge as you go. Continue by adding on the next piece. Finish by gluing the pom-pom to the centre of your paper flower and, once dry and secure, carefully fluff it open with your fingers.

Make Anna-Lisa DeAth Photo Katie Lee

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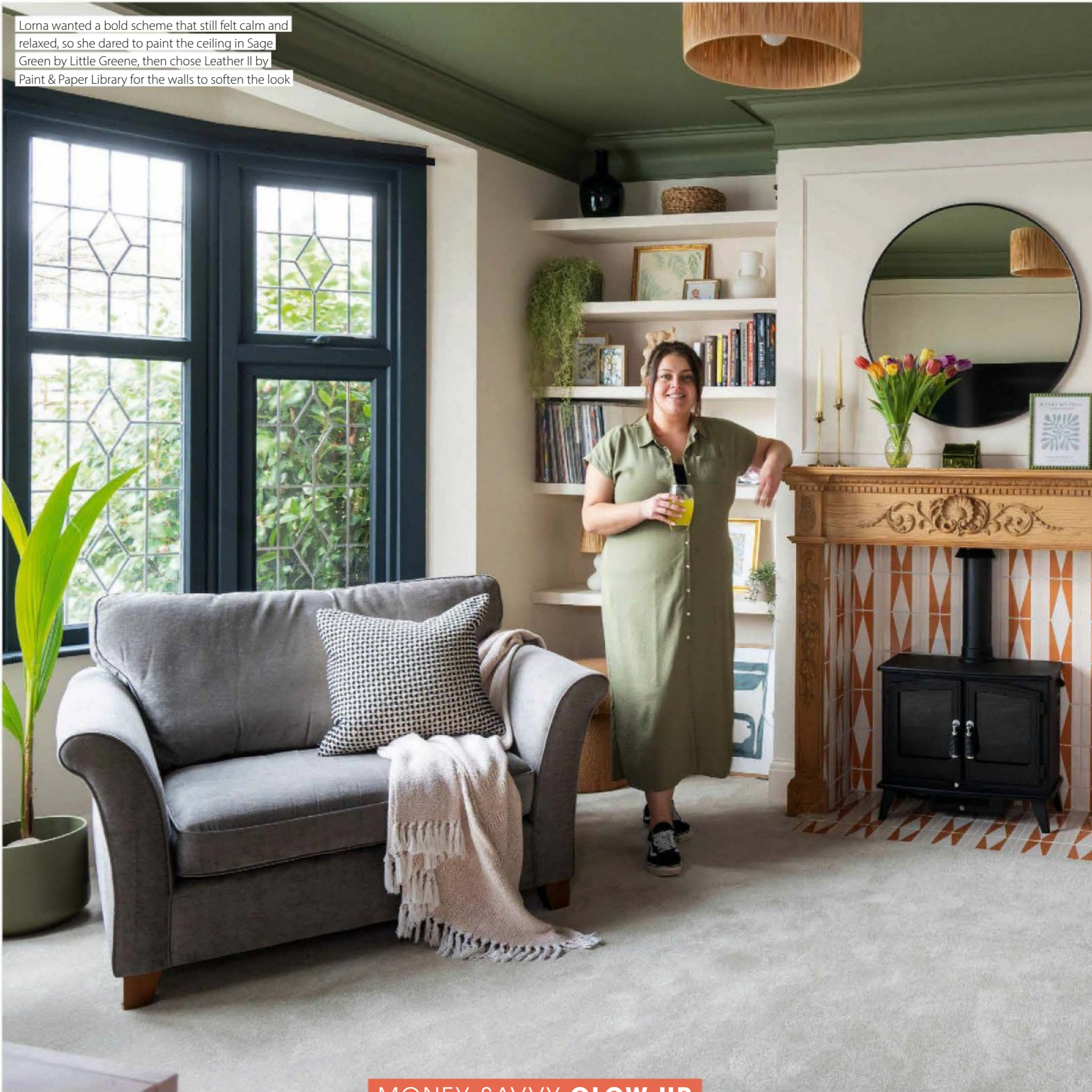


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Lorna wanted a bold scheme that still felt calm and relaxed, so she dared to paint the ceiling in Sage Green by Little Greene, then chose Leather II by Paint & Paper Library for the walls to soften the look



MONEY-SAVVY GLOW UP

IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH a splash of paint

Lorna McMahon didn't want to wait for a costly extension to spruce up her 1930s home, so she got the paintbrushes out and transformed the space with clever ideas



Welcome to my home

A BIT ABOUT ME

I'm Lorna McMahon, 33, a bank manager, and I share my interiors on Instagram @atthemacs. I live here with my husband Rob, 36, a plasterer, and our three year old son, Henry.

WHERE I LIVE

We've lived in our five bed, 1930s detached house in Shoeburyness in Essex since October 2021.

WHAT I WANTED TO CHANGE

When we moved into this house, our plan was to renovate it from top to bottom, eventually replacing the bathroom and building a new kitchen extension. We couldn't afford to do the building work straight away, so in the short term I decided to makeover the most-used rooms to turn them into a family-friendly space that we could enjoy.

HOW I MADE IT MY OWN

We tackled most of the projects ourselves, and our weekends were spent installing new coving, plastering walls, and ripping up the old carpets. Rob tackled the damp issue in the main bedroom shortly after moving in, while I gave the rooms a glow up using paint, wallpaper and accessories. It's taken time for this house to feel like home to us, but now it reflects our style and tastes.

MY FAVOURITE PART

The living room because it's decorated in calming shades. It's the perfect place to relax in.



Style idea
Create drama with an unexpected burst of colour on the ceiling

Living room

'Last October, we embarked on a lengthy renovation of this room. I took a risk by painting our ceiling in green and was apprehensive at first, but now I absolutely love the cosy feeling the colour brings to the room. We installed wall panelling, then painted the walls the same tone as the upstairs rooms. Our biggest change was opening up the fireplace to make it a focal point, and installing an electric stove. I found the wooden surround on Facebook Marketplace for £40. Inside the hearth, I installed tiles with a retro orange design from Walls and Floors. Rob built custom shelving and I sourced vintage furniture for the room alongside a sofa from Cozmo, which I love because it has changeable upholstery covers.'

My story

'When we started house hunting, my husband and I were looking for a refurbished home, but fate had different plans! We stumbled upon this fixer-upper property online, and as soon as I saw it, I could picture our future here. It wasn't our plan to take on a huge renovation, especially as I had a newborn at the time, but life has a funny way of surprising us sometimes!

The untouched decor was a blast from the past. Every wall was covered with 1980s wallpaper and the wooden units in the kitchen had been painted with white emulsion, which looked scuffed and awful as it was the wrong type of paint. There were also

hedgehog-patterned tiles on the walls, so we called it the 'Tiggy-Winkle room', after the hedgehog in Beatrix Potter's story! There was an old extension at the back that needed attention, and the upstairs layout needed to be re-jigged. We also had a damp problem in the main bedroom.

We're still saving to do the kitchen extension and a bathroom reno, but in the meantime I've been able to test out decorating ideas and colour schemes in the other rooms. Along the way, we've uncovered hidden fireplaces behind bricked-up walls, added bespoke radiators and made our own plaster coving.

Our home is a testament to all our hard work. This house is our dream home and I love that each room now reflects our personality.'



Feature Maxine Brady Photography David Giles



The faux foliage in Lorna's arrangement is from The Range and the placemats are from Dunelm



This dining table was given to Lorna by her father-in-law, who replaced the glass top with a solid piece of granite, and Lorna found coordinating chairs in Next. The walls were previously painted in a peachy shade which she repainted in GoodHome Ballina from B&Q on the lower half of the wall and fireplace, and Natural Hessian by Dulux on the top half

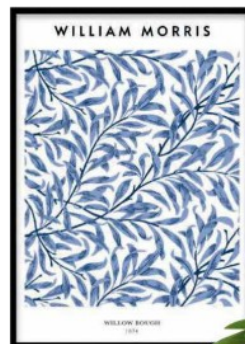
This home is a testament to our hard work. This house is our dream home and I love that each room now reflects our personality



Lorna hopes to teach Henry how to play the piano when he grows up. For now, it also serves as a display piece for a couple of Lorna's prints and accessories

STEAL MY STYLE

Get Lorna's colourful yet calm look with these buys



← William Morris Bough No2 poster, from £10.95, Desenio

↓ Luana boucle geo cushion, £10, B&M



↑ Arc Lemon tiles, £4.50 each, Decorum Tiles

→ Artificial Chinese money plant in monochrome pot, £14, Next



→ Marmalade Rene Pick n' Mix gloss tiles, £31.95 per sq m, Walls and Floors





The curved archway is an original feature of the house and helps to separate the dining room from the snug area where the family watch TV

Living room-diner

'We plan to knock down an internal wall in the dining room as part of our bigger kitchen renovation plans, but decided to give the room a mini freshen-up in the short term. My husband argued against stripping the walls in case huge chunks of the plaster came off with the wallpaper. And, despite my curiosity about what lay beneath the cladded ceiling, we decided to leave it untouched as we feared the unknown!

Instead, I painted over the original wallpaper in calming cream and green as a temporary makeover. To create distinct areas within the open-plan room, I painted the walls green up to dado rail height. Fortunately, the engineered oak flooring was in great shape. I scoured online shops for accessories to finish it, like the generous rug from La Redoute, and found affordable frames from George Home for the gallery wall.

All in all, it took me a long weekend to give the space the spruce up it needed!



A treasure-seeker, Lorna loves to fill her walls with artwork picked up from charity shops and mix them with new buys. The slogan wall hanging is from H&M Home



To turn this once-underused area of her home into a cosy snug for her family, Lorna found a corner sofa that the whole family can relax on. She's blended the TV into her scheme by putting together a gallery wall around it. The checkerboard rug is from La Redoute

Style idea
Zone an open-plan room using rugs



I got to try out different colours and patterns in here before we invest in a brand-new kitchen

Kitchen

'Eventually, we plan to rip out this Nineties kitchen when we build the new extension. In the short term, I gave it a new look using paint and decided to experiment with colour and pattern. Shortly after we moved in, I painted it blue, but I wasn't a fan. So, for my birthday I took a week off work to give the kitchen another makeover. I started by painting the wooden cabinets and updating the hardware with gold handles found on Amazon, then I covered over the hedgehog-patterned tiles with tile paint as a base for a patterned design. I played around with masking tape to create shapes on the tiled splashback and walls, then I used yellow paint for the design. I found the black and white wallpaper after I'd painted the tiles and it matched perfectly.

I kept the same flooring but used a grout pen to freshen up the lines, and I painted the white uPVC doors and windows black. I then styled the space with natural textures. I'm so pleased I got to try out the different colours and patterns in here before we invest in a brand-new kitchen.

It's helped me avoid making expensive mistakes.'



EXPERT ADVICE

Paint wall tiles like a pro

Follow these top tips for painting over old-fashioned wall tiles to freshen up your space on a budget

- Before painting, thoroughly scrub your tiles to remove any dirt, grease and grime. Rinse with clean water and allow them to dry completely. Next, lightly sand the tiles to create a rough surface that will help the paint to adhere.
- Not all paints are suitable for tile surfaces. Look for specialist paints designed for tiles. These paints are durable, moisture-resistant, and will adhere well to the smooth surface of the tiles.
- Applying a good-quality primer is essential when painting tiles. Primer helps your tile paint adhere better and ensures a smooth and long-lasting finish. Apply the primer evenly with a brush or small roller and allow it to dry completely as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- When painting the tiles, use a high-quality brush or roller for an even coverage. Apply the paint in thin, even coats, working in small sections at a time. Avoid applying too much paint at once to prevent drips and runs. Allow each coat to dry completely before applying the next one.
- Once the paint has dried thoroughly, finish the job by applying a clear sealant topcoat. This will protect the paint from moisture, stains, and everyday wear and tear.



Lorna managed to find a wallpaper that complemented her hand-painted tiles, in black and white for contrast, at Dunelm



↑ Lorna transformed her kitchen with just a few tins of paint. She painted over the tiles in Rust-Oleum's Hessian as a base, and then painted shapes on top in the Dijon shade. She painted the units in the colour Serenity, also by Rust-Oleum

← To save worktop space, Lorna hung metal rails, which she picked up from Dunelm for £7 each – and the display hides an unsightly plug socket, too!



Style idea
A cover can hide an old radiator and increases storage in a hallway

← Hallway

'I wanted to connect the upstairs rooms with the ground floor so that the whole house flows together, so chose a soft teal for the walls to reflect the blues and greens I've used elsewhere. To keep the space feeling light and bright, I only painted the colour up to the dado rail. Again, this decorating job is a temporary fix until we do the extension, which meant I painted over the existing wallpaper. I also installed a radiator cover, painted in the same hue, so I could style it up with a mirror and accessories to give the entranceway a bit of personality.'

Lorna decorated her bedroom with wooden grooved panelling from Wickes, which she painted a soft blue called Sea Nor Sky by Paint & Paper Library. The couple had the curved radiator custom made by Stylish Radiators

It wasn't our plan to take on a huge renovation project, especially as I had a newborn at the time, but life has a funny way of surprising us sometimes,



Bedside tables from La Redoute complement Lorna's coastal-inspired bedroom scheme. She installed a wall light above them (from Dunelm) to free up more space



Main bedroom

'This bedroom was one of the first rooms we tackled. We cleared out everything – the carpets, layers of wallpaper and ugly built-in furniture. There were radiators in odd places, like in the alcoves, so we had them removed too. A friend helped us install a custom-made radiator into the curved bay window. It was a team effort! Rob sorted out the damp proof course and replastered the walls, then I painted everything. Since we live near the sea, I wanted a coastal vibe, and went for a fresh and inviting atmosphere. I found arranging the furniture in here a challenge, as I had to work around the curved bay and a chimney breast. Using masking tape, we mapped out the furniture onto the floor to find the best layout. Rob fitted wooden slatted panelling to create a stylish backdrop for the bed, and I found a lovely cast iron fireplace on Facebook Marketplace that fits perfectly. It looks like it's always been in this room.'

Every fireplace in the house had been bricked up, so the couple wanted to open them all back up to restore the property's period charm. Lorna sourced this iron fireplace secondhand, and the faux olive tree is an Amazon find, as Lorna loves to add greenery to her interior schemes



Lorna has styled the bedroom alcove similarly to the one in her living room for a feeling of continuity throughout her home. Her dressing table is from John Lewis & Partners and, as in the living room, she's added a William Morris print with an LED wall light



Although she eventually plans to replace the bathroom, Lorna has pepped up her existing blue scheme with yellow accents and rattan accessories for a sunny look



Style idea
A bamboo ladder makes a handy towel holder



TURN OVER
to shop Lorna's natural look →

↑ Bathroom

'The house came with this blue bathroom with a layout that features a separate toilet and bathing area. Eventually, we'll reconfigure the back of the house, including the bathroom. This means we can move some walls and turn it into a more family-friendly space. Bathrooms (and kitchens) are a big purchase so I'll stick with what I love, being mindful of how my own style has changed over time. Rob and I married in Bali and I'd love a space that transported me back there, with natural stone, wood tones and lots of greenery. Creating lots of light will be important for me and also for the many plants I plan to have in here! We have a few treasures from Bali to display, too.'



What I learned

- A word of advice: never renovate a room just before Christmas, it's chaos! After making that mistake myself, I've learned to set realistic timelines and not rush headlong into things.
- Just because you're waiting to do bigger building projects, it doesn't mean that you can't make your home your own with a lick of paint and a lot of imagination.
- My style has evolved hugely over time, and I'm inspired by fresh coastal colours as well as warm, earthy tones.

SHOP THE LOOK

Back to nature

Introduce materials such as raffia, cane and wicker to your scheme for a boost of texture, like **Lorna** has in her home



Style idea

Zone an open-plan space using a divider

- 1 Salto raffia ceiling shade, £35, Habitat 2 Flower rattan placemat, £3.50, Primark 3 White and Natural basket planter, £12, B&M 4 Ines Yellow raffia and ceramic desk and table lamp, £85, Oliver Bonas 5 Bamboo effect planter, £20, Matalan 6 Rattan round basket natural large, £14, Dunelm 7 Large rattan-framed mirror, £39.99, H&M Home 8 Faux bamboo in rattan basket, £42.99, Gisela Graham 9 Talkning room divider, £99, IKEA 10 Wooden cabinet, £246, Søstrene Grene

MAKE THE LOOK

Floral table centrepiece

Be inspired by **Lorna** to create a statement floral tablescape – use faux foliage for everlasting style

Pick up faux foliage and flowers from a craft shop such as Hobbycraft, or try Dunelm, IKEA or The Range

TOP TIP

If you have leftover material, you could craft a matching candle holder. Make a shorter centrepiece, then curl around a hurricane candle holder and secure



YOU WILL NEED

- length of green rope
- floral shears or secateurs
- selection of fresh or faux foliage
- green floral tape
- selection of fresh or faux flowers
- florist's wire
- decorative picks (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Measure a piece of rope to the length of your table. For a luxurious look, add 60cm so the rope drapes 30cm off each end of the table.

2 You can use either fresh or faux foliage and flowers to create your runner, or a mixture of the two. Cut down the stems on the foliage to various lengths and arrange different types of seasonal greenery together to achieve your desired texture and weight. To add bulk to delicate foliage, group a few stems in small bunches, binding with floral tape.

3 Find the centre of your rope and begin to attach the greenery with floral tape so that it flows outward from the centre of the table. Continue to layer the foliage along the rope until the rope is no longer visible or until the desired fullness is achieved. Depending on your preferred style and budget, this table runner can be made as detailed or as simple as you like.

4 Next, cut your flower stems, leaving about 10cm attached to the flower, and place flowers throughout the foliage, attaching them to the rope where necessary using floral tape or florist's wire. As you did with the foliage, group stems of delicate flowers, such as gypsophila, in small bunches, binding with floral tape to make them easier to work with.

5 Once you're happy with the arrangement of the flowers and foliage, you can add sprigs of smaller flowers or other colourful accessories, such as butterfly picks or mini paper honeycomb picks to suit your scheme or occasion.

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A generation ago, a woman named Sylvia made a promise. As a doctor's secretary, she'd watched stroke destroy the lives of so many people. She was determined to make sure we could all live in a world where we're far less likely to lose our lives to stroke.

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Sylvia changed the story for us all. Now it's our turn to change the story for those who'll come after us.

Stroke still shatters lives and tears families apart. And for so many survivors the road to recovery is still long and desperately lonely. If you or someone you love has been affected by stroke – you'll know just what that means.

But it doesn't have to be like this. You can change the story, just like Sylvia did, with a gift in your Will. All it takes is a promise.

You can promise future generations a world where researchers discover new treatments and surgeries – and every single stroke survivor has the best care, rehabilitation and support network possible, to help them rebuild their lives.

Will you make that promise to generations to come? Please, leave a gift in your Will to the Stroke Association.

Find out how by calling **020 7566 1505**
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Stroke
Association

Decorator's moodboards

Planning a makeover? A moodboard is a designer's must-have to organise your ideas. Each month, we put together a trio of boards to inspire your next project

HANNAH TRIBE, STYLE ICON



Reliable, solid and well-loved, blue is probably not the first shade you think of when imagining hot, new trending colours, but don't underestimate the power of this versatile hue. Blue's steady, go-with-everything attitude is exactly why it's so popular at the moment and we love this all-seasons shade in any room.



56
HEAD TO THE MED

THIS MONTH'S THEME

INTO THE BLUE

Refresh your look with three new ways to use trending blues in your home, whatever your style



58
MODERN COASTAL



60
LAKESIDE RETREAT

Feature Hannah Tribe

Head to the Med

Give your home year-round holiday vibes with a classic combo of blue and white



COLOUR PALETTE

Choose strong colours for a high-impact makeover

14

15

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Hewitt oval extending **dining table** in Blue, £1,995; Slatted **chairs** in Blue/New York Midnight, £449 for 2; **Bench** in Blue, £549, all Furniture Village



Confetti apothecary **vase**, £19.50; modern glass cylinder **vase**, £9; speckled wine glasses, £16 for 2; fish **vase**, £15; picnic cereal **bowls**, £12 for 4; shell **platter**, £10; chequerboard **planter**, £15, all M&S

3 SECRETS TO THIS SCHEME

EMBRACE THE DARK

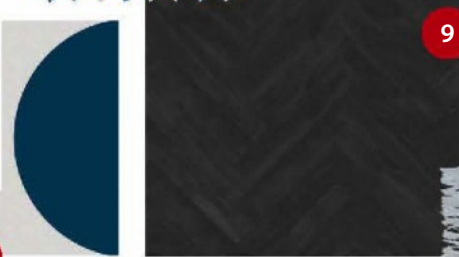
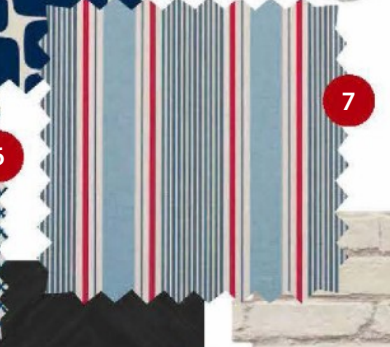
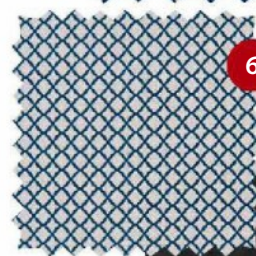
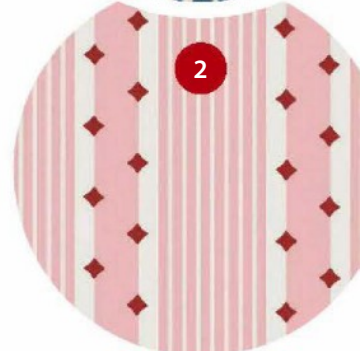
Stick to deep, inky blues to help ground the playful patterns. Colours like navy, indigo and Prussian blue add a touch of sophistication to your look, which means you can take design risks in other areas.

KEEP IT SLEEK

Opt for furniture and accessories in modern, unfussy shapes. Think slab doors on your kitchen cupboards, and smooth enamelled light fittings. Choose dark painted wood and metal pieces to complement the navy you'll use in other areas.

THROW SOME SHAPES

Give your look a burst of energy using high-contrast patterns with strong, graphic shapes. Keep an eye out for designs that look like they could be cut from sheets of coloured paper. You can also paint your own murals in this style, using tester pots.



Cotton **cushion cover** in Blue stripe, £42; cotton **throw** in Blue abstract, £72, both TBCo



10



12

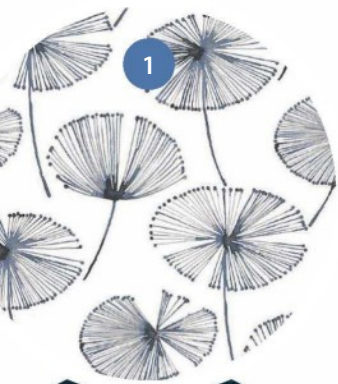
Style idea

Apply the 'unexpected red theory' by adding a little ruby and russet. These will lift the blue tones and give your look a designer touch



13

- 1 Odisha wallpaper in Indigo, £70 per roll, The Pure Edit
- 2 Diamond 01 wallpaper, £80 per roll, Lick
- 3 Coralli wallpaper in Red and Indigo, £69 per roll, Jane Clayton
- 4 The Ribbed pendant ceiling light, £249, houseof
- 5 Lohko fabric in Indigo and Jasmine, £39 per m, Scion
- 6 Ariyana fabric in Denim, £52 per m, Clarke & Clarke
- 7 Sail stripe fabric in Marine, £17 per m, Terrys
- 8 Rustic Masonry brick-effect tiles in Dove White, £34.95 per sq m, Walls and Floors
- 9 Herringbone laminate flooring in Oak Black, £35.31 per pack, Remland Carpets
- 10 Stonehouse Studio Mylo tile in Ink, £44.50 per sq m, Victorian Plumbing
- 11 Medina Blue triangles patterned tile, £53.55 per sq m, Porcelain Superstore
- 12 Abstract shapes tile decals in Blue Tones, from £17 for 12, Sirface
- 13 Anatolia Sky Blue runner rug, from £290, Weaver Green
- 14 Statement walls matt paint in Nearly Black, £9.99 for 1.25L, Wilko
- 15 Valspar Classic interior matt emulsion paint in Planet Fever, £30 for 2.5L, B&Q
- 16 Flat matt paint in All Inclusive, £52 for 2.5L, COAT



3 SECRETS TO THIS SCHEME

GO TO EARTH

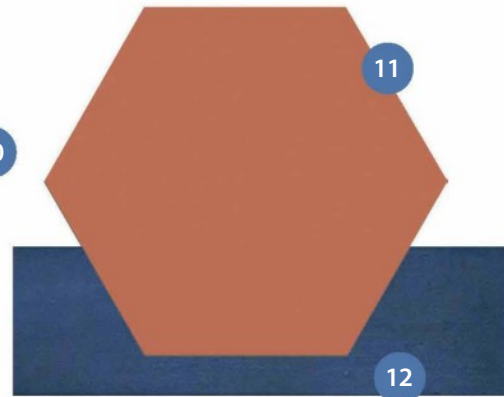
Ground soft denim shades with earth tones. Rich sandstone and peachy terracotta will add warmth to prevent the look from feeling stark or cold. Opt for pale beige wherever you would normally use brilliant white – like on ceilings and woodwork.

ABSTRACT THINKING

Look out for abstract prints that reference organic forms. Think spinning dandelion clocks, swirling shells and rain-drenched flowers. These will add subtle, natural texture to your look

MOVE WITH THE FLOW

Choose furniture with gentle curves to create a welcoming vibe in your room. Mix and match these curves with rustic pieces. Look out for tables with obvious joinery or live-edge shelving, which retains the bark of the wood.



Style idea
Try distressed finishes and crumpled linen to create a lived-in space that invites you to relax



Pebble pouffe, £50; Mirage rug in Cream, from £100; Scottie double bed frame, £380; 180 thread-count Oxford bedding set in White, from £34; Woodcut bedding set, from £14; Waffle bedding set in Beige, from £35; Linear striped cushion, £10; textured stitch cushion, £14, and throw, £25; Simone bedside table, £110; Bobbin table lamp, £45; Seaside Walk candle, from £6; Herringbone curtain, from £22; hyacinth storage basket, £20, all Habitat



Abrey 12-piece dinnerware set, £145, Cox & Cox

1 Aya Black Blue self-adhesive wallpaper, £26 per roll, Dunelm **2** Grandeco distressed wood panel wallpaper in Navy Blue, £16 per roll, I Want Wallpaper **3** Albany Beach Hut wallpaper, £14.99 per roll, Wallpaper Direct **4** Marissa fabric in Teal and Spice, £22 per m, Clarke & Clarke **5** Fossil fabric in Denim, £33.60 per m, Graham Sanderson Interiors **6** Fion furnishing fabric in French Blue, £35 per m, John Lewis & Partners **7** Aftas oval jute rug, from £95, La Redoute **8** Ammonite lamp, £35, Dunelm **9** Dijon tumbled limestone tiles, £42 per sq m, Quorn Stone **10** GoodHome Poprock White Wood effect vinyl plank, £17.76 for a pack of 8, B&Q **11** Vista Terracotta hexagon wall and floor tile, £51.48 per sq m, Victorian Plumbing **12** Manacor wall tile in Ocean Blue, £39.95 per sq m, Tile Mountain **13** Velvet matt paint in Mid Umber, £49.37 for 2.5L, Dulux Heritage **14** Matt emulsion paint in Ashley Blue, £20 for 2.5L, Dunelm **15** Flat matt paint in Kimchee Fan, £52 for 2.5L, COAT

Wilson 4 seater **sofa** in Indigo house linen mix, £1,699; Navy woven diamond stripe cotton **throw**, £20; Kemble fringed **cushion** in Oatmeal, £15; Harvey stripe **cushion** in Navy, £39; Trewsbury **rug** in Cream and Blue, from £129; Canterbury **floor lamp** in Antique Silver, £225; Inglesham **nest of 2 tables** in Whitewash Oak, £199; all The Cotswold Company

Modern coastal

Rethink the seaside look and create the ideal space in which to unwind – no novelty lighthouses required



COLOUR PALETTE

These gentle hues create a chilled-out vibe

13

14

15



Aldbury **console table** in Dark Washed Grey, £550; Pickworth Posy **wallpaper** £48 per roll; Farnworth stripe **wallpaper** in Smoke Blue, £48 per roll; Gold leaf bottle hurricane **candle holder**, from £25; stoneware **vase** in Harriston Green, from £24; Tregaron lustre 230g **candle with clear cloche**, £25; Fernhill rattan **table lamp**, £79; matt emulsion **paint** in Hedgerow, £46 for 2.5L, all Laura Ashley at Next

Lakeside retreat

Step into a verdant wonderland with a richly textured look, inspired by the wild beauty of waterside plants



COLOUR PALETTE

Lighten your look with fresh, pale shades

14

13

15



Curtain in Sade fabric in Denim; frilled **cushion** in Tiny fabric in Sky; piped **cushion** in Cooper fabric in Denim, all from £23.04 per m, Prestigious Textiles

3 SECRETS TO THIS SCHEME

LET IN THE LIGHT

Combine soothing shades of Eau-de-Nil and sky blue with zingy leaf green for a fresh effect. Use these colours sparingly across the room, with white or off-white as your main tone, to keep the look feeling bright and airy.

PICK UP PETALS

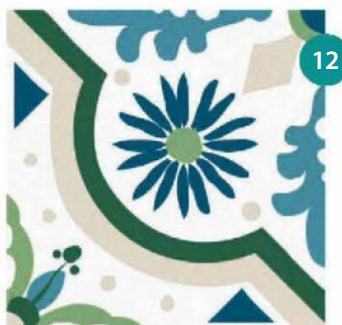
Use pretty, floral patterns for a traditional Arts and Crafts feel. Pair these flowing styles with something more structured, like a small trellis design or a repeated block print, for a balanced look. To avoid the scheme feeling too formal, use the structured patterns only as accents, for instance in cushions or lampshades.

ALL IN THE DETAILS

Give your room a classic atmosphere by choosing furniture that doesn't skimp on the details. Look out for sofas and chairs with turned wooden legs and castors, or tables with cabriole legs.



Chadwick 3-seater **sofa** in Deep Blue matt velvet, £1,999; Camille **coffee table** in Limewash Oak, £499; Marsden **pendant light**, £70; Boxwell **floor lamp**, £175; Berkley **mirror** in Nordic Oak, from £159; Manaia White wash **table lamp**, £135, all The Cotswold Company



Style idea
A traditional style doesn't mean everything has to look antique. Mix in modern finishes for a scheme that won't feel like a museum piece

1 Leiden **wallpaper** in Denim, £60 per roll, Clarke & Clarke **2** Grandeco Marian vintage Art Nouveau floral trail Navy **wallpaper**, £15 per roll, Wilko **3** Laura Ashley Kate **wallpaper** in Seaspray Blue, £48 per roll, Next **4** Ornella **fabric** in Denim, £18 per m, Jane Clayton **5** Aria **fabric** in Lake Blue, £35 per m, John Lewis & Partners **6** Kamila **fabric** in Indigo, £29 per m, The Pure Edit **7** Chantelle floral 3-light **chandelier**, £79, Dunelm **8** Alentejo abstract outdoor indoor washable **rug**, £40, George Home **9** Colosseum dryback LVT **flooring** in Limed Oak, £59.99 per sq m, Lifestyle Floors **10** Laura Ashley Wicker matt floor **tile** in Eau De Nil, £42.42 per sq m, B&Q **11** Farmhouse **tile** in Duck Egg, £36 per sq m, Wickes **12** Valencia Blue wall & floor **tile**, £44.50 per sq m, Victorian Plumbing **13** Ben interior matte **paint** in Deep in Thought, £20 for 0.94L, Benjamin Moore **14** Matt **paint** in Blue 04, £45 for 2.5L, Lick **15** Claypaint in Grasshopper, £57.50 for 2.5L, Earthborn

10 easy DIYs for instant personality

Transform your home and garden in a flash, with these simple and stylish decorating ideas you can do in a long weekend. What's more, they all come in at under £100!



Advance Satin paint in Blue Macaw, £30.75 for 0.94L; ben interior matte paint in Baby's Breath, £20 for 0.94L, both Benjamin Moore

COST:
£62

Transform your kitchen cupboards

There's no need to break the bank in order to revive kitchen cabinets that are looking past their best. All you need is a can of paint and some elbow grease

STEP 1 Before you start painting, remove the handles from your cabinets and keep them in a safe place. If you're planning to replace the handles, fill in the holes with wood filler and sand it smooth once dry.

STEP 2 Cover your working area with a dust sheet to protect it. Give the surface of the doors a good scrub with sugar soap to remove any dirt, grease and grime. If you can, remove the doors to paint them as it will make the job easier. If not, don't worry, you can still paint them while they are attached – you just need to paint carefully to avoid drips and sagging.

STEP 3 Choose a hardwearing, scrubbable paint to give your cabinets a long-lasting finish. Satin, gloss, eggshell, multi-surface and specialist cupboard paints will all work well for this project. You could choose one colour for the whole kitchen, or be bold and opt for two shades for an on-trend look. We recommend painting your wall cabinets in a pale colour and your base units or island in a darker shade.

STEP 4 For a smooth finish, apply the paint using a mini foam roller. However, if your cabinet doors have intricate mouldings, a 1-inch fine-tipped synthetic paintbrush will get into all the nooks and crannies and reduce tramlines. Apply the paint in thin layers, rather than overloading the roller or brush, to avoid drips and sagging. Apply at least two coats of paint to your doors for a durable finish (three is even better), allowing each coat to dry thoroughly before applying the next one.

STEP 5 If your surface finish is a little uneven or has drips, sand back the problem areas gently when dry, using fine-grit sandpaper, before adding another thin layer of paint.

STEP 6 Once the painted doors are thoroughly dry, reattach the door handles. If you're adding new handles, mark and drill new holes for the handles before screwing them into position.



Tropical Paradise
wallpaper in Teal,
£14 per roll,
I Love Wallpaper

COST:
£28



Create a wow-factor cloakroom

It's easy to create a designer look on a shoestring in a downstairs toilet. By its nature, this bijou space will require wallpapering around some awkward internal corners, but with a little knowhow and planning you can create a professional finish with just one or two rolls of paper

STEP 1 Begin papering from the middle of a flat area of wall. As you approach a corner, measure the distance to the corner from the last piece of hung wallpaper and add on 2.5cm to allow for an overlap. Trim the next piece of wallpaper to this width, but don't throw away the remaining cut paper.

STEP 2 Position the trimmed piece carefully from the top and, once you're happy, hang it, using a wallpaper smoothing tool or brush to smooth it towards and into the corner. The excess wallpaper should overlap onto the adjoining wall. Trim the paper at the top and bottom in the usual way.

STEP 3 In most houses the walls are not perfectly straight, so you'll need to set a plumb line on the new wall. Measure the width of your wallpaper off-cut, then measure this distance from the corner and make a mark high up on the wall. To find the vertical, use a plumb line or a weight attached to a length of string and hold it against the mark. Use the string as a guide to make marks at intervals on the wall using a pencil.

STEP 4 Hang the wallpaper off-cut against the plumb line and it should fit neatly into the corner, overlapping the first piece. For a professional finish, take a utility knife with a very sharp blade and, using a steel ruler, cut the papers where they overlap.

STEP 5 Remove any excess from the top paper, then peel the top paper back and remove the excess from the bottom paper.

STEP 6 Finally, push the top paper down and it should match and meet perfectly with the bottom paper, joining like two regular wallpaper seams.

Paper a feature wall

Adding a feature wall is a really easy way to add impact to your room, but if you've never hung paper before, don't be daunted. By using the paste-the-wall method, you can transform a wall in just a couple of hours

STEP 1 Begin by covering your work area with dust sheets. Prepare the walls by cleaning them with sugar soap to remove any residue of grease and dirt. Then fill any holes with multi-purpose filler and sand them smooth once dry.

STEP 2 Start at the centre of the wall so you have a smooth and seamless focal point. With a pencil, mark roughly where each length of paper will hang to ensure you have enough left over for any internal or external corners. Locate your middle marking, and use a spirit level and a pencil to lightly draw a vertical line from the top to the bottom of the wall. This is where you will hang your first length.

STEP 3 The paste-the-wall method is quick, easy, and much less messy than pasting the paper. Begin by mixing the wallpaper paste with water in a bucket, following the manufacturer's instructions. Once stirred, leave the paste to stand for a few minutes to thicken up, then you're ready to go.

STEP 4 With your length markings from step two in place, you can now apply the paste to the wall. Empty some paste

into a roller tray and evenly roll the paste where you are going to hang your first length of wallpaper. Paste slightly wider than the width of the roll, and use a paint brush to apply paste along the top and bottom of the wall, and around any sockets, windows or chimney breasts. Remember, the paste will dry out quickly, so it's important to work swiftly.

STEP 5 Hang your first length by carefully pulling the wallpaper up from the roll, and positioning it so you have an overhang of roughly 10cm at the top and bottom to allow for trimming. Now hang it, making sure the edge of the paper aligns with your vertical line. Gently flatten out the paper using your hands until it is fully attached to the wall.

STEP 6 Sweep a wallpaper brush over the surface of the paper to gently smooth out any air bubbles, working from the centre outwards. Cut the excess paper at the top and bottom with a sharp utility knife or a pair of wallpapering scissors. When hanging the next drops of wallpaper, use a seam roller to make sure all the seams sit flat against the wall.



Vacay Vibes wallpaper in Tropical Orange, Ocean Blue and Flamingo Pink, £48 per roll, Lust Home

COST:
£96

Sew a set of stylish voiles

With warmer, lighter days underway, it's time to swap your heavy winter curtains for sheer, lightweight voiles. Made-to-measure curtains can be costly to buy, but it's quick and easy to make your own

STEP 1 To work out how much fabric you need, first measure the width of your window, then double this measurement to give your curtains some fullness. If you're making full-length curtains, measure from the top of the curtain rod to the floor, add 21cm for hemming, and then subtract 1.5cm so that the curtains just skim the floor. For window curtains, measure from the top of the curtain rod to the bottom of the window and then add 7.5cm if you'd like the curtain to extend past the bottom of the window, then add 21cm for hemming.

STEP 2 Choose the best fabric for the style of your room. Sheer fabrics come in a variety of styles, from understated plains, to embroidered or patterned fabrics that add more visual interest. A thinner fabric may be trickier to sew, but will let in more light, while a thicker sheer fabric will be easier to handle and provide more privacy – ideal for a bedroom, for example.

STEP 3 Lay the fabric down on a flat work-surface. Use a tape measure to measure out the final height and width dimensions, and use a pencil or tailor's chalk to mark these measurements on the fabric. Then, use

dressmaker's scissors to cut the fabric to size. For two separate curtain panels, first cut out a panel that's the full width of your measurements. Then, cut that panel in half along its width to give you two identical panels.

STEP 4 Lay the fabric right-side down and fold the two side edges inward by 1.5cm, press, then fold them in by another 1.5cm, press and pin in place at 10cm intervals. If you're making two curtains, repeat this step on both panels. Use an iron on a low heat to press the fabric flat.

STEP 5 On a sewing machine, sew along the folded and pinned edges. Sheer fabric requires thin, lightweight thread in order not to tear, and use a loose tension on your sewing machine to help avoid ripping the delicate material. Once sewn, remove any remaining pins.

STEP 6 Fold the top and bottom edges inward by 2.5cm, press, then fold again by 8cm and press and pin. Secure this fold and create a channel at the top by stitching 1cm in from the folded edge. Repeat at the bottom to create the weight needed to ensure the curtains drape beautifully. Pass your curtain rod through the top channel of each curtain and hang them in place.



Give a cupboard some love

Transforming a junk-shop bargain into a stylish piece of statement furniture is not only a satisfying and eco-friendly project, it can also make a huge impact in your room. All you need is a tin of paint and some wallpaper off-cuts to switch up a sideboard from dull to designer



STEP 1 Begin by cleaning the sideboard using warm, soapy water to remove any dust and debris. If you're planning to replace the handles, remove the old ones, fill in the holes with wood filler and sand it smooth once dry.



STEP 2 Use a small foam roller or a paintbrush to apply a couple of

coats of paint to the surface of the sideboard, allowing it to dry thoroughly between coats. Here, we've used a chalk paint to give a lovely vintage-effect matt finish but satin, gloss, eggshell, multi-surface and specialist cupboard paints will all work well for this project and give a tough, durable surface.



STEP 3 Using a tape measure, work out the dimensions of the recess areas you wish to paper at the back of the unit.

STEP 4 Use a pencil and a ruler to transfer these measurements to the paper backing on a sheet of self-adhesive wallpaper or vinyl. Use a sharp craft knife and metal ruler to cut out the wallpaper pieces.



STEP 5 Peel away the backing paper at one corner and position the wallpaper in place against the back of the sideboard. Carefully peel away

more of the backing paper, little by little, pressing the wallpaper with your hand as you work to stick it firmly to the back of the sideboard. Use an old credit card to press over the surface of the wallpaper to remove any air bubbles.

STEP 6 If you have used chalk paint to paint your sideboard, apply a coat of furniture wax over the top to protect the finish and make it more durable. If you're swapping the handles, drill holes for the new ones and screw them into position.

Tranquil
sheer fabric
in Rosebud,
£50.40 per m,
Prestigious
Textiles

Take flooring from drab to fab!

Rather than laying an expensive new carpet or laminate floor, get creative with a few tins of paint and add colour and pattern to a plain floor in just a weekend

STEP 1 Before you start, move all of the furniture out of the way. Remove any flaking or loose paint by sanding it down. If you're painting floorboards, remove any staples or tacks that might have been holding carpet in place.

STEP 2 Give the surface of the floor a clean to make sure there's no dirt or debris on it and leave it to dry completely before you start painting. Protect skirting boards with masking tape, and any surfaces that you want to shield from the paint should be covered by a dust sheet.

STEP 3 You'll need to choose paint that is designed for your particular floor surface. Specialist floor paints are usually suitable for wood, laminate or tiles, but always check the manufacturer's recommendations on the tin. Make sure you choose a formula that's ultra-durable to withstand footfall.

STEP 4 If you're using a floor paint for wood, laminate or tiled floors that requires a primer, apply the primer to the floor and allow it to dry thoroughly. Some paints don't need this, so check the tin. If you're painting a concrete floor, start by cleaning it with a stabilising solution if it's bare or, if it's painted, wipe it down with white spirit. If you're painting over a laminate floor, gently sand the surface to remove the shiny finish so the paint can bond with the material underneath it.

STEP 5 Paint around the edges of the room using a brush – this is called 'cutting in'. Next, fill a paint tray with paint and use a large roller to fill in the main part of the floor. Start at the furthest wall away from the entrance and move backwards towards the door so you don't paint yourself into a corner! Let the paint dry fully before you walk on it. You'll usually need another coat or two to get the best coverage. Several thinner coats is always better than one thick one.

STEP 6 If you want to paint a decorative border around the edge of the floor, mark this out lightly with a pencil, before filling in the outline with two coats of your chosen colour of floor paint. If you're not confident enough to draw a border freehand, consider using a stencil instead.

STEP 7 Most specialist floor paints don't need to be sealed or varnished, but do check the manufacturer's recommendations. If necessary, for example when painting over tiles or laminate, you may need to apply a couple of coats of clear interior surface sealer to protect the surface and make it more durable.

COST:
£86

Chalky finish floor paint in
My Husband Said No and Raspberry Ripple,
both £42.99 for 2.5L, Rust-Oleum



Chalk Paint in (left to right) Louis Blue, Duck Egg Blue, Antoinette (dry-brushed with Old White), Old White, all £16.95 for 500ml; **Matt Chalk Paint Lacquer**, £24.95 for 750ml, all Annie Sloan

**COST:
£42**

Give garden furniture a facelift

Painting your garden table and chairs will protect them from the elements and give them a refresh at the same time. If the weather is on your side, this is a quick and easy job that gives instant results

STEP 1 Preparation is key! Start by removing any flaking or chipped paint from wooden furniture and fill any holes with wood filler. Treat any rust spots on metal pieces and patch or glue any cracks in plastic. Giving your paint the perfect base will not only make it last longer, it'll give it a professional-looking finish, too.

STEP 2 Sanding the furniture will give a good base for the paint to stick to. Start sanding with a coarse-grain paper, such as 80 grit, and then finish with a finer grain, such as 220 grit, to create a really smooth finish. A sandpaper block is best for flat surfaces such as tabletops, but you'll find sheets of sandpaper are easier to get between slats or around legs.

STEP 3 Once you've finished sanding, use a large, clean paintbrush or a vacuum with a brush attachment to remove any dust. Ensure your surface, whatever the material, is thoroughly cleaned with sugar soap to remove grease and grime, and allow it to dry fully before you begin to paint.

STEP 4 Choose a paint that's suitable for your particular furniture, whether it's wood, metal or plastic. Many exterior paints are multi-surface, but check the tin before you buy. If possible, choose a formula that's water-repellent and anti-fungal. Some paint formulations require the surface to be treated with a primer first. If this is the case, apply two coats of primer, allowing them to dry thoroughly between coats.

STEP 5 When you're ready to start painting, stir the paint well, then use a brush to apply it. Leave the first coat of paint to dry as specified on the tin and then apply your second coat. As always, it's better to apply two thin layers of paint than one thick, gloopy layer. Leave to dry thoroughly. If your furniture is particularly intricate, for example woven wicker or filigree metal, you might want to consider using a spray paint to ensure you get good coverage on all the fiddly areas.

STEP 6 For an extra layer of protection from the elements if you store your furniture outdoors, consider applying a couple of coats of clear exterior varnish or lacquer, but check the manufacturer's recommendations for your chosen paint to make sure you use a compatible product.

Add personality to outside walls

Painting fences or garden walls can instantly transform your outdoor living space, creating a fresh new look in time for summer. Weather permitting, this is an easy project that can be completed in a day or two

STEP 1 When it comes to exterior surfaces, always choose a suitable paint formulation to ensure it will stand up to all weathers. So for brick, stone, rendered or concrete walls, opt for a water-based masonry paint, and for fences, choose a water-based exterior wood paint. Look for formulations with anti-fungal, frost-resistant and anti-aging properties to ensure your home's exterior stays looking lovely for longer.

STEP 2 Make sure that the weather provides good conditions for painting. The ambient temperature should be above 5°C, with no risk of rain during application or drying. Avoid painting in full summer sun or on surfaces that are already warm, as this will affect the way the paint dries.

STEP 3 Prepare render, brick, stone, cement blockwork or previously painted exterior walls by ensuring that the surface is clean, dry and grease-free, before brushing it down to remove any loose material. Replace any loose mortar or render, and fill and repair any cracks with exterior-grade filler before you start the project. If the surface of your outside wall has become powdery, brush it down and treat it with a masonry stabilising solution before painting. Treat areas with any fungal growth using a fungicidal wash or 25% solution of household bleach, followed by thorough cleaning.

STEP 4 On smooth surfaces, use either a high-quality, synthetic bristle brush or a short-nap, wool-blend roller for the best finish. Ensure that the brush is suitably sized for the project. For textured surfaces, choose a roller with a longer nap length to ensure even and thorough coverage.

STEP 5 Apply a primer coat of masonry paint. To do this, add a little clean water to the primer at a ratio of 5–25%, depending on how porous the surface you're painting is. Stir the paint mixture thoroughly before use, and make sure you paint in even strokes for smooth coverage.

STEP 6 After waiting at least four hours for the primer coat to dry, apply the first full coat of masonry paint (not watered down). For the best finish, work the final brush strokes all in the same direction, and try not to brush over paint that has already begun to dry. Allow at least four hours before applying the second coat, but check the manufacturer's recommended time for your chosen paint.

Upcycle a set of pots

Glazed pots and planters can be pricey, so save money by refreshing old terracotta, metal or plastic pots to create a colourful Mediterranean vibe that's perfect for small spaces

COST:
£83



Intelligent masonry paint in Mambo, £83 for 5L, Little Greene

STEP 1 Before you start painting, clean the outside of your pots with warm soapy water. Clean any grease off metal pots with an old rag and white spirit. Allow the pots to dry fully before applying any paint.

STEP 2 If you'd like to use multiple colours, tester pots are perfect for this project. Alternatively, if you'd like just one or two colours and you're painting a large number of pots, then it will be more cost-effective to buy a litre of your chosen paint. Apply your first coat of paint to your pots and allow it to dry thoroughly following the manufacturer's recommended drying times.

STEP 3 Apply a second coat of paint to your pots and allow to dry. If needed, you may want to apply a third coat.

STEP 4 To add texture, as on the green pot, mix a small amount of white exterior paint into some of your coloured paint and dab on with a sponge. Leave to dry.

STEP 5 To use, add a layer of gravel, crocks (broken pottery), or broken up polystyrene chunks for drainage – for large planters this should fill a third of the way up – then top them up with peat-free potting compost and add your chosen plants.

COST:
£16



Wall painted in Royal Exterior in Faded Terracotta, £19.20 for 1L; pots painted in Royal Exterior in Miami Vibes, Teal, Clouded Yellow and Giddy Green, all £3.96 for a 125ml sample pot, all Protek

Tidy beds and borders

Neatening up your flower beds and borders can make a huge difference to the look and feel of your garden, and you don't have to spend lots of time or money to make a big impact

STEP 1 Start by removing any weeds from the soil. Take time to dig down and remove all the roots and runners to help prevent them from reappearing later on.

STEP 2 Dig the soil over to aerate it, loosen the texture and create a finer soil. Depending on the size of your flower bed or border, you can use either a garden fork or hand fork for this job.

STEP 3 To prevent weeds from regrowing, add a layer of weed control membrane over the surface of the soil, weighing it down around the edges with soil, garden pegs or pebbles.

STEP 4 If you want to plant through the membrane, simply cut slits in the surface with a sharp knife and plant through the slits. The membrane will allow water to permeate through to the plants' roots, while preventing weeds from growing up through the fabric's surface.

STEP 5 Add a thick layer of bark clippings to cover the weed control membrane. This not only looks smart, it also benefits the plants by helping the soil retain moisture, and deters airborne weed seeds from taking hold.

STEP 6 Finally, neatening the edges of your beds. If they are bordered by grass, use a half-moon edging tool for crisp, straight edges. Alternatively, lay bricks or slabs around the edges of the beds to keep them tidy.

COST:
£19



Verve dark brown large bark chippings, £12 per 100L bag; Verve landscaping fabric, £7, both B&Q

Blue and peach sit opposite each other on the colour wheel and so work together perfectly for a complementary scheme. A scattering of soft neutrals and a few darker highlights help to add depth to this room's colour palette

Matt emulsion **paint** in Bright Skies, Pressed Petal and Blood Orange, all £36.49 for 2.5L, Dulux



7 secrets to the perfect colour palette

Love colour but not sure which shades will work in your space? Our guide will help you choose a beautiful and inspiring palette to perfectly suit you and your home

Whether you're starting from scratch and giving your home a complete makeover, or looking to update one or two rooms, deciding which colour combination is the right one for you and your space can often feel a little daunting. Fortunately, there are some simple tips and tricks that can help guide you through the process, so that you can create a home with flow and personality through a winning palette of colours.

Before you pick up a paint brush, it's handy to know colour theory and the colour wheel, and how these tools can guide you towards a scheme that's not just visually pleasing, but appeals to your other senses, too. Need a space to be calming? There are hues that can help you achieve this. Want to feel productive and energetic? Likewise, certain colours can inspire you to be just that.

When you've chosen your favourite shade or the one that sets the right mood, the colour wheel comes into play; use it to add to your palette, confident that the colours you're choosing are complementary. 'The colour wheel is a beautiful visual tool that helps you understand how colours are made, and how they work together. It can help you choose the right colour for an accent and create tonal, harmonious and contrasting combinations for every room in your house,' says Marianne Shillingford, creative director at Dulux.

Once you have a few carefully chosen colours, you'll need to work out the best way to use them, and this is where the Golden Ratio rule can help. 'The Golden Ratio in interior design is a formula used to create balanced schemes,' explains Helen Shaw, director of marketing at Benjamin Moore. 'Colour offers the perfect opportunity to inject this theory into your home; with 60% of the scheme being the main colour, 30% the secondary, and 10% an accent.' Ready to get colour confident? Read on to discover our seven steps to decorating success...



GoodHome walls & ceilings silk emulsion paint in Toronto, £16 for 2.5L, B&Q

Matt emulsion paint in Blue Lace, £15 for 2.5L, Homebase

Estate emulsion paint in Middleton Pink, £54.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball

1 Find your favourite colour

To help you explore colour and discover which ones you naturally favour, look at your current surroundings, your clothing, upholstery and artwork, to see if there are any common hues that you feel drawn to. Then, once you've identified a few favourites, browse paint charts to see what's available, and refine your selection further by developing a moodboard. This can be placed in the room you're decorating and observed at different times of the day to see how the light affects the colours, and if they still work for you.

'When incorporating your favourite colour, we recommend thinking about the Golden Ratio; the main colour, 60% of the scheme, is often the walls and main hard furnishings; 30% is the secondary colour, used on chairs, bedding and curtains; and finally the accent, 10%, is for finishing touches that add a pop of colour. Woodwork or architectural features offer the perfect place for this element,' says Helen Shaw, director of marketing at Benjamin Moore. Keep in mind that your favourite colour might work as the main colour of your scheme but equally, it may be best as a secondary shade or, if it's very bold, saved for those special finishing touches.

These three colours – pale blue, pink and cream – work together beautifully to create a scheme that's soothing and interesting without being overpowering

Walls in Ben Interior Matt paint in White Blush; ceiling in Splash, both £20 for 0.94L, Benjamin Moore



Consider painting cherished pieces of furniture so that they blend in effortlessly with a new room scheme

Lower walls in Chalk Paint in Amsterdam Green; upper walls and sideboard in Antoinette, both £26.95 for 1L, Annie Sloan



2 Incorporate heirlooms and treasured pieces

When designing your space, you may come across a favourite possession or heirloom that needs to be incorporated into the new look, without it standing out or looking like it doesn't belong. 'Often what puts people off using vintage pieces in their homes is that the dark wood or shiny varnishes don't fit into their existing room schemes,' explains colour expert, Annie Sloan. 'Mid-century modern pieces look great with modern decor, but the colour of the wood can often clash with other woods. Don't be afraid to paint a 1950s sideboard or 1960s dressing table. Here, the soft pink makes a delicate statement that tones with the wall colour in this pretty bedroom.'

If your heirloom can't be painted or upcycled – for instance a rug or piece of artwork – consider using it as your starting point. Select a few colours or tones from the piece that you can highlight elsewhere in the room, so that your treasured item sits perfectly in your new scheme.

Dorma matt emulsion paint in Blush, £32 for 2.5L, Dunelm

Estate emulsion paint in Oval Room Blue, £54 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball

Premium Walls & Ceilings interior emulsion paint in Emerald Temple, £37 for 2.5L, Valspar

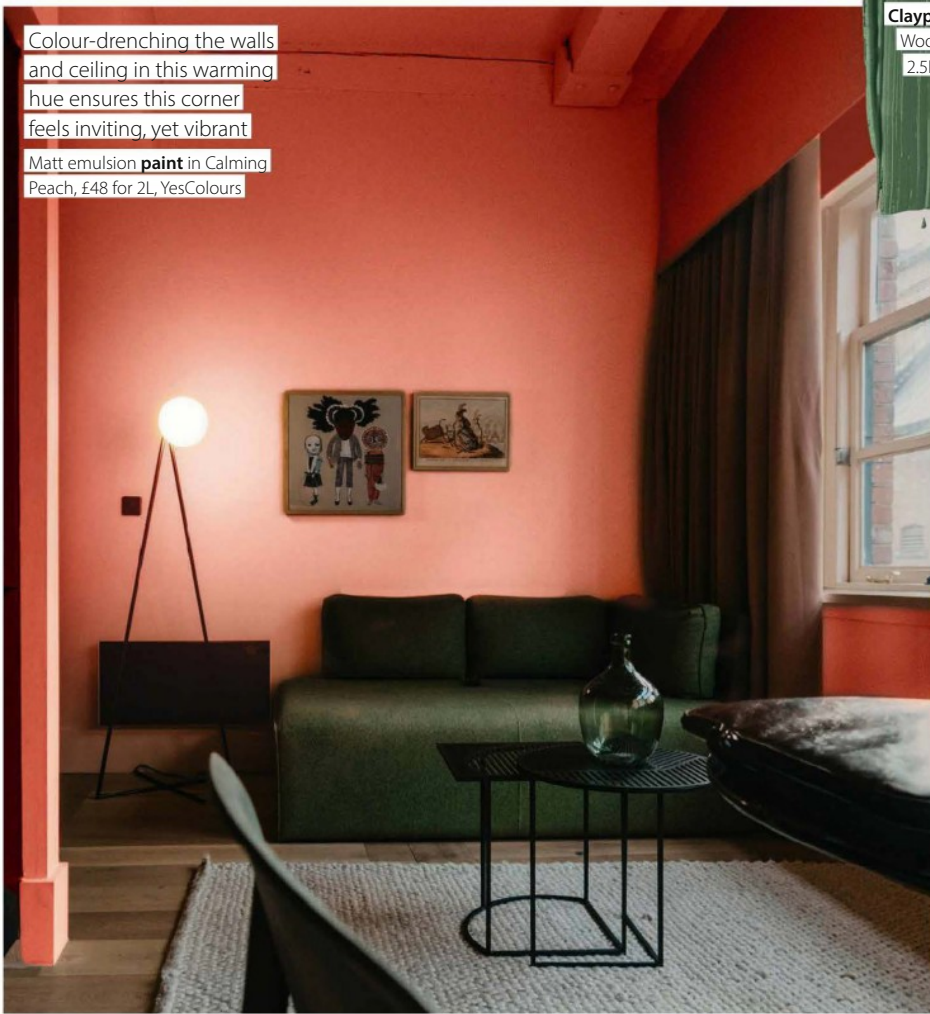
Colour-drenching the walls and ceiling in this warming hue ensures this corner feels inviting, yet vibrant

Matt emulsion paint in Calming Peach, £48 for 2L, YesColours

Claypaint in Hobby Wood, £57.50 for 2.5L, Earthborn

Flat matt paint in Old Street, £52 for 2.5L, COAT

Matt emulsion paint in Tuscan Rooftop, £38 for 2.5L, Lust Home



3 Think about size and scale

The size of a room will have an impact on the colours you choose to decorate it with, but it doesn't always follow that smaller spaces must be painted in paler colours. Emma Bentley, co-founder of YesColours, explains: 'There are misconceptions about having to paint a small room white or neutral, to avoid making the room feel smaller than it already is. Contrary to belief, going bright and bold in a small space creates greater impact and makes the room feel far more inviting. For a cosy, compact snug, consider dark orange walls for a comforting ambience. But if you are still concerned about using a lighter colour, then opt for a pastel tone, such as blush pink, as this will add a touch of warmth while maintaining an airy feel.'

Likewise, if you're working with high ceilings or a larger room and want to create a cosy vibe, consider painting the ceiling in a warmer shade to trick the eye into thinking it's lower than it is. Similarly, you can create a more intimate feel in a large room by looking to darker colours with warm undertones to absorb light and give the impression of a smaller space.

4 Consider natural light

'Before decorating any room, take note of which direction it faces and how much natural light will enter,' says Helen Shaw, director of marketing at Benjamin Moore. 'As a general rule, rooms facing south will be filled with natural light, whereas those facing north may lack warm sunlight. As a result, north-facing rooms can benefit from strong hues or neutrals with a yellow or red undertone for a hint of warmth, while south-facing rooms can embrace almost any colour, including whites with grey undertones.'

In the same way as wall colour plays a part in the 'temperature' of a room, so too does natural lighting. So be sure to pick a shade that enhances the warmth that you already have, or one that works to counteract the cool feel by visually turning up the temperature.

→ This kitchen is filled with warm, natural light, so a predominantly white scheme is fresh and welcoming rather than cold and sterile

Ben Interior Matt paint in White Dove and Silver Satin, both £20 for 0.94L, Benjamin Moore



Laura Ashley matt emulsion paint in Cotton White, £38 for 2.5L, Homebase

Matt emulsion paint in White 05, £45 for 2.5L, Lick

Absolute matt emulsion **paint** in Woad, £57.50 for 2.5L, Little Greene

Silk emulsion **paint** in Raspberry Meld, £14.99 for 2.5L, Wilko

Matt emulsion **paint** in Nickel, £15 for 2.5L, Wickes

This denim blue creates a restful feel that's ideal for a bedroom, where you want to feel cosy and relaxed

Premium Walls & Ceilings interior emulsion **paint** in Shale Blue, £37 for 2.5L, Valspar

5 Decide on the feel and function

Understanding the psychology of colour can help you make an informed decision when it comes to decorating each room of your house. Colour is a powerful tool and can influence your mood, emotions, and also the atmosphere in a space. So be sure of how you want your space to function before exploring the best colours to help you achieve this.

'Green tones are traditionally associated with balance and calm, and make a great foundation for your colour scheme,' says Sarah Lloyd, interiors and paint expert at Valspar Paint. 'Orange is a warm, inviting colour that invokes confidence and style in any room, but it should be used sparingly or interspersed with calmer colours, as too much can overwhelm a space. Blue is often used to promote a tranquil, calming environment, especially in bedrooms and bathrooms. It also helps us to de-stress, and using tonal and uniform blue combinations helps to de-clutter the room and the mind.'



Photo @sarah_dreamofhome

6 Consult the colour wheel

The colour wheel is a handy device used in interior design to see how colours relate to each other, allowing you to work out winning combinations with ease. The wheel is divided into 12 sections, each representing a colour, covering primary, secondary and tertiary hues that can be combined to create contrasting, harmonious and tonal schemes.

'Combining colours from opposite sides of the wheel allows you to create a dynamic and high-energy space, ideal for sociable rooms such as the dining room,' says Justyna Korczynska, senior designer at Crown Paints. 'You can also use a colour wheel to create a tonal scheme, using different tones, tints and shades of a single hue for a timeless finish.'

For a relaxing and harmonious scheme, choose colours that sit next to each other on the wheel as this will create a soft, layered look. For a considered effect, use your chosen colours across your paintwork, furniture and furnishings to give your room a complete makeover.

A tonal scheme is perfect for highlighting different features in the room with paint. Bring in other tones with accessories and soft furnishings to complete the look

Crafted by Crown flat matt emulsion **paint** in Cross Stitch and Made with Love, both £37.60 for 2.5L, Crown Paints

Johnstone's Wall & Ceiling silk emulsion **paint** in Ballet Slipper, £14.99 for 2.5L, Wilko

Vinyl matt emulsion **paint** in Dusty Rose, £15 for 2.5L, Wickes



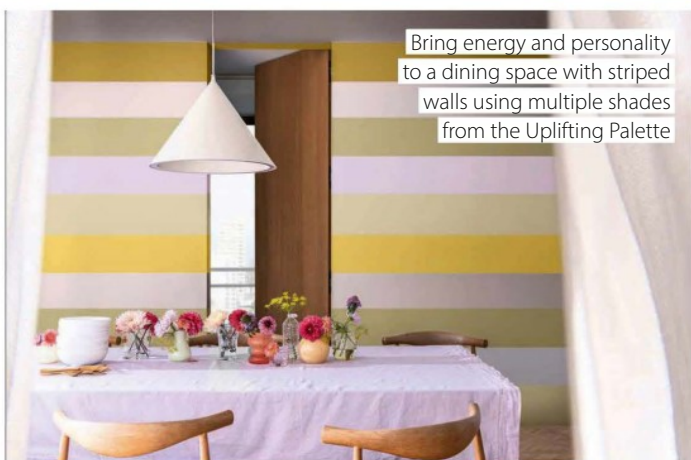
7 Let the experts help you refine your choices

If you're still struggling to settle on a palette of colours that work cohesively in your home, look to the professionals for help. The colour experts at paint companies often pull together palettes of their own hues, to show how they can work together in your home for an effortlessly put-together interior.

'Take inspiration from the Uplifting Palette from Dulux Colour Futures 2024 – a collection of gorgeous colours that can be used together in any combination to capture a feeling of joy,' says Marianne Shillingford, creative director at Dulux. 'Combine more than one colour on the walls and woodwork, then get creative with painted blocks, bands and stripes to define different areas for different activities. If you have a core palette of 10 colours, you can use it to decorate the whole of your home. Use one or two shades as the connecting thread in each room, and dial the other colours up or down to suit each space.'



In the bedroom, the shade Sweet Embrace takes centre stage to create a tranquil space, with a feature wall in Tailors Chalk and pops of yellow to lift the scheme



Bring energy and personality to a dining space with striped walls using multiple shades from the Uplifting Palette



In the kitchen, make the most of the warm shades by combining Sweet Embrace and Fragrant Peony as the main hues, with Rocking Horse as an accent



↑ Dulux's Uplifting Palette is comprised of 10 colours: 1 Sweet Embrace 2 Fragrant Peony 3 Tailors Chalk 4 Warm Straw 5 Lilac Skies 6 High Summer 7 Wild Wonder 8 Rocking Horse 9 Ochre Sands 10 Sandy Shallows
All matt emulsion paint, £36.49 for 2.5L, Dulux



Get creative with the Uplifting Palette in a home office area to make an eye-catching display that can be soothing, yet inspiring

Make it reign

With *Bridgerton* back on our screens for season 3 this month, period and Regency-era finishes are a hot design trend. Your home will be the talk of the ton with these royalcore ideas

Make an entrance

Create a sense of drama from the moment you step into your home with elegant faux floral displays and ornate patterns. The hallway is an often overlooked area but it's a great place to set the tone for the rest of your home – even if yours isn't quite on the same scale as this one! As this is a space you won't spend long in, you can get away with going all out with pattern and colour, without it feeling overwhelming. Match your colours with the patterns you're using for a cohesive look.

Bridgerton Royal Garden multicolour round rug, from £339, Ruggable

Classic Hotel 300 thread count **bed linen**, from £17 for a pair of pillowcases, Tielle Love Luxury



Get your beauty sleep

Spoil yourself with high thread count cotton bedding. These luxurious sheets are more densely woven than ordinary bedding, creating a slightly heavier fabric and, when woven with a satin weave, a silky smooth finish. This style of bedding tends to be more expensive but the high-quality fabric washes well and lasts longer than ordinary bedlinen – meaning your investment will pay off in the end.



Wall in Pompadour Wall Paint, £55.95 for 2.5L; **woodwork** in Pointe Silk Satin Paint, £24.95 for 750ml; **mural** in Duck Egg Blue, Old White and Antoinette Chalk Paint, £26.95 for 1L, all Annie Sloan

Fake those features

Paint and stick your way to grandeur with murals and moulding. With a steady hand and a bit of imagination, you can even add features using paint. This painted portico gives this doorway an irresistible sense of theatre. If painting isn't your thing, you can add pre-made mouldings instead. Make rectangular frames using beading and attach them to the bottom of your wall to create the effect of panelling.

Style idea

Get a luxe look on a budget with dramatic chandelier style lighting

Accentuate your lighting

Don't let modern lighting give the game away. Add opulence with plenty of softer options to create an elegant atmosphere. If you're renting, or don't fancy calling out an electrician, table lamps and free-standing floor lamps can help you create the same effect.



Charlotte 9 light chandelier, £140, BHS



Anderson table lamp, £60, The Cotswold Company



Brighton wall fitting, £95, Pooky



Style idea

Attach a picture rail and fit your mural underneath. You'll spend less on your mural and the picture rail adds period character too



Create a showy backdrop

A true period drama needs the perfect scenery, and you can set the stage using custom-made murals. These large-scale designs have a transportive effect, giving a sense of depth and space. Look out for designs that draw from artworks from the era you'd like to recreate – like this 19th century design from Sandberg. Using original source material will help you to create a more authentic look.

Chinoiserie Garden wallpaper
in Pink, £41.52 per sq m, Sandberg

Scallop trim **napkins**, £3.50 for 2; **wine glass** in Green, £3.50; plain Green **candle**, £1.50 for 2; Green ombre **candles**, £2 for 2; **candlestick**, £2.50; scallop **tableware**, from £3.50, all Primark



Set the scene

Give your dining space main character energy by creating a layered tablescape for hosting a stylish soirée. Displays like these can look tricky to pull off but the rules are straightforward. Create plenty of height by stacking up tableware; start with the widest pieces and work up to the smaller ones. Stick to a maximum of three colours and reference these across your pieces – for example, matching candles to glassware and napkins.

Read the {society} papers

A floral pattern is a fantastic way to set off your scheme. Here are our high street faves

Paloma Home Vintage
Chinoiserie wallpaper
in Blossom, £34 per roll,
World of Wallpaper



Laura Ashley Josette
wallpaper in Duck Egg,
£48 per roll, Next



Galerie Chinoiserie
wallpaper in Turquoise,
£54.95 per roll,
Decor Supplies

Casadeco Corne
D'Abondance **wallpaper**
in Bleu Faience, £61.10
per roll, Jane Clayton



Grandeco French Vintage
Toile Trees wallpaper in
Blue, £19 per roll, Wilko

Bolster the effect

Restyle your sofa for a time-travelling effect. You'll need two bolster cushions, one to place at each end with the short edges facing outwards. Choose a cushion that's the same length as the depth of your sofa but, if you can't find the perfect size, place the cushion so that a short end is level with the front of your sofa and fill in the gap with another cushion.



Shabby Chic by Rachel Ashwell velvet ruffle
jewel bolster **cushion** in Pink, £25, Next

Camille limewash oak extending **dining**
table and 6 rattan chairs, £3,093,
The Cotswold Company



Think French

French design comes with a sense of attention to detail. Choose furniture with extra curls, swoops and waves for a touch of something special. When searching for second-hand furniture online, try terms such as 'cabriole legs' and 'bow fronted'. Don't worry if the pieces are a little more shabby than chic: a gentle buff with a soft cloth and beeswax-based polish is often all you need to return them to splendour.

Style idea

Swap your bathmat for a machine washable, vintage-style rug. Try Ruggable or Weaver Green



Aura Bath & Spa Matte paint in Breath of Fresh Air, £37 for 0.94ml, Benjamin Moore

Bring luxury to the bathroom

Don't neglect your bathroom when it comes to creating an all-round royalcore look. It's a place where you can really treat yourself like royalty, so it should look the part too! Swap modern mirrors for something a little more elaborate and paint the frame gold. Introduce secondhand furniture, like an ornate chair to drape a robe over, or a chest of drawers to use as storage or upcycle into a washstand. When adding wooden pieces to high-moisture areas like bathrooms, give them a fresh coat of varnish for the best protection.

Premoda Arno Herringbone luxury vinyl flooring in Fawn, £45.99 per sq m, The Floor Room



Take to the floor

Turn every room into a ballroom by creating an authentic period parquet look with affordable, lookalike vinyl or laminate. Use tiles to create an infinite array of tessellating designs to complement period features. Alternatively, opt for large scale flagstone tiles for a gentler look.

Choose designs that draw from artworks from the era you're looking to recreate

Put a ring on it

Transform your bedroom with a regal bed frame. Avoid modern, angular four-poster bed styles and look for something with graceful lines and curves. These designs will allow you the option of adding draperies and curtains, but are also elegant enough to hold their own without them. If your room feels too bijou for a frame like this, consider adding a circular 'ciel de lit', or hanging canopy, which attaches to the wall or ceiling above your bed. These will require curtains, as they'll look a little disconnected without them. But you can use any lightweight, pre-made curtains that are the right length to touch the floor.

Waterloo iron four poster bed frame, from £799, The Original Bed Co.



Heritage hues

Create a modern Regency effect with these chalky colours in creamy pastel shades. Mix and match any or all of these colours for a perfectly curated period scheme.



Velvet Matt **paint** in Candle Cream, £49.37 for 2.5L, Dulux Heritage



Resistance durable ultra matt **emulsion** in Daisy Field, £56 for 2.5L, Graham & Brown



Vinyl matt emulsion **paint** in Lilac, £15 for 2.5L, Wickes



Claypaint in Forget-Me-Not, £52 for 2.5L, Fenwick & Tilbrook



Claypaint in Vanilla, £57.50 for 2.5L, Earthborn



Wall and Ceiling **paint** in China Rose, £39.99 for 2.5L, Rust-Oleum



Chalky **Emulsion** in White Doe, £45 for 2.5L, Craig & Rose

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One problem room Two new looks

Every month, we ask two interior stylists to solve a real room design dilemma, each creating a moodboard to help our reader find the perfect solution for their space

LOOK ONE: LA DOLCE VITA



Hannah's problem kitchen

➤ 'I love to bake, but I don't love spending time in this kitchen! It feels dark in here as there isn't much natural light. I'd like to know how to brighten up the room and add colour and personality, plus lots more storage. I prefer a modern vibe, rather than a classic country kitchen, and love green, although I'm open to trying new colours.'

LIKES:

Up-to-date interiors with a unique twist

DISLIKES:

Chintzy, fussy details and country style



Feya 5 light semi-flush **light** in Antique Bronze and Champagne dimpled glass, £159.60, dār lighting



Ravello **pot** with handles, £29, The Cotswold Company



Claypaint in White Clay and Bobble Hat, £57.50 for 2.5L, Earthborn



MARISHA TAYLOR

Why it works

This Med-inspired scheme is all about laid-back sophistication with a playful twist. Repainting the base cabinets in sea blue, adding blue-green tiles, and finishing with pops of terracotta pink, fun motifs and natural textures will lift Hannah's dark kitchen for getaway vibes at home. Swap wall cabinets for shelves and hanging rails to open up the space and keep things close to hand when baking inspo strikes.

Marisha's style tips

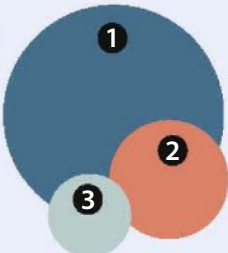
- White goods can be the first thing your eye is drawn to in a small space, but aren't easy to move or hide without a full reno. For a budget option, hang a curtain over them in a print to match your scheme.
- Stackable organisers, dividers, pull-out shelves and hooks attached to the backs of cupboard doors will maximise the space you already have and help to clear the clutter.
- Getting extra lighting wired in is expensive, so look for battery-powered LED options. Rechargeable, motion-activated strip lights can be added inside cupboards, or underneath wall units or shelving to illuminate food-prep areas.

Meet the stylist

Marisha Taylor is a stylist and writer with over 10 years experience. Based on the south coast, she has a passion for travel, people, and clever design. Find her on Instagram @mishytaylor_stylist.

Colour palette

Use these colours in these proportions around the room



- 1 Matt **paint** in Blue 05, £45 for 2.5L, Lick
- 2 Matt emulsion **paint** in Tuscan Rooftop, £38 for 2.5L, Lust
- 3 Matt emulsion **paint** in Serene Green, £48 for 2L, YesColours



Lemon tree bone china **mug**, £7.99, Gisela Graham



Origins jute Duck Egg **runner**, £94.99, Rugs Direct



Natural Home **glass jars** in bamboo stand, £12, B&M



Cone base gin **glass**, £15 for 2, M&S



Bon Appetito border **print**, £14, Madison Ball Creative



Shell **side plate**, £3.50, Primark



GoodHome Dukkah Brass effect kitchen **cabinet handle**, £14 for 2, B&Q



Bonaveno **storage tins**, £8.95 for 2, Rex London

ON-TREND SCALLOPED STYLE



Vaxthus **basket**, £13, IKEA

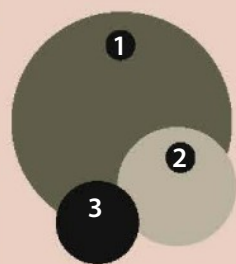
LOOK TWO: GLAMOROUS GREEN



Jug kettle, £55; 2-slice toaster, £65, both Cuisinart

Colour palette

Use these colours in these proportions around the room



- 1 GrafClean matt paint in Highland, £27.50 for 1L, Graphenstone
- 2 Modern Emulsion in Drop Cloth, £63 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball
- 3 Intelligent Eggshell paint in Jack Black, £39 for 1L, Little Greene

GoodHome Yarra pendant ceiling light in Red, £38, B&Q



Why it works

Lean into the lack of natural light with a dusky green kitchen. Combine harmonious shades of sage, olive and forest green with warm wood elements. Swap the tiles for marble print ones and wrap the worktops in a matching vinyl for the upscale look of marble without the price tag.

Tara's style tips

- If you're planning a full reno, pick tall wall cabinets and go handleless. This will reduce visual clutter and ensure every inch of a compact kitchen is used. For a savvy alternative, find stylish storage boxes that match the colour of your cabinets and put these on top.
- While an all-white space feels light and airy, it can also be clinical, so clever use of colours will create balance. Use light colours on the wall cabinets to draw the eye upwards, and use a mid to dark green on the lower kitchen units.
- Streamline accessories to a palette of two or three colours. Black, neutrals, and pops of red keep the space feeling curated and pulled-together.

Meet the stylist

Tara Rodrigues, winner of Channel 4's *The Big Interiors Battle*, focuses on biophilic and holistic designs. She draws inspiration from the textures, shapes and colours found in nature to enhance wellbeing. Find her at tararodriguesinteriors.com.

TARA RODRIGUES



HIGH-END LOOK



Red and Beige poster, from £15.95, Desenio



Green Hollis tall tumblers, £22 for 4, Next



Acacia wood serve board, £6, B&M

Faux fishbone succulent in aged pot, £16.99, Gisela Graham



Large walnut wood spatula, £7.50, Bohemia



Black metal circle caddy, £7.50, Matalan



Hatton wooden bar stool in Black, £119, Cult



Liseli vase in Natural Stone effect with Black detail, £42, Where Saints Go



Eco frying pan 28cm, £24, ProCook



Footed stoneware bowl, £29.99, H&M Home

Marrakesh Natural cereal bowl, £11, Rose & Grey

NEED STYLE ADVICE?

If you'd like our stylists' help with a problem room, send a photo of your space to homestyle@ourmedia.co.uk for your chance to appear in this feature.



St Giles kitchen, from £6,500
for 20 door fronts, Naked Kitchens

What did Hannah decide?

'While I love how fun Marisha's La Dolce Vita look is, Tara's Glamorous Green scheme is really sleek! I like the idea of the controlled palette as I'm not overly confident with colour, but I'll add a couple of bold prints to inject some of the playfulness of Marisha's scheme.'

5 OF THE BEST

Air purifiers

Breathe fresh, clean air with less allergens and pollutants using these handy devices

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR
 An air purifier has become a household essential, helping to keep allergens, dust, bacteria and contaminants at bay. A game-changer for allergy sufferers, they can make a big difference to the air quality in our homes. There are a few factors to consider before buying one. Here, we've looked at noise levels, size, portability, filters, and the room size each model is suited for, as well as any special features that make these air purifiers stand out from the crowd. So check out our top five to help you breathe easy this summer, and beyond.



1

Clean Air compact air purifier with touch control, £79.99, Russell Hobbs

With its three-layer filtration system, this model can catch up to 99.95% of airborne allergens. The filters should be changed every six-to-eight months, and there's a handy reminder so you don't forget! Measuring just 40 x 20cm, it's ideal for smaller spaces up to 10m sq and really easy to move from room to room. It includes three speeds and a night mode, where the colour-changing LED display dims and the fan speed slows, so as not to disturb your slumber.

BEST FOR: portability

2

Honeywell Air Genius 5 air purifier, £149.88, Amazon

This air purifier features a permanent, washable iFD filter and pre-filter to remove up to 99.9% of viruses. It also includes an odour- and VOC-reducing filter, which needs to be replaced every three months, to tackle smoke and food smells. Measuring 78 x 32cm, it works in rooms of up to 112m sq and has a sleek tower design that slots neatly into any space. There are five cleaning levels, with the noise reaching 48dB, however a sleep function keeps things perfectly quiet for a good night's sleep.

BEST FOR: ease of use

3

Blue Max 3250i, £149, BlueAir

Measuring 48 x 26.9cm and ideal for rooms of up to 48m sq, this stylish air purifier has a HEPASilent filter to capture at least 99.97% of airborne particles. The filter lasts six-to-nine months, but you can track its status via an app, so you can keep a replacement handy. This smart model can display real-time data about your air quality, as well as go into standby mode when you leave home and turn back on when you're nearby. Its low noise level of 18dB is great for light sleepers.

BEST FOR: affordable smart technology

4

HoMedics TotalClean 4-in-1 tower air purifier, £79.99, Amazon

A HEPA-type filter helps this model remove up to 99% of airborne allergens every hour; a replacement filter indicator lets you know when to change it. Measuring 30 x 19cm, it's suitable for rooms up to 27m sq, so ideal for a bedroom or home office, however its compact design makes it easily portable. There are three speeds, the fastest being a little noisy, although there is a quieter night mode. We love the aromatherapy feature – just add essential oil to the pads to infuse a subtle scent into your space.

BEST FOR: budget

5

Philips Expert Series 3000i connected air purifier, £484.99, John Lewis & Partners

The CleanHome+ app and voice control features for this model allow you to control the air quality in your home with ease. It has a HEPA and Active Carbon filter to remove up to 99.99% of allergens, which will need replacing periodically, and intelligent sensors that automatically adjust the settings. At 64.5 x 29cm, this model can tackle spaces up to 135m sq. Choose from four day modes, with a noise level of up to 56dB, or two near-silent night modes.

BEST FOR: larger spaces

★
EDITOR'S CHOICE

WIN! A chic bathroom suite worth £2,708

2 LUCKY WINNERS



TO ENTER

It's so easy! Head to yourhomestyle.uk, click on the 'Win' tab, find the draw you want to enter and fill in your details.

Closing date 30th June 2024 at 11.59pm

Overhaul your bathroom this year with a stylish new look! We've teamed up with bathroom distributor Frontline to give two lucky readers a bathroom suite from its Aqua range, each worth over £2,700!

Frontline's Aqua collection is designed to offer luxurious style at an affordable price, with timeless and contemporary pieces, as well as a selection of classic Italian-inspired products.

This brilliant prize includes: a bath; bath panel; close coupled toilet with cistern, soft close seat and dual flush technology; wall-mounted storage units; basin vanity unit; towel warmer and mirror in a black and chrome scheme.

The modern Aqua Medici single-ended bath features sleek lines and a streamlined profile. Winners will receive a plastic front panel, chrome Code bath mixer tap with round, turn-twist controls and Frontline chrome bath waste.

The Aquatrend wall-hung vanity unit includes a ceramic basin with chrome Code basin mixer tap and two drawers for plenty of storage, finished in stylish Matt Carbon. Winners will also receive a matching tall wall storage unit. Made from engineered wood, the storage and vanity units have soft-close hinges for quiet and safe use.

To finish your new bathroom in style, the lucky winners will also receive a black-framed LED Halo mirror with a demister and smart touch switch.



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1 The promoter is Our Media Limited (company number 05715415). 2 The closing date for the promotion is 30th June 2024 at 11.59pm. 3 The promotion is open to mainland UK residents only (not including the Channel Islands) aged 18 years or older. 4 The promotion is not open to Our Media Limited's employees or contractors and anyone connected with the promotion or their direct family members. 5 Curbside delivery is included. 6 Installation is not included. 7 Manufacturer guarantees are only valid if installed at the homeowner's address. 8 Entrants must accept responsibility for checking the dimensions of the suite before entering. The dimensions are: bath 1700x400x750mm; sink vanity unit 513x530x365mm; tall storage unit 350x1200x216mm; towel warmer 800x500mm. 9 For the full list of Terms and Conditions, visit yourhomestyle.uk/win.

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WIN...

Stylish suites

Go for pretty in pink with this fabulous range of modular furniture in Matt Peony, which offers simple Shaker design in a super-matt, fingerprint-proof finish. Team with white sanitaryware and a patterned wallpaper for a fresh look that will stand the test of time.

Mayfair wall-hung **basin unit** with White ceramic **basin**, £625; wall-hung **tall unit**, £450; Kenji Brushed Brass **mirror**, £210; Trend Brushed Brass ladder **radiator**, £403; Grace back-to-wall freestanding **bath**, £1,329, all Bathrooms to Love



Make a splash

with colour

Give your bathroom a fresh new look with shades in bold, nature-inspired tones, from coral pink and sunshine yellow to forest green and midnight blue

Gone are the days of the traditional plain bathroom – colour is in! Fortunately, this doesn't mean that you need to ditch your white suite, as there are plenty of ways to transform this hardworking space without breaking the bank. If you're looking to replace your sanitaryware with something a little more bold, colourful suites are no longer limited to 1970s avocado green – you'll discover options from subtle pastels to more vibrant shades.

If the existing suite is staying put, why not switch up your style by giving the walls a new look with paint? Always opt for a bathroom

emulsion to ensure it stands up to the daily wear and tear that a busy bathroom has to cope with. Green remains a popular hue for bathrooms, and it looks particularly stylish when teamed with a few humidity-loving houseplants, but choose whatever colours make you happy – we start and end our days in the bathroom, so it pays to go for a mood-boosting hue.

Budget-friendly updates are easy in the bathroom: the high street is filled with an array of gorgeous towels, mats and other accessories which will give your space an instant refresh. If you want to flex your DIY skills, you could refresh plain

tiles using colourful a grout pen, or revive tired flooring with a lick of paint. If you're feeling thrifty, spend some time trawling local secondhand stores and online for preloved pieces of furniture which, when given a good sand down and coat of paint, will add character to the room, as well as essential storage. The same goes for smaller accessories such as mirrors. Check out Facebook Marketplace for bargains and Instagram and Pinterest for some upcycling inspiration.

Though practicality is key, the bathroom can be a fun space to think outside the box – a little creativity will help you achieve a look you love.

Space saver

Make a style statement with this perfectly pink basin, which is a fun solution if you want to add some colour without overwhelming your space. It has a diameter of 36cm, so it's a handy choice even for a bijou bathroom. Choose a wall-mounted or high-rise mixer tap to complete the sleek look.

Arezzo round counter top basin in Matt Pink, £109.95, Victorian Plumbing



Play with paint

Create a work of art on your walls by using bold lines of colour to section off more muted shades. Crown's Easyclean bathroom emulsion is durable, mould-resistant and can be wiped clean, so it's perfect for busy bathrooms.



Crown Easyclean bathroom emulsion in Linen Cupboard, Teal and Soft Duck Egg, all £22 for 2.5L, all Wickes

Patterned towels

Need a quick fix? Add a few colourful towels to your scheme



- 1 Pure cotton wave towels, from £9.50 for a hand towel, M&S
- 2 Busenkel kids bath poncho with hood, £12, IKEA
- 3 Brights geo tufted bath towel, £12, Habitat
- 4 Burnt Orange geo towel, from £5 for a hand towel, Dunelm

Blank space

Adding colour to a white backdrop can make a big impact – ideal for those who are renting or on a tight budget. Go wild in the aisles and pick up a selection of purse-friendly accessories in your favourite shades for an affordable update. Or, if you're able to, give the tiling a twist by using a contrasting grout or a quick refresh with a grout pen.

Vägsjön hand towels in Golden Yellow, £3.50; Vilito step stool, £29; Kärrknipprot bath mat, £10; Storavan 3-piece bathroom set, £1.75; Enhet bathroom in White, £300 including wash basin cabinet, basin, tap, shelving unit, high cabinet and mirror, all IKEA





Moody hues

Go for a darker shade if that's more your style – it will still create a daring effect. We love this inky blue hue for a bold look, especially paired with brushed brass fixings. The acrylic panels are a super practical alternative to tiles, eliminating grout lines for easier cleaning.

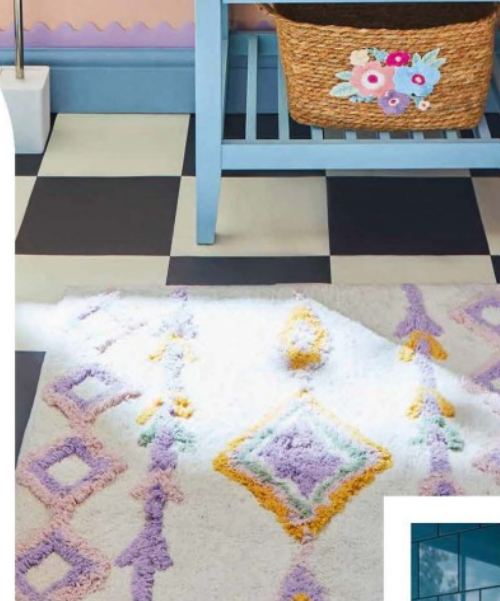
Starlight Sapphire wall panel, from £580.80 per 2400x896mm panel, Showerwall



Milano Legend freestanding double-ended slipper bath in Honey Yellow, from £999.99, Big Bathroom Shop

↑ Statement piece

Offered in a collection of eye-catching shades, this bath will add both elegance and colour to your bathroom. They're handpainted to order in the UK, and you can also choose from different finishes for the feet. Or, you could spruce up an existing tub with chalk paint (just don't forget the primer and sealant).



Tile style

Available in a range of 27 different shades, from bold primary colours to subtle pastels, these stunning tiles are the perfect way to give your walls some va va voom! Mix and match gloss and matt finishes, or play around with different tile sizes to personalise the look.

Matrix gloss tiles in Ocean Teal, £34.96 per sq m, Topps Tiles

← Colour clash

This leafy oasis features a lush green shade painted on the upper wall and ceiling, with a subtle pop of contrasting colours underneath. Keeping the remaining walls and floor a lighter colour balances the look, preventing the green from overpowering the space.

4 pro tips from the bathroom designers

Best for... tight budgets

'One of the simplest, most cost-effective ways to add colour to a bathroom is through painting and upcycling. Why not pick up a secondhand vanity unit and give it a new lease of life with some specialist furniture paint?'

Rikki Fothergill, bathroom style expert, Big Bathroom Shop

Best for... busy people

'Some bathroom reno projects can be time consuming, however, there are some quick ways to add colour. Installing a coloured basin, for example, will enrich your bathroom in a short amount of time. Similarly, replacing a tap can take as little as one hour, making it a really speedy update.'

Hannah Saunders, design expert, Victorian Plumbing

Best for... small bathrooms

'The latest furniture collections are a great way to add on-trend shades to your bathroom – as well as provide storage space which is essential in a small room. Adding coordinating coloured units will make it feel less cluttered, creating the illusion of a more spacious interior, especially if you opt for wall-hung units which free up floor space.'

Julie Lockwood, furniture product manager, Bathrooms to Love

Best for... rentals

'Renting makes it difficult to completely reinvent your bathroom, but accessories such as colourful towels, bathmats, shower curtains and storage can transform your bathroom from tired to inspired, without losing your deposit. Some landlords will allow you to make small changes to the property (though make sure you get written permission first). If so, installing mirrors or shelving units can re-energise your space.'

Hannah Saunders, design expert, Victorian Plumbing

Easycare Bathroom emulsion in Guild Green, Frosted Papaya and Rock Salt, all £36.49 for 2.5L, all Dulux



Budget buys

If you're working with a tight budget, let the accessories do the talking. Give your space a hassle-free makeover with affordable towels, bathmats and baskets, and reduce visual clutter at the same time – making your colours pop even more. You could also update existing furniture with a lick of paint.

Ultrasoft bath towels, £12 each; embroidered floral basket, £9; Pink stripe oval basket, £9; contrast woven storage basket, £9; reed diffuser, £3.50, all Primark

Two tone

If you're not sure where to start, pick a pair of colours and use these around the room. We love how this neutral scheme is elevated by pops of pink and sunny yellow. Green and pink or navy and pink schemes are also bang on-trend right now.

Ochre Yellow arches under sink storage unit, £145; Ochre Yellow tile soap dispenser, £10; Ochre Yellow tile toothbrush holder, £12; round wall mirror, £55, all Next



ADDING AN EN-SUITE GAVE MY LOFT A

high-end hotel vibe

Laura Hall squeezed a petite en-suite into her loft space to get the luxe feel she'd dreamed of, finishing the look with lashings of colour-pop coral

'My father was an antiques dealer and passed on his love of all things vintage to me, but I like to complement this with modern pieces to create a contemporary feel,' says Laura



Feature and styling Lisa Moses Photography Katie Lee



About me

I'm Laura Hall, an interior designer and content creator, and I live with my husband Graham, a software developer, and our two boys, Ben, seven, and Rory, five. Our home is a four-bedroom 1930s end-terrace in Woolton, Liverpool, which we bought in October 2015. I share my reno story on Instagram @thehexagonalhouse.

Laura loves the maximalist look, but pared it back slightly in this space: 'Pale pink walls, not too much furniture, and space for the room to breathe is my idea of minimalism. Compared with the rest of my home, I've toned this room down for a calm, relaxed feel'

TOTAL
£3,660



BEFORE



My problem bedroom

We originally had three bedrooms, but I knew that the boys would eventually want a room each. We wanted to retain a spare room so that family and friends could visit, which meant finding a way to create a fourth bedroom.

How I made it work

We decided to convert the loft space to make the extra bedroom. Although the loft wasn't boarded out, there was plenty of floor space and head

height, so it felt ripe for a conversion. Adding an en-suite in the design ensured it became a sumptuous main bedroom for myself and Graham.

My favourite part

Although it's smaller than I originally expected and more pared-back in terms of colour than the rest of our home, I love the luxurious feel we've incorporated into the en-suite. It's a nod to the sophisticated bathrooms in hotels we've stayed in.

Although our two boys were happy sharing a bedroom, we knew the time would come when they would want their own space. Graham and I also both work from home and our bedroom was regularly doubling up as an office, which wasn't ideal. So, a loft conversion was the obvious way to add more space and future-proof our end-terrace home.

We submitted the planning permission in 2019 but delayed starting the loft to allow ourselves time to save. When the build finally began, though, we realised the architect had drawn the steels and supporting walls in the wrong position, so we had to quickly get new plans, and we ended up having to remove the window on the side of the house to get the steels in.

It felt strange designing a space that I'd never actually been in, but I knew my scheme was always going to include plenty of colour and pattern. I also wanted to inject a calm, relaxing vibe, so I chose a soft pink for the walls, then made a feature out of the wardrobes, painting them vibrant coral and edging them with gold leaf detailing to elevate the look.

Unfortunately, we couldn't squeeze a bath into the en-suite, but slimline sanitaryware makes the most of this space. We also had to have an electric shower to help with water pressure, so I hunted around to find a stylish design with a waterfall head. I also chose shower panels rather than tiles, and LVT flooring; both low-maintenance options. I'm getting more confident at designing and I feel prouder each time I create a space, but I still pinch myself that I live in such a lovely home!

'The en-suite is the most pared-back room in the whole house!' says Laura



By choosing just a few key pieces, Laura has helped this room feel more spacious. 'Although the room is full of colour and pattern, I wanted the space to feel uncluttered, so I haven't put much furniture in here'

My shopping list

Vintage Mint wall **tiles**, £34.95 per sq m, Tile Mountain. Marmo Migliore **shower panel**, approx £225 per panel, Mermaid. Amore DuElec Gloss Black electric **shower**, £319.99, Triton. For similar shower screen, try the Arezzo Matt Black profile **wetroom screen**, £189.95; Metro rimless close coupled modern **toilet** and soft close seat, £189.95, both Victorian Plumbing. For similar shower tray, try Hydrolux low profile 1400 x 700mm **shower tray** with waste, £149, Plumbworld. Minnie Blush Pink wall-mounted **vanity unit** and polymarble **basin**, £229.99; Harbour Status Matt Black basin **mixer tap & waste**, £89.99, both Drench. For similar bath mat try Yellow daisy round **bath mat**, £10, Asda. Limes Oak+ LVT **flooring**, £49.99 per sq m; Walbrook Peyton Blue **flooring**, £57.49 per sq m, both Harvey Maria. **Walls** in matt emulsion paint in Watercolour, £48 for 2.5L; **cupboards** in eggshell paint in Cheerleader, £36 for 1L, both Graham and Brown. The Lowdown metal **cabinet** in Berry, £289, Mustard. For similar lights, try the Lena ribbed satin Gold-effect wired LED **wall light**, £35, B&Q. Joules Early Riser woven **throw**, £120; Joules Green hydrangea floral **duvet cover set**, £110; Joules hydrangea floral **cushion**, £40, all Bedeck Home. Folktales tufted flatweave wool **rug**, £110, Habitat. For similar vase, try the Geometric golden wall **vase**, £6.03, Temu. For similar gold leaf set, try the Wadities **gold leaf gilding adhesive set**, £18.99, Amazon.

'Although we lost some of the spare bedroom to the staircase, the design has created an L-shape which has worked nicely to allow for this extra seating area,' explains Laura

I'd never actually been into the loft before the work started, but I knew it was a big space with high ceilings so it was full of potential,



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'I wanted to make the most of the storage, so spent time working out the best combination for the doors to make them look balanced, especially as the central doors hide the chimney breast,' Laura explains

Style idea

Utilise every inch of storage so that colour and pattern, rather than clutter, can shine



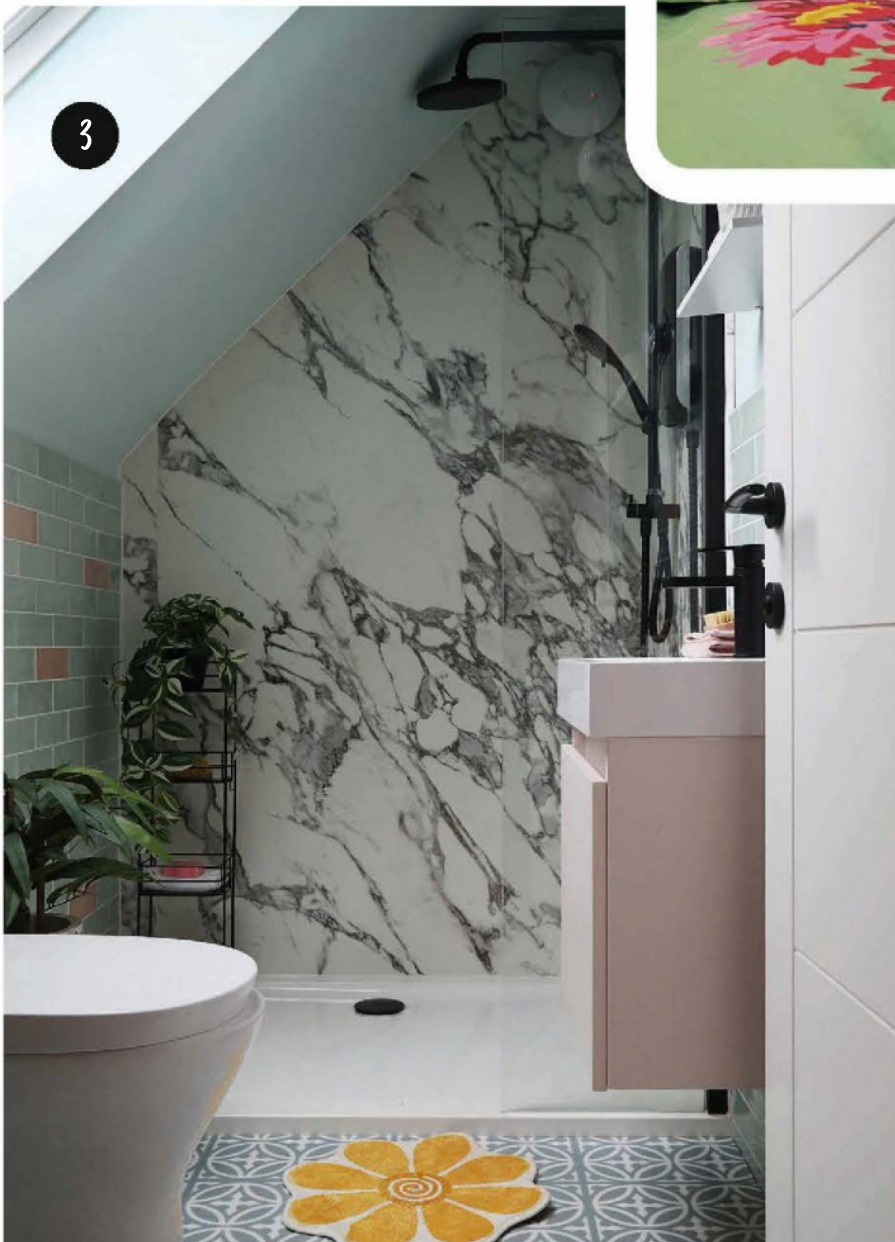


1



2

TURN OVER
to shop
Laura's
bold look
→



3

Style advice

Three simple tricks
to try in your own home

1 Gold glow up

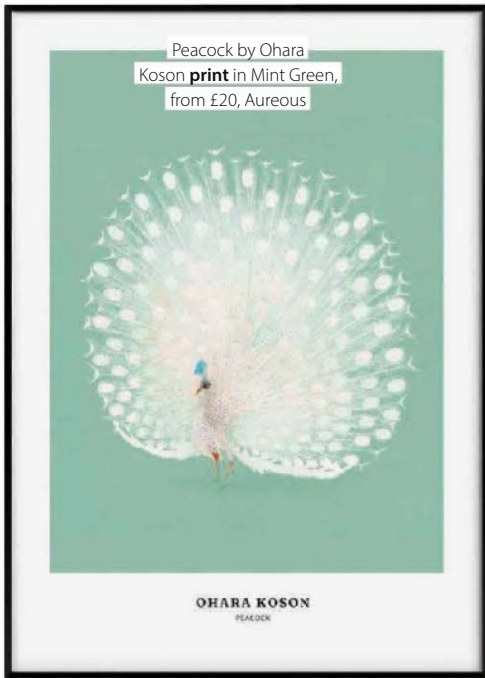
Add some zing to your mouldings, like Laura has done with the wooden beading on her fitted wardrobes and doors. You will need to buy a gold leaf kit online. 'Brush on the glue, leave it to go tacky, then add the gold leaf, which I simply rubbed on,' says Laura. 'At first it looks messy, but trust the process, as when it's brushed off the finished effect looks beautiful – though I am still finding bits of gold every time I clean the room!'

2 Dopamine decor

Decorating with warm colours, such as pinks, reds and oranges, can help us feel happier, so Laura loves to embrace lots of joyful colours and bold pattern in her interiors. 'I chose plenty of tactile materials to add texture, which all helps inject an uplifting vibe. For me, these bright, warm tones raise my energy levels, though ultimately I subscribe to decorating your home in any way that makes you feel happy.'

3 Make a splash

Shower panels are a low-maintenance, cost-effective alternative to tiles. They don't require any grout so there's no discolouring to contend with, making them easy to clean and more waterproof, too. 'As I only needed two panels, they were also cheaper, quicker and easier to install than tiling the whole space,' Laura explains. 'They come in a wide range of colours and finishes – I chose a matt marble effect to create a modern, sophisticated look.'



Peacock by Ohara Koson **print** in Mint Green, from £20, Aureous



Felted wool pom pom **garland**, £25.50, Funky Chunky Furniture Co.



Green ceramic scalloped **planter**, £15, Matalan

Style idea

Create a boutique hotel feel and layer throws and cushions on the bed



Aris cotton weave **throw** in Catkin, £25, Dunelm

GET THE LOOK

Peach fizz

Copy **Laura's** tropical cocktail of coral pink and fresh mint for a scheme guaranteed to quench your thirst for colour

USE IN A DRESSING AREA



Gold flamingo **wall hooks**, £19.95 for 3, Melody Maison

Eppy fabric **accent chair** in Mint Green, £99, Habitat



Ochre mimosa **faux floral** in vase, £15, Nutmeg Home



LAURA

For me, these bright, warm tones raise my energy levels



Pastel textured **tealight holders**, £24 for 5, Next



Mustard Made Lowdown **locker** in Berry, £289, Rose & Grey

Shell collection abstract **print**, from £18; abstract shell cut outs **print**, from £18, both Violets Print House



Get the look

Matt emulsion **paint** in Friendly Peach, £25 for 1L, Yes Colours



Large glass **candle** with rope handle in Green, £12, B&M



Style idea

Break up a bold colour palette with plenty of pattern



Coral and checked **cushions**, £25 for 2, M&S

REVERSIBLE DESIGN

3 OF A KIND... GOLD WALL LIGHTS

Lena ribbed satin Gold effect wired LED **wall light**, £35, B&Q

Knurled Edison double **wall light** in Brass, £79, Industville

Lainey **wall light** in Matt Black and twisted glass, £37.20, dār lighting



Honolulu **wallpaper** in Ochre, Rose Pink and Teal, £48 per roll, Lust Home



Tropez Mint patterned **tile**, £56.71 per sq m, Porcelain Superstore



Green **tealight holder**, £1, Primark



Ask the *experts*

How to deal with nuisance neighbours

Our experts solve your DIY dilemmas. This month, we help address troublesome issues with neighbours



PAULA HIGGINS

CEO of HomeOwners Alliance



NICK DONLON

Housing expert at Citizens Advice



ANNABEL CLARK

Dispute resolution partner at Keystone Law



ESME WHEELER

Pet welfare expert at RSPCA



Privacy is a common issue in overlooked gardens, but there are ways to smooth things over

Q I want to raise the height of my fence for privacy, but my nosy neighbour wants the space left open – do I need their approval?

Paula Higgins, CEO of HomeOwners Alliance, which exists to give practical help to homeowners across every aspect of buying, owning and selling, says... 'Most residential properties can have a fence up to two metres in height – including trellis – without requiring planning permission. If you plan to install a higher fence, then you will need to seek approval from the planning department of your local authority. If this is the case, then your neighbour will be able to raise an objection, but you do not need to get their approval as long as the fence is on your property.'

That said, it's essential to be clear about the boundaries of your property and to check that the fence is indeed yours, as it is possible to have a shared boundary or fence. You can do this by looking at your property deeds. Contrary to common belief, there is no hard and fast rule as to who gets the front (or smooth side) of the fence.

If you are paying for the fence, it can face any direction you like, as long as the posts are within your boundary. But we would always advise that you avoid getting into a dispute with your neighbour by letting them enjoy the smooth side of the fence; especially in this case, where they are not happy with the fence in the first place.'



When water drips through from the flat above you, it's time to talk to your landlord

Q There is a leak in my flat coming from my upstairs neighbour. We are both renters, living in a converted terraced house. Who's responsible for repairing the leak and fixing the damage?

Nick Donlon, housing expert at Citizens Advice, who has worked in housing advice for over a decade, says... 'If the leak from your neighbour's flat has caused damage to the structure of your home, then your landlord is likely to be responsible for repairing it. Your landlord might also be responsible if your home isn't safe for you to live in, but only once they know about this damage. Your landlord is unlikely to be liable for any damage to your belongings if they weren't responsible for the leak.'

If the flood or leak was caused by your neighbour being careless, for example they left the bath to overflow, you could make a claim against your neighbour on the grounds of nuisance or negligence. You could claim for the damage caused to your belongings, but in this case it's best to first speak to your neighbour.

If you share the same landlord with your neighbour and the cause of the leak was the failure to make repairs in their flat, which is down to your landlord, then they could also be responsible for the damage caused by the leak.'

Q My next-door neighbour has set up a holiday rental in their garden and now they have noisy guests there most weekends – can I ask them to stop?



A music curfew could help reduce the noise of a nearby holiday rental

Annabel Clark, a dispute resolution partner at **Keystone Law**, who handles cases across a wide range of areas, says... 'The first thing you should do is talk to your next-door neighbour who, if they continue to live in their house while renting out their garden room, may also be concerned by the noise from their holiday guests most weekends. You should express your concerns about the level and timing of the noise nuisance, and suggest some reasonable restrictions to include. For example, a time when outside music should be turned off, the number of guests allowed, and anything else relevant to your particular circumstances.'

If they are unwilling to cooperate, you may wish to consider with the local authority planning department whether they have the correct permissions to let out the garden room as accommodation. Different planning

If the disturbance is regular, keep a diary to record the time, duration and nature of the noise

regulations apply when there are bedrooms in garden rooms. You can also report particular instances of noise nuisance to the council. If it's regular, keep a diary to record the time, duration and nature of the noise. If it's a one-off that is unbearable, you should call the local noise abatement officer. Every set of circumstances is different, and if in doubt you should take legal advice.'



Even adorable dogs can be noisy enough to annoy the neighbours!

Q I work from home and my neighbour's dog barks all day while they are out of the house – is there anything I can do?

Esme Wheeler, RSPCA pet welfare expert and clinical animal behaviourist, says... 'Dogs bark for lots of reasons – and their owners may not be aware that they're barking when they're out. In the first instance, please approach them to let them know; they may appreciate the information so they can address any issues, such as separation-related behaviour problems, which is one of the most common causes of barking and affects approximately eight in 10 dogs.'

Dogs should never be left for long periods, and teaching dogs to settle for short periods can take some time, so please be patient with your neighbour.

If this doesn't help, then you should contact the local authority to make a noise complaint. Please don't call our emergency hotline, as our teams are incredibly busy trying to help animals suffering cruelty and neglect, and a call about a barking dog could block our phone lines. Council staff have statutory powers, so are better placed to investigate the barking and will contact us if they have welfare concerns we can assist with.'

5 handy tips for keeping the noise down

Be a considerate neighbour by minimising noise in your own home

- 1 Place rugs above hard flooring or invest in padding beneath carpet, to help reduce footfall noise. This can be particularly beneficial on stairs and upper floors.
- 2 Hang heavyweight curtains in front of windows and your front door, as a barrier to block out sound.
- 3 Upgrade cabinet door and drawer hinges to soft-close mechanisms, or add adhesive bumper pads to help absorb impact and prevent slamming.
- 4 Strategically place large pieces of furniture – such as bookshelves or sofas – against shared walls to act as sound absorbers. Also try to seal cracks and gaps around the skirting with caulking, to prevent noise travelling between the walls.
- 5 Establish mutual quiet hours with your adjoining neighbours. Night hours are generally accepted as being from 11pm until 7am. Being mindful of noise during early-morning and late-evening hours can contribute to a more harmonious living environment for everyone.



Adding rugs to hard flooring, and heavy curtains in front of doors and windows, can help to absorb sound.

Pearl Wheat made-to-measure curtain, from £125, Hillarys

POPPY BENNER, ECO CHAMP



Savvy home solutions

Make your home life simpler and more sustainable with handy household hacks and hints, product reviews and easy eco swaps

3 ESSENTIALS FOR

al fresco cleaning

Get ready for summer with a quick spruce-up of your outdoor area, from patios and decking to barbecues



1 This brush's stiff bassine bristles (made from natural palm leaves) makes light work of sweeping debris from gutters, plant pots, tools and other dusty parts of the garden.

2 Blast away stubborn dirt with this self-assembled pressure washer. It's a great-value option that saves you scrubbing by hand, with a 6 metre hose for easy manoeuvrability.

3 Apply this concentrated formula with a brush, sponge or cloth to clean up unsightly rust spots. It'll make outdoor furniture, barbecues, fire pits and even trampolines look like new again.



5 STEPS TO...

Organise your fridge

- 1 Start by removing everything** and cleaning the fridge thoroughly. Set aside any items that don't really need to go back in the fridge, such as bananas, potatoes and tomatoes, and pop these into baskets or serving bowls instead.
- 2 Create a 'Use me first' shelf** at the top of the fridge and move leftovers up here, as well as any food about to go out of date – this is a great way to reduce waste.
- 3 Rearrange the other shelves**, as certain foods last longer when stored in specific areas. Upper shelves are better for spreads, the middle shelf is the most consistent temperature so is best for eggs and dairy, and meat and fish should go in the drawers at the base of the fridge, which is the coldest part.
- 4 Maximise storage** by making use of vertical space: use stackable, transparent containers so you can see where things are in an instant. Try storing carrots, limes, and broccoli in jars of water to prolong their lives; put berries and leafy greens in airtight containers lined with kitchen towel.
- 5 A turntable organiser** is ideal for condiment jars, helping to make items at the back of the fridge more accessible, and less likely to be wasted.

Bags of joy



Add a pop of colour to your weekly shop with the new statement totes from Kind Bag. More than just a pretty design, these eco-friendly shoppers are made from RPET fabric which comes from 100% recycled plastic. In fact, each bag saves six plastic bottles from ending up in landfill or the ocean. Easily foldable into a handy pouch, they're super-strong too, holding up to a whopping 20kg!



Sustainable smiles

You're probably already aware of smol's dishwashing and laundry products, but did you know the brand also makes bamboo toothbrushes? According to smol, 256 million toothbrushes are thrown out in the UK every year. Bamboo is recyclable, has a lower carbon footprint than plastic, and regrows quickly, making these stylish toothbrushes a perfect plastic-free swap. They're even colour-coded for busy households, too.



Bamboo toothbrushes, £7 for 6, smol

3 ON TEST... ECO LAUNDRY SHEETS

Laundry sheets offer a plastic-free alternative to liquid detergents, but how effective are they at removing stains and keeping whites bright? Do they make your washing smell nice, and are they good value for money? I put three to the test... I put three to the test...



Best for removing stains

I found these laundry sheets performed well, even on a white t-shirt that was a bit stained. I thought the 'Uplifting' scent was very fresh, and I was pleased with the overall clean they gave. They left my clothes and towels feeling really soft, too. For their eco credentials (less packaging so lower carbon footprint, biodegradable materials and naturally derived stain removers), I think they're worth the 37p per sheet and would use them again.

5 MINUTE FIXES

Have a bit of extra time? Here are three quick tasks to do this month



Toronto 4-slice toaster, £49.99, Salter

1

← Clean the toaster

Turn off the toaster and leave it to cool down, then remove the crumb tray and shake it out into your compost bin. For any leftover crumbs inside the toaster, use a brush to dust them away. Wash and dry the tray thoroughly before putting it back.

Paper purge →

Quickly blitz each room in the house looking for old newspapers, magazines, birthday cards, junk mail, or any receipts no longer needed. Separate into piles, ready for donation, shredding or recycling.



2

← Sanitise switches

Light switches are regularly used but not often cleaned, and can become a hotspot for bacteria! To banish those germs, spritz a microfibre cloth with antibacterial spray and give each switch a quick wipe down.



3



Best value

I was pleasantly surprised by how well these sheets dissolved on a cool wash, leaving no residue or mess. When I tried them on a muddy set of kids' clothes, one sheet wasn't enough to completely shift the dirt, but I do live in a hardwater area. I'd continue to use them on lighter loads, as the Fresh Blossom scent is so lovely. Plus they offer good value at £4 for 25 sheets, which works out at 16p per sheet.



Best for sensitive skin

Even on a cold wash these strips worked really well at shifting dirt, but I did feel that two strips were necessary for a decent-sized load, making the price per wash more like 50p. I liked the really subtle but fresh linen fragrance, and was impressed by the zero-waste packaging. After using them for a while, I noticed that my skin was feeling softer and less itchy, which was an added bonus I wasn't expecting.

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MIDWEEK MEALS TO MAKE IN MINUTES

Simple springtime suppers to make on repeat!



Monday

TAGLIATELLE WITH ASPARAGUS AND MUSHROOMS

PREP TIME 10 minutes
COOK TIME 20 minutes
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 40g salted butter
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 150g chestnut mushrooms, wiped and finely chopped
- 200g lighter soft cheese with garlic and herbs
- 150ml single cream
- 100ml white wine
- 6g fresh parsley, finely chopped
- salt and pepper
- 400g tagliatelle
- 2 x 100g packs asparagus tips
- 20ml extra virgin olive oil
- 40g Parmigiano Reggiano, to serve

METHOD

- 1 Melt the butter in a wok or large frying pan and sauté the onion for a minute. Add the mushrooms then cook for another couple of minutes.
- 2 Add the soft cheese, single cream, white wine and parsley. Season with salt and pepper, then cook on a low heat for a couple of minutes.
- 3 Meanwhile, cook the tagliatelle in a large pan of boiling water for about 8-10 minutes, as per the directions on the pack.
- 4 Cut the asparagus in half and sauté them in the olive oil for 2-3 minutes. Drain the pasta and add to the mushroom sauce, toss in the asparagus and gently heat through. Serve with shavings of Parmigiano Reggiano.

COOK'S TIPS

Use a vegetarian hard cheese alternative if you want to make this dish veggie. Reserve a cup of starchy pasta water and add it to the mushroom sauce to make it extra silky.

Recipe and image courtesy of Aldi, aldi.co.uk



Tuesday

SWEET AND SOUR PORK

PREP TIME 5 minutes
COOK TIME 15 minutes
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 500g pork fillet, cubed
- ½ red pepper, deseeded and cubed
- ½ green pepper, deseeded and cubed
- 350g canned pineapple pieces
- 3 balls of Opies stem ginger in syrup, chopped, plus 30ml ginger syrup (from the jar)
- 1 glass of sherry
- 30ml red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 4 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp cornflour
- noodles or rice and pak choi (optional), to serve

METHOD

- 1 Heat the oil in a pan and cook the onion, pork and peppers for 3-4 minutes.
- 2 In a bowl, combine the pineapple pieces and juice, chopped ginger, ginger syrup, sherry, vinegar, tomato purée, light soy sauce and sugar. Add to the pan and cook gently for 8-10 minutes until the pork is cooked.
- 3 Blend the cornflour with a little water to form a smooth paste and then add this to pan, stirring continuously until the sauce thickens.
- 4 Serve with rice or noodles and pan-fried pak choi, if liked.

COOK'S TIPS

Try mixing it up by swapping the pork for chicken, or use tofu instead for a vegan option. (If making it vegan, omit the sherry or use an alternative such as vegan dry white wine.)

Recipe and image courtesy of Opies, opiesfoods.com



Wednesday

CAESAR WEDGE SALAD

PREP TIME 10 minutes

COOK TIME 15 minutes

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 50ml buttermilk • 50g soured cream
- 50g mayonnaise • 1 tsp lemon juice
- 75g Belton Farm Red Fox cheese, crumbled
- salt and pepper • 150g bacon lardons
- 100g ciabatta, torn into bite-sized chunks
- 4 large eggs • 2 little gem lettuces, each cut into 4 wedges • 100g radishes, thinly sliced
- chives, to garnish

METHOD

- 1 Make the dressing by blitzing the buttermilk, soured cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice and 50g of Red Fox cheese in a blender. Season and chill until ready to serve.
- 2 Fry the lardons off in a pan until golden and crispy. Remove the lardons with a slotted spoon, then fry the ciabatta chunks in the fat until crispy. Put to one side.
- 3 Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil over a medium heat. Using a slotted spoon, carefully lower 4 large eggs into the water. Cook for 6 minutes, adjusting the heat to a gentle boil.
- 4 Rinse the eggs in cold water, gently crack all over and peel off the shells. Add the lettuce wedges to a serving platter. Slice the eggs in half and place them around the wedges. Pour over the cheese dressing and top with sliced radish, crispy bacon bits, croutons and chives. Finish with crumbled Red Fox cheese.

COOK'S TIPS

Vary this dish by adding any combination of salad veggies, including tomatoes, ribbons of courgette, or peppers. Make it veggie by swapping the bacon lardons for capers or olives.

Recipe and image courtesy of Belton Farm, beltonfarm.co.uk



Thursday

GRILLED MACKEREL AND WATERCRESS SALAD WITH ORANGE AND CHILLI

PREP TIME 20 minutes

COOK TIME 5 minutes

SERVES 2

INGREDIENTS

- 2 oranges • ½ tsp ground coriander • ½ tsp ground black pepper • 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped • 4 mackerel fillets • ½ tsp Dijon mustard • ½ tbsp good-quality honey • 85g watercress • ½ small red onion, finely sliced

METHOD

- 1 Preheat the grill to medium-high. Zest half an orange and mix well with the coriander, black pepper, and half the chopped chilli.
- 2 Lightly score the skin of the mackerel fillets with a sharp knife, being careful not to cut into the flesh. Press the spice mixture into the skin.
- 3 Segment the oranges: cut off the top and bottom, then cut away any peel and pith using a paring knife. Holding the peeled orange over a bowl to catch the juice, use the paring knife to cut each segment away from the centre. Put the segments to one side and squeeze the peel to release any juice.
- 4 Measure 2 tbsp of the orange juice into a small bowl, then mix in the mustard, honey and remaining chopped chilli.
- 5 Place the mackerel fillet skin-side up on a grill tray. Grill for 4-5 minutes or until cooked through with crispy skin.
- 6 While the fish is cooking, divide the watercress between two plates. Scatter with the orange segments and sliced red onion. Drizzle with the orange dressing and top with the grilled mackerel. Serve immediately.

Recipe and image courtesy of The Watercress Company, watercress.co.uk



Friday

ROAST PEPPERS STUFFED WITH SPICED TOMATO RICE

PREP TIME 5 minutes

COOK TIME 40 minutes

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- For the peppers** • 4 red, orange, or yellow peppers
- 250g cherry tomatoes • 2 tbsp olive oil • sea salt and pepper
- For the rice** • 1 tbsp olive oil • 2 leeks, cleaned and chopped • 3 cloves garlic, sliced • 1 tbsp smoked paprika • 1-2 tbsp harissa paste • 250g packet of pre-cooked rice • 1 x tin Tarantella peeled plum tomatoes • 70g green olives, chopped (optional)
- 1 tsp sea salt • fresh herbs, bread and salad, to serve

METHOD

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4. Cut the peppers in half lengthwise and remove the seeds and stalk. Place in a large baking tray. Add the cherry tomatoes to another baking tray. Drizzle both trays with oil and season. Bake both for 30 minutes, then remove from the oven and set aside.
- 2 In the meantime, fry the leeks gently in olive oil until soft, then add the garlic. Fry for a further minute. Add the smoked paprika, harissa, pre-cooked rice, tinned tomatoes, olives and salt and stir to combine. Cook for 5 minutes. Set aside.
- 3 Spoon the rice filling into the baked peppers and bake for another 10 minutes. Remove from the oven. Top with the roasted tomatoes and herbs, and serve with a leafy salad and bread.

COOK'S TIPS

Mix up the filling with lentils or beans. For a budget swap, use dried rice instead of pre-cooked and simply boil it while prepping the leeks.

Recipe and image courtesy of Tarantella, tarantellauk.com

A photograph of a dining table with a basket of roasted chicken, a glass of beer, a pan of food, and a bowl of greens. The scene is set on a light blue wooden table. In the center, a pink wire basket lined with white paper is filled with golden-brown, charred chicken pieces. To the left, a silver pan with a wooden handle contains a mixture of fried items and green vegetables. In the foreground, a clear glass filled with beer and several metal skewers is visible. To the right, a pink bowl contains fresh green herbs. The background shows a person wearing a blue denim shirt.

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Gather the gang and celebrate the bank holidays with a colourful feast of small plates and sharing tapas dishes

← Peri peri wings

PREPARATION TIME 10 minutes, plus marinating time (optional)

COOKING TIME up to 40 minutes

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1kg chicken wings
- 4 tbsp peri peri seasoning
- salt and black pepper
- 4 large red chillies, roughly chopped
- 4 red birdseye chillies, roughly chopped
- juice of 1 lemon
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped, to serve (optional)

METHOD

1 If liked, cut the wings into 2 pieces (called the drumette and the wingette). You will end up with more pieces of chicken, which is a great way of feeding a crowd. Alternatively, leave them as they are. Put in a mixing bowl and season with 3 tbsp of peri peri seasoning and salt and pepper.

2 Put all the chillies, 1 tbsp of peri peri seasoning, the lemon juice, oil and salt and pepper in a food processor. Blitz them until smooth. Add a drop more oil if you like the sauce a little looser.

3 Reserve half the sauce for later and pour the other half over the wings. Massage it into the wings. Leave to marinate if you have time.

4 For best results, cook on a barbecue: make sure it's very hot first, then cook the wings for 10-12 minutes, turning every 2 minutes until they develop a black char all over. Alternatively, to oven bake: preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4, put the wings on a baking tray and cook for 20 minutes. Turn the wings over and bake for a further 20 minutes.

5 When the wings are cooked through, brush on the remaining half of the sauce. Serve with the coriander, if using.



Recipe and image courtesy of Feed Your Family for a Fiver in Under 30 Minutes by Mitch Lane (£16.99, Harper Thorsons)



→ Marinated green olives

PREPARATION TIME 15 minutes

COOKING TIME 2 minutes

MAKES 400g

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium oranges
- 3 tbsp Spanish extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp sherry vinegar
- 2 tsp white sesame seeds
- 1 tsp freshly crushed black peppercorns
- 400g manzanilla olives in a jar, drained and rinsed
- a few fresh mint leaves, washed and patted dry

METHOD

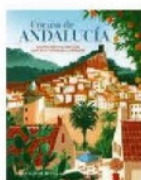
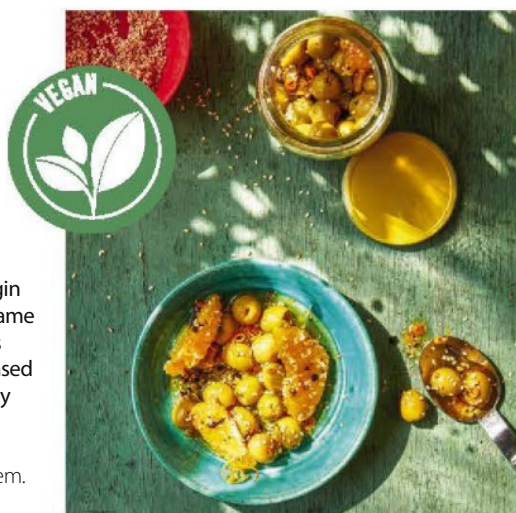
1 Wash the oranges, and grate and juice one of them. Set the other aside.

2 In a bowl, using a hand whisk, mix the orange juice and zest with the olive oil and the vinegar.

3 Peel the second orange, removing all the pith, and use a small knife to cut it into segments.

4 In a small frying pan, toast the sesame seeds until they colour and release a nutty aroma.

5 To a serving bowl, add the toasted sesame seeds, peppercorns, olives, orange segments and mint leaves, before adding the juice. Mix well and serve.



Recipe and image courtesy of Cocina de Andalucía by María José Sevilla (£22, Ryland Peters & Small). Photography by Nassima Rothacker © Ryland Peters & Small

↑ Spicy prawns with garlic and chilli

PREPARATION TIME 5 minutes

COOKING TIME 5 minutes

SERVES 2 (more if part of a tapas platter)

INGREDIENTS

- 25ml olive oil
- 300g shell-on king prawns
- 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 red chilli, finely sliced
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- a good pinch of Maldon chilli sea salt

METHOD

1 Heat the oil in a heavy-bottomed frying pan. When nice and hot, add the prawns, sliced garlic and chilli. Fry until the prawns are pink and slightly charred, and the garlic is golden – approximately 2-3 minutes.

2 Take the pan off the heat and stir the paprika and Maldon chilli sea salt into the oily sauce, tossing to coat the prawns.

3 Serve immediately with some crusty bread for mopping up the juices, if liked.

Recipe and image courtesy of Maldon Salt, maldonsalt.com



Mac and cheese croquettes

PREPARATION TIME 30 minutes, plus chilling
COOKING TIME 30 minutes
MAKES 4-6

INGREDIENTS

• 1 tbsp butter • 5 tbsp plain flour • 250ml whole milk • 300g Belton Farm Red Fox cheese: 200g melted for the mac and cheese and 100g crumbled for the centre of the croquettes • 1 tsp English mustard • salt and pepper • 200g bacon lardons • 200g macaroni • 3 eggs, beaten • 300g panko breadcrumbs • vegetable oil for frying • chives, finely chopped • 1 lemon, cut into wedges

METHOD

1 Melt the butter in a small pan. Add 1 tbsp of the flour and whisk on a low heat for 1 minute. Gradually whisk in the milk, then bring to a boil, whisking occasionally. Reduce the heat and simmer for 4 minutes or until thick. Stir in 200g of the Red Fox cheese until melted, then stir in the mustard and season with salt and pepper.

2 Cook the bacon lardons until crispy. Boil the pasta in salted water until al dente, drain well and mix with the cheese sauce and cooked bacon. Spoon into a small baking dish and put in the fridge for 2-3 hours (or overnight) to set.

3 Crumble the remaining 100g of Red Fox cheese. Scoop out heaped teaspoonfuls of the macaroni and, with slightly wet hands, place a piece of cheese in the centre and roll into balls.

4 Put the remaining 4 tbsp of flour into a dish and season. Put the eggs and breadcrumbs in separate dishes. Roll the balls in each then once more in the egg and breadcrumbs. Chill for 10 minutes.

5 Fill a deep, medium pan no more than one third full with oil. Heat until the temperature reaches 180°C. Fry the balls in batches until deep golden and crisp. Drain on kitchen paper then keep warm in the oven while you cook the rest. Serve topped with flaky sea salt, chopped chives and lemon wedges on the side.

Recipe and image courtesy of Belton Farm, beltonfarm.co.uk

→ Figs with prosciutto and blue cheese

PREPARATION TIME 10 minutes
COOKING TIME 6-10 minutes
SERVES 6

INGREDIENTS

• 6 large figs (or 12 small ones) • 60g creamy blue cheese, such as Gorgonzola • 6 large thin slices prosciutto • balsamic glaze, for drizzling

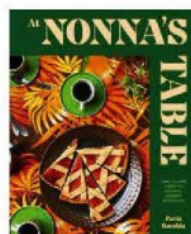
METHOD

1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan/gas mark 5. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
2 Cut the figs in half, from the stem towards the base, but don't slice all the way through. You want the figs

to still be connected at the base. Place a small amount of blue cheese inside each fig, dividing it equally.

3 Close the figs up and wrap a prosciutto slice around each one, to hold it together.

4 Place the figs upright on the baking tray, spacing them apart. Roast for 6-10 minutes, depending on the size of the figs, until the prosciutto is partially crisp, the cheese melted and the figs warmed through. Serve warm, with a drizzle of balsamic glaze.



Recipe and image courtesy of At Nonna's Table by Paola Bacchia (£26, Smith Street Books). Photography by Paola Bacchia



Add some spice to this classic Spanish tapas dish with fillings of peppers and chorizo



Tortilla

PREPARATION TIME 15 minutes

COOKING TIME 30 minutes

SERVES 6

INGREDIENTS

- 300ml Spanish olive oil
- 2 white onions, thinly sliced
- 1kg potatoes (Desiree or Maris Piper work well)
- sea salt, to season
- 6 medium eggs

METHOD

- 1 Heat a couple of tablespoons of olive oil in a small saucepan. Add the onions and cook slowly until very soft, brown in colour and very sweet. Reserve for later.
- 2 Before you start cooking the potatoes, choose a frying pan light enough to lift with one hand, and a plate light and big enough to cover the pan when it comes to turning the tortilla over. Place the plate near the sink.
- 3 Peel and thinly slice the potatoes. Rinse, pat dry and season with salt. In the pan, gently heat the remaining oil over a medium heat until a small piece of potato sizzles when dropped in. Now add all the potato and turn regularly. Once the potatoes are nearly ready, add the onions.
- 4 When cooked, tip the potatoes and onions into a colander over a bowl to drain the oil. Season, if needed. Beat the eggs in a large bowl and add the potatoes and onions, mixing thoroughly.
- 5 Heat 1-2 tbsps of the reserved oil in the frying pan. Pour in the egg mix and cook for 2-3 minutes. Gently push the tortilla away from one side of the pan to check that the underside is just light brown in colour.
- 6 Place the plate on top of the pan and turn carefully so that the tortilla lands on the plate. Turn the pan right-side up and slide the tortilla back into the pan to cook the other side. Cook for another couple of minutes. Check the centre, which should remain fairly moist, with a wooden skewer. Place a clean plate on top of the pan so you can turn the tortilla back over again.



Recipe and image courtesy of *Cocina de Andalucía* by María José Sevilla (£22, Ryland Peters & Small). Photography by Nassima Rothacker © Ryland Peters & Small

Beef and shallot empanadas

PREPARATION TIME 25 minutes, plus 1 hour resting

COOKING TIME 30 minutes

SERVES 6-8

INGREDIENTS

For the dough

• 450g plain flour • 1 tbsp salt • 60g unsalted butter • 1 egg • 6 tbsp water • 1 tbsp vinegar

For the filling

• 2 eggs, hard-boiled • 1 tbsp of olive oil
• 4 echalion shallots, peeled and chopped
• 1 garlic clove • 1 tbsp dried oregano • 500g beef mince • 1 tbsp raisins • 1 tbsp pitted green olives, roughly chopped • ½ a 400ml tin of chopped tomatoes • vegetable oil for frying

For the green sauce

• 1 small bunch of tarragon • 2 large bunches of flat-leaf parsley • 2 round shallots, peeled
• 3 tsp Dijon mustard • 40g small capers, drained, rinsed and roughly chopped • 200ml extra virgin olive oil • 2 tbsp sherry vinegar

METHOD

1 Start with the dough: mix the flour, salt and butter in a bowl by hand until it comes together. In a separate bowl, beat the egg, water and vinegar, and add to the flour dough. Knead the mixture on a clean, floured surface until it comes together as a rustic dough. Set aside, covered, in the fridge for one hour.

2 To make the filling, peel and cut the hard-boiled eggs into thin slices. Heat the oil in a large pan on a medium heat then cook the echalion shallots until golden brown. Add the garlic and oregano, cook and stir for two minutes. Add the beef mince and cook for 10 minutes until browned. Add the raisins, olives, eggs and chopped tomatoes.

3 Meanwhile, make the green sauce by blitzing all the ingredients to a chunky texture in a blender.

4 Take the dough and roll out with a rolling pin to form a rectangular sheet around 2cm in thickness. Then, using a small bowl or cup, cut out circles around 12cm in diameter. Take a circle of dough and fill it with 2 tbsp of the beef filling. Then, fold the dough over and mark the edges with a fork to close the empanadas.

5 To deep fry, heat enough vegetable oil to submerge the empanadas in a large, deep frying pan. Add a few empanadas to the oil at a time, cooking for 4-5 minutes until golden brown. Serve with the green sauce on the side.

Recipe and image courtesy of UK Shallots, ukshallot.com



☞ Cheeseburger nachos

PREPARATION TIME 15 minutes

COOKING TIME 20 minutes

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

• 1 tbsp olive oil • 1 onion, finely diced • 450g minced beef • 2 tbsp BBQ sauce • salt and pepper, to taste • 200g bag lightly salted tortilla chips • 75g Cheddar cheese, grated • 75g Monterey Jack cheese, grated • 2 tomatoes, diced • ½ jar Opies Mini Gherkins, roughly chopped • ½ jar Opies Mini Silverskin Onions, roughly chopped • 6 tbsp burger relish • 50g sliced jalapeños, optional

METHOD

- 1 Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 6. Heat the oil in a pan and gently fry the onion for 5-6 minutes until softened. Add the minced beef and fry for a further 5-10 minutes until browned, then stir in the BBQ sauce and season generously.
- 2 Meanwhile, spread a third of the tortilla chips over a deep 20x20cm ovenproof baking dish so that they overlap, then scatter with a third of the cheese. Add layers of minced beef, tomatoes, gherkins and onions until all the chips have been used, followed by the remaining cheese.
- 3 Place the dish in the oven and bake for 10 minutes or until the cheese has melted.
- 4 Remove the dish from the oven, drizzle over the burger relish and scatter over the jalapeños if using.

Recipe and image courtesy of Opies, opiesfoods.com

☞ Spinach tarte du soleil

PREPARATION TIME 15 minutes

COOKING TIME 30 minutes

SERVES 4 (or more as a sharing plate)

INGREDIENTS

• 100g spinach • 2 sheets of puff pastry (300g each) • 1 egg, beaten • 1½ tbsp Dijon mustard • 120g Cheddar cheese, grated • 60g Parmesan, finely grated • black pepper • 1 tsp poppy seeds

METHOD

- 1 Wash the spinach and put in a heatproof bowl. Cover with boiling water and leave for 30 seconds, until softened and wilted. Drain and cool completely in cold water. Drain again and then squeeze out as much water as you can before roughly chopping it.
- 2 Roll each pastry sheet out into a large circle (26cm diameter). Put one circle into the fridge and the other on a lined baking tray. Brush around the edge with beaten egg. Smear the inside of the circle with mustard and then scatter over the chopped spinach and ¾ of the Cheddar and Parmesan. Season with black pepper.
- 3 Remove the second sheet from the fridge and place it directly on top, pressing the edges together to seal. Mark the centre on the circle by pressing the rim of a small glass or cup onto it.
- 4 Lightly score the circle into 24 equal divisions through the centre (use the edge of a ruler). Take a large sharp knife and cut each line to the mark you

made with the glass rim, to give 24 spokes radiating out from a central hub.

5 One by one, take the end of each spoke and give it a full turn, making 2 distinct twists in the length. Try to bring the end back down in line with the circle edge. Do this all the way around.

6 Brush the whole tart with beaten egg and

sprinkle the poppy seeds and remaining cheese across the top. Return to the fridge for 10 minutes to rest, while you preheat your oven to 190°C/170°C fan/gas mark 5. Bake for 25-30 minutes until golden brown. Serve warm.

Recipe and image courtesy of Riverford, riverford.co.uk



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Pashley Deck Chair **accent chair** in Poppy, £1,099



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'To get into this kind of detail with upholstery you end up going bespoke, but all this lovely upholstery geekery that I really enjoy in my job is something I wanted to bring to this high street collection,' says Sophie

Feature Sophie Ellis

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Sophie Robinson

Ready to get colour confident? The interiors expert has designed a new range with DFS so you can embrace bold hues and banish the beige for good! Well, almost...

You may have seen Sophie on the latest series of BBC One's *Interior Design Masters* as a guest judge, or you might have heard her co-hosting the chart-topping podcast *The Great Indoors*. Now, Sophie has teamed up with DFS to create a capsule collection of sofas, armchairs, footstools and scatter cushions in her signature style of bright hues and bold patterns, with the aim of encouraging us to dial up the dopamine in our decor and make our homes all the happier for it.

In-between her busy diary of launch events, expert talks and her own design workshops, we were excited to chat to Sophie about the new range, and ask her tips for adding maximum colour with minimal fuss – and which hues to avoid at all costs.

We love your collab with DFS! Tell us a bit about the collection...

The main inspiration was to bring a collection of colours, fabrics and patterns together so people could feel confident to use colour in their home. So I put together a palette, which is all my sort of bright, joyful, positive, saturated colours, but they're also

quite warm so they work really well with both period and contemporary homes.

You can mix and match knowing that the colour story is coherent across the collection and create something that's quite individual. I think the idea of the matching three-piece suite is pretty dead and buried and people want to be more experimental with their decor, especially people who like to use colour and pattern. My wish is that people will be able to really explore their personal pattern style.

Which are some of your favourite pieces?

It's really hard because I designed my ideal capsule collection and I love it all! What I'm really excited about is to see what other people do with it. We created room sets for the photoshoot to give you an idea of how I'd put things together, incorporating bold wallpaper and rugs, and different colour schemes. I'm excited to see what colours are selling and what people are going for. I'm hoping to hear that it isn't only the beige! Because yes, you can have beige – well, we're calling it 'Biscuit' – so it's a Sophie Robinson sofa for people who want something

more neutral but then you'd add the pattern with the cushions. I've actually had a couple of pieces delivered to my home and the Pashley accent chair comes in the bold red and pink Deck Chair stripe and it's the most fabulous armchair I've ever seen.

You're known for your love and use of colour. Why is having a colourful home important?

Colour impacts our emotions; people have an emotional reaction to colour. We've been going through a period of people not connecting to their interior spaces, and people really want to now. I think the pandemic has a lot to do with that. People being in their homes longer than they've ever been made us really consider how our homes make us feel, and colour really delivers that.

So when you're looking for a sofa or a paint palette, you need to get in touch with how that colour makes you feel. Does it make you feel happy and bright and sunny and positive? Or does it drain the life out of you? It's definitely not a one size fits all – that's why there are so many colours and patterns in this range. It's an opportunity to explore your

Standen 4 seater **sofa** in Buttercup, £1,499;
Standen Honeycomb square buttoned **footstool**
in Buttercup, £629



If you're renting or in a new build, this is a great time to start investing in your look and style

Fairlight 4 seater **sofa** in Aqua, £1,499;
Wakehurst **footstool** in Cobalt, £599; Pashley
Plain Jane **accent chair** in Leaf, £1,029



relationship with colour because home is our safe space, our haven, and this is a place we retreat to. We should be surrounded by the things we love and the colours that make us feel our best.

What are your colour trend predictions?

I think that working out what our own relationship to colour is, is actually more important – especially when you're making a big investment like a sofa. DFS found that people typically keep their sofas for seven years so it's quite a considered investment choice.

In terms of general trends, we're going to see more colour: it's continuing to be really popular. We've got an Aqua colourway in the sofa which I think is going to be quite big. I'm seeing lots of lilac and lavender tones, maybe replacing the pink eventually.

What's the easiest way to add colour to a rental, and to a new-build property?

Get the colour on the walls with the paint – that's the fastest, most affordable, most transformational way to get colour into your space. But then it does bring me on to the sofa as it's a really big piece of furniture, and I think because of that a lot of people default to a neutral. If you're renting or starting out in a new build, this is a really great time to start investing in your look and style. Choose the bold colour for the large piece of furniture that's going to give you so much more visual bang for your buck. Or if it's not the sofa, maybe it's an

accent armchair or a footstool on a colourful rug. I think the big elements make the most visual impact – sofa, rugs, artwork, paint – so you can create a massive transformation quickly.

The other thing that's important is to understand that it takes time to build your look. We live in such a fast-paced social media world where everybody looks like they've decorated their house over a weekend. The reality is that I've been in my home eight years, and I've just about got it how I want. But get your look and your colour palette tapped from the get-go and then layer up, knowing that every purchase or every decision builds on this. You want to make a big splash, but remember that doing up a home is like a journey, rather than a destination.

What are your top tips for mixing colours? Can you make mistakes with it?

Oh no, people can make mistakes – I wouldn't have a job if it was that easy! You can build up quite complex colour palettes, which could be four, five, six, seven, eight different colours, and those are the ones that trip people up. I suggest that you take a hero print – it could be a piece of artwork, a cushion, a fabric swatch, a wallpaper – which will have a complex colour palette within it. Often you can use that to draw out your paint colour, your sofa colour, your flooring colour, because you know that palette works really well together as the designer, who's an

expert of colour, put that palette together.

And beware of pure brilliant white and pure black – be very, very afraid of those two colours because they can create real discord and disharmony very easily. Pure brilliant white is such a hard and chemical colour. And pure black is also very cold and quite often, in this part of the world, we want to create warm and cosy colour schemes. Those are the two colours, or non-colours, that I personally never use in any of my schemes and I would also tell people to be really wary of them. So instead, go for an off-white or a graphite grey.

You've recently been on our screens as a guest judge on BBC One's Interior Design Masters series 5 – what's it like judging other people?

It's brilliant, I love judging other peoples' designs as I don't have to do any of the work! It's the dream job, isn't it? I wholeheartedly take my hat off to the designers. They look like they work hard on the telly but they work 100 times harder in real life. It's such a quick turnaround: they have to get the ideas, they have to source the items, they have to get it all ready to go up, they have to keep stopping to be filmed. I think the designers who work on the show are amazing. They really pull together and support one another, which is such a heartwarming thing.

Finally, we often see your pet dog on your socials – should dogs be allowed on the sofa?!

Yes, they should! She's so spoilt that she's allowed on the sofas and therefore anything that's in my house has to be really durable, hardwearing and practical. I'm not precious. I love my home and I love that it looks lovely, but I also want it to be a home that people live in and feel relaxed in. And I wouldn't give up my sofa cuddles with my dog of an evening for anything – it's the best part of the day!

Shop the DFS x Sophie Robinson sofa collection in selected stores and online at dfs.co.uk. Keep up to date with Sophie at [@sophierobinsoninteriors](https://www.instagram.com/sophierobinsoninteriors) on Instagram.

Discover the latest interior collections, collabs and must-haves!



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