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Embracing little luxuries...

OK yes, I may have bought yet another scented candle yesterday, even though I didn't specifically need one. Guilty as charged! But when the nights are drawing in and the days feel so dull and grey, I'll take any pick-me-up I can get my hands on. It's the interiors-lovers take on the 'lipstick effect' – we're on a tight budget and I may not have the funds for all the big projects and purchases I'd love to tackle right now (and to be honest, there are way too many on the wish list to count), but I'll make up for it with small indulgences instead.

> "A scented candle is the interiors-lovers take on the 'lipstick effect'"

I find a scented candle is the perfect little luxury to hit the spot, but I'm also partial to a new cushion or houseplant. Luckily, this issue is packed with stylish and affordable buys to give your home a quick update (I'd start with the brilliantly curated 20 under £20 on page 18), alongside big ticket stuff like new kitchen worktops (page 163). The *Ideal Home* team are amazing home bargain hunters, tracking down gorgeous pieces that look great, but won't break the bank.

The new season always brings fresh new looks, and we've rounded them up in a bumper bonus 'magazine' inside – 30 pages of what's hot on the high street right now, from cosy country to understated modernism. Turn to page 65 now to indulge in some feel-good inspiration.

Heather

HEATHER YOUNG, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

idealhome.co.uk

THIS MONTH DON'T MISS...

Get switched onto kitchen and bathroom lighting, plus expert advice on keeping warm and tackling damp

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IDEAL HOME EXPERTS



KALPANA FITZPATRICK
MONEY EXPERT
An award-winning financial journalist and author, Kalpana shares her money-saving tips in her monthly column on page 173



ALI LOVETT
HOUSES EDITOR
Ali led the judging of the fantastic entries in this year's Reader Home Awards – turn to page 151 to see the worthy winners – congrats all!



MICHELA COLLING
SHOPPING EXPERT
Trends enthusiast Michela searches out hidden gems from the high street and independents that will add the final flourish to a room.



CHARLOTTE BOYD
INTERIORS STYLIST
Charlotte is a stylist with over 15 years' experience styling rooms. She shares her decorating know-how in Looks that Last on page 22.


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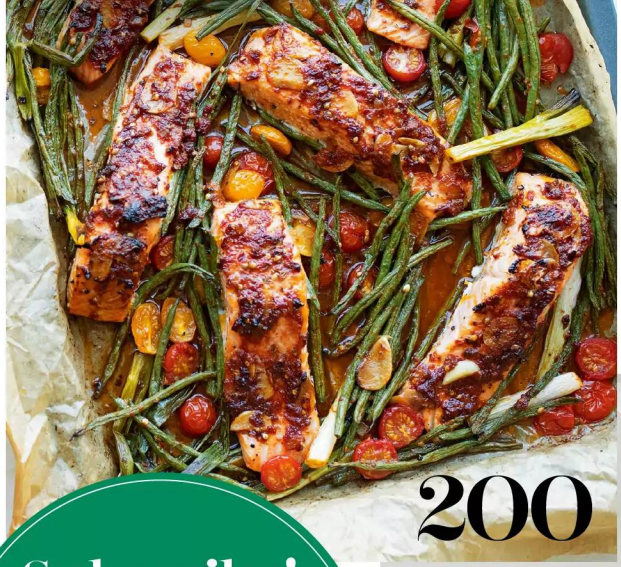
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SUBSCRIBE ON PAGE 166 FOR YOUR MONTHLY INTERIORS FIX



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BE CANDLE SAFE Enjoy the special touch that candles add to your home; but take care to use them safely: Always place lit candles well away from foliage, furniture, curtains and soft furnishings, and always out of draughts. Keep candles out of reach of children and pets. Never leave a burning candle unattended. Keep candles away from hair and clothing. Always place candles upright in suitable holders that can't easily fall over. Always be sure that candles are properly extinguished.

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Stockholm extending dining table with four chairs and a dining bench in dark oak, £1,995; Stellar distressed Orange rug, from £119, all Furniture Village

STYLE STATEMENT

Colour drenched

Dramatic teal tones are just right for creating a cocooning, colour-drenched scheme, saturating everything in one colour – walls, ceiling, woodwork, radiators, furniture, the lot! Furniture Village has a new collection in rich teal and rust (the perfect accent), as well as dark oak furniture, including the Stockholm dining set (shown here) to perfectly complement a moody scheme. Elsewhere in the collection, the Sleep Story Dice bed frame in Plush Atlantic is equally dreamy with its deep blue shade.

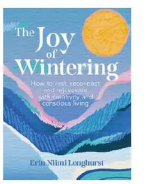


IH LOVES...

Bobbin edges

Large Gold Bobbin oval wall mirror, £175, Click Style

What to do this month...



READ In her new book, *The Joy of Wintering* (£12.99, Harper Collins), Erin Niimi Longhurst presents a strong case for simply taking it easy, teaching us why rest should be embraced rather than stigmatised so that we can lead more productive, creative and conscious lives – and avoid the dreaded burnout.

LISTEN Want to know how to ditch the mum-guilt? Or how to keep your children safe on social media? Or maybe you'd like to learn the secrets behind a great night's sleep? On the *Motherkind* podcast, Zoe Blaskey speaks to those in the know about these and many other modern-day parenting challenges.



DO If you love magical winter illuminations, visit Aglow at Auckland Palace, by The Auckland Project, in County Durham. From 22 November to 31 December, the grounds will be alight with awe-inspiring installations. We hear Father Christmas will be appearing, too, at the Christmas at the Palace event from 15 November.



Scallop stripe frill duvet cover set, from £15; Pink scallop tuft cushion, £12; Scallop side table in Green, £32, all George Home



Neston armchair in Olive Green sustainable velvet, £399, Cult Furniture

IH LOVES...

Olive has usurped sage and emerald to become this season's must-have green!

NEED TO KNOW

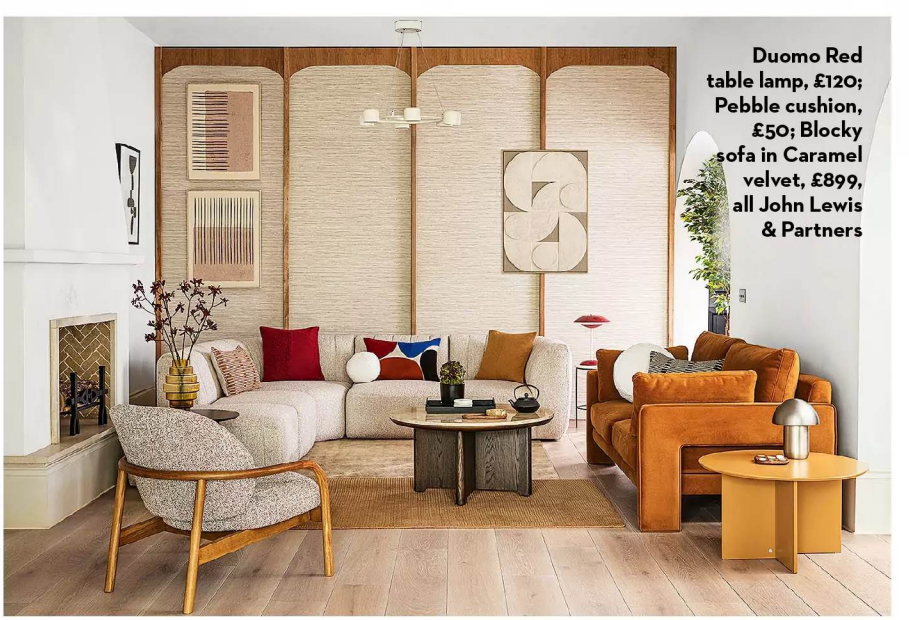
PAST TIMES

If you've been looking for interiors inspiration lately you'll have noticed that heritage styles are on the up. George Home has a new collection that will evoke that sense of grandeur at a purse-friendly price, bringing together elements from different periods: think nouveau-esque bed linen, Morris-inspired prints and renaissance-style busts (all shown here). We also love the patchwork single duvet set, perfect for styling a child's bedroom with the same look.

SURPRISE IN STORE

Red shots

Red has certainly been getting attention recently, with primary colours being a hot trend and TikTok's Unexpected Red Theory taking social media by storm. So it's no surprise that John Lewis & Partners' colour of the season is Rebel Red, in which it has introduced key pieces that will lift any scheme, including the modern Duomo Red table lamp and Pebble cushion (both shown). If classic is more your style, look out in store for the striped cushions or spindle dining chairs.



Duomo Red table lamp, £120; Pebble cushion, £50; Blocky sofa in Caramel velvet, £899, all John Lewis & Partners





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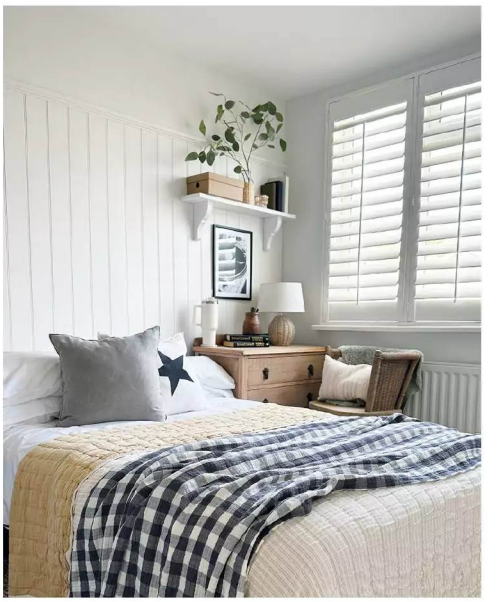
WE KEEP SEEING

'New nostalgia

Old meets new may not be an original concept in interior design, but with the safe, nostalgic feeling it creates, it's little wonder we crave it. For extra comfort this winter check out the offerings from M&S – you'll find quilted patchwork and embroidery, bold checks and stripes, ruffle trims and scallop edges, all in a muted palette of green, red and blue with some vibrant mustard pops.



Striped rug, from £149; Striped bolster, £19.50; Joshua table lamp, £49.50; Velvet Patchwork cushion, £25; Embroidered Floral cushion, £35, all M&S



WE'RE FOLLOWING

@interiors71

YOUR BEST DECORATING DECISION IN YOUR HOME? Adding panelling to the walls and keeping the backdrop neutral.

SECRET STYLING IDEA? Keeping to a neutral colour palette throughout my home so I can swap accessories about for a new look without spending any money and 'shopping my home'.

FAVOURITE CORNER? That's a hard one. Probably any corner of my living room, especially the built-in cupboards and shelves, or my little boot-room peg shelf.

ITEM THAT SPARKS JOY? My white linen bedding. I adore linen. Also my beautiful wicker tray on the living room footstool.

FEATURE LAURA HIGGINS

IH LOVES...

'This pared-back design is just one of the timeless pieces from a collab between two iconic 'British brands.



Habitat x Morris & Co. Canterbury writing desk in oak, £350, Habitat



DESIGN FOR LESS

High street heroes

THE DESIGN EDIT

Now and then, the high street comes up with something so utterly fabulous, it looks as if it's come from a designer boutique. Here are some of our latest discoveries that will make your home look more expensive without the big spend...

WHERE TO BUY **1** Natural linen wave shade, £45, Habitat x Morris & Co **2** Woven Stripe bolster cushion, £22.50, M&S **3** Tray, £35.96, Søstrene Grene **4** Patterned wool-blend blanket in Light Beige/Dark Brown, £34.99, H&M Home **5** Anjou metal side table in Terracotta Red, £89, Att Pynta **6** Petit Folkstone stripe armchair, £169, Dunelm

FEATURE MICHELA COLLING

| EDITOR'S CHOICE |

20 UNDER £20

DESIGN FOR LESS

Everyone loves a bargain – and our editor-in-chief Heather has hand-picked her fave buys for this month



Oil burner, £3, **B&M Home**



Raya pendant, £19.99, **Wilko**



Lattad place mat, £3.50 each; Entusiasm bowl, £12 for set of four; Verdagen glasses in Turquoise, £6 for four, are similar; Strimmig plate, £15 for four, all **Ikea**



Habitat 60 Tam Tam plastic stool in Blue, £18, **Habitat**



Churchgate blue glaze diffuser, £15, **Dunelm**



Rattan and metal hanging hooks, £18, **John Lewis & Partners**



Bobble picture frame, £6, **Habitat**



Woven reed basket, £18, **Bohemia Design**



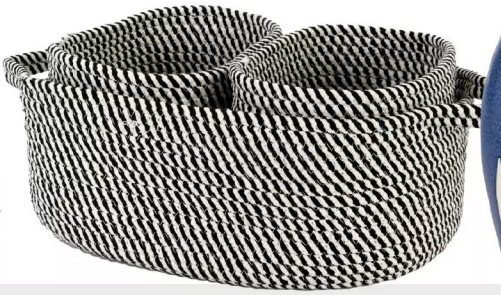
Rok vase, £12.99, **Dobbies Garden Centres**

ℒℒ Style saver



Blue line glass wall art, £18 for two, **Very**

Cotton rope baskets, £9 for three, **Primark Home**





Vase, £19.48, **Søstrene Grene**



Primal Navaho hand towel, £4; Primal Navaho bath towel, £7; Natural stone-effect tumbler, £4; Natural stone-effect soap dispenser, £6, all **George Home**



Textured edge mug, £16 for four, **Marks& Spencer**



Elements salt and pepper mills, £10 each, **Dunelm**



Cabana rattan planter, £14, **Matalan**



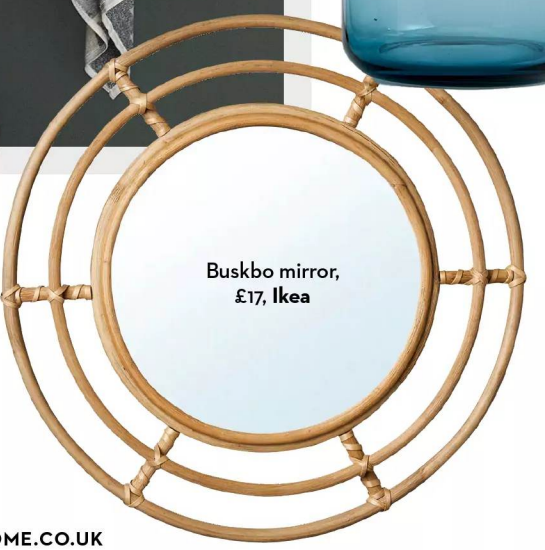
Tribeca tumbler, £14 for four, **Marks & Spencer**



Plain plaited cushion, £12, **George Home**



Cotton cushion cover, £14.99, **H&M Home**



Buskbo mirror, £17, **Ikea**









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IDEAL IDEA

Gallery wall

Decorative plates grouped together can make a wonderful gallery wall display, especially when set against a richly patterned wallpaper. Choose a good mix of both patterned and plain plate designs for variety.

HEATHER YOUNG,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

BORÅSTAPETER BLOMSTERVALL WALLPAPER, £84 A ROLL, WALLPAPER DIRECT



Create a relaxed, personal feel by mixing handcrafted ceramics and artwork with new furniture pieces, adding pattern with colourful woven rugs and cushions.

Verne **chest of drawers**, £679; Elysse **chair**, from £469, both Swoon. For similar **rugs** and **cushions**, try Graham & Green

WALLPAPER
Kew Olive wallpaper, £120 a roll, Warner House

PAINT
Old Rose emulsion paint, £48 for 2.5ltr, Neptune

FABRIC
Rozalia Vintage Blanche linen fabric, £110m, Divine Savages

MODERN arts & crafts

TRENDS COME AND GO, BUT HERE'S HOW TO GIVE THIS LOOK TIMELESS APPEAL

Walls painted in Rolling Fog, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. Chess weave **rug**, £799, West Elm. Column **coffee table**, £399; Lexington **loveseat** in Natural Deep Green velvet, £999, both Atkin and Thyme. Canterbury reeded glass **cabinet**, £350; Merton **armchair**, £500; Hammersmith **side table**, £95; **lamp** in Strawberry Thief, £45, all Habitat x Morris & Co. **Bud vase**, £12 for three, Habitat. Ardini **floor lamp**, £359, Lights and Lamps. Mustard large **planter**, £98; Striped candleholder **bowl**, £11, Green **vase**, £35, all Spicer and Wood. Abstract White **candle holder**, £12.48; Terracotta **candle holder**, £55; **sheepskin**, £65; Brown speckle **bowl**, £12.50, all Graham & Green. House Doctor Mollie **cushion cover** in Camel, £40; Madam Stoltz embroidered **cushion cover** in Hazelnut, £40; HK Living woven **cushion** in Meadow, £55, all Folk Interiors

WONDER WALL

For a fresh twist on classic wood panelling, use an oversized, modern geometric design painted in a soft sage green. Contrast with pops of William Morris botanical-inspired prints on the upholstering and lighting



PATTERN DRENCH

Papering the walls in a floral design and adding garden-inspired fabric at the window and on seat pads creates a warm, comforting space with a connection to nature

Blind made in Bower in Herbal/Weld, £119m; Borage **wallpaper** in Leafy Arbour, £105 a roll, Emery Walker Collection, Morris & Co



Embroidered diamond **rug**, from £179; scalloped **side table**, £99; wooden pillar **candle holder**, £9.50; ceramic floral **vase**, £15; ceramic stripe **vase**, £24.50; ridged **planter**, £12.50; Trim **vase**, £29.50; rattan **table lamp**, £59; Sherwood **chair**, £299; geometric bolster **cushion**, £17.50, all M&S

TRY BOTANICAL MOTIFS

Flora and fauna-inspired designs are key to this look connecting spaces to the natural world. For pattern lovers, mix and match stylised leafy prints in earthy hues on walls, upholstery and soft furnishings. If you like calmer interiors, team nature-inspired prints on fabrics with plain or panelled walls.

MAKE IT HANDCRAFTED

Seek out local craftspeople and pair vintage finds with antique furniture and artwork to give the space an eclectic, layered feel. Whether it's a hand-thrown vase or a carved oak side table, mix quality artisan-made pieces into your interior that you will love and keep for years to come – this look is the opposite of fast interiors.

PICK EARTHY SHADES

Whether you're using wallpaper or paint, your colour palette should reflect nature. Choose warm pinks and muted green shades for walls in a flat matt finish, adding depth with pops of rich mustard and terracotta on accessories and soft furnishings. Add texture using rattan lighting and flat-weave rugs.

GO FOR QUALITY

A key aspect of the Arts and Crafts movement was respect for the natural world and using long-lasting, sustainable materials. Swap throwaway buys for well-made furniture which has been crafted from renewable materials that will still look good in 10 years time – even if it means spending a little more.



FEATURE CHARLOTTE BOYD **STYLING** CHARLIE DAVIS
ART DIRECTION NICKY PHILLIPS **PHOTOGRAPH** MAXWELL ATTENBOROUGH

STYLE DIRECTION

“Introduce fluted concrete side tables into a traditional floral bedroom scheme to give it a contemporary twist”

HEATHER YOUNG, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

DREAMY SCHEME

Choose a natural textured paint finish for the walls and make a feature of the bed with fern green floral linens. Pair it with a patterned upholstered headboard in an earthy terracotta



Nouveau floral Green **duvet cover set**, £12 for a double; Floral chiffon **cushion**, £10, both George Home

The shortlist

FLOOR LAMPS

Use these decorative designs to layer lighting



'I combine wood and brass in a modern yet timeless design

£££ Style saver

WHERE TO BUY

1 Skellig floor lamp with Matthew Williamson Black and White ikat shade, £188, Pooky **2** Winnie floor lamp, £119, Marks & Spencer **3** Easel floor lamp, £269, The Cotswold Company **4** Swing-arm floor lamp, £110, Morris & Co x Habitat **5** Där Spool floor lamp base, £142; Frida 45cm marble-effect shade, £43.99, both Lighting Direct **6** Francia floor lamp, £199, Cult Furniture **7** Alyssa floor lamp, £100, Very **8** Remi floor lamp, £75, Dunelm

FEATURE MICHELA COLLING

TREND TALK

“Here’s to creating a warm and inviting space”

BIG TRENDS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN THESE DAYS, WITH MICRO TRENDS TAKING THEIR PLACE. WE EXPLORE THE LATEST CRAVING: CAFECORE

One suspects it’s the notion of hunkering down when the weather gets cooler or cosying up in a welcoming space filled with the delicious aroma of coffee and baked goods, but it’s hard to deny that the ‘cafecore’ trend revolves around comfort, and that’s what makes it so appealing. According to Pinterest’s yearly trend report, searches for ‘coffee station decor’ have risen by +145% and ‘cafe aesthetic’ is up by +820%. The great thing about this trend is it doesn’t discriminate between different sizes of kitchens and whether you own or rent, so you can adopt the cafe kitchen look in any home.

‘My advice for those who want to recreate the warming experience of a cafe at home, is to invest in a quality and statement coffee machine – chrome works well,’ says Simon Ribchester, head of design at Beams (beamsrenovation.com). ‘Consider coffee-inspired tones as a colour palette – latte beiges, creamy off-whites and natural wood will enhance the overall cosy and calming ambience,’ Simon suggests.

While this could manifest in the paint on the walls or colour of your cupboards, there are also smaller changes you can adopt, including adding accessories, such as cafe curtains and tea towels, in the same palette. Or if you have your dining table in the kitchen, you could include coffee-coloured cushions and a tablecloth. ‘Finally, consider adding open shelves above the drinks station for a stylish way to display your favourite mugs, coffees and everything in between,’ Simon advises. ‘However, avoid overcrowding the shelves with unnecessary items to prevent it becoming visually distracting.’ ■



Put a carefully curated mix of pieces on display to create a snug but uncluttered feel

THE IDEAL HOME VIEW ON... CAFECORE

Do we think this micro trend is here to stay? Content editor Holly Cockburn weighs in on whether this is just a passing phase in the world of homes

‘Kitchens are becoming more than just a space to cook – they’re often a meeting point for the whole family to get together and for you to do the main bulk of your living – even more so than the living room itself. So making a kitchen feel cosy and inviting is top of the agenda. The cafecore trend embodies this feeling and is the perfect way to upgrade those slow mornings spent with a delicious brew. You can invest in your dream coffee machine, switch out linens to warm neutrals and cute gingham patterns, and so on. This trend is all about curating an inviting atmosphere, which I’m sure will stick around.’

FEATURE SARA HESIKOVA AND GINEVRA BENEDETTI
PHOTOGRAPH FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/DAVIDE LOVATTI



IH COLOUR EDIT

Plum

THIS MONTH, OUR COLOUR EXPERTS PRESENT THIS BEAUTIFUL BERRY SHADE AND HOW TO USE IT IN YOUR HOME

Wrap a hallway in a deep plum, with darker skirtings. Front walls in Córdoba intelligent matt emulsion, £64 for 2.5ltr; skirtings and architraves in Purple Brown intelligent gloss, £38 for 1ltr; far wall, ceiling and cornice in Scullery absolute matt emulsion, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, all Little Greene

'What the experts say...

Designers and stylists share their views

'Plum is a wonderfully flexible colour and a fine choice for kitchen cabinetry, especially when paired with an empathetic neutral on walls. It also creates a cosy living room/snug when applied to the walls, or even for a grown-up bedroom where it will layer effortlessly with earthy neutral linens and cottons.'

PATRICK O'DONNELL, BRAND AMBASSADOR, FARROW & BALL

'The warm purpleness of plum pairs beautifully with a wide range of colours. Try with cooler but tonally similar colours, such as lavender, for harmony; contrast with teal for a touch of glamour. For a bit of regal drama, combine with black and introduce warm metallic elements. To inject some energy, think about adding a strong pink to the scheme.'

MANDY RIPPON, PRODUCT MANAGER, FRENCHIC PAINT

'Plum pairs well with a variety of colours, including neutrals and metallics, so it lends itself to both modern and traditional schemes. Its depth evokes a feeling of heaviness and warmth, which is an ideal aesthetic for bedrooms. It works well as a feature wall, or for smaller bedrooms, an accent colour.'

TOBIE LEWIS, PAINT & INTERIORS EXPERT, V&CO PAINT

'Cosy and comforting, plum is the perfect shade to set the scene for colder months. Drenching the whole room including the ceiling in similar plum shades can create an inviting space. If you use a neutral colour on woodwork or the ceiling, stick to warmer tones of creams and taupe so it doesn't jar.'

EMMA BESTLEY, CO-FOUNDER, YESCOLOURS

'Plum is sophisticated, ranging from purple to brownish-red. Ideal in drawing or dining rooms, it is a deep tone but not aggressive. It pairs well with yellow ochre, rich green, neutrals and black.'

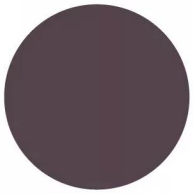
FRANCESCA WEZEL, FOUNDER, FRANCESCA'S PAINTS



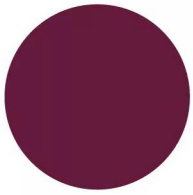
Use plum to colour block with a lighter shade for a modern look. Walls in Grenache and Rouge II, both pure flat emulsion, £60 for 2.5ltr, Paint & Paper Library

> "Sitting between **RED** and **PURPLE**, plum brings **WARMTH** in buckets and a **CALMING** spiritual balance"
>
> **PATRICK O'DONNELL**, BRAND AMBASSADOR, FARROW & BALL

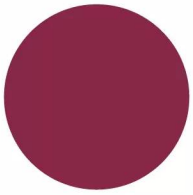
the edit PLUM



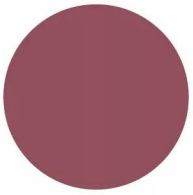
BEST FOR A COSY FEEL
Boujee chalk wall paint, £42.95 for 2.5ltr, Frenchic Paint



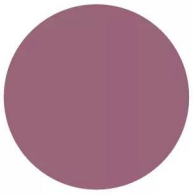
BEST FOR A DRAMATIC LOOK
Loving Pink matt emulsion, £48 for 2ltr, YesColours



BEST FOR KITCHEN CABINETS
Pall Mall pure matt emulsion, £54 for 2.5ltr, Fenwick & Tilbrook



BEST FOR A DINING ROOM
Exmoor Heather eco emulsion, £85 for 2.5ltr, Francesca's Paints



BEST FOR A SMALL BEDROOM
Plum Tree flat matt emulsion, £44 for 2.5ltr, Zhoosh

NEED HELP WITH YOUR ROOM? JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP, THE IDEAL HOME ROOM CLINIC

FEATURE SOPHIE WARREN-SMITH



New Collection

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IDEAL VS GREAT DEAL

Cosy on up with warming tones and texture for an inviting living space



PLUMP SLUMP
Squishmeister sofa in Sticky Toffee clever velvet, from £2,195, Loaf



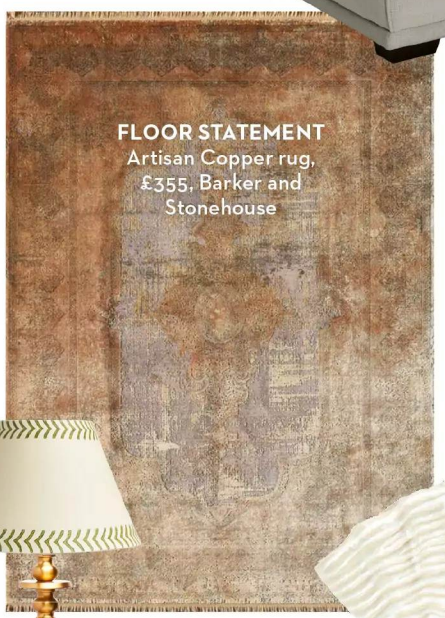
SLEEK COMFORT
Porto luxury modern ottoman in Soft Cream premium linen, £299, Furniture Outlet



DEEP SEATED
Julien velvet three-seater Orange sofa, £695, Habitat



COSY REST
Icon Theo footstool in Beige corduroy, £39.99, Icon



FLOOR STATEMENT
Artisan Copper rug, £355, Barker and Stonehouse



PERFECT SCENTS
Jo Malone London Lime Basil & Mandarin candle, £50 for 200g, Cult Beauty



AFFORDABLE AROMA
Habitat large Mandarin & Basil candle with lid, £9 for 350g, Sainsbury's



TASSEL FRINGE
Navaja aged effect kilim jute cotton rug, from £185, La Redoute



BRIGHT NOOK
Phileas rechargeable table lamp, £122; Verdant Arrows 20cm empire shade in hand painted card, £41, both Pooky



TACTILE FINISH
Faux clam vase, £85, Cox & Cox



STATEMENT PIECE
House of Hampton reactive large clam vase, £35.99, Wayfair

READING CORNER
Grainger rechargeable table lamp, £60, John Lewis & Partners



CHIC COUNTRY
Sage Dresser check cushion with Blush trim, £95, Tori Murphy



FIRESIDE STYLE
Medium rattan open-ended log basket, £69, The Cotswold Company



WOVEN BEAUTY
Open rattan log basket, £35, Marquis & Dawe



£££ Style saver

CHARMING CHECK
Delilah Green gingham cushion, £25, French Bedroom

FEATURE ANNA MORLEY

CLEVER DECORATING

Wallpaper with a twist

THESE LOW-KEY IDEAS ADD STYLE, COLOUR AND PATTERN WITHOUT THE DANGER OF VISUAL OVERWHELM



Clutterbuck **wallpaper** in Lodge, £110 a roll, National Trust collection; **panelling** and **beading** painted in Sage & Onions absolute matt emulsion, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, both Little Greene. For a similar **floor lamp**, try the Capi, £115, La Redoute

Add structure with panels

If you want to hang pictures or photos on a patterned wallpaper, it can look messy. Create order with frames made from lengths of beading painted to match the paper and contain your display.

Give it a twist...

Turn each frame into an oversized artwork by using it to frame a section of wallpaper in a contrasting colourway.



Custom-made **wallpaper panel** in Tree Canopy (contact your nearest stockist for a quote), Boråstapeter. NJP **wall lights**, £325 each; PH5 **pendant**, £875, all Louis Poulsen. For similar **pot**, try the 17cm jar in Clay, £33, Tine K Home

BLACK GROUT
Makes plain white tiles more interesting

'Make use of the fifth wall

Papering the ceiling in a high room can make it feel cosier. It's a great way to add style and design detail in a kitchen where you want the walls to be scrubbable and paper-free.

Give it a twist...

Frame the wallpaper by painting the coving in a dark colour picked from the wallpaper's pattern.

Elevate simple shelving

This idea works for a glazed dresser or open shelving to lift a plain, painted wall or to create a contrast with a wallpapered one. For the latter, make sure your two papers share either a colourway or a pattern type.

Give it a twist...

Use the same wallpaper in different, vibrant colours for a bold but harmonious effect.



For similar **wallpaper** (on wall) try Trellis Positive in Green, Secret Garden collection, Galerie, £44.95 a roll, Fashion Wallpaper. Suffolk **dresser** in Snow, from £3,955, Neptune. Fern **wallpaper** (in dresser), £110 a roll, Little Greene

WALLPAPER CHEAT SHEET

1 Canopy wallpaper in Navy/Green, £110 a roll, Lime Lace
2 Pin Stripe wallpaper in Soft Sage, £30 a roll, I Love Wallpaper
3 Summer Meadow wallpaper in Sage, £144 a roll, Fiona Howard

Turn wallpaper into artwork

Thrift a large canvas (it doesn't matter if you hate the picture) and use a staple gun to cover it with a section of leftover wallpaper. Pinch the edges for a sharp crease.

Give it a twist...

Make smaller boards (to fit wallpaper samples) with the same paper in three colourways and hang in a grid or row.

Canvas covered in Designers Guild Fleur Orientale **wallpaper**, £198 a roll, Chapel Interiors. **Wall** painted in Card Room Green estate emulsion, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Sofia **armchair** in Artichoke, £1,860, Ceraudo. Large cane **side table** in Celadon, £595, Trove by Studio Duggan

IMMERSIVE COLOUR

Get a simple, streamlined look by painting walls, ceiling and shelving in the same colour

Dinosauria **wallpaper** in Ecru, £195 a roll, House of Hackney. **Wardrobes** painted in Sobek 587 architects' eggshell, £34.50 for 750ml, Paint & Paper Library. For a similar **wardrobe** as a freestanding design, try the Classic, from £1,227, Scumble Goosie

STATEMENT PAINTWORK

Find a bold shade in the wallpaper pattern and match your paint for a framing effect

Customise your cabinetry

If you have built-ins or freestanding storage with panelled fronts, simply paste wallpaper sections to the centre panels. Then paint the battens and frame in a co-ordinating colour.

Give it a twist...

Use a texture instead of a pattern – for example, rattan on a roll, marble-effect vinyl or faux woodgrain paper.



WALLPAPER CHEAT SHEET

1 Betty wallpaper in Honey, £102.60 a roll, Sandberg **2** Candice Olson Modern Artisan Star Struck wallpaper in Off White, £100 a roll, Beautiful Walls **3** GoodHome Nivosa Teal coloured concrete plastered effect embossed wallpaper, £26 a roll, B&Q

FEATURE VANESSA RICHMOND **PHOTOGRAPHS** FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/JAMES MERRELL, DAVID BRITTAIN, DAN DUCHARS, POLLY WREFORD

Try a trompe l'oeil effect

Instead of an all-over pattern, go for a pictorial mural that feels as though you could step into it. For a nature-inspired look go for a leafy backdrop, swaying grasses that grow up from the skirting or drifting clouds.

Give it a twist...

Paint woodwork in a vibrant colour from the design of your wallpaper mural.



Aralia **wallpaper** in Moss Green, £41.52sq m, Sandberg. Ambrose **bedside table**, £685, Sweetpea & Willow, is similar. For similar stripe **bedding**, try the Sid Stripe 100% linen bedding, from £26 for an Oxford pillowcase, Secret Linen Store. For similar green **linen** (on headboard), try Campbell plain linen in Green Tea, £75m, Warner House



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1

"I have a glamorous retro look"



2

£££ Style saver



3



4

The shortlist

SIDEBOARDS

These storage stars are ideal for hideaway and display



5



6



7

WHERE TO BUY

1 Umi sideboard, £1,099, Atkin and Thyme **2** Ringo sideboard, £650, Rockett St George **3** Elements Thompson sideboard, £399, Dunelm **4** Stowe large sideboard, £749.99, Oak Furnitureland **5** Henshaw sideboard in Dusky Seaspray, £860, Laura Ashley at Next **6** Harlem metal sideboard, £525, La Redoute **7** River large sideboard, £999, Made.com

FEATURE MICHELA COLLING



WARM WELCOME
Create an inviting hallway with a soft grey carpet, laid throughout the downstairs areas to help spaces flow. First Impressions carpet in Welldressed, £24sq m, Victoria Carpets

PLAN THE PERFECT

Carpets & rugs

WHATEVER YOUR BUDGET, THERE'S PLENTY TO CONSIDER WHEN IT COMES TO CHOOSING A NEW CARPET OR RUG, AS OUR THREE EXPERTS SHARE

MEET THE EXPERTS

DANIEL PRENDERGAST, DIRECTOR AT THERUGSELLER.CO.UK

'Starting with a rug is a bit like how you'd select an outfit for a special occasion; you wouldn't pick out your accessories before choosing your outfit.'

KIRSTY BARTON, BRAND STORYTELLING MANAGER, ALTERNATIVEFLOORING.COM

'Place carpet samples on the floor! Test them out barefoot or in socks to help you choose.'

RUPERT ANTON, SPOKESPERSON FOR THE CARPETFOUNDATION.COM

'Buy the best carpet you can afford. You'll walk on it every single day, so it takes a lot of use.'



TOP TRELLIS
Bring in pattern with a subtle trellis design, then pick out the background colour on a feature wall. Terali Ivy rug, 185x275cm, £359, Ruggable

The right flooring can really set the look for a scheme, with carpet and rugs having many positives – and we're not just talking about the obvious comfort underfoot. But with so much choice, from colour to texture, material to design, where do you start? We asked three people in the know – the director of a rug brand, brand manager at a flooring company and a carpet expert – to share their secrets.

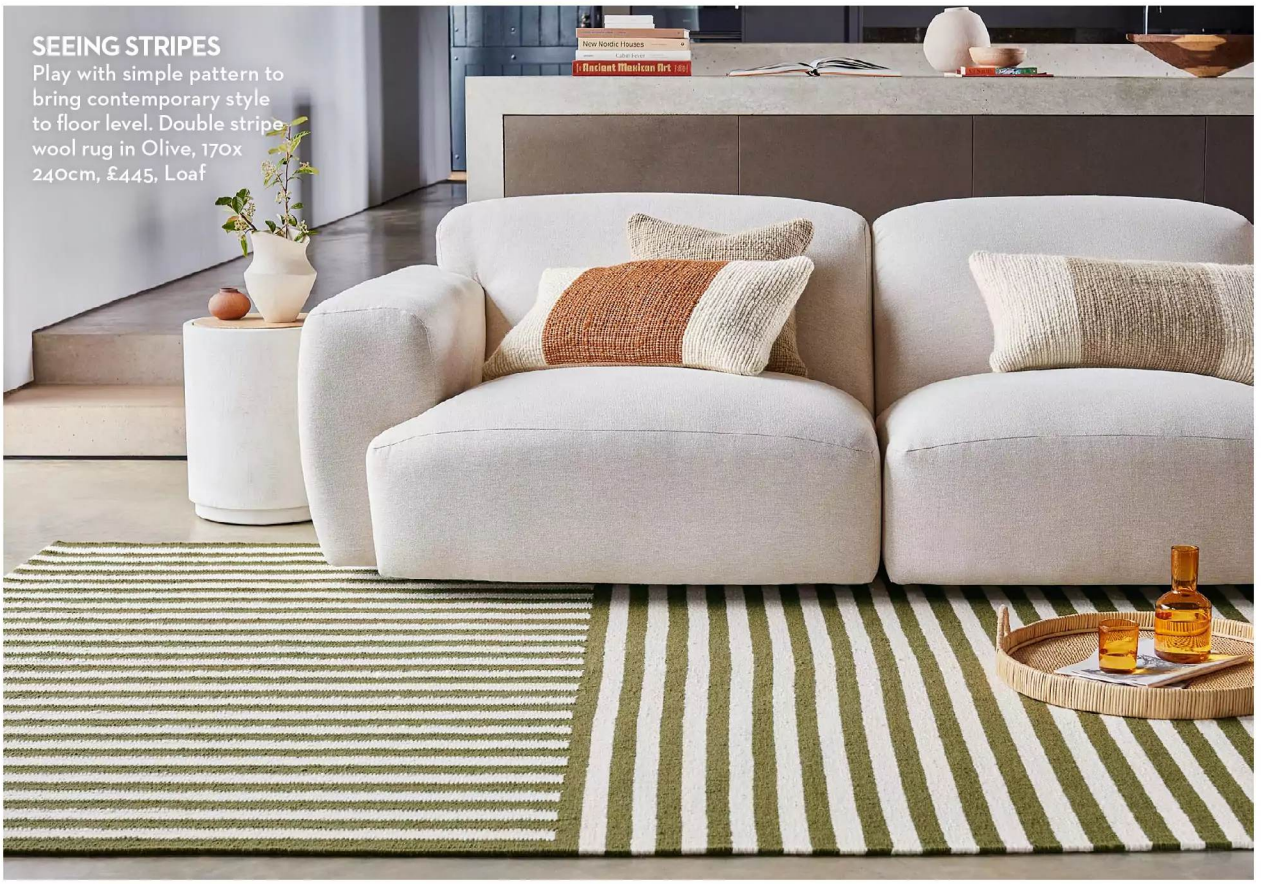
THE CARPET COMEBACK

'Carpet, like anything to do with interiors, enjoyed a boom during the Covid years – but, let's be honest, there are only so many floors to carpet, so there has been a decline in carpet sales,' says Rupert. 'Furthermore, LVT and wood flooring remain an established trend – for practical, maintenance and lifestyle considerations. That said, carpet remains extremely popular for stairs, landings, bedrooms and some living rooms.' Kirsty says, 'A high-pile carpet provides a sense of luxury and softness underfoot in a bedroom. In contrast, a carpet with tightly woven fibres is hardwearing and soundproofing, making it a great choice for high-traffic areas such as the hallway and stairs.'

'A big help for the carpet industry is the increasing desire for calm, nurturing interiors,' says Rupert. 'As the home becomes more of a sanctuary, the soft, warm and textural qualities of carpet really resonate with consumers.' Kirsty agrees, 'Carpets add a wonderful soft and homely feel to any interior.'

TRENDS TO WATCH

'While neutrals continue to be a best-seller for their timeless appeal, we're also seeing an increase in customers looking to add a sense of personality to their floor,' says Kirsty, 'from stripes to florals and in a range of colours from soft pastels to luscious greens or deep majestic tones. These vibrant colourways are a brilliant way for people to elevate their entire scheme by making their floor a centre-focus.' Rupert agrees, 'Greys are on the wane, giving way to warm earthy colours, so ochres, soft golds, earthy greens and sage greens are growing in popularity, as is blush pink. We're also seeing more pattern and colour on stairs and landings; however, stripes are diminishing, with ›



SEEING STRIPES
Play with simple pattern to bring contemporary style to floor level. Double stripe wool rug in Olive, 170x 240cm, £445, Loaf

> "The beauty of **CARPET** is you can choose one style everywhere for a **COHESIVE** look or **MIX** up **COLOURS**"

KIRSTY BARTON, BRAND STORYTELLING MANAGER, ALTERNATIVE FLOORING



TAKE IT THROUGH
Echo a stripe carpet on a landing with a simple striped throw on the bed. Sorrento Wide Beige loop pile carpet, £26.99sq m, Tapi Carpets & Floors

herringbone and geometrics popular, as are natural textures such as loop piles,' says Rupert.

When it comes to rugs, 'neutrals are still a go-to because of their versatility and timeless appeal,' says Daniel, but he has noticed pattern is gaining popularity. 'Homeowners and designers are embracing more pattern to add personality to their spaces. Another notable trend is mixing neutral and patterned rugs, using neutral tones as a base, layering on pattern to create greater visual impact.' Custom-made rugs are also popular, as are geometrics and Scandi-inspired designs, vintage looks and nature-influenced motifs.

MATERIAL MATTERS

'The natural trend isn't just about colours,' says Rupert, 'but also materials, with a trend towards eco-friendly and bio-based materials, such as carpets in 100% undyed British wool with cotton, jute and natural rubber latex backing. Likewise, synthetic fibres and cellulosic fibres, which are 100% biodegradable, are also gaining traction.'

Daniel agrees: 'Recycled PET, rugs made from recycled plastic bottles, are becoming increasingly popular. The PET fibres are durable, stain-resistant, and can be as soft as traditional fibres. Jute, sisal ›



NEED TO KNOW...

HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST CARPET

Rupert Anton from the Carpet Foundation shares his top tips when shopping for a new carpet

- Start with suitability: how much wear will it receive? The hall, stairs and landing, for example, will need a much heavier-wearing carpet than a bedroom.
- What are your decorating plans? Are you matching the carpet to a scheme, or will you be decorating in the future?
- Think about longevity: how long do you want your carpet to last? Is it a quick fix or a buy for your forever home?

DESIGNER SHOW
Make the floor the star with a fun geometric print like this one by British designer Margo Selby. Quirky Ribbon Magenta carpet, £134.30sq m, Margo Selby at Alternative Flooring



SIMPLE WARMTH
In a dining room, choose a rug that's water and stain-resistant, and even machine washable. Goop Remi Camel Brown rug, 185x275cm, £419, Ruggable

> "Always choose a rug that is **PROPORTIONAL** to the size of the **ROOM** and the furniture"
>
> **DANIEL PRENDERGAST,** DIRECTOR AT THERUGSELLER.CO.UK

and seagrass are increasing in popularity year-on-year, as are washable rugs.'

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

'Do your research based on what carpet works well in that specific room,' says Kirsty. 'And think about how much use it will get,' says Rupert. 'What are your family circumstances – young children, teenagers or empty nesters? How long do you want it to last? For ease of maintenance, low-pile carpets are ideal.' Both Rupert and Kirsty agree that it then comes down to personal style. 'For longevity, purchasing a design that you'll continue to love for several years is so important, whether that's a wow-factor carpet with a bold design, or a neutral or natural carpet that subtly compliments your existing scheme,' says Kirsty.

'Starting your new scheme with a rug is a strategic and impactful approach to interior design – and it makes the whole process really easy, too,' says Daniel. 'A well-chosen rug acts as the foundation upon which the room's aesthetic is built, making it easier to pick furniture and accessories.'

'When choosing a rug for your room, think about the dimensions of the space, especially if it's narrow or non-uniform in layout; your existing furniture, budget and the overall look and feel that you're trying to create,' he adds.

When it comes to sizing, says Daniel, 'The 18-inch rule for rugs is a common guideline to ensure a room looks balanced – its premise is that when placing a rug in a room, there should be about 18 inches of bare floor space between the edge of the rug and the walls. This helps to create a border around the rug, framing the space. In a dining room, the rug should be large enough so that when chairs are pulled out from the table, they remain on the rug, while in a bedroom, the rug is often placed under the bed, extending out on both sides – or have the lower two-thirds on a rug.' ■



GO BOHO
A classic Berber-style rug will never date, adding warmth to a painted floor. It's the perfect partner for vintage leather furniture, helping to ground the look. For a similar Berber rug, try The Rug Seller

NEED TO KNOW...

HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST RUG

Daniel Prendergast, director at TheRugSeller.co.uk, shares his top tips when shopping for a new rug

- Create an illusion of space by choosing a neutral shade and delicate design that won't overwhelm the space and make it look small.
- Get the size of the rug right. If the room has a bed, the rug should extend at least a foot beyond the sides and end of the bed.
- Rugs with horizontal stripes or patterns can create an illusion of width, making the room appear larger.

FEATURE JENNIFER MORGAN **PHOTOGRAPH** FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/PAUL MASSEY

REIMAGINED CLASSICS

DECORATE YOUR HOME USING TIMELESS FURNITURE AND LAYERS OF GLORIOUS HERITAGE PATTERN, WITH HELP FROM HABITAT



Habitat x Morris & Co. Wandle solid wood upholstered double bed frame, £450; cushions, from £16 each; Library swing arm floor lamp, £110; Pimpernel quilted throw, £58, all Habitat



FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI **PHOTOGRAPHS** MAXWELL ATTENBOROUGH



Habitat x Morris & Co. Sunflower Rosehip bedding, £48 for a double duvet cover and two pillowcases; Pimpernel quilted throw, £58; Hammersmith marble side table, £80; Canterbury reeded glass cabinet, £350; Cloche touch table lamp, £45, all Habitat



Habitat x Morris & Co. Rosehip crewel cushion in Green, £20; bedding, from £38 for a single, all Habitat



Habitat x Morris & Co. Merton upholstered traditional armchair, £500; ceramic lamp, £80, both Habitat

Two of Britain's most respected design companies, Habitat and Morris & Co., have partnered to create a unique range of furniture and accessories inspired by the work of William Morris. Adapting many of the classic designs that made Morris a key figure in the Arts & Crafts movement, Habitat has rescaled his patterns for modern-day living and designed a range of new furniture and accessories.

HERITAGE BRAND

One of the 19th century's most prolific designers, William Morris's iconic patterns decorated the homes of the Victorians on wallpapers, textiles, tiles and more. He championed handmade production despite the Victorian era's focus on industrial progress, and still managed to create wonderfully rich and diverse patterns that are as popular today as they were 160 years ago.

NEW ORDER

Much like William Morris's enduring style, Habitat has been universally loved by the British public for over 60 years, making it the ideal brand to collaborate with. For this unique collection, every product has been carefully considered for contemporary living, with patterns adjusted in size, and forms reimagined to create a collection that will fit perfectly into any modern home, honouring Morris's famous quote: 'Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.'

STYLE FOR EVERYONE

From the classic tapered legs and wood turned ball detail on the Wandle bed, to the reversible Sunflower bedlinen that combines two of the designer's iconic patterns, everything has been designed respecting the Morris & Co. archive while looking to the future. So if you're keen to update your home with timeless pieces accented with layers of elegant pattern, head on over to Habitat.

1. Open app
2. Go to bar
3. Tap to scan

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Want to add a piece of timeless design to your home? Find the Habitat x Morris & Co. collection either in-store or online at Habitat (habitat.co.uk), or at Sainsbury's and Argos.

habitat

love design, love habitat.

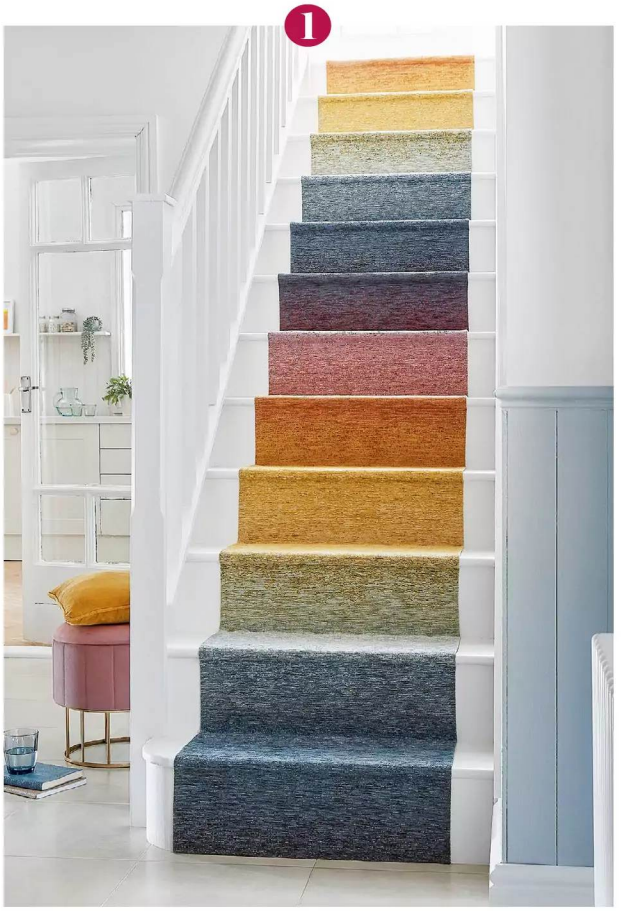
| ROOM RECIPE |

Colourful hallway

TRY THESE DESIGN INGREDIENTS FOR THE KEY TO A BRIGHT AND WELCOMING HALLWAY



Lower wall in Can-Can; upper wall in Bugle, both claypaint, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, Earthborn





1. VIBRANT VERTICALS

Add a strong burst of colour to your hallway with a rainbow-style ombré stair runner that will bring a smile to your face every time you set foot on it. If you'd rather not have carpet, try painting your stairs in a similar way instead, using varying colours, or different gradients of the same colour, on the risers and treads.

Ombré rainbow stair runner, from £135, Dunelm

2. DRAMATIC DOORWAY

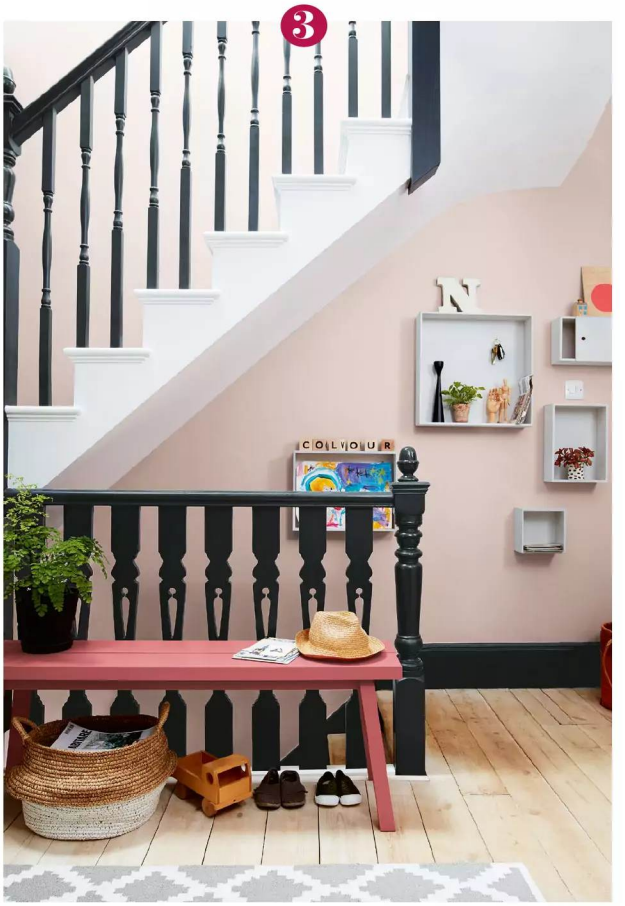
From the first glimpse, a brightly coloured front door will add visual presence and create a warm welcome. It may seem like a bold move, but it's less of a commitment than painting a whole room. You just need to decide if you want a happy and sunny yellow, a more classic blue or even a splash of orange or subdued burgundy.

For a similar yellow paint, try Mister David intelligent eggshell, £39 for 1ltr, Little Greene

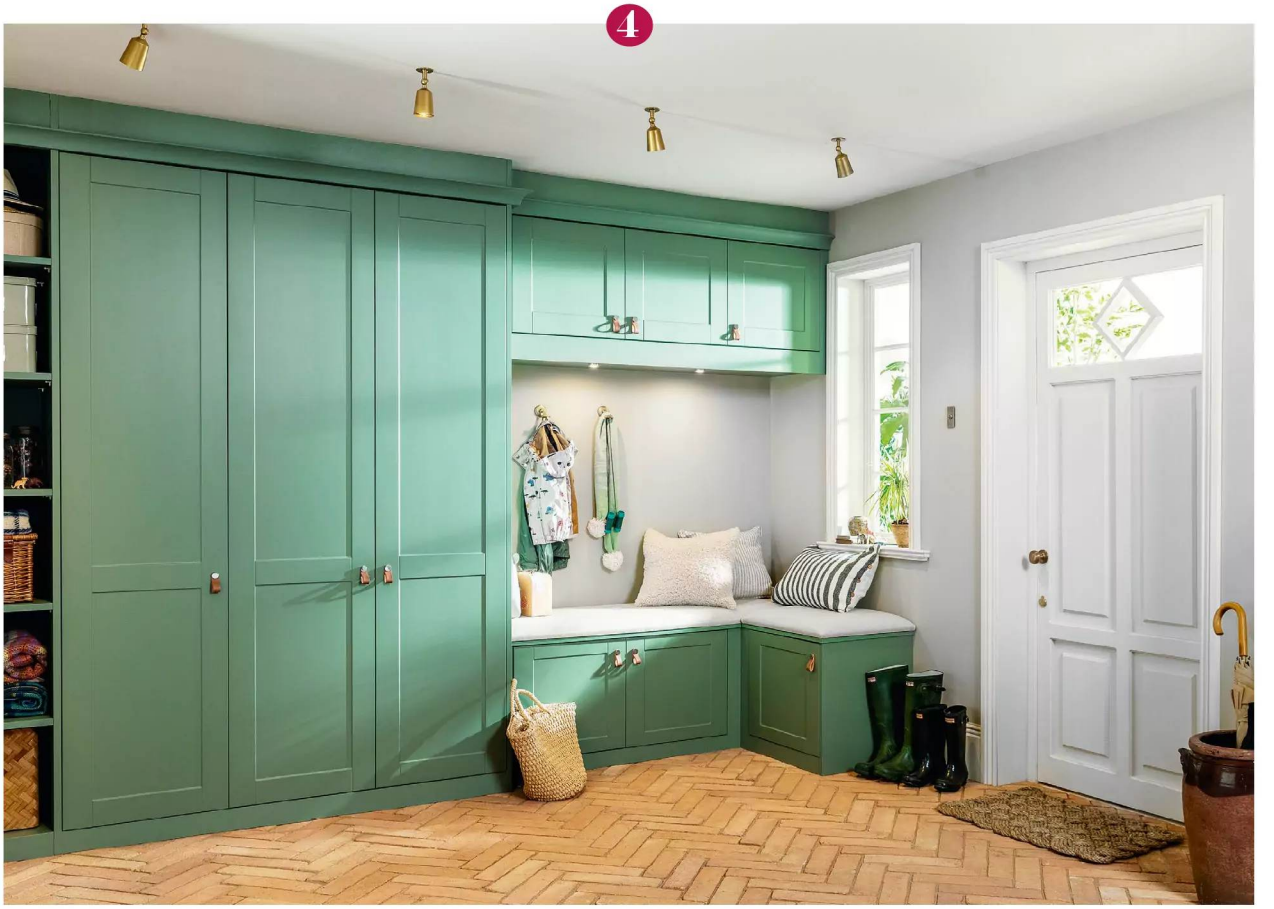
3. BOLD BANISTERS

Add impact to staircases by painting your banisters and handrail in a strong shade. Here, black has been carried through from the banisters to the skirting, in contrast to the softer pale pink walls.

Banisters and skirting in Rich Black simply refresh multi surface eggshell, £30 for 750ml; walls in Blush Pink one coat matt emulsion, £29 for 2.5l, both Dulux



4



> "The hallway can set the tone for your home"
>
> **HEATHER YOUNG**, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

4. NEAT STORAGE

As one of the busiest spaces in our homes, a hallway often needs to be able to house more than just coats and shoes. Consider using storage not only to provide a practical element, but to bring in some colour too. This gorgeous green works well with the terracotta tiles – so much more impactful than if it were a neutral.

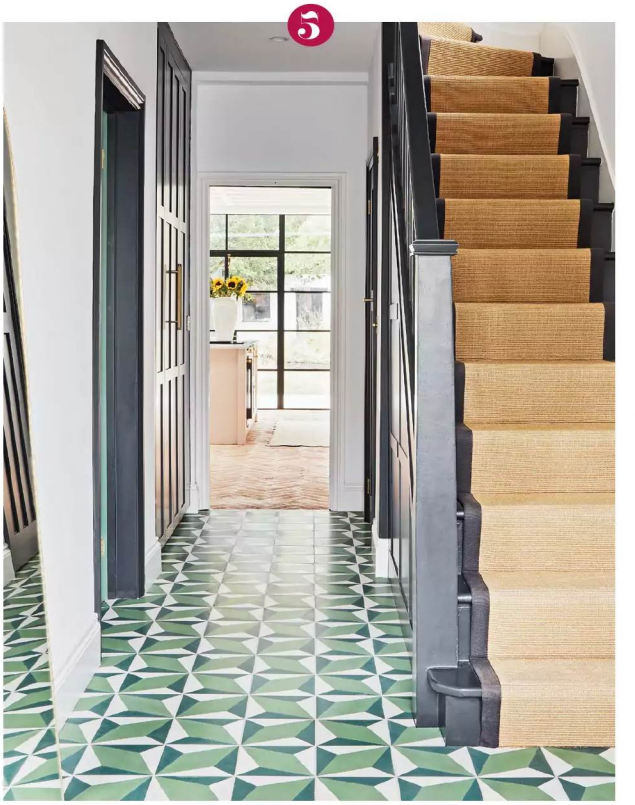
Shaker boot room in Willow Green, from £2,000, Sharps

5. BOLD FLOORING

Let your floor do the talking with statement tiles that inject some personality with their pattern and colour. These geometric designs come in five different shades, including zesty yellow and this dreamy green, and make a practical choice for a hallway because they can be easily cleaned.

Otura tiles in Green, £168sq m, Bert & May

5



FEATURE LAURIE DAVIDSON **PHOTOGRAPH** (2) FUTURECONTHUB.COM/JOANNA HENDERSON

NEED INSPIRATION? HEAD TO IDEALHOME.CO.UK FOR MORE HALLWAY IDEAS

IDEAL VS GREAT DEAL

Indulge your senses in spathroom luxury with these tasteful finds

CLEAR VIEW
Wellington bathroom pendant, from £390, Fritz Fryer Lighting



ANTIQUE FINISH
Round extra large Real Deal mirror, dia80cm, £325, Loaf

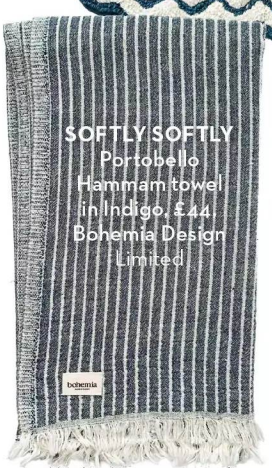


GENTLE CURVES
Rosita scalloped oval bath mat in Mint, £38, Anthropologie



BOLD GOLD
Petit Square basin mixer, £237, RAK Ceramics

SOFTLY SOFTLY
Portobello Hammam towel in Indigo, £44, Bohemia Design Limited





ENRICHED REEF
Faux coral specimen, £65, Escapology Home



ELEGANT BLOSSOM
Tropez Mint patterned tile, £69.60sq m, Porcelain Superstore



SUMPTUOUS SOAK
BC Designs Delicata bath, £4,253, West One Bathrooms

£5 Style saver

CIRCULAR DESIGN
Lindbyn mirror in Gold, dia.80cm, £65, Ikea



SOLID PIECE
Dove brushed brass high rise basin mixer tap, £119, Bathroom Mountain

SIMPLE STATEMENT
Zeta clear glass bathroom ceiling pendant in satin brass, £50, BHS



WIGGLE EDGE
Green & Cream bath mat, £10, George Home





OCEAN VIEW
Artificial coral, £4.78, Søstrene Grene

FRINGE BENEFIT
Logan Hammam Towel, £33, Ebb Flow Cornwall





MEDITERRANEAN INFLUENCE
Blossom Green Petals matt pattern wall and floor tiles, £36.95sq m, Walls and Floors

SINKABLY SMOOTH
Paradigm single-ended freestanding slipper bath, £1,660, Roper Rhodes



FEATURE ANNA MORLEY

Powdered Clay®

"Oh Bol...ognese!"

#KeepItClean



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In a busy home accidents will happen. But no matter what mess is made, we'll help you keep it clean with Crown Easyclean® Kitchen Matt Emulsion. Its GREASEGUARD+ technology makes wiping down kitchen walls and ceilings easier than ever, even on interior wood and metal. So you can enjoy your colourful spaces with a little less colourful language.

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It's not just paint, it's personal.®



EASY STYLE UPDATES

Weekend decorator

CLEVER TRICKS TO MINI DECOR PROJECTS... WE ROUND UP THE SIMPLEST, QUICKEST WAYS TO MAKE YOUR HOME MORE BEAUTIFUL NOW

Walls and ceiling in One of a Kind luxurious flat matt emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Crafted by Crown

IN ASSOCIATION WITH CROWN It's not just paint, it's personal.

1 PAINT YOUR CEILING

Whether you choose to go the same colour as your walls, a shade or two lighter (or darker), or try something completely different, painting your ceiling can change a room's looks. Darker colours make the ceiling feel closer, for a cosier effect, while light tones reflect more light into the room.

2 STYLE A SEASONAL TABLE

Layer crockery and add leafy glassware and acorn-shaped side dishes to your table for a stunning November tablescape. A few candlestick holders in varying sizes add height, while foliage in a vase brings a touch of the outdoors in. For a sweet finishing touch, tie napkins with a velvet ribbon bow.

Organic shaped **dinner plates**, £7 each; Green **candle holder**, £16; wooden **candle holder**, £30, all John Lewis & Partners



PAINT CHEAT SHEET

1 Overjoyed walls and ceilings matt emulsion, £19 for 2.5ltr, Crown 2 Velvetine flat matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5ltr, Elle Decoration by Crown 3 Collage luxurious flat matt emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Crafted by Crown

3 Keep winter chills at bay by hanging a lined or heavy curtain across the inside of your front door and adding a thick doormat and/or draught excluder.

4 **SWITCH IN A NEW VASE**

Give worktops or surfaces a new look with a different vase and some more wintry stems. This one has a wide neck, so works perfectly with fuller bouquets or even a single standout stem.



Fired Earth textured **vase**, £39.50, M&S



Find similar floating candles at Amazon

5 **HOW TO**
MAKE A CANDLE BOWL

Bring natural charm and a golden glow to your table with this simple country-style decoration

- Start by taking a footed glass bowl that has a diameter of approximately 20cm and half-fill it with cold water.
- Place some floating tealight candles on top of the water – make sure you don't overfill the bowl, you want some space around the candles.
- Take a shallow glass dish, around 30cm diameter, and fill with some natural sprigs – we've used a mix of rosemary, snowberries and larch cones, and this dish sits on a metal stand to give it extra height.
- Place your glass bowl into the dish, arranging the foliage around the 'foot' to create a beautiful woodland-inspired centrepiece.

6 MAKE A FEATURE OF WOVEN DISHES

Instead of artwork, use a few artisanal woven plates to bring colour and interest to a blank wall space. Opt for oversized designs with bold patterns to add impact, try loose-weave rattan styles in natural hues for a more subtle look, or go for a collection of smaller dishes – Etsy has a great selection, as does Karakorum.



Wool Hygge Koselig Mokka runner with Rainbow Pride border, from £144, Alternative Flooring



Colour Confetti table lamp, £30, Next

7 LIGHT UP DARK CORNERS

As the evenings get darker more quickly, adding a few extra lamps where you need them can make all the difference. If you're looking for one without a large lampshade, then this compact design is perfect. The confetti-style base ensures it will work with a multitude of colour schemes and will look decorative wherever you place it.

8 Give shutters and blinds a good clean using a vacuum with a soft bristle attachment, then wipe down afterwards with a damp cloth. 'Use a soft bristle toothbrush to reach hinges or deep crevices.

9 LAY A RUG IN THE KITCHEN

In a room where we spend a lot of time standing up, having a softer surface to stand on, like a rug or runner, makes sense. Granted, it means you'll have to be more careful with spills, so choose an easy-clean surface, but it's worth it to have that extra cosy addition on which to stand – plus it looks nice, too!



Anywhere Ca-rPET Herringbone Re-set **runner** with Herringbone Black Border, from £137, Alternative Flooring



Hourglass two-seater **sofa** in Vintage Velvet Olive, £1,899, Sofology

10 Pay your ceiling some attention by adding architectural details, such as a ceiling rose or cornicing. Go for bold and paint in a contrasting standout colour.

11 SHOW OFF A DISPLAY

Instead of scattering vases about the house, why not dedicate one area to lots of designs? Try arranging various shapes and sizes in a similar colourway, or display in a rainbow fashion, with red through to violet.

12 HOW TO MIX PATTERN AND PLAIN

Enhance your living room scheme with a good balance of pattern and print combined with some areas of plain

- Look at the large pieces of furniture you have; if you're keeping existing sofas or chairs in plain fabrics, or you don't feel confident with pattern, start small with print accessories such as rugs, cushions and artwork.
- Mix up patterns on cushions by using three different prints in varying sizes (one large-scale pattern, one medium and one small) and intersperse them with plain designs. A plain trim on a patterned cushion is also a great way to help you focus on the pattern.
- There's no rule that says if you have one floral pattern, any other patterns also have to be floral. Clash stripes with spots, florals with geometrics.
- If you're going to have a large piece of furniture in a bold pattern, consider giving it space with some plain cushions, so it's not pattern overload.
- Ensure you have a good balance of pattern on each side of your room. For example, if you have patterned curtains, you may want to include a print on the other side of the room, whether it's with artwork, cushions or a piece of upholstered furniture. A patterned rug can also pull a scheme together.



Small ceramic floral **vase**, £15, M&S

13 ADD TEXTURED WALLPAPER

Ideal for hiding imperfections on walls, textured wallpaper is also a good way to add subtle pattern and can be either left as it is or painted in a colour of your choice. If you have a picture rail on your wall, why not use two different types of textured wallpaper in the same colour – one below the rail and one above?

Sage **bed frame**, from £1,195 for a single, Button & Sprung



WALLPAPER CHEAT SHEET

1 Anaglypta luxury vinyl Deco Paradiso paintable wallpaper, £14 a roll, Homebase **2** Linen Beige wallpaper, £65 a roll, Graham & Brown
3 Crystal Cowslip Meadow wallpaper in Grey, £90 a roll, I Love Wallpaper

FEATURE LAURIE DAVIDSON **PHOTOGRAPH** FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/DAN DUCHARS

COLOUR CONFIDENT

BRING YOUR HOME UP TO DATE WITH CROWN'S RANGE OF PAINTS

As we go through life our tastes and needs change when it comes to interior décor. You might love bold and bright colour one year and then prefer a more calming scheme another, so we want our homes to be flexible and evolve with us. The colour experts at Crown believe that every pot of paint is brimming with potential and you can change a room or even a mood to make a positive difference.

KINDER PAINTS

With Crown's Walls & Ceilings range of paints, not only do you have a range of 80 colours to choose from, you can decorate your home safely thanks to its unique Breatheasy 99% solvent-free formulation. It helps to create a healthier space for your family by limiting exposure to airborne triggers of asthma and allergies. It is also made with carefully selected Vegan Verified ingredients.

PERFECT SHADE

If you're unsure which colour to choose, Crown's expert team of specialists and designers have done the hard work for you by curating its specially selected range of colours, so you can easily bring a contemporary, on-trend look to your home.

FANTASTIC FINISHES

There's a variety of shades and finishes to choose from, whether you want to go for a vibrant, traditional, modern or calming scheme. Pick from matt emulsion, for a more classic flat finish, or silk emulsion, which will give surfaces a gentle sheen. The thick and creamy paint goes on easily and covers beautifully.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

To make deciding your perfect shade easier, you can order Real Paint Swatches – A5 paper samples coated in real paint – so you can see how the colours will look in your home in different light conditions. All that's left for you to do is decide which room to decorate first.



Wall in Powdered Clay walls & ceilings emulsion, from £19 for 2.5ltr, Crown





Wall in Peek-a-boo Blue walls & ceilings emulsion, from £19 for 2.5ltr, Crown

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit crownpaints.co.uk/colour-samples to discover all the colours on offer and to try Real Paint Swatches, or visit your nearest Crown Decorating Centre, Homebase, Wickes or leading independent retailer for the extensive paint range and sample pots.

CROWN
It's not just paint, it's personal.®

FEATURE AMY HODGE



HIGH STREET TRENDS SPECIAL

THE BEST NEW LOOKS & BUYS
TO UPDATE YOUR HOME,
IN STORE AND ONLINE NOW

| TREND 1 |

New country

COTTAGECORE HAS HAD A GROWN-UP MAKEOVER, WITH WARMTH AND ELEGANCE AT ITS HEART

WHEN TO CHOOSE IT While this trend might be rooted in country-cottage vibes, it isn't just restricted to countryside abodes. Its comforting charm can be used in any home, including city apartments, and celebrates the idea of simple living. When this look first found its way into our homes, it was a little more fussy and twee, but this refreshed style has grown into something smarter and refined, while still holding that relaxed, laid-back vibe.

WHERE TO USE IT At this time of year, cosy bedrooms, living rooms and snugs will best lend themselves to a country-style look, but that feeling of traditional meets country-classic can be achieved in any space with just a few simple additions. For example, mantelpieces, windowsills and tray-topped coffee tables can play host to a carefully curated collection of candles, treasured trinkets and wild-flower-filled vases.

Essential elements

GINGHAM, checks and stripes still reign supreme, but the introduction of folksy florals and quilted patchworks gives them a dose of nostalgic charm.

BLUE hues of navy and Oxford set the ideal backdrop for shades of berry, mustard and olive green to really pop and flourish against.

RUFFLES, frills and scallops edge cushions and lampshades, giving everyday accessories a lovely whimsical feel.

WOOD furniture, such as coffee tables and dining chairs, plus turned-wood lamp bases, brings a touch of the outside in and embraces the use of traditional materials.



Classic blue

A dark blue sofa can be as versatile as cream or grey, but it gives a lovely warm feel to neutral schemes and goes with almost every colour.

BUY THE KEY PIECES
Parker Knoll Modern Classics Hyde Park three-seater sofa, £2,795; Maywood rug in Black, from £149; Stockholm light oak coffee table, £349; Acanthus table lamp, £249; Stockholm nest table, £249 for a set of two, all Furniture Village



COLOUR CHEAT SHEET

Aubusson Blue wall paint, £55.95 for 2.5ltr, Annie Sloan

Blush intelligent eggshell, £80 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene

Craft Fair flat matt emulsion, from £27 for 2.5ltr, Crafted by Crown

Where to shop for it

OUR HIGH STREET FAVOURITES THAT ARE LOVING THE NEW COUNTRY LOOK...

M&S

Never one to let us down in the bedding department, M&S has everything you need to create a cosy space for autumnal evenings.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Stripe ruffle edge bedding set, £59; Suzani bedding set, £39.50; striped bolster cushion, £19.50; linen cushion, £19.50; patchwork bedspread, from £149; Betty table lamp, £49.50; reactive mug, £5, all M&S

Furniture Village

Offering a huge range of desks, dining tables, side and console tables in beautiful natural-wood finishes, the brand also boasts a curated collection of accessories that perfectly pair with this look, too.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Lista storage desk in Oak, £469; Stockholm wooden dining chair in Dark Oak, £439 for a set of two, all Furniture Village













George Home

Fancy hosting a Halloween or Bonfire Night soirée? Head to George Home, where you'll find plenty of pumpkin-inspired buys and beautiful burnt orange tones to decorate your table.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Reactive glaze 12-piece dinner set in Green, £35; bubble wine glasses in Amber, £3 each; reactive glaze pumpkin serving bowl, £14; nibble bowl, £3, all George Home

Dunelm

A cosy armchair to snuggle into is a must for any country cottage living room and this striped offering is a classic that's also available in an array of other fabrics.

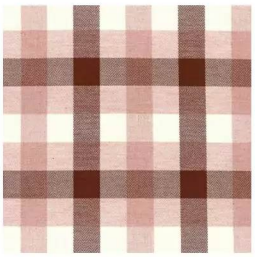
BUY THE KEY PIECES

Beatrice Folkstone stripe snuggle chair in Mulberry, £399; Evington cushion, £28; Morcott cushion, £25; Morcott throw, £50; Bitteswell wall light, £45; Bradmore rug, £479, all Dunelm

> "Keep an eye out in charity shops and on pre-loved websites as they're the perfect place to find vintage quilts or cushion covers"
>
> **HEATHER YOUNG**, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

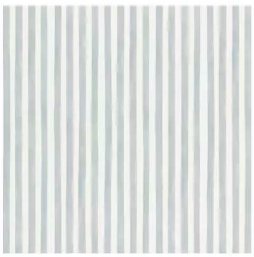
| THE PALETTE |

New country



THE FABRIC

Watercolour check in Brown/Pink, £47.50m, Ian Mankin



THE WALLPAPER

Watercolour stripe in Pastel Blue, £22 a roll, Wallpaper Direct

THE PAINT

Skimming Stone modern emulsion, £63 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball



THE FLOORING

Shetland wool loop carpet in Vellum, from £35sq m, Cormar Carpet Co

FEATURE HOLLY WALSH AND GINEVRA BENEDETTI







The shortlist

NEW COUNTRY

Introduce a relaxed, cottagey vibe to your home







1 Soho four-piece cookware set in Green, £129, ProCook **2** Retreat folk tea towels, £5 for a set of three, Matalan **3** Large round distressed window wall mirror (dia 100cm), £185, Click Style **4** Large Brioche sofa in Gardening Glove Green clever velvet, £3,195, Loaf **5** Spool floor lamp in Gloss Taupe, £156; Frida marble pattern tapered drum shade in Taupe, £49, both Där Lighting **6** Fluted-edge cake stand, £14.99, TK Maxx



7 Sophie classic two-cord napkins in Forest Green, £26 each, Rebecca Udall **8** Seagrass round place mat, £20 for a set of four, The Cotswold Company **9** Rebell Coolie pendant lamp, £149.50, Nicholas Engert Interiors **10** Chester Forest Green small kitchen island with granite top, £499, The Cotswold Company **11** Large bottle vase, £19.95, Rex London **12** Walcote striped bar stool, £249, Dunelm **13** Scalloped jute runner with green border, £65, Oliver Bonas

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI

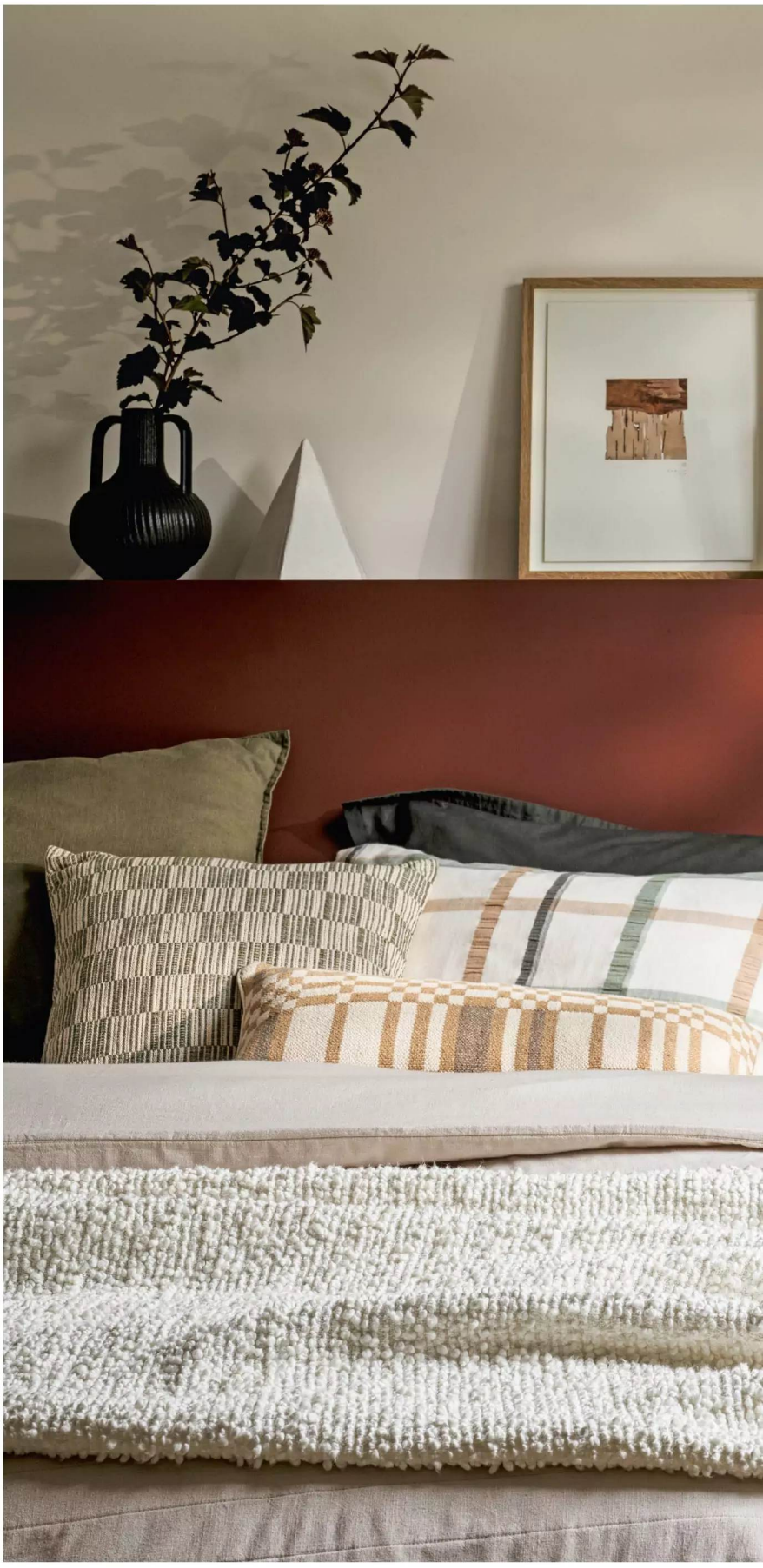
| TREND 2 |

Pared-back modernism

TAKE IT BACK TO BASICS WITH THIS SLEEK, CONTEMPORARY STYLE

WHEN TO CHOOSE IT If your wardrobe is filled with simple, refined and concisely chosen pieces, then this trend will reflect that same ethos in your home. Combining a minimalist approach with timeless design choices, hero pieces of furniture and accessories that take centre stage creates a calm and elegant home. Colour is not lacking, yet is chosen carefully to reflect nature and work harmoniously throughout your space.

WHERE TO USE IT This trend works perfectly in any room of your home and effortlessly flows from one space to the next. From spa-like bathrooms to intimate dining areas, it's about creating unfussy spaces that promote a restorative and cosseting environment to retreat to. Start by decluttering each room and invest in clever storage to create a more sleek and considered space to unwind in.



Essential elements

TACTILE TEXTURES should feature on cushions, throws and upholstery, including bouclé, embroidery and chunky knits, which can be combined for cosiness.

STONE worktops and accessories made of granite and marble give this look its simple and linear base. Cheat the look with stick-on vinyl to cover surfaces.

AUTUMNAL COLOURS of rust, olive and charcoal take inspiration from natural surroundings and bring warmth to the otherwise cool scheme.

LAYERED LIGHTING will help to create a soft glow throughout your home, so opt for table, side and wall lights that emit an inviting ambience. Oversized candles should adorn tabletops.



Texture focus

Using a variety of fabrics with a tactile finish is a subtler way to add interest to a pared-back scheme and helps to create a relaxed ambiance.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Checked seersucker bedding set, £55; bolster cushion, £22.50; woven cushion, £22.50; linen cushion, £19.50; bouclé throw, £45; double handle ridged vase, £15; candle holder, £5; dinner candle, £3 for two; reactive serving bowl, £25; Sydney table lamp, £45, all M&S

COLOUR CHEAT SHEET

Thames Reeds chalky matt paint, from £59 for 2.5ltr, Morris & Co

Nomad Dark Olive Green flat matt paint, £52 for 2.5ltr, Coat Paint

Hazelnut Truffle Easycare washable & tough matt emulsion, £46.25 for 2.5ltr, Dulux

Where to shop for it

OUR HIGH STREET FAVOURITES WHO ARE CELEBRATING THE PARED-BACK MODERNISM LOOK...

M&S

In a sleekly styled bathroom, you'll need a way to bring in curated colour and pattern and these chic towels from M&S will do just that. The elegant scented candles and toiletries add a hotel vibe too.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Geometric bath towel, £12.50; Apothecary Warmth candle, £17; Apothecary Calm hand wash, £6; striped fringed bath towel, £15, all M&S

Habitat

For statement furniture that doesn't break the bank, Habitat has all you'll need. This table, which can be dressed up or down, will act as a hero in your dining space.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Jericho dining table in Black, £395; Cohen side table in Clay, £50; Hanna chairs in Black, £190 for two; tealight candelabra, £25; distressed Dark Sand patterned rug, £100, all Habitat













George Home

Dress up your sofa and chairs with cushions in similar colours but an array of different textures from George Home's new Primitive Essence range.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Primal wiggle line cushion, £9; Ombre striped brushed cushion, £10; Primal stripe brushed throw, £10; Black and white striped vase, £12, all George Home

H&M Home

A high-street leader in this smart, contemporary style, H&M has accessories to suit all rooms of your home, including bathroom pieces in keeping with this look.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Striped towels in Beige, from £4.99 for a hand towel; marble soap dispenser, £24.99; marble toothbrush mug, £9.99; small marble tray, £9.99, all H&M Home

> "To stop this look feeling too cold and crisp, opt for thick curtains and plush rugs to warm up floors and keep the room cosy"
>
> **HEATHER YOUNG**, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

| THE PALETTE |

Pared-back modernism



THE FABRIC

Okeyo in Onyx 8025-03, £97.50m, Romo

THE WALLPAPER

Ticking Stripe in Smoke, £48 per roll, Ohpopsi

THE PAINT

Under the Wave eggshell paint, £70 for 2.5ltr, Fired Earth



THE FLOORING

Bloomfield narrow plank, from £92.95sq m, Ted Todd



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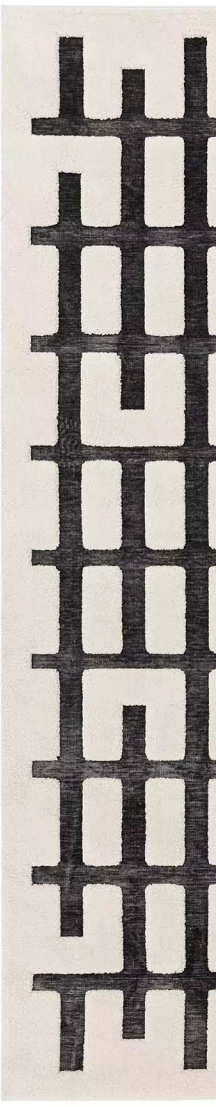
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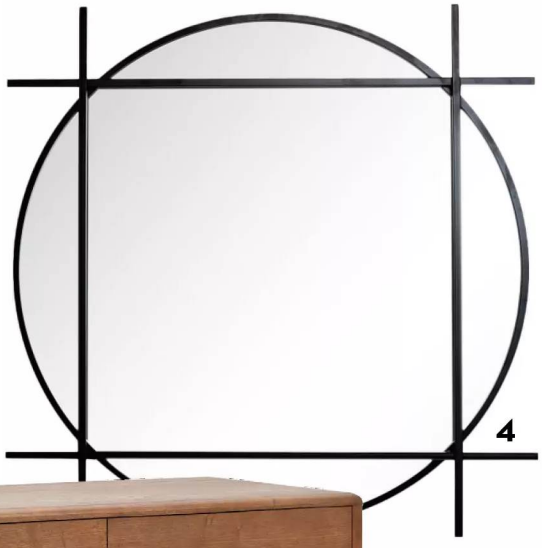


The shortlist

PARED-BACK MODERNISM

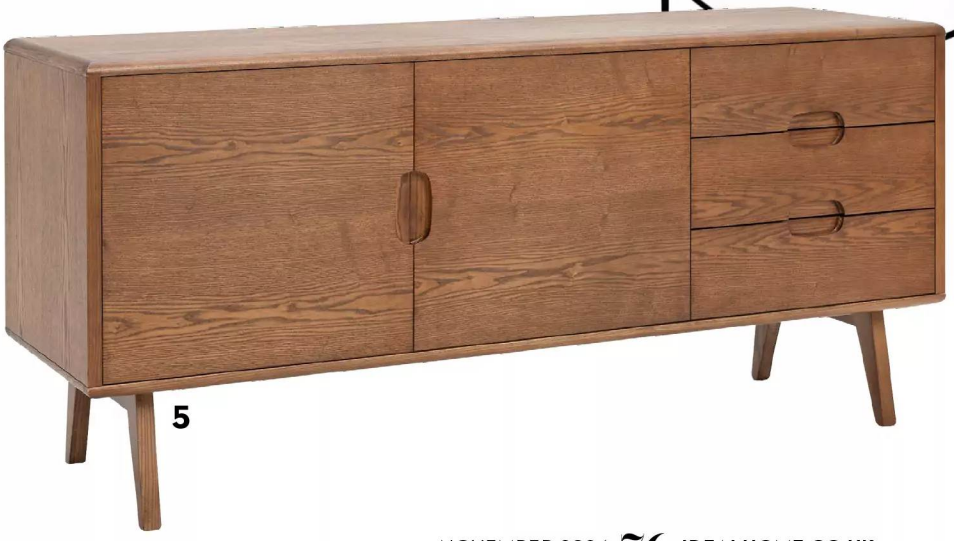
Create a sleek and sophisticated space





4

WHERE TO BUY **1** Modern mid-century framed print, from £99, Abstract House **2** Dena wood board, from £14, Design Vintage **3** Reuben accent chair, £375, Next **4** Large round black wall mirror (dia 97cm), £109.95, Melody Maison **5** Scion Esala sideboard, £595, Habitat **6** Bianca photo frame in Rosewood, £42, Rebecca Udall

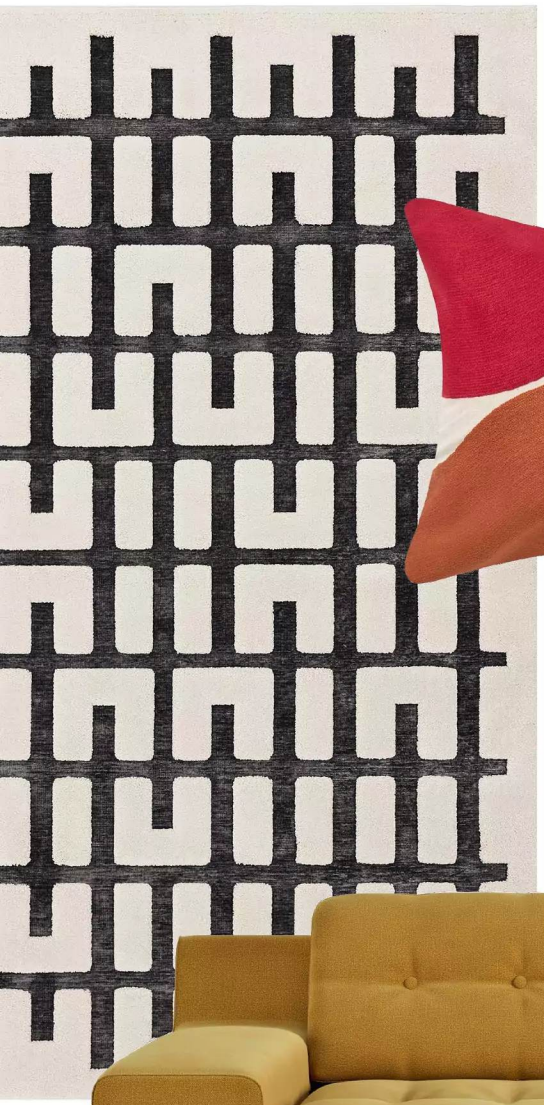


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FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI



7



8



9



10

7 Draper rug, from £129, Cult Furniture **8** Black candelabra, £14.99, TK Maxx **9** Pebble cushion, £50, John Lewis & Partners **10** Baneza aged brass and wood cone table lamp, £199, lightsandlamps.com **11** Hendricks three-seater chenille sofa in Gold, £1,400, Habitat **12** Morand oval marble-effect dining table, £449, Where Saints Go **13** Urban bookends, £10 for a set of two, Matalan **14** Living bouclé round cushion in Ginger, £26, ScS



11



12

13



14

| TREND 3 |

Glam luxe

ADD A LITTLE OPULENCE TO YOUR HOME WITH THIS RICHLY SOPHISTICATED STYLE OF DECOR

WHEN TO CHOOSE IT Love the glitz and glamour of the 1920s, but want it to feel fresh and modern? Then this is the trend for you. Perhaps you'd like to add some depth, drama and decadence to your living space, or maybe you're just hoping to create the perfect cosy corner to entertain in style. Either way, this look is all about luxurious finishes and mixing in metallics to create a home that oozes modern elegance.

WHERE TO USE IT The glam luxe trend lends itself perfectly to entertaining spaces, such as living rooms and dining rooms, but will work anywhere you can wheel in a drinks trolley and serve up a cocktail or two! Create a sense of occasion in kitchens with glam glassware – think statement champagne flutes, martini glasses and elegant decanters. And bedrooms can easily be transformed by layering up beautiful bedding in sumptuous textures and fabrics.

Essential elements

METALLICS are key, the hero being brass. Whether it's brushed or bronzed, furniture legs, handles and glassware should all boast this finish.

MARBLE is your go-to for tabletops, accessories and even flooring (great for a boutique-hotel-style bathroom!)

VELVET cushions, sofas and curtains will bring in sumptuous softness to balance out the marble and metals. Try tassel and fringe finishes for a sense of extravagance.

MOODY SHADES of colour, whether painted on the walls or featured on fabrics and tableware, will embrace the change of season and lift a lacklustre living space.





Pure decadence

Dark green walls are the perfect partner for elegant brass and marble finishes, plus plush velvet seating.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Euston accent chairs, £299 each; Dark Chester marble coffee table, £425; Valencia bar trolley, £160; Pink leopard-print coupe glasses, £18 for a set of two, all Next

COLOUR CHEAT SHEET

Muga pure flat emulsion, £60 for 2.5ltr, Paint & Paper Library

Forest Shade Easycare washable & tough, £46.25 for 2.5ltr, Dulux

Bottle Green matt emulsion, £20 for 2.5ltr, Dunelm

Where to shop for it

OUR HIGH STREET FAVOURITES THAT ARE CHAMPIONING THE GLAM LUXE LOOK...

Habitat

With its 60th anniversary Gold Edit, Habitat is the place to go for modern metallic accessories that will elevate your home for years to come.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Hendricks sofa, £1,400; Ellipse pendant light, £115; Habitat 60 bar trolley, £125; candelabra, £25; cocktail set, £32; glasses, £16 for four; Jackson platter, £12; wine rack, £30; wavy wood picture frame, £80, all Habitat

DFS

This opulent sofa from the brand's collab with Ted Baker is just one from a range of showstopping items that fit this trend perfectly.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

DFS x Ted Baker Brompton Grande sofa in Burgundy Regent Chenille, £1,899; bolster cushion in Terracotta Painted Bloom, £59; interlocking footstools, £679; Buchanan accent chair, £849, all DFS













Next

From big-ticket items like statement velvet armchairs, down to smaller must-haves like embroidered cushions and swoon-worthy vases, Next has nailed this luxurious look for the new season.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Langdon metal four-poster luxe bed frame in Black and Opulent Velvet Charcoal, from £715 for a double; Orchid side table, £175; large swirl vase, £32; pink tiger-print cushion, £16; orange velvet spot cushion, £26; leopard-print cushion, £22, all Next

George Home

One of our fave go-tos for updating your tableware, George Home has all you need to create a decadent dinner party, from brass cutlery to jewel-toned, ribbed glassware. Black plates keep things looking suitably dramatic, too.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

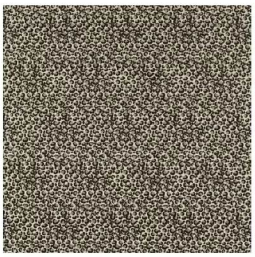
Black ribbed dinnerware, £22 for a 12-piece set; York cutlery, £10 for a 16-piece set; marble tealight holders, £5 each; blue glass candleholder, £6; stacking ribbed glasses, £2.50 each, all George Home

> “Try mixing in touches of leopard print with this luxe trend to add a bit of fun and frivolity”

HEATHER YOUNG, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

| THE PALETTE |

Glam luxe



THE FABRIC

Pokot Leopard Spot in Noir, £62m, Lime Lace



THE WALLPAPER

Boho Luxe Starlight in Blue, £70 a roll, Beautiful Walls

THE PAINT

Flora’s Tale lifestyle emulsion, £55 for 2.5ltr, Earthborn



THE FLOORING

Falls Green marble-effect tiles, £41.95sq m, Walls and Floors







The shortlist

GLAM LUXE

Add some instant elegance to your home

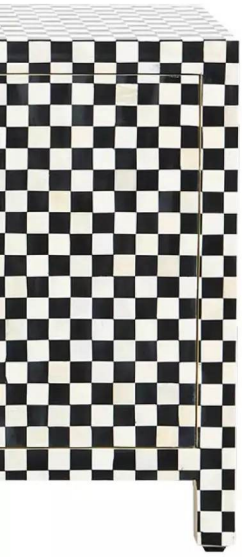








WHERE TO BUY **1** Rectangular art deco gold metal-framed wall mirror, H92xW61cm, £95, Click Style **2** Tortoiseshell wine glass, £4, Nutmeg at Morrisons **3** Chequerboard sideboard, £1,250, Oliver Bonas **4** Gold geo pear ornament, £12.99, Homesense **5** Leopard print faux-fur throw, £99, French Bedroom **6** Metal bowl in Gold, £14.99, H&M **7** Boyd flush ceiling light, £87, Habitat **8** Robyn armchair in Burnt Orange sustainable velvet, £349, Cult Furniture





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£££ Style saver

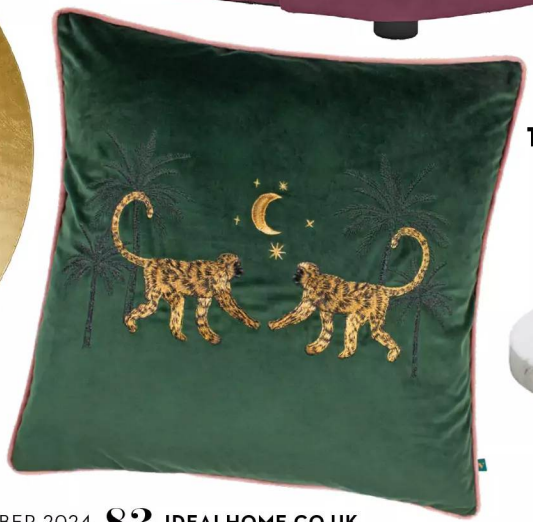
9 London Gold stainless-steel cutlery set, £59.99, What a Host **10** Floren side table in Capri, £795, Oka **11** Tortuga floor lamp, £125, Oliver Bonas **12** Door knob in Gold, £4.64, Søstrene Grene **13** The Fitzrovia two-seater sofa in Matt Velvet Wine Mix without trim, £849, Sofology **14** Round gold leaf candlestick holder wall sconce, £40, Rockett St George **15** Living Dusk monkey cushion, £22, ScS



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FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI

| TREND 4 |

Prints charming

EMBRACE PATTERN AND COLOUR TO CREATE A RELAXED AND JOYFUL INTERIOR

WHEN TO CHOOSE IT This look is all about celebrating print, pattern and personality by the truckload. Not for those who crave order and simplicity, this eclectic style layers pattern-heavy fabrics, wallpapers and accessories, interspersed with rich colour and whimsical details. If you love to embrace the chaos of multiple design eras (but in a stylish way, of course), this trend will be perfect for your home.

WHERE TO USE IT Any space you want to inject a bit of life into will be lifted in an instant once swathed in clashing patterns. It's about being brave and cheerful, so if you want to mix classic stripes with retro florals, or pair pops of pink with olive green or teal, then lean into it for heartening results. Re-covering a headboard with a patterned fabric to jazz up a guest bedroom, or opting for a bold and busy wallpaper in a kitchen will spark immediate joy.

Essential elements

FLORALS – but mix them up. Go for small-scale ditsy prints combined with bold blooms or gently trailing designs.

GREENERY, plus fresh or faux flowers, will work in harmony with floral patterns, so use lots of lush house plants, from fiddle leaf fig trees to dried hydrangeas.

PAINTED WOOD, be it skirting boards, door frames, dado rails or cupboard fronts. A classic white finish has no place here, so opt for contrasting colour.

WALL ART, especially if you paint frames in hues to match your prints. Eye-catching plates and platters hung within a gallery wall offer another way to add pattern.



Perfect clash

Your cushions don't all have to be the same. Here, the stripes tone with the seating, while the floral fabrics share similar colours, which ensures everything is harmonious.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Cushions (from left), Thorpe House in Madder, £86m; Betsy Flora in Red Lac, £56m; Art Stripe in Jade, £86m, all House Florals by Liberty Fabrics



COLOUR CHEAT SHEET

Muted Blush resistance ultra matt emulsion, £56 for 2.5ltr, Graham & Brown

Loving Green eggshell, £35 for 1ltr, Yes Colours

Olive emulsion, £48 for 2.5ltr, Neptune

Where to shop for it

OUR BRAND FAVOURITES THAT ARE ALL ABOUT THE PRINTS CHARMING LOOK...

Liberty

Heralding this trend with its signature style, Liberty is renowned for ditsy florals and bold prints, which can be used to cover cushions, upholster seating or simply framed as wall art.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Bench seat cushion, Feather Petals linen in Red Lac, £86m; cushion, Empress Vine in Fennel, £50m, both House Florals by Liberty Fabrics

George Home

With beautiful bedding sets in harmonising colours and patterns, and cushions galore, George Home is a must-visit ahead of your bedroom makeover.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Scallop stripe frill double duvet set, £15; green scallop edge rectangular cushion, £9; pink scallop tuft cushion, £12; scallop side table, £32, all George Home











| THE PALETTE |

Prints charming



THE FABRIC
Kappar Seagrass, £135m, Abigail Borg



THE WALLPAPER
Mon Seul Désir in Dusty Blues, £175 a roll, Print Sisters

THE PAINT
Terracotta Pot eggshell, £60 for 2.5ltr, Claybrook



THE FLOORING
Akari Lattice Large in Honeysuckle, £142.99sq m, Amtico



Divine Savages

This eclectic British brand is all about adding drama to your home and its fabulously floral wallpapers will do that in abundance. We also love its range of heavily fringed lampshades (and there's one available in the same pattern as this wallpaper).

BUY THE KEY PIECES
The Brambles wallpaper in Mulberry, £159 a roll, Divine Savages

Dunelm

As if its own range of curtains and blinds didn't provide enough choice, Dunelm also offers options with patterns by the prince of prints, William Morris.

BUY THE KEY PIECES
William Morris at Home Blackthorn made-to-measure Roman blind, from £115; Martha vintage velvet snuggle chair in Apricot, £699; made-to-order cushion cover, from £42; Mila rug in Pink, £209, all Dunelm

> "Mixing heritage prints with geometric patterns and checks will help keep the look more contemporary and less twee"

GINEVRA BENEDETTI, DEPUTY EDITOR

FEATURE HOLLY WALSH **PHOTOGRAPH** (LIBERTY) BEN ANDERS









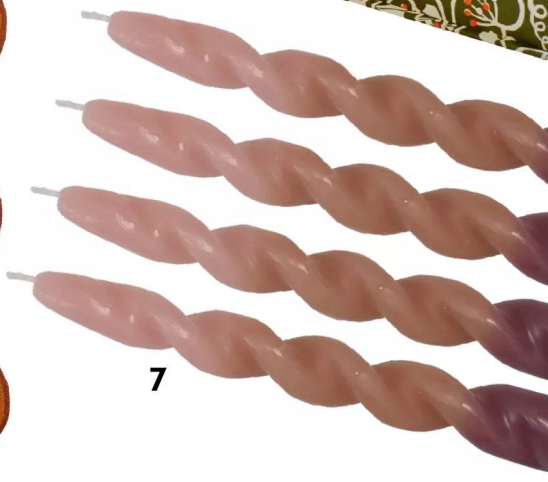
The shortlist

PRINTS CHARMING

Choose elaborate pattern for an easy style win









WHERE TO BUY **1** Burnt red urn-shaped planter, £24.99, Homesense **2** Kandy rectangular cushion cover in Dusty Pink, £55, Nkuku **3** Green Wild Daisy jug, £25, National Trust Shop **4** Rattan and wood room divider, £325, Ella James **5** A4 letter tray in Ivy Swamp Green and Orange, £29, Cambridge Imprint **6** Orange floral wavy rug, £99.99, Homesense **7** Spiral dinner candles in Pink Ombré, £14 for a set of four, Rockett St George **8** William Morris at Home Fingal armchair in Nettle Acanthas velvet, £1,020, sofa.com

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI



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9 Habitat x Morris & Co. small ceramic lamp in Strawberry Thief, £45, Habitat **10** Framed Crisanta prints in Mustard, £195 for a set of two, Oka **11** Bloomin' Marvellous handmade fringed lampshade in Blush Green, £415, Divine Savages **12** M&S x National Gallery side plates, £25 for four, M&S **13** Trailing flowers crewel cushion, £39, The Cotswold Company **14** Montpellier wardrobe, £1,825, Laura Ashley

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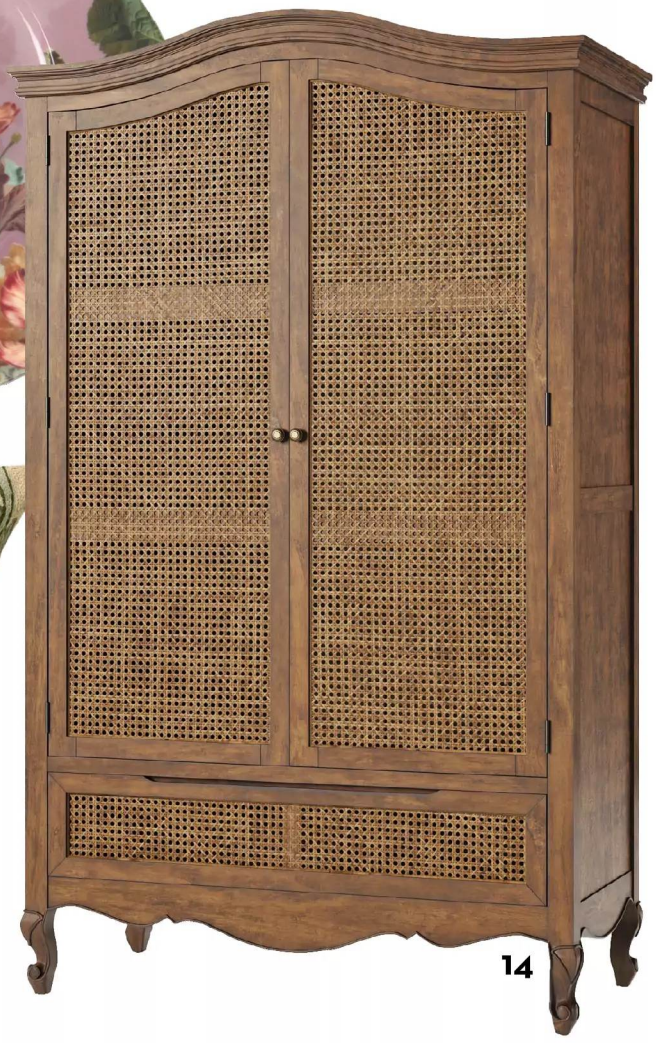


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| TREND 5 |

Unexpected colour

BE BRAVE WITH BOLD SHADES THAT AROUSE EXCITEMENT, BUT IN A CONSIDERED WAY

WHEN TO CHOOSE IT We want our homes to reflect our personalities, so if you like the idea of a clutter-free and well-designed space, but want to add a bit of energy and fun, then look no further than this spirited trend. Moving on from the summer's viral 'unexpected red theory', it's a mash-up of a maximalist style with a more minimalist look and it seeks to surprise and delight, with colour featuring in places where you might not normally expect it to be.

WHERE TO USE IT Depending on how deep you want to dive into the well of colour, you can either make a bold statement with key items in statement shades or opt for a more refined look with smaller accessories and lighting. However, with this trend, it's all about using colour in unexpected places, so you want it to be eye-catching, with items such as sideboards, dining tables and oversized rugs in hues that scream, 'Look at me!'



Essential elements

PRIMARY COLOURS are key here, so think cobalt blue, pillar box red and sunshine yellow, but ground them a little with black and other neutrals, such as cream or grey, and wooden finishes.

CURVES and organic shapes feature not only in artwork and lighting, but in sculptural seating and side tables, too.

LINEAR DETAILS contrast with curved shapes, to give this look a streamlined and high-end feel.

FUN is what this trend seeks to evoke, so don't overthink it, but enjoy the process of using bright colour to create an uplifting scheme in your home.



Unleash yourself

Get creative with existing furniture. For example, hairpin legs can be given a new look by spray painting them in a standout shade. Alternatively, look for ready-made designs that feature a hit of colour where you least expect it.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Brunel Red Edition desk, £699; stool, £149; Tanya Ling Aoueilles rug by Christopher Farr, from £950; Brunel stool cushion, £49; Hay dog bed, £155; braided dog leash, £25; Barro mug in Blue, £29 for a set of two, all Heal's

COLOUR CHEAT SHEET

Electric Blue matt emulsion, £38 for 1ltr, Yes Colours

Red supreme eggshell, £32.99 for 1ltr, Vintro at B&Q

Purple 03 Dumbo House matt, £45 for 2.5ltr, Lick

Where to shop for it

OUR HIGH STREET FAVOURITES THAT ARE LOVING THE UNEXPECTED COLOUR-POP LOOK...

Dunelm

Confidently nailing its range of colourful bedding to instantly change up your bedroom scheme, Dunelm also offers super-fun items like this compact bedside table and bright light shade.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Elements Griffin classic compact bedside table in Blue, £79; East End Prints Berlin wall art, from £14; Munro pendant light, £55, all Dunelm

Habitat

This colourful trend is exactly what Habitat has been championing for the last 60 years, so it's only right that the brand's anniversary collection features this standout red dining set.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Habitat 60 Larsa table, £300; Larsa chairs, £160 for two, Scoop chair in White, £325, Reuben side table in Black, £50; Ripple rug, £295, all Habitat













Heal's

Proving that even the most sophisticated and elegant pieces of furniture can benefit from this look, Heal's brings a tidal wave of colour to your home with this verdant sideboard.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Riga high-gloss sideboard, £1,999; Big Red Triangle rug, from £1,200; Column vanity mirror, £129; Botanist candle, £75; Splash vase, £49; *The Voice Within* print, from £30, all Heal's

Sofology

Sofology's range of accent armchairs comes in a whole host of colours so you can opt for a neutral to balance out loud accessories, or go bold with something a little more punchy.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Retreat accent swivel chair in Casual Chenille Ivory, £599, Sofology. HK Living metal triangle table lamp, £149, Trouva. Barrel side table in Oak, £795, Soho Home

> "Painting your ceiling in an attention-grabbing shade would work wonderfully with this trend, so grab your roller and look up!"
>
> **HEATHER YOUNG**, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

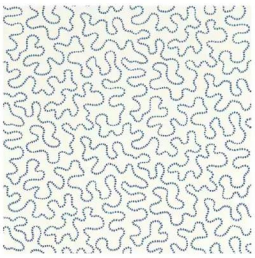
| THE PALETTE |

Unexpected colour



THE FABRIC

Churchgate bouclé in Ivory, £18m, Dunelm



THE WALLPAPER

Wiggle in Lapis/Sky, £79 a roll, Sophie Robinson at Harlequin

THE PAINT

Sorrel Green plant-based multisurface eggshell paint, £89 for 2.5ltr, Mylands



THE FLOORING

Remington hand-tufted rug in Kite Orange, £199, Cult Furniture



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The shortlist

UNEXPECTED COLOUR

Inject some dopamine brights into your scheme



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WHERE TO BUY **1** Wool blend blanket in Bright Green, £24.99, H&M **2** Blue wireless portable table lamp, £26.40, Søstrene Grene **3** Wall shelf with red brackets, £34.96, Søstrene Grene **4** Elio mug, £10, Oliver Bonas **5** Habitat 60 Scottie dining chair, £130, Habitat **6** Red wavy mirror, £120, Rose & Grey **7** French linen bedding in Mustard Yellow, from £42 for a pair of pillowcases, Soak & Sleep **8** Grassmere glass candleholder, £16, John Lewis & Partners



9 Jaque checkered blue indoor/outdoor rug, 150x215cm, £289, Ruggable **10** Habitat 60 Akari four-poster metal double bed frame, £350, Habitat **11** Elements footed tray, £12, Dunelm **12** Blue cactus ornament, £14.99, Homesense **13** The Skinny cabinet in Mustard, £289, Mustard **14** Ricrac fabric napkin, £55 for an assorted set of four colours, Meri Meri

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI

quality

made-to-order

The **we love to cook** kitchen

affordable

classic



kütchenhaus
The **German** Kitchen



Whatever happens in your kitchen, get the quality, choice and experience you deserve at Kutchenhaus - **The German Kitchen.**

DISCOVER YOUR PERFECT
GERMAN KITCHEN


my furniture
living · dining · bedroom · lighting · accessories
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ideal homes
EXPLORE | EXCITE | INSPIRE

IDEAL IDEA

Instant warmth

If your neutral space is feeling a little cold this season, why not introduce a dose of warming colour? As well as cushions, consider painting a window frame or upcycling furniture.

HEATHER YOUNG,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



PHOTOGRAPH CHRIS SNOOK

Living room

'I upholstered the footstool in a bold fabric but didn't want too many other patterns fighting for attention so I switched to plain curtains as the previous ones were too jarring,' says Jen.

BUY THE KEY PIECES
Footstool upholstered in Zambezi Blush cotton satin fabric, £52m, Emma J Shipley. For similar fireplace tiles, try Demi Mono, from £39sqm, Quorn Stone.





| IDEAS HOME |

FEELING bold

A PUNCHY PALETTE OF PINK, YELLOW AND BLUE, TEAMED WITH BUILT-IN JOINERY AND PANELLING, HAS TRANSFORMED JEN AND NICK BRAKE'S NEW-BUILD HOME

BOLSTER CUSHIONS
Create an elegant look paired with a high button-back sofa



HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

Jen Brake, 37, lives here with her husband Nick, 40, and their children Bella, 14, Ollie, 10, and Bear, eight, plus dog Polly. They run a bespoke joinery business.

THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom detached house in Clayton-le-Woods, Lancashire.

As DIY novices, buying a detached new-build house off-plan in January 2015 was an easy option for Jen and Nick Brake. With white walls and grey floors, the property lacked character but has since been given a colourful makeover.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE PROPERTY?

'The idea of a blank canvas with no wallpaper to strip really appealed to us. Our previous house was an end terrace, which felt quite claustrophobic and noisy. Having grown up on a farm, Nick wanted somewhere quieter, and we needed more bedrooms for our growing family.'

WHICH ROOM HAS SEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE?

'The kitchen. There were steps down from the hallway but we built a partition wall with doors and windows to bring light through. We'd picked a white gloss Magnet kitchen but I got bored with it, so we replaced some of the wall cabinets with a shelf and panelling, painted the doors a smoky green and bought a new worktop and tap. I felt I couldn't change the speckled grey granite worktop, which I hated, as it was expensive, but in the end we sold it.'

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ADD CHARACTER?

'When we installed a built-in bookcase in the dining room, it clicked that it's possible to add character to a new build. It was just a big expanse of wall before. Before long we were adding alcove cabinetry in the living room too, then panelling and patterned wallpaper in our bedroom. Details like classic artwork and traditional rugs also helped. Having found several little nooks and alcoves to create interesting storage, we decided to join forces with my brother and create our own business (@hellonook_uk) in October 2021. We now create charming nooks in people's homes using built-in furniture.'

HOW DID YOU GET SO COLOUR CONFIDENT?

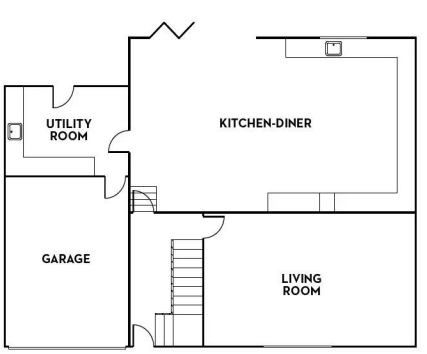
'A lot of the rooms were white for several years before I became braver with colour, which started when I hand-painted some bears in the children's bedrooms. Before long, I'd changed every room several times over. It's worth buying good-quality paint, though. Mylands and Little Greene are lovely to work with as they're so thick and luxurious.'

WHAT'S NEXT?

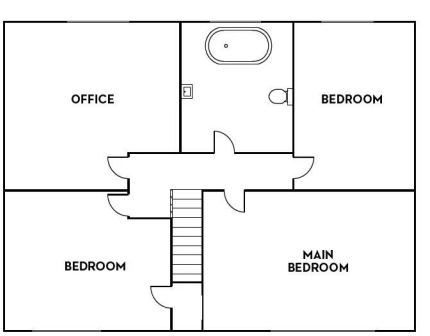
'I'd like to change the bathroom as I'd love a freestanding bath and brass fittings, plus easy-clean panels rather than tiles. You can follow my progress on Instagram at @halfpaintedhouse. My dad jokes that my walls are two inches thicker now as I've painted them that many times, but I'll probably redecorate every room again!'

THE LAYOUT

The hallway leads to a living room on one side, while straight ahead is a glazed partition wall with a door and steps down to the kitchen-diner. Off this space are bifolds to the garden and a bookcase wall with central door leading to the utility room, which has access to the garage and garden. Upstairs there are three bedrooms, an office, family bathroom and en-suite shower room over the stairs that was previously accessed off the main bedroom but now has a door to the boys' bedroom.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



Living room

‘The walls in here were white for three years before going dark grey, then pale pink, then dark blue, then back to pale pink again! I eventually realised this room suits paler walls.’

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Shoreditch 2.5 seater sofa in moleskin velvet in Candyfloss, £1,894, Darlings of Chelsea, is an alternative. Karin three-seater sofa in Mustard, £849, SLF24, has this look. So’Home Shapes flatweave rug in Blue, £225, La Redoute, is a good match



Kitchen–diner

'This wall was set back with a 15cm alcove and I realised it was the perfect depth for books. I drew the bookcase design and my brother Dave, a joiner, built out the doorway and constructed the shelving.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Bookcase painted in Shocking Pink dead matt, £89 for 2.5ltr; utility units in Burlington Arcade dead matt, £89 for 2.5ltr; kitchen spray-painted in Museum dead matt, £89 for 2.5ltr, all Mylands

'Our dining table has been sanded back and I've also given my budget grey chairs a new look using watered down leftover pink tester pots'

PINK CHAIRS
Add impact by picking a vibrant colour to tie together chairs and woodwork

FOCUS ON...

PAINTING KITCHEN CABINETS

Copy Jen, who revamped her white gloss kitchen with matt smoky green paint – it's an inexpensive way give your cabinets a fresh new look

■ If your kitchen is in good condition but you're bored with the colour, repainting it can give the room a new lease of life. If you're taking the DIY route, to minimise drips it's best to take off the doors and handles then paint them laid flat, although some people are happy to cover the hinges with masking tape first. Applying several very thin coats will make drips less likely.

■ Cleaning the surfaces with sugar soap or degreaser is essential, while glossy laminate cupboards will need a light sand with 120 grit sandpaper. Next, apply two coats of adhesion-promoting primer, such as Zinsser or Caparol Capacryl, then sand again with 240 grit sandpaper.

■ Finally apply two or three coats of paint with a brush or small roller (sanding between coats). Jen used a spray gun from B&Q (priced from £55) to avoid brush marks. For laminate doors, use a specialist satin finish paint designed for wood, melamine or MDF. If your cabinets are wood, any eggshell or interior wood paint should be suitable.

■ For a professional finish, there are companies that offer a spray-painting service. They will mask off your walls, floors, windows and doors. Expect to pay around £80 to £100 per cabinet.



Painting cabinets is a budget-friendly option to make your kitchen look as good as new

Office

'Beading and new handles were added to the sideboard before I painted it in pink. This is where I work doing consultations for our bespoke joinery business.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Besta sideboard, £205, Ikea, painted in Pink House dead matt, £89 for 2.5ltr, Mylands. Musée No 873.009 art print, from £25, Musée Home. Panelling painted in Adventurer intelligent eggshell, £80 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene

Main bedroom

'My dressing table has been given a new look with leftover paint from Bella's bedroom. I chose expensive wallpaper so it was cheaper to have panelling on the bottom half.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Curved dressing table with foldable mirror, £364, Fy!, is similar, painted in Roasted Beetroot premium wood & metal eggshell, £42 for 2.5ltr, Valspar



PANELLING

Pick a darker shade below to anchor the scheme, paired with a small-scale pattern above







Main bedroom

'At first I painted this room dark blue to help me sleep, before going back to white and then pale pink, but it felt a bit boring all one colour, so I recently added panelling and classic patterned wallpaper. I love the combination of yellow and pink.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES
William Morris style Willow wallpaper, £78.75 a roll, Wallpaperdirect. Walls and panelling in Serene Pink matt paint, £48 for 2ltr, YesColours

ARTWORK
Keep an eye out in charity shops for affordable art to complement your scheme



Bathroom

'I stencilled the grey floor tiles with pattern to add interest. Bending and cutting the stencils without smudging the paint was really tricky.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Zaida faux tile stencil, £8, Dizzy Duck Designs, is similar. Metro Devon Fern ceramic brick tiles, £20.48sq m, Easy Bathrooms, would work here

Bella's bedroom

'This room was pale blue before which felt very icy. Bella really wanted purple as it's her favourite colour.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Walls painted in Roasted Beetroot premium walls & ceilings, £37 for 2.5ltr, Valspar



WALL LIGHT
Go DIY by adding a coloured bulb and cable to a standard base

STYLE MUST-HAVES

INSPIRED BY JEN AND NICK'S HOME

IN THE PINK
Rook sideboard, £849, Swoon





RANGE OF SIZES
Teal Juno rug, from £85, Weaver Green



COLOUR POP
Harper two-seater sofa in Butterscotch matt velvet, £1,650, sofa.com



BUDGET BUY
Rayner dining chair in Blush Pink sustainable velvet and brass, £59, Cult Furniture

FEATURE KAREN WILSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** KATIE LEE
PLANS RICHARD HOOKWAY



'I wanted a chequerboard floor in the hallway, and Sophie came up with this gorgeous design which incorporates more colour in it. We use those colours consistently throughout the house'

KALEIDOSCOPE of colour

CHARLOTTE AND WOODY WOODWARDS HAVE TRANSFORMED A DARK AND DATED TERRACE INTO A BRIGHT FAMILY HOME PACKED WITH PERSONALITY



> ‘We used **GREEN** as a **NEUTRAL** throughout – it’s a unifying **THREAD** to layer on more **COLOURS**



Kitchen

'The new layout means there's so much extra light, it feels really cheery now. We've added sky lights, a pitched roof and internal glazing to let it flow throughout.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Bespoke units, Brentwood Kitchens; painted in Vardo by Farrow & Ball. Shivakashi Pink granite, from £215sq m, The Marble Store. Aluminium doors, Chigwell Window Centre



HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

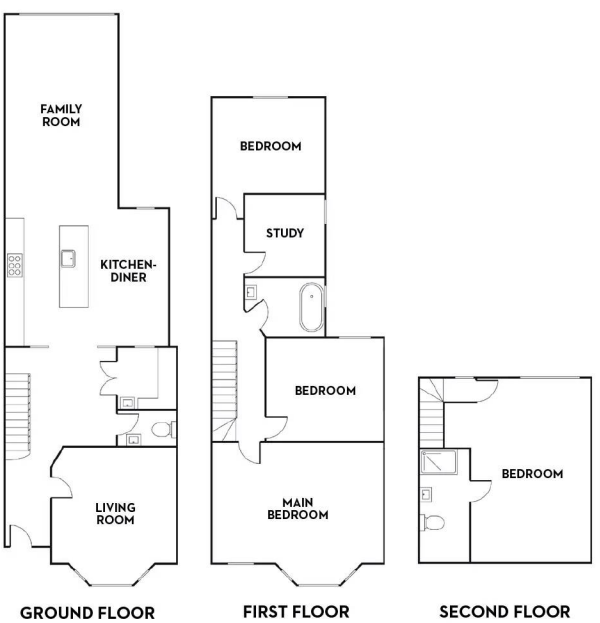
Charlotte Woodwards, a compliance officer, lives here with her husband Woody, who works on a trading desk, and their children Margot, seven, and five-year-old Wilfred.

THE PROPERTY

A four-bed Victorian terrace in South Woodford, east London.

THE LAYOUT

It's a typical Victorian terrace, with the living room off the hallway at the front. Continuing past the staircase, there's a loo and utility room, leading on to the kitchen-diner. At the back, there's a family seating area. On the first floor is the main bedroom, two children's rooms, family bathroom and study. The top floor has an extra guest room with en suite.



When Charlotte and Woody moved to a family-friendly area of London, they found a period property that hadn't been touched for 35 years. They have since transformed it with an extension and pops of colour.

WHY DID YOU MOVE HERE?

'We moved to east London about five years ago after living in Wood Green. Although it was a really sweet house in a buzzy area, we had some friends who had moved to South Woodford and it was lovely when we visited – there are lots of green spaces, nice schools and yet it's still on the Central Line so you can easily travel into the city.'

WHAT WAS THE HOUSE LIKE WHEN YOU BOUGHT IT?

'It was a very handsome property from the outside, with lovely original windows with green panes. Inside was tired after being untouched for 35 years by the family that had lived there, and was still in the original Victorian layout. It had long corridors, the kitchen was too small for modern family life and it felt very dark – the lights were always on downstairs no matter what time of year.'

DID YOU START WORK STRAIGHT AWAY?

'We had architect's plans drawn up to extend the kitchen, but then felt totally overwhelmed and still hadn't made much progress after living here for three years. By chance I was talking to a neighbour one day, who recommended interior designer Sophie Gunning (projecthome.uk). We clicked straight away and she set about helping us introduce colour and functionality to our home. She changed the architect's plans and made the living space bigger, which suits our family much better. It was amazing to work with Sophie, she was far more than just a designer and helped project-manage throughout.'

WHAT DID YOU CHANGE?

'The work took seven months and we moved back in in September 2023. The downstairs layout had changed to add plenty of light and use the space better. The open shelving in the middle of the house breaks up the space and announces a new area without blocking any light. Sophie taught me to use green as a neutral – it goes with everything and has become a unifying colour throughout. Even our window frames are a shade of green. It means you can then layer on more colours and make it as bold as you want without worrying whether things go together.'

WHAT'S NEXT?

'We're very happy living here – we love what we've achieved and the house brings us peace. It's perfect for our family as there are spaces to be alone as well as together. The only thing that might tempt us to move is a driveway!'



Living room

'This is one of my favourite rooms. It can take a bolder colour because it's got high ceilings and gets plenty of light through the bay window. I bought the yellow sofa before the house was even done up!'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Large Pudding sofa in Bumblebee Clever Velvet, £2,435, Loaf

Dining area

'My parents always had a massive rough pine dining table when I was growing up so that's what I always imagined we'd have.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Dining table is vintage; Roseland Furniture's Portland eight-seater extending table, £719.95, is a similar style. Vintage chairs painted in Emperor's Silk chalk paint, £26.95 for 1ltr, Annie Sloan





Kitchen

'We saw an inspiration shot of a kitchen with an odd-one-out cupboard and I thought, why not? This unit was bespoke, but the rest was off-the-shelf which felt like a good budget compromise.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Aged Brass Ionian tap, £560, deVol. Roberts Revival radio in Uno Sunburst, £149.99, John Lewis & Partners

FOCUS ON...

RECLAIMED DOORS

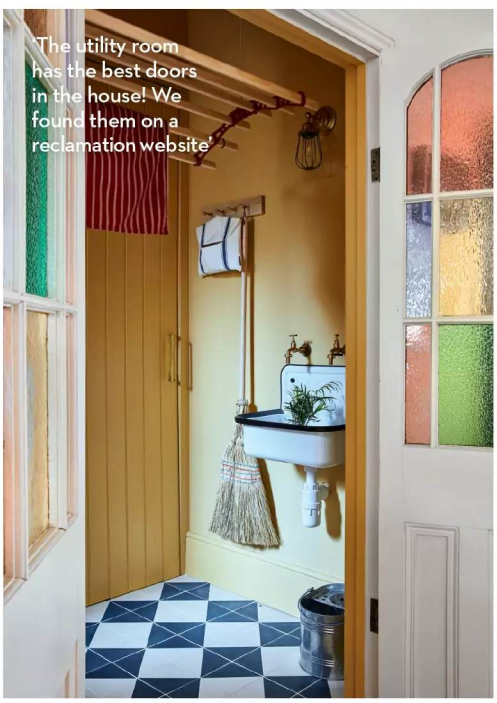
Adding vintage details makes a real difference when renovating a period property. Here's what you need to think about when choosing internal doors...

■ Buying a reclaimed door can be a bit overwhelming – there's a huge choice of conditions, colours, sizes and styles. Have a look at the doors elsewhere in your house or along your road – is there a design that's more common? It's likely to be the original door design and will give you a good starting point. Adding a design from the wrong period might not give a cohesive result.

■ Try visiting a reclamation yard in person to get an idea of what you like and how much it will cost. Stained glass designs, like Charlotte's, will be more expensive. Facebook Marketplace and eBay have lots of options so it's helpful to know what you're looking for before starting – watch out for any broken glass, cracks or rotting wood as the doors could be warped.

■ Try to choose replacement doors in the same size, including depth. Small details like the side the door hangs on will keep installation costs down as it won't require a carpenter to move hinges and fill gaps.

■ If you're adding a new doorway, buy the door before the frame is put in – you'll have a much wider choice of doors.



'The utility room has the best doors in the house! We found them on a reclamation website'



Main bedroom

'Our bedroom is the whole width of the house, so it was another light-filled room that felt like it could take a deeper colour. The hearth tiles were broken so I chose a chequerboard design.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Walls in Ashes of Roses intelligent matt emulsion, £33 for 1ltr, Little Greene. Beaumont four-poster bed, £795, The White Company

FOUR-POSTER BED
Adds drama and hotel chic to a main bedroom

FEATURE ALI LOVETT **PHOTOGRAPHS** CHRIS SNOOK
PLANS RICHARD HOOKWAY



'For the study we chose Adam Bray Brown paper stripe wallpaper in Teal, £184 a roll, The Design Yard. It feels like brown packaging paper – it's really matt and textured, and the perfect addition'



En suite

'I love chequerboard designs, it's a pattern we've used throughout the house. Here, we did it as a diamond instead of square. As we didn't need a bath for our guest room, we could include a really big shower with a lovely reeded glass screen.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Bespoke cement tiles, Mosaic Factory. Burlington Victorian basin with pedestal, £224.99, Drench. Nogu cane sunburst mirror, £38, La Redoute

FAMILY MUST-HAVES

INSPIRED BY CHARLOTTE AND WOODY'S HOME



PRACTICAL FLOORING
Ashford Mix patterned tiles, £76.08sq m, Porcelain Superstore



SPILL-RESISTANT FABRIC
Smooth sofa in Clever Velvet, £1,895, Loaf



CUDDLE UP
Teal Sam stripe cotton quilted throw, £139, The Secret Linen Store



TOY STORAGE
Huduma stripe woven baskets, from £27 for a small size, The Basket Room

HARDWEARING MATERIAL
Tile rug, £120, Braided Rug Company

| FAMILY HOME |

TWO HOMES into one

BY COMPLETELY REWORKING THE FLOOR PLAN, JENNY THORPE WAS ABLE TO RESTORE THE BEAUTIFUL SYMMETRY OF HER 1930s SEMI





Kitchen

'I love the look of the splashback extending up the wall. Wooden shelves, antique brass hardware and amber pendants add warmth.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Shaker cabinetry in Obsidian Green by Little Greene; Calacatta Gold quartz worktop and splashback, all The Shaker Workshop.
Lara stools, £149 each, Dunelm.
Pendants, £168 each, Spark & Bell



> **RENOVATING** the whole house in one go was **TOUGH**, and moving out for six months ate into our budget, but it was **WORTH** it to get the job done, rather than living in a building site

JENNY THORPE, HOMEOWNER



HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

Jenny Thorpe lives here with husband Sam, an IT accounts director, and their daughters, Sylvie, five, and Dora, three.

THE PROPERTY

A 1930s semi-detached house with four bedrooms, in Chelmsford, Essex, bought by the couple in December 2020.

THE LAYOUT

The front hall opens into the living room on the left and the playroom on the right, which leads into the large open-plan kitchen-diner via a utility room. A loo and shower room sit off the hallway. Upstairs, the first floor has three bedrooms, including the master bedroom with en suite and dressing room, and the family bathroom. The second floor has a guest bedroom with en suite, and a second room that's currently used as an office.



Jenny and Sam weren't looking for a project, but while on the hunt for their next home they spotted this 1930s semi, split into two independent dwellings, and decided to draw on Jenny's eye for design to turn it back into one beautiful family home.

WHAT APPEALED TO YOU ABOUT THIS HOUSE?

'To be honest, if this place had come up on any other street we wouldn't have gone for it as it needed so much work. The right half was converted into a self-contained annex with its own internal front door and separate staircase, so we knew it would be a big project to return it to one single house. But we loved the location, the house still retained some period features and we could see it had the bones to become a stunning family home.'

HOW DID YOU REDESIGN THE LAYOUT?

'We wanted to reclaim the beautiful symmetry of the house, starting by removing the annex staircase, but our plan was also to extend the back of the house to create a generous, relaxed family kitchen-diner as I knew, from how we used our previous home, we'd spend most of our time there. Originally, we couldn't access the top floor of the main house through the annex so we lost a box room to create a doorway into the master bedroom. And since we were doing so much work it made sense to go into the loft at the same time to add a guest bedroom and office. We started with the kitchen, extending out an extra three metres, and once the builders started taking down the internal walls we decided to move into a rental for three months, but of course the work took longer than expected so to save money we moved in with my mum for another three months.'

WHAT DROVE YOUR DECORATING DECISIONS FOR THIS HOUSE?

'I have three style rules that I've used throughout the house; I start with a neutral base, sit that with darker tones and then add wooden accessories to inject depth and warmth. I don't want to have too much colour on the walls and prefer a pared-back look, but I like to bring in interest using bold furniture to give each room its own personality, which I update with accessories and artwork.'

ARE YOU ALL PLEASED WITH THE FINISHED RESULT?

'We love it; particularly the downstairs extension. That works really well, transitioning from a fully functioning family kitchen-diner in the day to sophisticated entertaining space in the evening. It's sometimes hard to imagine how there could have been another separate home in here, and although it's been a labour of love, returning this house to its former glory has been worth the effort.'



Living room

'Re-instating the chimney breast and installing the fireplace has given the room a focal point while the built-in shelves add pace and interest to the wall, as well as much-needed storage.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Walls in Green Smoke modern emulsion, £105 for 5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Beatrice sofa, £699, Dunelm

PICTURE RAIL

Painting the picture rail and above in a lighter shade than the walls below creates a cosy feeling in a room

"I'm not a **DIY-ER** at all, but I can do the **DESIGN** and have a good **EYE** for detail"

Living room

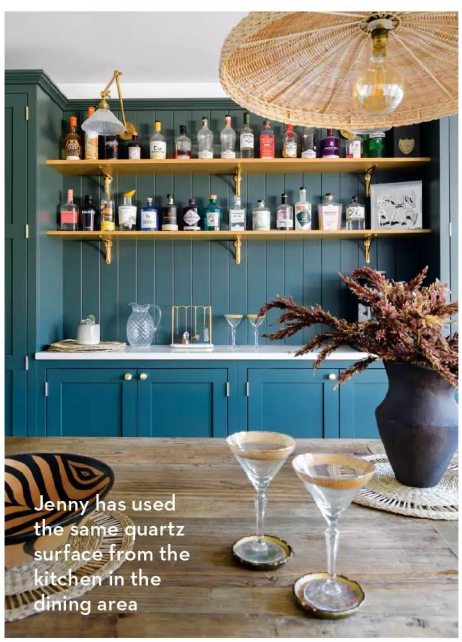
'I always start a scheme with a calming colour, but I wanted to elevate the living room so chose the dark blue velvet sofa and gold lamp to ground the look while adding a luxurious feel.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Alena three-seater sofa in Ink easy velvet, £1,739, Swoon. Mixed Shape multi-arm wall light, £228, Amber Lewis for Anthropologie

SMART IDEA

Curved radiators offer a practical and stylish solution for bay windows



Jenny has used the same quartz surface from the kitchen in the dining area

FOCUS ON...

QUARTZ WORKTOPS

Give your hard-working kitchen surfaces a high-end look with quartz, which is both elegant and durable

WHAT IS QUARTZ?

Quartz is a man-made material, bonding ground quartz with resins and pigments which is compressed into large, polished slabs that can mimic the look of natural stone. The vein effect is added into the stone during the engineering process.

WHAT ARE THE PROS?

It's a low maintenance, non-porous material that is stain resistant. It's tough so won't crack or scratch easily, and being man-made means it can come in almost any colour, plus the veining is usually more consistent than natural stone.

AND THE CONS?

It's expensive and heavy so needs skilled professionals to cut and fit it, adding to installation costs. The seams can be noticeable if you have a long piece, so work with your supplier to match the pattern.

IS IT ECO-FRIENDLY?

The production process doesn't use extensive mining, unlike natural marble, and can involve recycling by-products from other industries. Quartz is one of the most abundant materials around, and is recyclable. It's also long-lasting, so rarely needs replacing.

Dining area

'We put the dining table rather than the TV in this nook so I can see the children from the kitchen. We use it if we have people over, but we tend to sit around the island or in the snug day to day.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Porter dining table, £2,250; Lucien chairs, £245 each, all Graham & Green. Plantasia wallpaper in Indigo, £195 a roll, House of Hackney. Aphrodite 80cm pendant in rattan, £255, Pooky

COHESIVE COLOUR

Continue the same cabinetry and colour scheme from the kitchen into the dining area to help the flow of a large space



Main bedroom

'The rattan furniture and gold lamp add the texture and warmth the muted scheme needed, while a gentle pop of pattern brings interest to this simple corner.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

For a similar bed, try the Saharsa, £1,950, Nkuku. Rattan-drawer bedside table, £139.99, H&M. Pick wall light in Black and Brass, £112, Pooky. Morris & Co Pink Rose Oxford pillowcase in Blue, £24, John Lewis & Partners

CALMING SCHEME

Colour-drenching the panelling and picture ledge adds character to a large expanse of wall





Bathroom

'The freestanding bath is the focus of the room, positioned under the window, and although the space is small, by forgoing a tray and choosing a wet-room style shower, I managed to fit it all in.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Cuban Star tiles in Black and White, £40sq m, Tiles Direct. Charlotte Edwards' Rosemary freestanding bath in Matt Black, £1,319.99, BathLux, is similar. Tier on Tier louvre shutters, Superior Shutters

Sylvie's bedroom

'I wanted this room to be fun and playful and Sylvie loves animals, so this mural design was a real find as it perfectly encapsulates her style.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Pink Jungle wallpaper mural, £35sq m, Munks & Me. Majari Floral duvet cover, £36 for a single, La Redoute. Similar teepee, SoBuy children's play tent, £36.95, The Range



'The fixtures and fittings look luxe, but the vanity, from a chest of drawers, gives the natural element I love.'





Sylvie's bedroom

'A petal-shaped headboard and the scallop shelves combined with pink and green bring a softness and a playful touch.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Daisy headboard, £199.99, The Little Rattan Company. World Map, from £9.95, Kid of the Village

FEATURE AND STYLING LISA MOSES **PHOTOGRAPHS** CAROLINE MARDON
PLANS RICHARD HOOKWAY

FAMILY MUST-HAVES

INSPIRED BY JENNY'S HOME



SLEEP SOUNDLY
Malu rattan child's bed, £699, La Redoute



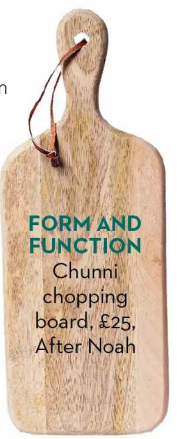
TOP TILES
Melville White tiles, £56.69sq m, Porcelain Superstore



BURNING BRIGHT
Glass tealight holder in Amber, £2, B&M



TIMELESS PATTERN
Horn Poppy William Morris cushion, £34.99, Wayfair



FORM AND FUNCTION
Chunni chopping board, £25, After Noah

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| STYLE HOME |

"Nostalgia WITH A MODERN TWIST"

A MIX OF VINTAGE AND MODERN STYLING HAS GIVEN MICHAEL AND OLIVIA COSTELLO'S GEORGIAN PROPERTY A COLOURFUL UPDATE

CURATED SHELVES
Group favourite books, treasures and photos on bookshelves for a unique display of everything you love



HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?
Michael Costello, the owner of an advertising agency, and his wife Olivia, a travel writer.

THE PROPERTY
A four-storey, three-bedroom, 18th-century Georgian townhouse on the sought-after seafront in Deal, Kent.

"Old-world décor is elevated with contemporary pieces"

'Our interior designer Susan Venn of Susan Venn Design Studio (susanvenn.com) was crucial to the transformation of the house as she understood our personality and ideas. We enjoy creatively mixing pieces we've gathered over the years and Susan encouraged us to add modern touches to elevate the scheme. I especially love the modern ceiling light reflected in the mirror.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES Lorenzo chandelier, £1,395, Soho Home. The Orb mirror above fireplace, Reid & Wright. Chelsea Rouge sofa fabric by Kirkby Design, TM Interiors



3 "We love blending colours and styles"

'We're delighted with how the house is stylish and comfortable yet modern and charmingly nostalgic. The coastal location and views have been a main consideration on every floor of the house. Embracing the old and new and blending colours and styles has resulted in a light-filled home with old-world charm.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES Walls in Skimming Stone estate emulsion, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Koko stool, £89.99, The Rattan Company, is similar. Lani Teal ottoman fabric by Jane Churchill, £70m, Colefax & Fowler. Try the Original BTC Hector pleat wall light, £185, John Lewis & Partners, for a similar look



2 "Incorporate an intriguing feature"

'We love the little window above the front door and wanted to create something intriguing for when visitors walk past and look in. Susan suggested botanical wallpaper on the ceiling, and we loved this unexpected idea. We were initially unsure about her idea for a dark wall colour in Green Smoke to complement the wallpaper but once we saw the finished look, we loved how the light brings the colour to life and how it changes throughout the day.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES Walls in Green Smoke, £57.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Wallpaper in Raphael Blue, £117.36 a roll, Sandberg Wallpaper. Old School Tulip pendant light, £120, Holloways of Ludlow, is similar

NEUTRAL WALLS
A neutral backdrop will always give you more options for adding colourful fabrics and accessories



"Our bright kitchen creates the sunniest mood"

'Our kitchen is a simple design with plain wall tiles and pared-back cabinets. The lively mustard hue creates an inviting space and adds a cheerful ambience. During our time working abroad we've lived in rental houses with sterile kitchens, so it's been fun to make bold colour choices.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES Quick dry satinwood in Honey Mustard, £73.49 for 2.5ltr, Brewers, is a similar colour. Matt floor tiles in White, Grey and Black, £17.95sq m, Walls and Floors


“We love the VIBRANT colours in every room as they’re so UPLIFTING”



ADD CHARACTER
Create a nostalgic air with your fabric choice, like this sea blue colour adorned with tulips

"Create seaside charm – with not a seagull or shell in sight"

'We were keen to include echoes of the coast, but not in an obvious way. The patterned banquette in sea blue has an old English air about it and makes good use of limited seating space.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES Fabric in Tulips, Sea Blue, £168m, Ottoline. Christie Rise & Fall light, £665, Original BTC. Ercol Heritage chairs, £390 each, Heal's, are similar

“A mixed palette really can work”

‘We adore the views from our bedroom and didn’t want anything to distract us from the beautiful sunrise. The Bermuda Hemp wallpaper blends in perfectly with the sludgy colour of the sea, as do the muted paint colours. Bursts of emerald, orange and pink bring in a playful touch.’

BUY THE KEY PIECES Bermuda Hemp II wallpaper in Midnight Jade, Phillip Jeffries. Headboard in Pebble fabric, £170m, Fermoie. Door in Windmill Lane intelligent eggshell, £80 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene



TACTILE HEMP WALLPAPER
This carefully chosen design emulates the shades of the sea





POPPY PRINT
Ambrose lamp, 30cm straight empire shade in Poppies by Ellen Merchant in Green, £111, Pooky



GEO PATTERN
Velvet cushion, £19.99, Homesense



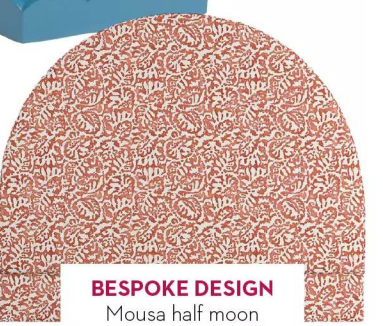
SOLID WOOD
Tempus dining table, £1,995, Oka

STYLE MUST-HAVES

INSPIRED BY MICHAEL AND OLIVIA'S HOME



SO CURVY
Tea tray, £22, John Lewis & Partners



BESPOKE DESIGN
Mousa half moon headboard, £479, The Headboard Workshop

VINTAGE VIBE
Massimo bedside table, £290, Ruma





POP OF COLOUR
Boston 2.5 seat curved arm sofa in Raspberry Smart Velvet, £2,090, sofa.com

"Our guest bedroom is brimming with personality"

'We wanted this room to be colourful and interesting as well as comfortable. The wall hanging is the crux of the scheme because it's such an eye-catching textile. Playful bursts of yellow on the curtains, bedsheets and lampshade mean that, even on a dull day, this room feels like a ray of sunshine.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES Try Slowdown Studio for a similar wall hanging. Eden curtain fabric in Lemon by Christopher Farr, £145m, Jane Clayton. Lokta paper lampshade, £14, Etsy

FEATURE KAREN JENSEN-JONES **PHOTOGRAPHS** NICK SMITH
SUSAN VENN OF SUSAN VENN DESIGN STUDIO (SUSANVENN.COM)





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WORKTOP OPTION
Honed granite, as opposed to gloss, gives a low-sheen, tactile matt finish

'The cabinets are painted in a sumptuous crimson red that has hints of magenta and orange – the darkness and depth make it a great choice for creating a welcoming environment.'

Cabinetry, from £15,000, Bybrook Bespoke; painted in Huguenot; walls in Rose Theatre; woodwork in Millbank, all £89 for 2.5ltr, Mylands



KITCHEN NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?
Ruth Corbett and her husband Paul Rodgers.

THE PROJECT
Full refurbishment of the kitchen in their mansion apartment in north London, knocking through into a small bedroom to create a spacious kitchen-dining room.

TOTAL COST
£50,000

| KITCHEN PROJECT |

Yes to colour

BY EXPERIMENTING WITH COLOUR AND PATTERN RUTH CORBETT AND PAUL RODGERS HAVE BROUGHT A RICH PALETTE TO THIS MANSION FLAT



'A slim mid-century dining table, chairs and a bench that tucks fully underneath work well dimensionally, as this room is long and fairly narrow.'

Ceramic rise and fall light, £229, The French House. Ercol Windsor dining table, £2,450, Furniture Village, is similar

The term that sprang to mind when we first visited our new home was "European apartment". It had the high ceilings, parquet flooring and airy rooms that reminded us of flats we'd stayed in on trips to Paris and Rome,' says interiors journalist Ruth Corbett. It was with this in mind that Ruth and Paul planned their new kitchen, starting with a knock-through between the existing space and an adjacent bedroom.

Designer Rowena Sim of Bybrook Bespoke (bybrookbespoke.co.uk) was recommended to the couple by a friend. 'We worked with Rowena in minute detail on every aspect of the design and she gamely took on all our demands,' says Ruth. 'We oscillated over whether or not to have an island, before agreeing a kitchen table was more in keeping with our European vibe. We debated fitted versus freestanding furniture before plumping for a combination of both, and we jettisoned spotlights entirely in favour of a flexible mix of wall, picture and pendant lights.'

The one element that was not up for debate was colour. 'I'd discovered this deep red Mylands paint shade for the cabinetry and wouldn't be swayed. Against the earthy brown for the woodwork and pale blush for the walls, it radiates warmth.' Black honed limestone worktops and a mix of new brass handles alongside some fancy antique ones create a pleasingly eclectic look, while the La Cornue range is a serious investment piece. 'There's a "configure your own design" option that allowed us to pick the colour, trim and hob preferences.'

For flooring they chose rustic terracotta tiles for an Italian farmhouse kitchen feel. 'The hexagonal shape is more interesting than the usual square, and a rectangular edging tile works well as a finishing trim,' says Ruth.

Hand-painted clay zellige wall tiles were the last piece of the design jigsaw. 'They absolutely make the kitchen. We bought one third in solid blue (in three shades), to reduce the cost, to two thirds in the pricier geometric, and arranged them randomly behind the cooker and as a splashback. They put an individual stamp on the space that feels very us!'



TILE TREATMENT
Terracotta can be coated with LTP antique beeswax and sealed for longevity



ABOVE 'The floor tiles have light to deep red tones and hand-finished edges to give the worn appearance of an original terracotta floor. They come unsealed, so you can achieve the effect you want.' Terracotta Hexagon tiles, £59sq m, Floors of Stone. Belfast ceramic sink, £469, Thomas Denby. Claridge lacquered aged brass wall lights, £154 each, Soho Lighting

LEFT 'Everyone loves the Moroccan zellige tiles. They blend traditional handcrafting with a modern geometric design to bring something completely fresh and unique to the overall look.' Blue Jean zellige tiles, from £153.60sq m, Otto Tiles





'The French range cooker is timeless and robust and the fact that the doors are solid rather than glass was aesthetically a big plus.'

CornuFé 110 Étoilé range in Ocean, £9,030, La Cornue. Fusion square boiling water tap, £1,590, Quooker

FOCAL POINT
The contrasting colours help the range stand out from the cabinetry

> "We went full **BLING** with the **BRASS** trim on the **RANGE**. The knobs are like little shiny **JEWELS**"

RUTH CORBETT
HOMEOWNER

STYLE MUST-HAVES

INSPIRED BY RUTH AND PAUL'S HOME



LIGHT TOUCH
Flora shade with pendant kit, from £69, Pooky



RELIABLE RANGE
Elise 110, £3,499, Rangemaster



CAFE AU LAIT
Le Creuset French press, £46, John Lewis & Partners

CHIC CUP
Vancouver mugs, £15 each, Le Creuset



TAKE A SEAT
Wardley dining chair, £375, Neptune

FEATURE RUTH CORBETT **PHOTOGRAPHS** DARREN CHUNG

| BATHROOM PROJECT |

Serene green

VICTORIA AND MAX ABBOTT USED THEIR GARAGE PLAYROOM TO CREATE A VIBRANT YET CALMING SANCTUARY



HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

Victoria Abbott and her husband Max, along with their four children, Margaux, eight, Nelson, six, Basil, four, and Juniper, eight months.

THE PROJECT

Creating a good-sized bathroom in keeping with the aesthetic of the house but with a practical, modern finish.

TOTAL COST

£10,000

'The Carrara marble surfaces were templated, as you would in a kitchen, after the bath was fitted.'

Amalfi Carrara, from £400sq m, Anything Stone. Fillmore bath, £595; Bournbrook bath mixer, £845, both Claybrook. Arezzo brushed brass heated towel rail, £299, Victorian Plumbing. Linen Frill bath mat, £50, Matilda Goad & Co



FLOORING
The chequerboard tile has been used throughout, including inside the shower, to help the space flow

When Victoria and Max moved into their house 13 years ago, soon after their wedding, it had just been converted from a stable into a three-bedroom family home. After having their third child eight years later, they realised that they would have to move if they didn't extend. Making the kitchen larger to include an open-plan seating area meant that the original living room could be converted into a master bedroom, with the adjoining garage playroom becoming an en suite. 'I wanted to include a bath, walk-in shower and separate washbasins,' says Victoria. 'I knew I wanted a green colour palette as it's my "colour for calm" and the tiles were my starting point. I fell in love with two tile choices: a stripe configuration and a chequerboard. I simply couldn't decide which one to use, so I used both!'

Victoria knew she wanted brushed living brassware taps and mixers so sourced those from Claybrook. 'I loved the utility feel of the taps – they looked like pipework coming out of the walls,' says Victoria. 'I went on to choose a simple bath, large enough to bath all the children in at once. The vanity unit was a whole other



> “Tiles in a **STRIPE** design work well with the tongue-and-groove **PANELLING**, and **ELONGATE** the room”





‘I like how the rounded washbasins contrast with the lines of the tiles.’

Bespoke vanity, £3,219, Parker Howley & Co

TOP LEFT ‘The tile designs have married well together – the checks anchor the space, and the stripes are stunning yet practical.’

Forest Green porcelain tiles, £78.76sq m, Bert & May. Fellini wall tiles, £69.60sq m, Claybrook. Planter, £21, Attic. Toiletries, from a selection, Belle Enfant

ABOVE ‘The reeded glass screen allows the light through, keeping the space open, and brings in another texture.’

Perito framed shower panel in fluted glass with brushed brass, £999, Claybrook. Sand Shell Pembroke Stripe towels, from £12, Piglet in Bed

story. I wanted it to be classic looking with drawers, and to fit two washbasins in a limited space. We went for a bespoke vanity unit from Parker Howley & Co, which ticked all of our boxes. It could even be finished in the same paint colour I was using on the rest of the woodwork, Skimming Stone by Farrow & Ball. All the walls were painted in a soft white to allow the green tiles to shine in the space.'

Reusing materials was important to Victoria, who asked a local carpenter to modify a storage cupboard, which was originally in the kitchen, 'Throughout the build, I repurposed different elements of the old house into the new renovations,' she says.

'One of the most challenging moments of the project was that the walk-in shower had to dip to allow for drainage. The tilers wanted to cut the tiles diagonally, but I insisted on keeping them whole, so that the pattern stayed consistent – and we got there in the end. Now it is complete, it is like a sanctuary tucked away at the far end of the house. Not only can we wash all the children in the bath at the same time, but I can enjoy relaxing alone time there too.' ■



WINDOW DRESSING
Sheer curtains allow for privacy in a bathroom while letting in the light

'I insisted on keeping the garage doors, so the exterior of the house remained the same. This not only saved money, but it also allows easy access to the plumbing.'

Woodwork in Skimming Stone modern eggshell, £35.50 for 750ml, Farrow & Ball



Brass detailing brings in a luxury finish, while living brassware taps and mixers add an organic texture and utility feel. The long niche ensures toiletries are kept easily to hand.

Toiletries and candle, from a selection, Attic





STYLE MUST-HAVES

BE INSPIRED BY VICTORIA AND MAX'S HOME



CROSSHEAD TAPS
Burlington Riviera basin pillar taps, £171.50, Sanctuary Bathrooms



DOUBLE WASHBASINS
Arrezzi 1410mm double vanity unit in Cornforth White, £3,120 (including nickel or brass hinges and knobs), Albion Bath Company



MINT TILES
Ca' Pietra Solar Star porcelain tiles in Green, £46.26sq m, Hyperion Tiles



GOLDEN TOUCHES
Large towel rail in Gold, £83.99, Dowsing & Reynolds

FRESH STRIPES
Striped bath towel in Light Beige & White, £9.99, H&M

FEATURE AND STYLING DILLY ORME **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID PARMITER

LIGHTING, REBORN

FREE UP THE WAY YOU LIGHT YOUR ROOMS WITH POOKY'S INGENIOUS GENESIS WIRELESS RECHARGEABLE LAMPS



Lollie rechargeable table lamp in White marble, £110; Regular Seurat rechargeable picture light in Antique Brass, £137, both Pooky



Regular Marcel rechargeable picture light, £147, Smaller rattle rechargeable lamp, £101, both Pooky



Scoon and Wee Scoon rechargeable table lamps, from £70, both Pooky



Doorstop rechargeable table lamp, £100, Pooky

A good lighting set-up is the final piece of the puzzle when it comes to a great room scheme. It has the power to set the mood, pull focus to areas of interest and brighten dark corners. But in some cases, lighting has its drawbacks – certain fittings require an electrician to install them, while others aren't practical for renters, who can only place lamps in a space provided there's a plug socket nearby. Thankfully, these concerns are all a thing of the past now that Pooky has launched its new, innovative Genesis collection.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

Traditional incandescent bulbs, energy-saving versions and even smart lighting are all yesterday's news. If a new freedom to place your lighting wherever you choose sounds good, then meet the Genesis. Created by lighting experts Pooky, the Genesis is a USB-C light-up cell that easily connects to lamp bases and wall lights by a magnetic point, with each cell providing more than 15 hours of light on a single charge. Ideal for table lamps or wall lights, simply connect it to a mains power supply via its USB-C lead to charge it when required.

PORTABLE, FLEXIBLE LIGHTING

With the Genesis, wall lights can be hung wherever you choose in your home, table lamps can be used in the bathroom or placed on shelves, and even brought with you as you move from room to room. And if you're not a fan of contemporary lighting, don't worry! Unlike the majority of rechargeable lamps on the market, the Genesis-powered lamps are traditional with a twist – super-stylish bases, with fabric shades that you can mix and match to find your perfect lighting combo.

MORE INFORMATION

To discover more about the Genesis collection and Pooky's new rechargeable lights, visit pooky.com or check out the brand's Instagram @pookylights for inspiration on where and how to use a rechargeable light in your home

pooky

"You're no longer restricted to lighting that needs a plug socket"

GINEVRA BENEDETTI, DEPUTY EDITOR

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BEST HOME

WINNER

LISA OLIVER &
LEE UNDERHILL

Taking on the renovation of a neglected house in Horsell, Surrey, that Lisa admits was 'barely habitable' was always going to be a challenge, but the couple have transformed it into a beautifully light, bright and spacious family home. Lisa and Lee did a lot of the work themselves to save money, as well as sourcing the materials to get the best price, eventually decorating throughout in a neutral colour scheme, highlighted with boho accessories and lush plants in every room for a relaxed yet elegant feel.

> "As a result of the renovation, I've become really good at DIY and see it as a challenge"



Ideal Home BEST HOME 2024











PHOTOGRAPHS MAXWELL ATTENBOROUGH



BEST GARDEN

WINNER

CLARE & DAVID CLARKE

Their large back garden in Reigate was always a labour of love for owners Clare and David, with the original plot completely overgrown and home to four rabbit warrens. The couple have since landscaped and revitalised the poor, sandy soil using plenty of mushroom compost, and the garden – complete with greenhouse, pond, terraced beds and firepit/terrace area – now flourishes year round, providing shelter to an abundance of wildlife that the Clarkes spot regularly from their house.

> “Since we landscaped, so much wildlife has returned to the garden, including owls, butterflies, bats and moths”



Ideal Home BEST GARDEN 2024





PHOTOGRAPHS COLIN POOLE/PHOTOWORD

Ideal Home
BEST ROOM MAKEOVER
2024

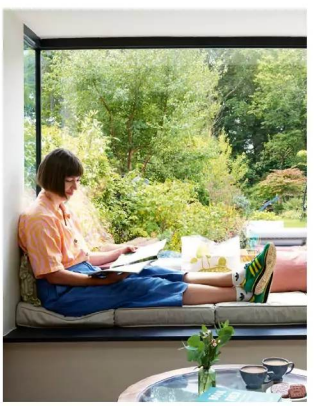


BEST ROOM MAKEOVER

WINNER

LAURA & JEREMY BARNETT

After buying their 1930s pebbledash semi in North Leeds during lockdown, the Barnetts had big plans for their kitchen. Deciding against adding a large extension to the back of the house, they instead reconfigured the existing space to make it more useable and bring in more light. The colourful cabinetry is easily the focal point of their stunning kitchen – created using carcasses from Howdens and door fronts by Naked Kitchens – adding extra warmth to the space with its sunshine yellow hue.





> “When I sit in the window seat overlooking our garden, I feel like I am on holiday”

PHOTOGRAPHS RACHAEL SMITH

renovation

IMPROVE | EXTEND | CONVERT



PHOTOGRAPH FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/DAN DUCHARS

IDEAL IDEA

Split-level breakfast bar

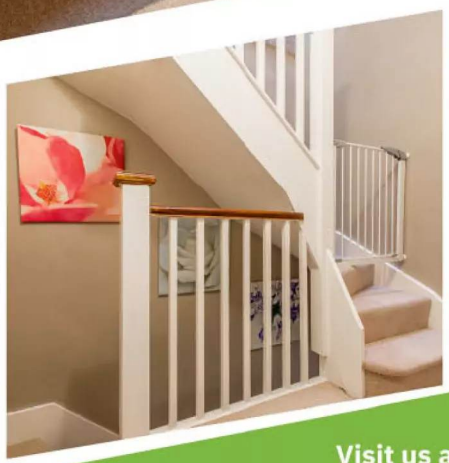
Cleverly marking out prep and dining areas on one unit, a split-level design is a great way to make the most of an island or peninsula. You can also zone it with different finishes on each side.

HEATHER YOUNG
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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PROJECT FOCUS

LOFT CONVERSIONS

LOOKING TO ADD MORE SPACE TO YOUR HOME WITHOUT HAVING TO SACRIFICE OUTDOOR SPACE? THIS GUIDE EXPLAINS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET STARTED

Q&A

A loft space is likely to be the largest square footage of unused space in your home, making it ripe for conversion. While it might seem a huge project to undertake, it is one of the most straightforward and cost-effective ways to extend your home. It's certainly less stressful than moving house, and if you don't have to extend, all you may need to do is strengthen the floor, insulate and add windows. Compared to a basement conversion, converting your loft is far quicker, safer and a lot more budget-friendly. A loft conversion is likely to improve your home's insulation which will cut your heating bills, too.

Price-wise – according to Checkatrade.com – the average 30sq m home extension will cost around £60,000 to £84,000 (depending on the finish) and can eat up a significant portion of your garden, while the average loft conversion of the same size can vary between £27,500 for a basic Velux design to £75,000 for a dormer conversion.

Q.1 CAN I CONVERT MY LOFT?

A The first step in planning a loft conversion is to assess whether or not you have enough space. 'Most properties will be suitable for a loft conversion as long as the loft measures 2.3m at the highest point,' explains John Allen, managing director at Econoloft. 'Other features that will help you decide whether your loft space is suitable are the pitch of the roof, the type of structure, and obstacles, such as water tanks or chimney stacks.'

Pre-war buildings with steeply pitched roofs are often the easiest to convert, but there will always be structural considerations and most lofts need additional support from steel beams to strengthen the floor and roof. If your loft pitch lacks the required head height, you could consider adding dormer windows, lowering the ceilings in the room (or rooms) below, or raising the roof. Adding a dormer is by far the most straightforward option. Lowering the ceilings or raising the roof will make the project much more complex and expensive, plus the latter will need planning permission.

Before beginning any construction work you will need to have architectural plans drawn up, that meet either permitted development or planning permission requirements, as well as party wall agreements if your home is joined onto another at either side. Your loft conversion must also pass building control inspections for it to be compliant. Unlike an extension, because lofts are relatively self-contained in the early stages of building, they can be accessed from the outside – meaning you can continue living in the house while the work is carried out, provided you can handle the disruption.



Q.2 WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE INSTALLATION?

A While a loft conversion will prove less intrusive than a full-scale extension, there's no avoiding the fact that it will still cause some disruption. The exact time frame will depend on your individual circumstances – from the size, design and complexity of your loft, to the availability of the building materials that your contractors need to use. Expect it to last for at least several weeks, up to a few months.

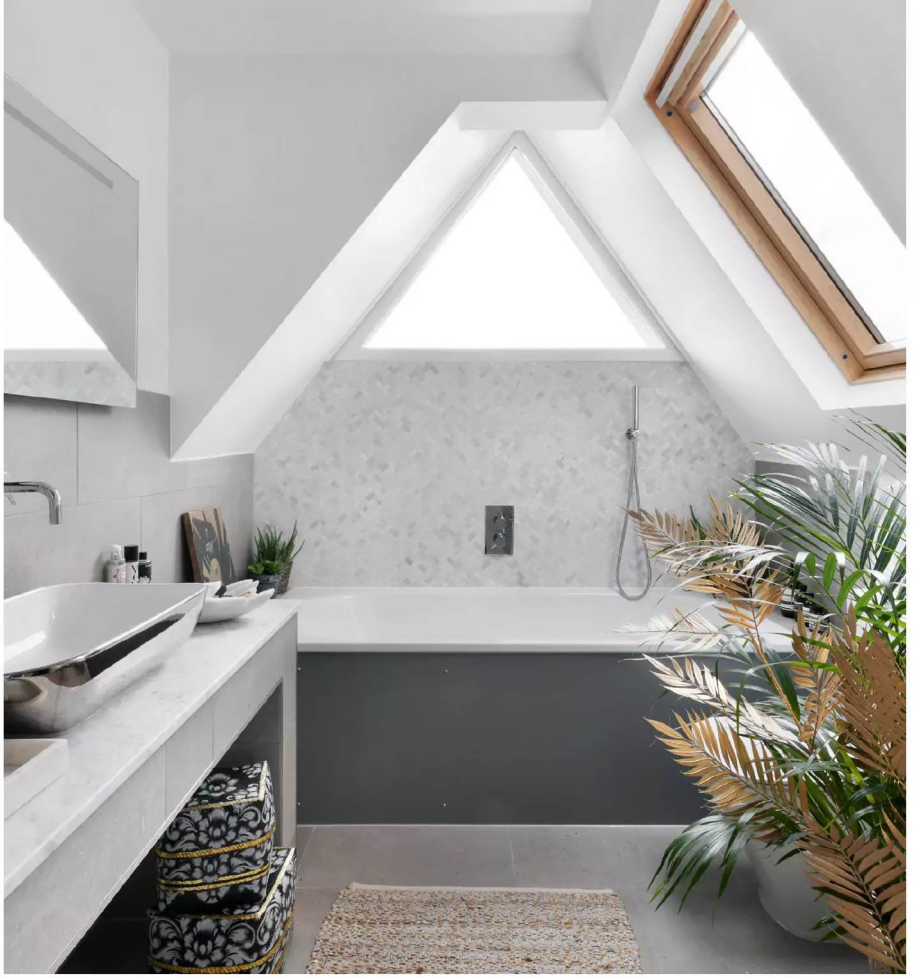
'If structural changes are required, such as installing new beams or reinforcing the floor, it may involve some noise, dust and temporary inconvenience, and if a bathroom or additional electrical wiring needs to be installed, there may be some disruption to existing services. However, experienced contractors can often minimise this by careful planning and coordination,' says Daniel Kerley, company director at Loft Living. 'Your contractor should be able to explain the likely impact on your day-to-day life but ultimately, you are building another storey on your property, often while remaining in situ, so the reality is that it will cause some disruption.'

It may be worth considering staying somewhere else during the works if the project is a complicated or lengthy one. It's possible you may not be able to avoid contractors walking up and down your stairs or the inevitable accumulation of dust that comes with any building job.

While loft conversions are ideally best worked on in drier weather, most specialist companies will work year around. If you're extending out to create a dormer or balcony, there's the option to construct a temporary roof over your building, otherwise known as a 'tin hat'. Made from a scaffold structure topped with an aluminium roof, a 'tin hat' will protect your home from wind, rain and snow until the new roof has been finished and sealed. Tin hats come with an extra cost though, around £4,000 plus VAT according to Sky Lofts so factor this into your budget if you're planning to convert outside of summer.

"TO ADD A BATHROOM, CHECK IT COMPLIES WITH BUILDING REGULATIONS"

*ALL SUGGESTED COSTS EXCLUDE VAT



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Consult a professional and have architectural plans drawn up to plan your conversion properly and consider the space you have available; if you want to add a bathroom you'll need to check it complies with building regulations for ventilation, electricity, water supply and drainage; a loft conversion can give you extra space in your home without the need to build into outdoor spaces



Q.3 IS IT POSSIBLE TO ADD A BATHROOM?

A Installing a loft bathroom will inevitably add value to your property, but it doesn't come without its issues. 'The difficulty of incorporating a bathroom in your loft depends on the current layout, the available space, and the proximity of existing plumbing and drainage systems,' says Daniel from Loft Living.

'With plumbing, the cheapest and easiest way is to make sure your new bathroom sits over the top of an existing one. It makes running water and soil pipes much easier,' says Barrie Cutchie, design director at BC Designs. 'Adding in an extra floor means water has further to travel upwards which can cause issues. This can easily be alleviated by installing a pump to generate water pressure: you'll need to know before plumbing things in whether or not a pump is required.'

[RESOURCES]

PRO HELP

'Depending on the weight and load-bearing requirements of the bathroom fixtures, such as the bathtub or shower, you may need to reinforce the floor structure. This could involve adding support beams or joists to ensure the loft can accommodate the extra weight.' Barrie Cutchie, BC Designs.

Q. DO I NEED PLANNING PERMISSION?

A 'The need for planning permission for a loft conversion can vary based on the type of property and its location,' explains Rob Wood, managing director at Simply Loft. Don't just assume your project will fall within your Permitted Development rights (or PD for short) because your neighbour didn't have to apply for planning permission.

There are many instances where full planning permission will not be required in order to convert a loft. 'Certain criteria must be met to qualify, such as ensuring the conversion doesn't exceed specific size limits or alter the roof's highest point,' explains Simon Rix, professional planning consultant from Planix.uk. 'Even if your project meets these criteria, it's advisable to apply for a Lawful Development Certificate from your local council to confirm that planning permission isn't required. This certificate not only provides peace of mind but also serves as a valuable document for future property transactions.'

The specific rules that need to be adhered to when designing and building your loft conversion are:

- **SIZE** If you live in a terraced house, your design should not increase the size of your roof space by more than 40 cubic metres. In other types of houses, this increases to 50 cubic metres.
- **ROOF HEIGHT CHANGES** You can't make the existing roof any higher than it is already without planning permission.
- **CHIMNEY ALTERATIONS** Without planning permission you can't add, alter or replace any existing chimneys or flues.
- **WINDOW PLACEMENT** Under PD rules, any new windows to the side of the loft conversion must be fitted with obscured glazing.
- **POSITIONING** Unless you are carrying out a hip to gable loft conversion, your new addition will have to be set back a minimum of 200mm from the eaves. Also, you won't be allowed to extend the roof more than any existing roof slope that is seen from the principle elevation.
- **BALCONIES** These, with the exception of Juliet balconies, cannot be constructed under PD.

While certain conversions and extensions will fall under PD rights, there are cases when a design won't meet the required criteria. 'For houses in designated areas, such as conservation areas or those considered listed buildings, additional planning consent is usually required,' explains Rob at Simply Loft. 'These areas often have stricter regulations to preserve the character and appearance of the local neighbourhood and community.'

'The design itself must adhere to specific limits regarding the size, materials used and impact on the roof structure,' adds Simon at Planix.uk. 'If your project involves significant alterations, such as with a mansard loft conversion or the addition of a balcony, a full planning application will be necessary.'

[RESOURCES]

PRO HELP

'You'll also have to consider a party wall agreement (if you share a wall or are close to neighbours) before work can begin.' Rob Wood, Simply Loft







LEFT Natural lighting is a key consideration when planning a loft conversion. A Juliet balcony is a great option if you have a roof with plenty of height **ABOVE** Roof lights are a simpler option to install for a loft conversion and will help the space feel light and bright

Q.5 WHAT ABOUT THE REST?

When designing a loft conversion, two of the most important factors to consider are how to add sufficient light and how to control the temperature in the new space.

For your loft conversion to feel welcoming, natural light is essential. This typically comes in the form of roof lights or dormer windows. 'Making sure you have enough light will make or break a loft conversion, so it's important not to skimp on this,' says John at Econoloft. 'A large floor-to-ceiling picture window, French doors or a Juliet balcony will help maximise natural light.'

Dormer windows offer extra headroom as well as light, as the glazed units are normally set parallel to the facade of the house, and a section of the pitched roof is raised to accommodate them. However, because dormer windows change the exterior appearance of a house, planning permission may be required. For example, you might be told your dormer can only go across two-thirds of the total width of the property. Or that the windows need to be sash, not sliding.

Skylights and roof lights are simple to install flat into the roof, so if you're looking for a simple, fuss-free option, they may be a better choice.

If there are several rooms in your conversion, you will need to add an emergency exit to the roof. The easiest, most attractive option is to fit a fire-escape window in each space, that's large enough for a person to climb through in case of an emergency. Fire escape windows designed for this are available from Velux.

As for regulating the temperature, if you've ever ventured into a loft room during the hottest or coldest months of the year, you'll be well aware of the extreme temperatures to which this space is vulnerable. For it to be a success, loft insulation is key. There are two choices: insulation can be applied over the rafters, known as a 'warm roof'. Alternatively, you can use the 'cold roof' method to insulate between and beneath the rafters – often with plasterboard covering – leaving a 50mm gap between the rafters and the roof tiles to allow airflow. The floor of the loft will also need soundproofing, which at the very least involves filling the void between the floor and joists with acoustic insulation. This is usually achieved with mineral wool.

Hot air rises, so your loft conversion will naturally be the warmest room in the house. Therefore, it is essential to factor in cooling methods. Sensor-operated windows – which open when the temperature reaches a certain level and close if rain is detected – are a great option. 'Consider installing windows that can be opened to create cross-ventilation and using extractor fans or mechanical ventilation systems to enhance air circulation,' advises Daniel from Loft Living.

FEATURE HOLLY REANEY, NATASHA BRINSMEAD AND GINEVRA BENEDETTI **PHOTOGRAPHS** FUTURECONTENT HUB.COM/BRENT DARBY, ALEXANDER JAMES, DAN DUCHARS, JAMES FRENCH, JEREMY PHILLIPS

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KITCHEN FOCUS

WORKTOPS

WE SPOKE TO THE EXPERTS TO FIND OUT THEIR TOP TIPS ON WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE CHOOSING A NEW KITCHEN WORKTOP

Choosing the worktop that's right for your needs shouldn't be a rushed job. It will take up a fair amount of space in your kitchen and you'll be working with it multiple times a day after all. 'One of the biggest mistakes I've encountered is the idea you can buy worktops purely by looking at pictures. Photos online or in print are very poor substitutes for seeing the real thing,' says Sofia Bune, founder of Sola Kitchens. 'I always recommend taking worktop samples home, where they may look very different from the way they appear in the artificial lighting of a kitchen showroom.' As well as taking samples home, here are a few other things you should consider when choosing a new kitchen worktop.



Shaker kitchen, from £35,000, John Lewis of Hungerford

1 PLAN YOUR JOINT LINES

It is rarely possible to completely avoid having to connect two slabs of worktop, especially if the kitchen includes runs of units that are too long to be topped by a single slab. Sometimes access or weight issues also make it necessary to use shorter worktop lengths, again making joints unavoidable. 'With careful planning, unsightly joints can be designed out,' says Oliver Webb, director at surface specialists Cullifords. 'By designing out, I mean moving them out of obvious sight lines, or putting them in areas where utensils, pots or countertop appliances will conceal them or distract the eye.'

2 INTRODUCE AN UPSTAND

An upstand is a low strip of worktop that sits against the wall, which performs two roles. Firstly, it provides a neat, watertight connection at the back of the worktop, helping to prevent spillages from seeping down behind the units, and secondly, it protects the walls. Upstands are usually supplied and fitted by your worktop supplier, and are made from the same material, although they are often thinner. 'It is particularly important to protect the wall behind sinks and hobs as these are the splash zones for soap suds or bolognaise sauce,' says Alice Hood, senior designer at kitchen company Roundhouse.

3 TRY VARYING YOUR WORKTOP THICKNESS

Switching up the thickness of worktops is one of those subtle design details that can elevate a good-looking kitchen to an amazing one. Using chunky worktops on a kitchen island unit and slimmer on the surrounding elevations, or vice versa, is a savvy way to add pace and interest to the space. 'In the UK, we tend to use 30mm as the standard worktop thickness,' says Oliver from Cullifords. 'In general, the thinner the worktop, the more modern the look. Some of the newly developed porcelain worktops go as thin as 12mm, which suits a very contemporary aesthetic.' The thicker your worktop, the more expensive it will be – Oliver has noted a rise in requests for 20mm-thick worktops since the credit crunch, as they are 30-40% cheaper than standard 30mm options.

FEATURE LINDA CLAYTON

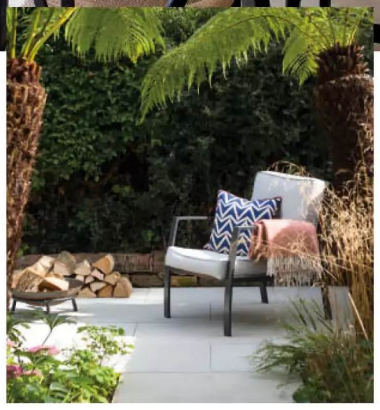
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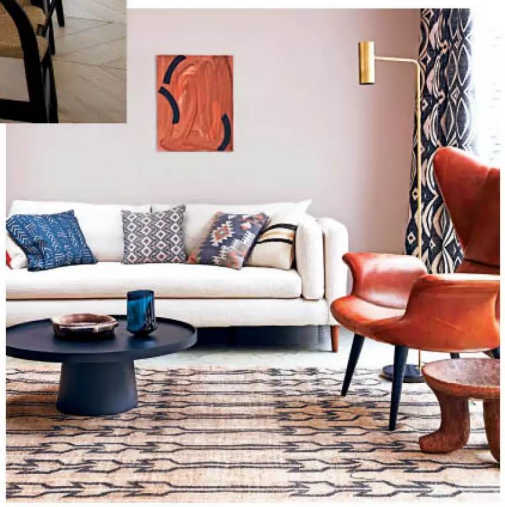
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BATHROOM FOCUS

UNDERFLOOR HEATING

THINKING OF INSTALLING UNDERFLOOR HEATING IN YOUR BATHROOM? TAKE A LOOK AT OUR EXPERTS' TOP TIPS BEFORE YOU START WORK

As well as creating an enviable level of comfort by establishing an even spread of warmth underfoot, well-designed underfloor heating (UFH) is energy-efficient and low maintenance. 'People want to get the most out of their bathrooms with spectacular designs, bigger tiles and as little clutter as possible,' says Lydia Luxford, technical and customer services manager at Easy Bathrooms. 'UFH provides a great addition to this, as it reduces the need for radiators and frees up space in the room.'



Bampton bath, £3,686, BC Designs

1 PICK THE BEST SYSTEM

The right setup depends largely on your circumstances – electric underfloor heating systems are typically easier to install, but come with higher running costs. Electric solutions are often the go-to choice for one-off installation in single rooms, as they can be laid directly over any solid subfloor and result in minimal height build-up. 'In smaller spaces, electric systems are relatively low cost,' says Lydia, 'and spending a little more money to purchase a separate, programmable thermostat is well worth the initial outlay.'

Water-based underfloor heating in a bathroom usually requires a little more work to fit and will initially cost more – especially if retrofitted. However, the monthly running costs will be lower.

2 GET THE POSITIONING RIGHT

To provide the correct heat output and an even spread of warmth across the floor, it's important that the cables or warm water pipes beneath your flooring are laid at neat, regular intervals. The higher the heat output that's required, the more closely the cables/pipes will need to be laid.

3 CHOOSE THE RIGHT FLOORING

'Underfloor heating works well with wood, tiles or stone flooring,' says Adam Chard, content manager at Victoria Plum. However, smooth, hard surfaces, such as porcelain and ceramic tiles, tend to have the edge over other flooring options when it comes to good heat conductivity.

'Tiles are always a strong favourite and can withstand the heat in most applications. When installed correctly they can last substantially longer than most other flooring options,' says Lydia from Easy Bathrooms. Tiles are easy to clean in case of splashes from the sink and shower, too. Some laminate and vinyl flooring products are not suitable for use on top of electric underfloor heating, so make sure you check with your supplier that the UFH kit and floor surface are compatible.

4 GET THE HEAT OUTPUT RIGHT

'In rooms with exceptionally high ceilings, underfloor heating can be less effective,' says Adam from Victoria Plum. That's why it's so important for your heating engineer or plumber to carry out a full heat loss survey on the bathroom before the system is specified. The calculations look at an array of factors, including the dimensions of the room, level of insulation, windows and the existing forms of heating. The numbers are then crunched so that a setup with the correct heat output for the space can be specified. ■

FEATURE REBECCA FOSTER
PHOTOGRAPH DARREN CHUNG



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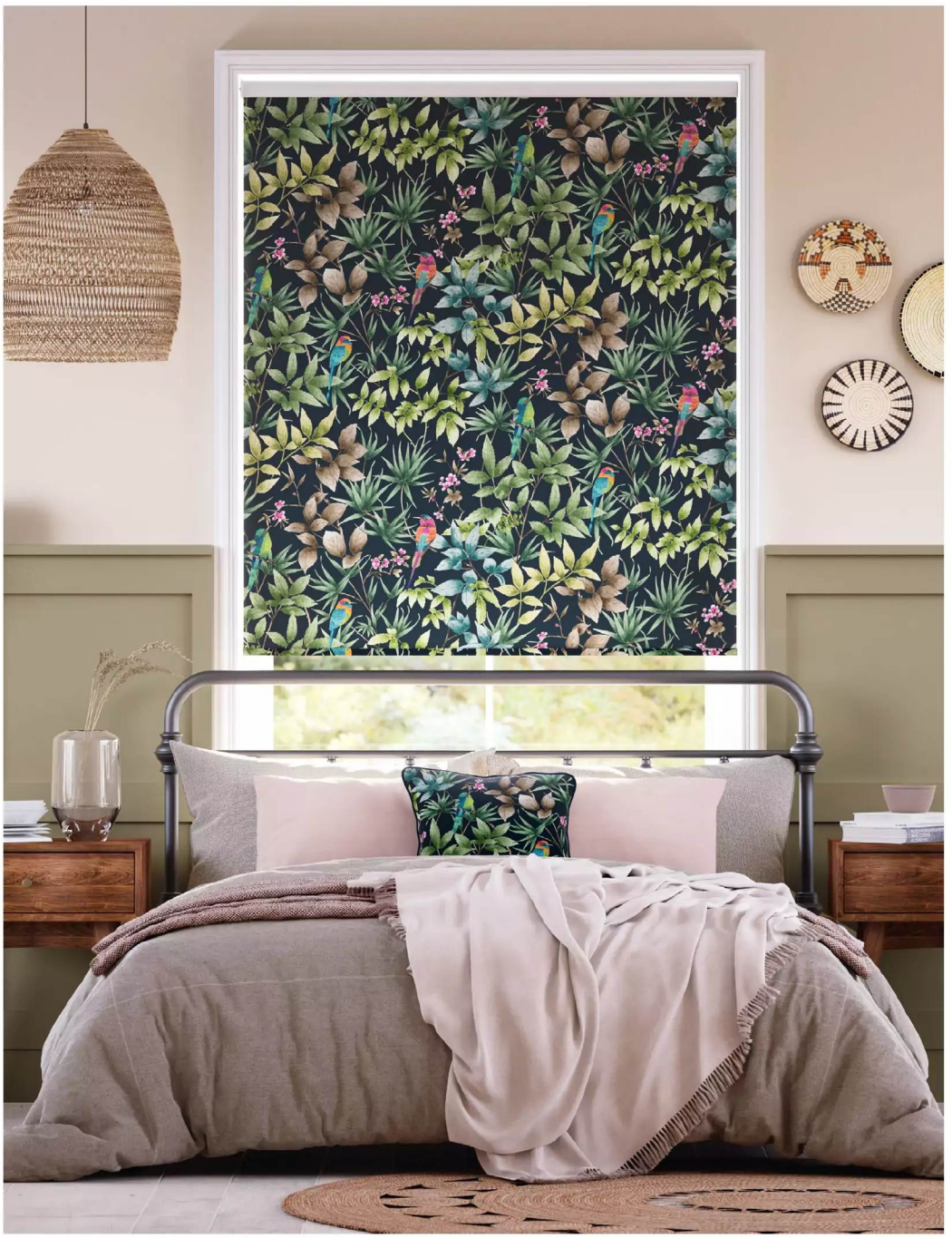
Add a touch of country charm to your home with this pair of bone china mugs from Joules, in a classic chintz flower pattern on black or white.



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CLEAN | ORGANISE | SOLVE



MAKE A SHOE CLEANING KIT

Include a stiff brush for knocking off dirt, a soft brush and shoe wax for buffing.

PHOTOGRAPH FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/JON DAY

WHAT TO DO THIS MONTH

On page 170, **DISCOVER** how to get the inside of a grimy kettle sparkling again (without using chemicals), plus **GEN UP** on things to do to keep your tech in tip-top shape on page 171; turn to page 173 to find out all our **EXPERT ADVICE** on writing a will; while on page 175 we have kitchen cupboard **DECLUTTERING** covered; then head to page 177 to read all about Black Friday and how to make sure you get the **BEST DEALS** on the day...

HOW TO...

NO-NONSENSE SOLUTIONS TO EVERYDAY HASSLES



Bought something online at John Lewis that has since dropped in price? Claim the difference back within 35 days here: johnlewis.com/price-drop-policy

Buying Christmas presents

Whether you're buying early because you're super organised or you're doing it to spread the cost, follow these tips for gifting success...

GIFT CARDS It's a sad fact of life that businesses can get into financial trouble, and if they go into administration, their gift cards might not be honoured. If you are buying gift cards, purchase them from an established, well-known brand to mitigate the risk of losing out.

EXTENDED RETURNS Some retailers offer extended returns over the Christmas period – if you buy presents from them, it gives the recipients time to swap your gift for something else.

CYBER WEEK Make the most of the discounts that surround Black Friday (29 November this year) and do your shopping then. For more advice on how to get the best deal, turn to page 177.

How to clean a kettle

After a fair amount of use, the inside of a kettle takes on a residue, or worse still, if you live in a hard water area, you can get limescale build-up. There are chemical limescale removers specifically designed for kettles, but if you'd prefer a more natural (and affordable) approach, arm yourself with some white vinegar or a lemon. With the vinegar option, add a solution of one part vinegar to three parts water to your kettle and boil it. Leave to cool completely. Empty it out, fill the kettle with fresh water and boil. Repeat once more until the smell of vinegar has gone. Alternatively, cut up a lemon into chunks, drop into the kettle, fill with water and boil. As before, empty the water out, fill with fresh water and boil again. Repeat once more. Then you can get back to having your regular cuppa!



How to unblock a toilet

Start by identifying the type of blockage, as different blockages require different remedies. If water drains slowly from the bowl, it means it should be relatively easy to unblock. If the water level in the bowl rises to the brim without falling, this means there is a complete blockage. This will be harder to unblock, but not impossible. If, upon flushing the toilet, the bowl remains virtually empty, there is a problem with air circulation in the waste pipe. This is a job for a plumber. Before you do anything, try pouring hot water down the toilet first. This can help dissolve the blockage. If that doesn't work, try pouring half a cup of baking soda into the bowl and then half a cup of white vinegar on top. Add between two and three litres of warm water and wait around 30 minutes to give the chemicals a chance to erode any limescale and soap residue in the waste pipe. Clear any excess foam by flushing it away.

Want to make your home more energy efficient? Visit ecofurb.com for tailored advice on the changes you may need to make.

Insulation tips for renters

Adding insulation is great if you're a homeowner, but what if you rent? Here are a few simple suggestions that will make your home cosier over the winter months...

ADD HEAVY CURTAINS Swap out light curtains or blinds for some heavier drapes to keep your windows insulated and retain heat.

COVER HARD FLOORING Layer up rugs on hard flooring to add warmth underfoot. Position Ikea's Stopp Filt anti-slip underlay (£6.50 for 165x235cm) beneath the rugs for extra safety.

ADD DRAUGHT EXCLUDERS Buy these for doors (Dunelm has a choice, from just £10) and if you have a chimney, get a special draught excluder for that – but only put it in when you're not using the fireplace.

CLOSE DOORS When you're not using a room, close the door to keep the heat in the rooms you're using.



Good tech habits to adopt

Get used to doing the following to ensure your tech remains in top working order...

1

DECLUTTER REGULARLY

It's easy to download stuff and forget it's there, taking up valuable memory space. Every month or so, scroll through the apps on your phone and delete anything you haven't used. Remove any movies or shows you have downloaded from your streaming service, and empty the bins on your desktop or laptop.

2

USE A PASSWORD MANAGER

Give yourself a break from inventing (and inevitably forgetting) a wide variety of random passwords. Use a password manager wherever possible.

3

BACK UP YOUR TECH

If you don't have anything stored on a cloud service, always use an external drive to back up any important information, documents or photographs – if your device should fail, you might not be able to recover these essential (or precious) items when you need to.

4

SHUT DOWN DEVICES

Don't leave your device on standby all the time. Shut it down once in a while, to conserve its battery life and energy.

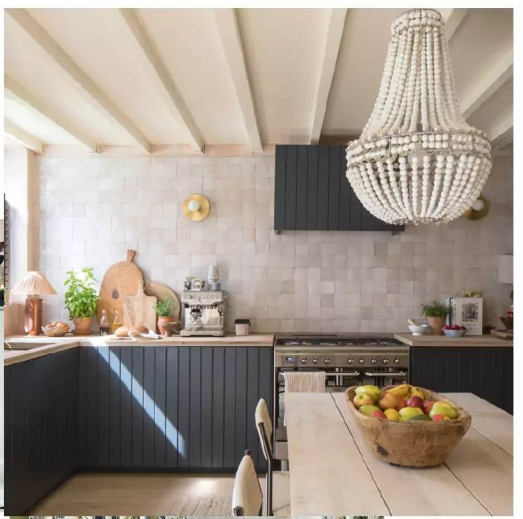
FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI, LIZ STANSFIELD, JENNIFER EBERT
ILLUSTRATIONS EMMA JACKSON, PAULA JARDINE **PHOTOGRAPH** GETTY IMAGES/IMTMPHOTO

trending on... IDEALHOME.CO.UK

How to get rid of damp

Find out the best ways to banish damp and condensation, and stop mould from building up in your home this winter.





Kitchen lighting ideas

Lighting can often feel like an afterthought when designing a kitchen, but it should always be considered at the same time as your plumbing. It can impact the feel and atmosphere of any space, and be used to emphasise certain features. So if you don't know where to start, check out our guide on how to choose the right lighting to make all the difference to your space.

Best sofa

Looking to upgrade your living room with a new sofa? We've tried and tested a wide selection of bestselling pieces from a huge range of brands to bring you our top rated recommendations when it comes to style, comfort and affordability.



> "Discover our tips to keep your home cosy this month"
>
> **HEATHER YOUNG**, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



How much does it cost to run a tumble dryer?

We've done the sums to show you the price (and how to slash your usage).



Fireplace ideas

Be inspired to update your living room fireplace and turn it into a showstopping focal point with our pick of the best tips and tricks.

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PHOTOGRAPHS FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/CAROLYN BARBER, KASIA FISZER, JAMES FRENCH, CHRIS SNOOK, SIMON WHITMORE

Making a will

IDEAL HOME'S COLUMNIST AND EDITOR OF MONEYWEEK.COM KALPANA FITZPATRICK SHARES HER FINANCIAL WISDOM

Making a will is something we all need to think about, but most of us end up putting it off. Research* shows that around 50% of UK adults do not have a will, and one in six don't ever intend making one.

It's understandable why you might want to brush the task of writing a will under the rug, but it's important to remember that if you die without one, your estate is subject to the laws of intestacy – this means your possessions and assets may not be distributed the way you would like and the law will decide. Making a will can be fairly simple and could be the most important bit of admin you tick off this month.

FIND OUT MORE FROM...

WILL WRITING Visit MoneyHelper.org.uk for more guidance on will writing and changing your will.

FINANCIAL PLANNING Go to unbiased.co.uk or vouchedfor.co.uk to find a financial planner.

INHERITANCE TAX Check to see if your estate is subject to tax via gov.uk/inheritance-tax

Do I really need a will?

You may be wondering if you even need a will. While it is not a legal requirement, there are many reasons why you should. If you have children, a will lets you nominate who would look after them should something happen to you. Without one, the courts may decide if there is no other person with parental responsibility. If you're not married to your partner, then there is no guarantee anything will go to them unless you have a will in place. So, making a will makes good sense to ensure you have a say in who your beneficiaries are and that your wishes are met.

Complex affairs

If you have complex affairs, for example, you own a business, have a second family or perhaps own an overseas property with someone, then you should certainly hire a solicitor. You can find a solicitor via the Law Society (solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk) or The Association of Lifetime Lawyers (lifetimelawyers.org.uk). The cost of getting a will done will depend on the firm you use and how complex your matters are, but a simple one can start from around £150.

Simple wills

If you have straightforward wishes and there are no complexities, then you can get a simple will. Your will can be a 'single will' which outlines your individual wishes, or a 'mirror will' which is the same for a couple; these are usually two documents that mirror each other. You can use an online will-writing service for simple wills, but note that regulations for these are not the same as solicitors, albeit cheaper. Before you use a service see if it is part of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (step.org), the Institute of Professional Will Writers (ipw.org.uk) or the Society of Will Writers (willwriters.com).



Do these three things...

1

LIST YOUR ASSETS

Before you make a will, you need to get your financial affairs in order beforehand. This will help you work out exactly what you have to give and will make the whole process a lot smoother. Then make a comprehensive list of all your assets and have a good think about who your beneficiaries will be.

2

A WILL FOR FREE

If you're over 55 and just need a simple will, October is Free Wills Month. In return for a gift to a charity, you can get a will written or updated. The campaign works with charities like Breast Cancer Now, NSPCC and many more. Register at freewillsmonth.org.uk as soon as possible as appointments are limited.

3

REVIEW AND UPDATE

If you have a will, and your circumstances have changed, update it as soon as possible. For example, if you've recently divorced, amend it. Your last will is the one that is usually valid, so you may want one that doesn't include your ex.

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ILLUSTRATIONS MELANIE BROWN
*CANADA LIFE


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Kitchen storage sorted

TRANSFORM YOUR OVERSTUFFED, CLUTTERED KITCHEN CUPBOARDS AND DRAWERS WITH HELP FROM THE EXPERTS

Kitchen cabinets are probably the most important storage in the home, but used daily and storing so much they can quickly fall into chaos. Knowing how to organise them efficiently is a game-changer, and will make the world of difference to how your kitchen runs.

'When it comes to getting your kitchen cupboards in order, it's important to get a system in place that's easy to stick to every day, given it's a space that's used daily,' say Charlotte Reddington-Smith and Gemma Lilly, aka the Style Sisters, who have homeware ranges at both Tesco and Next. Here, we've asked a number of experts for their top tips...



Organised kitchen storage makes finding an item – and tidying away after – a doddle

Start with a declutter

You probably guessed that the first step to organising kitchen cupboards is to declutter them. Incorporating expired food and unusable crockery into a new system of organisation defeats the objective, so start by going through your cupboards – all the way to the back – and getting rid of anything you don't need. 'Go through drawers and cupboards to see what you have, what you actually use and how many repeats you have,' says Vicky Silverthorn, professional organiser, You Need A Vicky (youneedavicky.com). 'You'll be surprised after a good declutter at just how well your kitchen stores things without much help.'

Relocate lesser-used items

If after decluttering your kitchen cabinets and drawers they still feel like they're bursting at the seams, have a look at the items that don't actually need to be in the kitchen. Do you have heaps of canned goods that could be kept elsewhere until you get round to using them? Or you've hoarded a stash of cleaning products that you won't need to open for a while?

'If you've purchased multiple products, see if you can free up cupboard space, by moving stuff to a shelf in the garage or a utility room,' suggest The Style Sisters. 'If you have corner cupboards, things can easily get forgotten about at the back, so they're a good place to store rarely used items,' suggests Amanda Biggs, membership director of the Association of Professional Declutterers and Organisers and founder of Professionally Organised (professionallyorganised.co.uk).

Reorganise drawers

Table linens, cloths and oven gloves often end up in an untidy heap or shoved to the back of a cupboard. Storing textiles in a drawer will keep them flat and easier to find. Organise drawers with adjustable dividers that section off the contents.

'Compartmentalised, wide pull-out drawers are great for maximising kitchen storage because they allow for the whole drawer space to be used,' says Richard Turner, national sales manager for UK & Ireland, Pronorm (pronorm.de). 'All items are visible, accessible and organised exactly how the user wants them.'

Double up on shelf space

Kitchen wall cabinets with fixed shelves often have large gaps in between that get wasted, particularly above shorter items. Maximise shelf space with raised inserts to give another layer of storage on top.

'Shelf risers are great if you have a lot of canned goods or other items that need to be stored on shelves like herbs and spices,' says interior designer Shanade McAllister-Fisher (shanademcallisterfisher.com). 'They help to maximise vertical space in cupboards and make it easier to see what you have – meaning no more out-of-date spice mixes hidden in the back of the cupboard.'

TRY TRANSPARENT STORAGE

'Acrylic containers and glass storage jars with a labelling system will level up the organisation stakes,' say Charlotte and Gemma of the Style Sisters. The beauty of transparent storage is that you can see what's inside at a glance. Having see-through storage also means the inside of your kitchen cabinets or fridge looks more organised.

'Transparent stackable storage work well for small items like packets of spice blends and herbs or small tins like anchovies or sardines,' says Craig Sammells, country manager UK & Ireland, Orthex Group (orthexgroup.com).



Decant into clear jars so you can see at a glance what you have



Door-hanging storage makes finding smaller items easier

MAKE USE OF CUPBOARD DOORS

'Savvy storage solutions like door-hanging storage units can make a huge difference to kitchen cabinets, and there are many affordable options available,' say the decluttering experts at Vintage Cash Cow (vintagecashcow.co.uk). Strategically positioned so that they don't bash into shelves, door-hanging storage – narrow shelves, pan lid holders, hooks or fabric pockets – is perfect for stashing small items or loose odds and ends that often get lost at the back of cupboards.

Maintain with regular checks

- Give everything a designated space – for instance, wine glasses in one cupboard on the top shelf, tea towels in the second drawer down, and so on – and stick to this set-up. If after a while, a certain storage set-up isn't working, reshuffle for a different solution.
- Consider hanging a length of spring-action curtain tension rod (available at Amazon, from £7) in the cupboard under your sink. Then you can use it to hook cleaning spray bottles up out of the way and tidy the rest of the cupboard's contents into neat plastic baskets beneath.
- Think about proximity. Store mugs and anything hot drink-related near to the kettle or coffee machine.
- If your cookbook shelf or cupboard is overflowing, squeeze in a shelf or two at the end of a run of units or on the reverse of a kitchen island to store your most used books.
- Use wasted inches between kitchen base units by adding a slot-in holder for chopping boards and kitchen trays. Or add a pull-out rail and use to hang tea towels and oven mitts.

Every kitchen set-up needs...



NEAT & TIDY
Bellwood packet organiser, £30, Umbra



NEW LEVEL
Observator clip-on shelf basket, £4, Ikea



LINED UP
Space three-piece lid stand, £16, Joseph Joseph



TALL & NARROW
Argon tableware storage jars, £13 for three, Wayfair



EXTRA HELP
Slimline wood-topped kitchen trolley, £126, A Place For Everything

FEATURE LISA FAZZANI, GINEVRA BENEDETTI
PHOTOGRAPHS FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/BRENT DARBY, LAURA EDWARDS, SOPHIE GALE

Black Friday

IF YOU WANT TO BAG A BARGAIN, BUT DON'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT UP IN THE FRENZY, FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO FIND THE BEST BLACK FRIDAY DEALS

If the words 'Black Friday' conjure up images of crowds crushing into a store to snap up an oversized TV for a heavily discounted price, then think again. Those chaotic days are long gone – now most of the Black Friday buying takes place online. Because of this, the discounts aren't as eye-popping but you can still nab a hefty saving on something you've coveted for a while, provided you don't get carried away on the day. Here's how to keep your head when finding the best deal this month...

Black Friday isn't just a day

Traditionally, Black Friday falls the day after Thanksgiving, which is always the last Thursday in November. This means that this year, we're looking at Friday 29th. However, Black Friday is now such a common event for most big-name brands that the discounts begin at the start of that week – sometimes even before – and they tend to carry on up to the Monday after, commonly known as Cyber Monday.

Do your research

The most important things to ask yourself when shopping on Black Friday are: 'Do I need this and can I afford it?' If the answer's no, then walk away. It's so easy to get caught up in the frenzy and tempted by the discounts, but if you're buying just for the sake of buying, then it isn't really much of a bargain. If there is something that you've coveted for a while but your budget won't stretch to it, find out how much it costs on several websites and keep note of the price if it fluctuates over time. Some brands will hike the price up for a short time before Black Friday and then drop it again by 30% or more, just so they can say it's been discounted heavily.

Check reviews

Appliances tend to be the best items to shop for on Black Friday, so head to idealhome.co.uk/what-to-buy and check to see if we've had expert hands-on experience with something you want to buy. *Ideal Home*'s buying guides are thorough, unbiased and truthful. We'd never praise something that we didn't think was worthy of it.

NEED TO KNOW...

'We'll be hunting down the best deals in real-time, so follow our Black Friday deals page for the hottest bargains all Cyber Week: idealhome.co.uk/blackfriday'



Price trackers

Use these websites to see if a 'Black Friday bargain' is the real deal...



UK.CAMELCAMELCAMEL.COM

This website tracks a vast array of Amazon products, keeping an eye on the pricing year-round, giving you a clear picture on whether the Amazon Black Friday deal is a goodie.



PRICERUNNER.COM

This price comparison website tracks over 3.4 million products from more than 6,400 British stores, so when you spot a deal, you can check if anywhere else offers the same (or less). Owned by Klarna, the Swedish 'buy now, pay later' finance company, you can find a similar price comparison tool on the Klarna app, powered by Pricerunner.



PRICESPY.CO.UK

PriceSpy tracks price changes of thousands of products from British web stores. It also offers info on when to get the best deal on buying popular products like air fryers and laptops (November and January respectively).

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI **ILLUSTRATION** MELANIE BROWN

Buying guide

Pet hair vacuum cleaners

IF YOU SHARE YOUR HOME WITH A FOUR-LEGGED FRIEND, KEEP THE FUR THEY SHED AT BAY WITH A HANDY PET-SPECIFIC CLEANER

BEFORE YOU BUY

■ In general, a vacuum can be an expensive investment, especially if you want one that will see you through many years of service. As a rule of thumb, you should budget around £250 for a vacuum cleaner with decent cleaning power. But you can spend twice that or more on premium models if your budget allows for it. More money can buy you additional features that will help clean your home of pet hair quickly and efficiently, such as greater suction power and more attachments.

■ A stick vacuum is generally an upright cleaner plus a handheld in one. Models designed to deal with pet hair frequently have a special attachment that can be used with the handheld, but the floorhead used with the stick may also have features that help cleaning in homes with pets. As two vacuums in one, they save on space, but the top-heavy design can make them tiring to use. Often cordless, they'll save the time taken plugging and unplugging a power cable, although these machines do need charging time.

■ Upright vacuum cleaners are larger and more bulky than sticks, but despite this, they can be easy to move over different floor surfaces. Going up and down stairs with machine in hand does require lifting more weight, however. Special pet attachments can deal with fur on upholstery.

■ As for the difference between a bagless and a bagged machine, you're likely to have a strong personal preference for this one. Bagless vacuums, of course, save the additional expense of buying the bags and making sure you have a constant supply. However, the ease of emptying the dust bin varies between bagless models, and how much dust puffs up as you do does too. The capacity of their bins also differs and can be relatively small. Vacuum bags can fit in more and seal tightly when you change them.



1

BEST FOR CARPETS

VAX ONEPWR BLADE 5 DUAL PET & CAR

CORDLESS Yes **CAPACITY** 0.6ltr **WEIGHT** 3.1kg **PRICE** £219.99

The suction power on this model is brilliant, and the oversized floorhead means that you'll be done with swooping around your house or flat in a flash. The battery life gave us absolutely no trouble, and we completed all of the cleaning tasks we needed to that day without having to return for a second charge. But this wouldn't have been much of a problem as it comes with a spare battery, meaning you can always have a back-up charged and ready to go. It is admittedly a little heavier than its predecessor, but it is brimming with great accessories and comes with a wall mount too, so storage is straightforward.

REASON TO BUY Comes with two battery packs

REASON TO AVOID Not all tools are included

RATING 4.5/5



Tried & Tested

We believe that any product should be simple to use, stand the test of time, look good and work brilliantly to make your life easier. Our testing team put each product through its paces at home, over several weeks, pitting them against everyday situations. Those products that make the mark are awarded a star rating. And the very, very best are awarded our 'Ideal Home Approved' recommendation.

EST. 1920 Ideal Home APPROVED ★★★★★

2

BEST OVERALL

MIELE COMPLETE C3 CAT & DOG

CORDLESS No **CAPACITY** 4.4ltr **WEIGHT** 3.4kg **PRICE** £389

Among the many vacuums we've tested, this is easily the most reliable if tackling pet hair truly is your biggest concern. The turbo brush floor head is equipped to get rid of the fluff from moulting dogs and cats, and you've also got a regular carpet floor head and another for hard floors to work with. Importantly for dealing with pet hair, the power with this vacuum is consistent, and the hose is extra long so that you can cover an entire floor without having to find another plug socket.

REASON TO BUY Excellent all-rounder that works on carpets, rugs and hard floors

REASON TO AVOID It needs to be plugged in and is a little tricky to use on stairs

RATING 5/5



3

BEST CORDLESS

DYSON V15 DETECT ABSOLUTE

CORDLESS Yes **CAPACITY** 0.77ltr **WEIGHT** 2.96kg **PRICE** £649.99

This is a pretty expensive investment as far as vacuum cleaners go; however, after testing it, we think it's a worthwhile purchase for cleaning a large and busy home. During testing, our reviewer found that this model offers powerful suction and effective detangling akin to that of a corded vacuum with an impressive run time of up to 60 minutes to get you through the entire house in one cleaning session. What's more, it boasts an innovative Detangling Digital Motorbar, perfect for homes full of pet hair.

REASON TO BUY Long battery life and effective detangling

REASON TO AVOID Very expensive

RATING 4.5/5



FOR MORE VACUUM CLEANERS, VISIT **IDEALHOME.CO.UK/BUYING-GUIDE-REVIEWS**

FEATURE JULLIA JOSON AND GINEVRA BENEDETTI
PHOTOGRAPHY FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/ ANNA STATHAKI

Buying guide

Family sized air fryers

MAKE MEALTIMES CHAOS-FREE AND GET FOOD ON THE TABLE IN A FLASH WITH ONE OF THESE GAME-CHANGING APPLIANCES

BEFORE YOU BUY

■ Air fryers are essentially mini countertop ovens. As they're smaller than a regular oven, they heat up faster and cook food quickly, so it's no surprise that they're becoming an essential kitchen appliance for speedy week-night meals.

■ One of the biggest things to consider when buying a family-sized air fryer is capacity, but as this is often listed in litres, it can be tricky to interpret. Ideally, you'll want at least a 5ltr air fryer, but if you've got older children or teenagers, we'd suggest an 8ltr model or bigger will be a more suitable size to keep everyone well fed.

■ Next, think about whether you need two zones or one larger one. This will depend on what you're looking to cook. For example, if you want to fit in a whole chicken, a single zone might be better. Or, if you've got different dietary needs to cater for, a dual-zone model will allow you to keep veggie foods separate from the meat options. And if you can't decide, choose a flexible air fryer that can do both.

■ The most versatile models offer cooking modes such as roast and bake, in addition to air frying. But if you're on a budget, you may need to forego some of these extra functions in favour of a large capacity. And a simple, clear control panel will be invaluable for rushed week-night meals.

■ Look for easy-to-use controls for both temperature and time, as these are the most important features of any air fryer. Auto-stop and keep-warm functions can be useful, but chips, if left for any amount of time, will soon lose their crispness. More expensive machines will feature touchscreens, rather than dial controls, which will help with accuracy.

> "Some models' zone capacity may not be very tall, so chickens may need to be spatchcocked"

GINEVRA BENEDETTI, DEPUTY EDITOR

BEST OVERALL

NINJA FOODI FLEXDRAWER AIR FRYER 10.4L AF500UK



CAPACITY 10.4ltr or 2 x 5.2ltr
MODES Max crisp, air fry, roast, bake, reheat, dehydrate, prove
SIZE H32.7xW49.6xD31.6cm
PRICE £269.99

With functions such as roast and bake, this is far more than just an air fryer, yet it remains effortlessly easy to use. Given that the enormous 10.4ltr cooking zone can be divided into two separate zones – which can cook at different temperatures and on different modes – it's one of the most flexible air fryers around. The drawer, divider and crisper plates are all dishwasher safe, too. It's pricey, but if you need to cook up large quantities, it's well worth it.

REASON TO BUY Huge capacity with a simple interface.

REASON TO AVOID It's bulky.

RATING 5/5

Tried & Tested

We believe that any product should be simple to use, stand the test of time, look good and work brilliantly to make your life easier. Our testing team put each product through its paces at home, over several weeks, pitting them against everyday situations. Those products that make the mark are awarded a star rating. And the very, very best are awarded our 'Ideal Home Approved' recommendation.

EST. 1920 Ideal Home APPROVED ★★★★★



BEST MEDIUM CAPACITY

INSTANT VORTEX AIR FRYER WITH VERSAZONE TECHNOLOGY

CAPACITY 8.5ltr or 2 x 4.2ltr **MODES** Bake, roast, grill, reheat, air fry or dehydrate **SIZE** H31.4xW38.4xD40.4cm
PRICE £199.99

This model has a flexible cooking space with a divider to split it from one big zone into two smaller zones. The single zone is big enough for a whole chicken or medium-sized joint of meat, and the interface is easy to use. The cooking tray and divider can go in the dishwasher, but the drawer can't. This is a great choice for any family, offering endless options that for us mean it's worth every penny.

REASON TO BUY Flexibility, and excellent performance.

REASON TO AVOID The drawer can be cumbersome.

RATING 5/5



BEST BUDGET

LAKELAND DUAL BASKET AIR FRYER WITH EASY VIEW

CAPACITY 2 x 4ltr **MODES** Steak, chicken wings, seafood, fish, pizza, chips, bake, vegetables **SIZE** H32.5xW40xD42cm
PRICE £99.99

The fact this model can only air fry is one of the compromises you're making to bag yourself a dual-drawer air fryer with an affordable price tag. It's not devoid of features, though – the two cooking drawers both have a light inside and a viewing window, which is rare, especially at this price. Furthermore, it has sync cook capabilities, and each side can air fry at a different temperature simultaneously. On test, it did the job, albeit slightly slower than other brands, but again, given the price we don't think an extra few minutes is a deal-breaker.

REASON TO BUY Affordable with viewing windows.

REASON TO AVOID No functions other than air frying.

RATING 5/5

FOR MORE AIR FRYERS, VISIT **IDEALHOME.CO.UK/BUYING-GUIDES-REVIEWS**

FEATURE HELEN McCUE
PHOTOGRAPH FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/MYLES NEW

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FEBRUARY 2024 Which? Recommended Provider RIVER CRUISES

RIVIERA TRAVEL

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Additional entrance costs may apply. Prices are per person, based on two sharing and subject to finite availability. Images used in conjunction with Riviera Travel. Offer operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Riviera Travel Ltd, ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430, a company wholly independent of Ideal Homes, published by Future Plc. Prices correct at time of going to print. See website for full details. †Supplement may apply. *Unlimited quantity of drinks at lunch and from 6pm to midnight while on board (selected drinks available).

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gardens

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Plant of the month

LILY TURF

A grass-like perennial, also known as *Liriope muscari,* lily turf is a great choice for filling borders or shaded patches under trees. It features glossy dark green leaves and produces spikes of purple flowers at the end of summer that last well into November before the first frost.

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI **PHOTOGRAPH** GETTY IMAGES

gardennews

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR OUTDOOR SPACE THIS MONTH WITH OUR GUIDE TO THE CHANGING SEASONS

CLEAR OUT YOUR GREENHOUSE

In advance of winter, now's the best time to give your greenhouse or potting shed a clean out in time for spring. On a mild, dry day, take everything out of the space, give the floor a good sweep, rinse out any empty pots and planters and put everything back inside.

PLANT BARE ROOT ROSES

While you may think of roses as a summer bloom, planting them should actually be on your list of jobs to do in the garden this month. 'Now is the ideal time to plant bare root roses, as long as the ground isn't frozen,' advises Morris Hankinson, founder and managing director of Hopes Grove Nurseries. 'Plant them as soon as you receive them, and ensure the holes you dig are deep and wide enough for the roots to spread.'



Garden must-haves



WHERE TO BUY

1 Abari planter stand, £110, Nkuku **2** Opinel Le Secateur hand pruner in Slate, £54.95, Berry Useful **3** Wooden herb markers, £4.49 for a set of eight, Gisela Graham

Grab a set of secateurs and cut back the top of any herbaceous stems, like hostas, peonies, ferns and grasses



Protect your tools

Give your garden tools a little extra protection this winter. Fill a zinc planter with sand, add some vegetable oil (about 0.5ltr for every 5kg sand), then mix well. Store the tools upright in the moist sand (blade submerged) until spring.



■ SOW HARDY VEG

If you have an existing veg plot, make sure you've harvested any remaining vegetables. Then sow with hardy types such as onions. Mound up a 5cm-high row of soil – this helps drainage and prevents rot. Push each bulb in, root first, leaving the tip visible. Cover with soil, firm down, and water. Suspend CDs from canes above them to deter birds, and cover the bulbs with glass or homemade cloches whenever frost is forecast.

■ START PREPARING YOUR SOIL FOR NEXT YEAR

Clear your beds of any dead plants, pulling plant and root out from the top. Don't worry if any smaller roots are left behind. Next, grab a shovel and dig, lift and turn the soil to aerate it. When you're done, add some compost to feed the soil and top with old grass cuttings or leaves to protect the soil and keep all the goodness of the compost in. ■

Herbs to plant now

1 ROSEMARY
This frost-hardy plant will thrive in well-drained soil in a sunny spot.

2 BAY
While it can handle cold weather, plant in a pot to move indoors when frosty.

3 CHIVES
Plant in a pot that you can take indoors in winter and outdoors again in spring.

4 THYME
This plant will do well in a pot on a sunny windowsill now, outdoors later.



FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI, KAYLEIGH DRAY **PHOTOGRAPHS** FUTURECONTENTHUB, COMANDREW WOODS, SIMON WHITMORE; GETTY IMAGES/JOSE A BERNAT BACETE, YULIA NAUMENKO, TOUTOUKE, FRANS SELLIES, ANNA BLAZHUK



garden special

Winter wonderland

HEAD OUTDOORS THIS SEASON AND BE INSPIRED BY SOME OF THE UK'S MOST BEAUTIFUL GARDENS



RHS WISLEY, Woking, Surrey

A lesson in how to create a winter garden, Wisley's deep borders brim with ever-changing interest in this flagship garden of the Royal Horticultural Society. The Winter Walk presents a dazzling display of rainbow-coloured winter stems, the low sun filters through the glasshouse borders, and dramatic drifts of snowdrops and paperbush will take your breath away. Running from 22 November to 5 January, Glow at Wisley is a ticketed-only, after-dusk-lit walk through the beautiful gardens.

Open daily, 10am-3.30pm
rhs.org.uk

The glasshouse at Wisley is home to the garden's tender plant collection and has three climatic zones to explore



STUDLEY ROYAL WATER GARDEN, Ripon, North Yorkshire

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, these gardens date back to the 18th century, featuring lush lawns, icy ornamental lakes and ponds, alongside various statues and follies. The atmospheric 12th century Fountains Abbey may be just a skeletal-like ruin, but the surroundings are packed with life, from long-established oak and sweet chestnut trees to wild red and fallow deer.

Open daily (except Fridays), 10am-4pm. nationaltrust.org.uk

There are plenty of elegant lakes and canals to explore at Studley Royal, one of the best examples of a Georgian water garden in England



The largest garden building at Stourhead was inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, after which it is named

STOURHEAD, Wiltshire

Dating back to the 1740s, Stourhead's Palladian-style villa is the backdrop to a magnificent man-made lake, which is framed on all sides by classically inspired temples, bridges and magical grottoes. The garden is filled with beech, oak, sycamore, Spanish chestnut, ash and holm oak trees, while in summer, you can marvel at over 100 types of pelargoniums grown in the Lower Walled Garden. In winter follow the mile-long light show trail with its twinkling tunnels and colourful illuminations through the gardens, from 29 November to 1 January (pre-booking essential).

Open daily, 9am-3pm nationaltrust.org.uk

WADDESDON, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

With nearly half a million visitors each year, Waddesdon's gardens feature several miles of box and yew hedges, alongside vast manicured lawns. In wintertime, you'll find variegated hollies and evergreen shrubs alongside winter flowering shrubs. The grounds are closed between 27 October and 14 November, reopening the following day as Christmas at Waddesdon, themed around the tale of Sleeping Beauty. Expect to see light projections on the Manor façade, as well as glittering light trails and a Christmas market.

Open Wednesday to Sunday (and bank holidays), 10am–5pm waddesdon.org.uk



The wonderful gardens at Waddesdon have had many key features restored so that they can be enjoyed today



Anglesey Abbey has a garden for every season and events throughout the year for all the family to enjoy

ANGLESEY ABBEY, Cambridge

Spread out over a huge 114 acres, the beautifully designed grounds of the Jacobean-style Abbey feature gardens for all seasons. In warmer weather, you'll find rose and dahlia gardens, while the winter garden is the perfect place to explore in the colder months. Between 19 November and 5 January, kids can enjoy the Wild in Art's Bear Hunt trail, inspired by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's much-loved book, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Or visit from 21 to 23 December, and you'll get to meet Santa's reindeer.

Open daily, 9.30am-4pm. Closed on 18 November
nationaltrust.org.uk

ABERGLASNEY, Carmarthenshire, Wales

With an Elizabethan cloister garden at its heart, the 10 acres at Aberglasney are a gardener's paradise, with drifts of witch hazels and hellebores bursting into bloom in wintertime, and the early-flowering narcissus making a special appearance in time for Christmas. Before you leave, don't forget to check out the plant sales area, where all the plants on offer have been chosen by Aberglasney's head gardener. From 29 November to 1 December the Winter Fair takes place, where you can find unique gifts, handmade decorations, homeware and artisan food and drink.

Open daily, 10.30am-4pm aberglasney.org



The historic cloister garden features a parapet walkway, the only known surviving structure of its kind in the UK

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI, RACHEL CROW **PHOTOGRAPHS** (WISLEY) RHS/JOANNA KOSSAK; (STUDLEY) NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/ANDREW BUTLER; (WADDESDON) STUART BEBB; (STOURHEAD) GETTY IMAGES/AMANDA WHITE; (ANGLESEY) NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/MMG/MARIANNE MAJERUS; (ABERGLASNEY) NIGEL MCCALL. OPENING TIMES AND DATES LISTED ARE FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER ONLY. PLEASE REFER TO EACH WEBSITE FOR ALL OTHER TIMES

gardenfocus

FROST PROTECTION

WHEN A SUDDEN FROST IS FORECAST, TAKE THESE STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR PLANTS

If you're thinking about how to protect your plants from frost this winter, we don't blame you as it can be devastating to lose tender shrubs or crops you've nurtured.

'You can get a ground frost that affects lawns and roots, and an air frost that affects stems, leaves, flowers and fruit,' warns Kate Turner, gardening expert at Miracle-Gro. 'Water in the plant's cells freezes, expands, then bursts, leaving the plant unable to take up water and nutrients.'

We asked gardening experts for quick and easy tips to protect your plants from frost...



Winter frost might look pretty, but it can damage your precious plants

YOU WILL NEED

- Verve white plastic fleece (L200x W100cm), £5 for a pack of three, B&Q
- McGregor two-tier mini greenhouse, £30, Argos
- Bubble wrap, £5.99 for L500xW30cm, Amazon

1 TRY MAKESHIFT CLOCHES

You don't have to spend a fortune to protect your plants; why not reuse empty plastic bottles to keep small plants frost-free in the harsh winter weather? 'Use a plastic bottle to create a homemade mini cloche by cutting the top and bottom off the bottle and placing it around the plant. It helps protect delicate leaves on young plants from chilly temperatures,' says Jack Sutcliffe, founder of Power Sheds.

2 WRAP PLANTS IN FLEECE

'Larger, more tender plants may need fleecing to help protect them from the cold and frost,' says Andrew Lawson, head gardener at the world-famous Tresco Abbey Garden. 'Fleecing is a thin, non-woven fabric used to protect both late and early crops and delicate plants during the chillier months. Simply wrap your plant in it (not too tight), or spread it out on top of your patch, while making sure it's nice and secure with pegs or string.'

3 BRING POTS INDOORS

'Potted plants can be moved into a shed or garage overnight to protect them from frost,' says Nick Hamilton, head gardener at Barnsdale Gardens. If you're fortunate enough to have a greenhouse or similar, move outdoor pots holding tender plants into there until the cold snap has passed.

4 SPRAY GARLIC

Did you know that garlic is a tried-and-tested way to protect plants from frost? Or, rather, from hungry slugs and snails that come out to feast in the winter? 'Winter is the perfect time for pests, such as ants and slugs, to invade garden plants, damaging them and destroying opportunities for healthy growth when spring comes around,' says Jack. 'The pungent smell of garlic will repel any pesky pests without damaging the plants.' Blend garlic with a little water to create a spray that will be easy to spread around the garden.

5 INSULATE YOUR POTS

'Trap warm air around your potted plants by wrapping the pots in bubble wrap,' suggests Jack. 'Bubble wrap can prevent plants from freezing and help them to survive winter weather.'

Wrapping containers will also help to prevent them from cracking as they freeze and thaw in cold weather.

6 CONSIDER MULCHING

'Mound some bark or soil temporarily over the crown of the plant to protect it – if you don't have either, then newspaper would do,' says Nick from Barnsdale Gardens. This works for more tender perennials that are planted in the ground, which can't be moved – try using it for your flowerbeds and borders. ■

FEATURE ANDREA CHILDS
PHOTOGRAPHS FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/ANNAICK GUITTENY, AMATEUR GARDENING

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happy home

HEATHER YOUNG ON WHY WE NEED TO TAKE SOME TIME OUT





Like so many of us, I find it really hard to relax. When thinking about having a little R&R, my mind immediately starts scrolling through my personal list of go-to downtime activities, which I think reveals a lot about my ability to stop and do nothing. Even my relaxation mode involves the word 'activities'!

I can spend hours working my way relentlessly through my to-do list, but I'll still feel guilty if I'm found taking a ten-minute break to lounge on the sofa. I'll jump up as if I've been caught doing something I shouldn't, when my logical brain knows it's perfectly fine and actually no-one is judging me! I think I'm hardwired to believe that I need to be constantly productive.

Over time, I have definitely developed a much better awareness of how important it is to plan in some space to switch off even if, in practice, I find it a constant challenge. I suffered from Long Covid for a couple of years, and chronic fatigue was my main symptom. It was during this period that I was forced to learn a lot about 'pacing' – I had to allocate periods of rest between activities to be able to get through my days. It was incredibly frustrating for my busy, 'always on' personality, but I had to find a way to put aside those weird feelings of guilt and ensure that I got the rest I needed. Thankfully I'm recovered now, and I think it's made me a lot better at recognising when I should take a break.

Sometimes it's physical rest I need. This is when my sofa lounging time comes into play, and I'm also a sucker for a soak in a super-hot bath. At other times, mental rest is more of an urgent priority, to try to stop my brain whirring and going into overdrive. I'm a bit of an exercise addict, and a good gym session is guaranteed to switch off all the other noise in my head. As a creative person, I find inspiration immediately dries up if I'm overwhelmed or stressed and anxious. To create space for ideas, I like to head outside for a walk (I've got notes on my phone full of projects that come to me when I'm out), or I potter in the garden.

There are a couple of tricks I've used in the past to force me to sit down. Knitting was the main one – there's something about the rhythm that I find very calming – it keeps your hands busy while your brain can switch off. I'm not sure when it happened but knitting is a habit I've completely fallen out of. Introducing it back into my downtime toolkit is now a mini goal for autumn, and it should mean I have some new cosy knits ready to wear in winter! ■

> "I'm hardwired to believe that I need to be constantly productive"



CUSHY NUMBER My essential for sofa time. Scallop cushion, £25, John Lewis & Partners

KNIT ONE PURL ONE Time to get the needles out. Beginner ribbed cup cosy kit, £9.99, Wool Couture

PURE COTTON Fluffy towels make bath time bliss. Geometric towels in Clay, from £6, M&S

PHOTOGRAPH FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/HEATHER YOUNG

NEED TO KNOW

How to improve your air quality

EXPERTS REVEAL WHY INDOOR POLLUTION MATTERS AND THE SIMPLE WAYS TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY AT HOME



KEEP IT FRESH

Open doors and windows to prevent the build-up of mould and damp, particularly in kitchens, utility rooms and bathrooms

We've known for decades that air pollution is harmful to our health, but until recently more attention has been paid to the outdoor air we breathe than air pollution generated within our homes. And while many of us have got into the habit of checking air quality at home, not many people know what they're looking for or how they can change the results.

'As outdoor air quality improves in our towns and cities, indoor air pollution becomes a greater proportion of the problem of polluted air,' explains Professor Frank Kelly, head of the Environmental Research Group at London's Imperial College. 'The effects of poor indoor air on health are less well understood compared to outdoor air quality, but there is evidence that poor indoor air quality can have adverse effects on health, such as increased risk of heart disease, stroke and respiratory infections.'

1 OPEN THE WINDOWS

Keeping the heat in can lead to a build-up of moisture in the air that increases the likelihood of mould, mildew and damp on walls and windows – especially in high-humidity rooms like kitchens and bathrooms. Air rooms regularly and make sure the trickle vents on your window frames are kept open. Check they are not covered by curtains and blinds and keep internal doors open, to make them as effective as possible. The Germans even have a name for it: *Lüften*, meaning ventilation, involves opening all windows to allow the fresh air to travel through the house.

2 COOK SMARTER

'When cooking, use the extractor fan or open a window,' advises Nicola Carslaw, Professor of Indoor Air Chemistry, University of York. 'Use the back rings of the hob rather than the front as the extractor fan works more efficiently with these. Steaming and boiling food is better than frying. And, finally, switch your gas hob to electric or induction when renovating.' Furthermore, keep the window open for 10 minutes after cooking to allow particles, gases and moisture to disperse. Of course, if you can use an air fryer, then you can avoid the hob much more easily.›





AIR ROOMS

Dust gathers in soft furnishings so plump them regularly outside, and keep window vents open for air to circulate

HANG OUT THE WASHING

As well as moisture levels, drying indoors can also mean more pollutants if scented laundry products are used

"EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT POOR INDOOR AIR QUALITY CAN ADVERSELY AFFECT HEALTH"

3 THINK AGAIN ABOUT THAT ROARING BLAZE

Everyone loves the cosy crackle of a woodburner or open fire, but all solid-fuel combustion contributes to both indoor and outdoor pollution. It's important your stove is well maintained and you only burn well seasoned wood to minimise emissions.

4 SWAP WAX CANDLES FOR BATTERY-POWERED ONES

Burning candles produces particulate matter and formaldehyde. If you choose scented candles, they release VOCs (volatile organic compounds) in addition. If you love a scented candle and don't want to deny yourself the pleasure, set a time limit on usage and open a window.

5 DON'T USE HOME FRAGRANCE

Other forms of home fragrance are also polluting the air in your home with VOCs and other chemicals. Aerosols are the worst, thanks to the propellants in them. Incense produces particulate matter and plug-ins release VOCs.

6 STOP SPRITZING SCENTED PRODUCTS

Scented cleaning and personal-care products emit VOCs, so look for unscented everything. 'Avoid scented products if you live with someone who is prone to respiratory issues,' advises Professor Carslaw. 'Switch from spray to cream cleaners and from spray-on deodorant to roll-on. Eco-friendly cleaners often contain as many fragrance compounds as regular cleaners, so look for unscented products instead.'

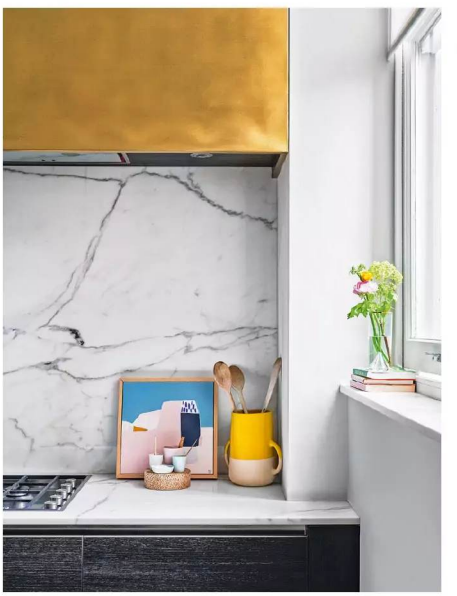
7 DRY WASHING OUTDOORS

In his book *Dampness in Buildings*, construction expert Alan Oliver concluded that drying clothes indoors can produce 3-7.5 litres of moisture. The safest way to dry is outdoors, or if that's not possible dry clothes indoors with an efficient dehumidifier running nearby. Yes, there's a cost attached to this, although it's cheaper than running a tumble dryer. Our investigation into the cost of running a dehumidifier found it to be 5-14p an hour.

8 USE AN AIR PURIFIER

The latest generation of the best air purifiers can be efficient at removing pollutant particles, but you must replace the filter regularly. Shop around, looking for the highest CADR (clean air delivery rate), and check the range of a device – you may need more than one. ■





RECONSIDER A REAL FIRE

Using solid fuel is polluting. If you do have a fire, have your chimney swept or your stove maintained regularly

TURN ON THE EXTRACTOR FAN

To be fully effective, extractor fans need to be vented outside rather than simply recirculating air

> "AVOID SCENTED PRODUCTS IF YOU LIVE WITH SOMEONE PRONE TO RESPIRATORY ISSUES"

FEATURE VANESSA RICHMOND **PHOTOGRAPHS** FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/MEL YATES, CAROLYN BARBER, SUSSIE BELL, JOANNA HENDERSON, DAVIDE LOVATI

one small step

IDEAS FOR A SUSTAINABLE HOME



Floral Street's diffuser reeds are plastic free

BLOOMING WONDERFUL

Floral Street is a British fragrance brand that boasts some of the best practices with regards to protecting the environment. As well as perfumes, the company creates a wide range of home products that are both ethical and vegan, from plant-based candles and alcohol-free room scents to naturally derived oil diffusers with plastic-free reeds. There are lots of fragrances to choose from, and they're great as gifts – for yourself and others – plus each product comes in recyclable floral packaging that is FSC-certified.



Anywhere Ca-rPET Re-set runner with Herringbone Black border, from £137, Alternative Flooring

Plastic fantastic

Made using recycled plastic bottles, Alternative Flooring's latest range of carpets and rugs is called Anywhere Ca-rPET. The 'anywhere' part refers to the fact that the soft, sisal-like material can be used indoors and out, while the rest takes its inspiration from the fact that the recycled PET yarn that the flooring is made from is known in manufacturing circles as rPET. The range comes in 4m and 5m widths, so is perfect for rugs, runners and carpets for most average homes, in a choice of four colourways and three weave styles.

Reduce, reuse recycle...

SECOND LIFE Dunelm's brilliant Textile Takeback scheme, created in partnership with The Salvation Army, will recycle your old bedding, tablecloths, shoes and accessories. Simply pack them up and bring them to the store, or generate a postage label via the website and take the parcel to a postage drop-off point. Visit dunelm.com/info/about/take-back-scheme for more details.

SWEET, THEN TREAT Use carpet offcuts or old rugs to line your shed floor. They will insulate the space, helping to protect against any potential cold and damp over the winter time.

SAVE WATER This month, consider swapping out your old shower head in favour of an eco version. They can reduce water flow by up to 85%, without any notable difference in performance. Mira Showers has three eco shower heads to help you lower your water consumption, including the Beat eco four-spray shower head, £41.34 (right).



ONE SMALL STEP

UPCYCLE PROJECT

Toy animal planters

SET THE SCENE
Group a few animals together to make the most of the theme



With this bold look, simple leafy green plants will work better than those with bright blooms

YOU WILL NEED

• Pen • Hollow plastic toy animals • Craft knife • Newspaper • Spray paint in any colour(s) • Sand • Soil • Small plant or succulent

If your kids have grown out of their toy animals, give them another life by transforming them into cute planters. Start by drawing an oval big enough for your plant on the toy animal's back, then use a craft knife to carefully cut a hole for your plant. Next, lay some newspaper on a surface, spray paint the toy and leave to dry. When dry, fill the cavity with a little sand and soil, before inserting the plant and packing the sides with more soil.

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI **PHOTOGRAPH** FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM/GRAEME AINSCOUGH



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- One brunch, seven dinners and 10 lunches and a welcome cocktail
- A tour of Hanoi
- Cooking class in Halong Bay
- Visit to Loc Yen
- Tour of Hoi An
- Cruise on the Perfume River
- Tour of Hué
- Tour of Ho Chi Minh
- Excursion along the Mekong River
- Tour of Củ Chi tunnel complex
- Tour of Phnom Penh
- Visit to the Kok Sangke community
- Sunrise visit to Angkor Wat
- Excursion to Angkor Thom
- Tour of Luang Prabang
- Cruise across Tonle Sap Lake
- Visit to Kuang Si Falls
- Baci ceremony
- Return scheduled flights to Hanoi
- Internal flights from Hanoi to Da Nang, Hué/Da Nang to Ho Chi Minh City, Siem Reap to Luang Prabang, and Luang Prabang to Hanoi
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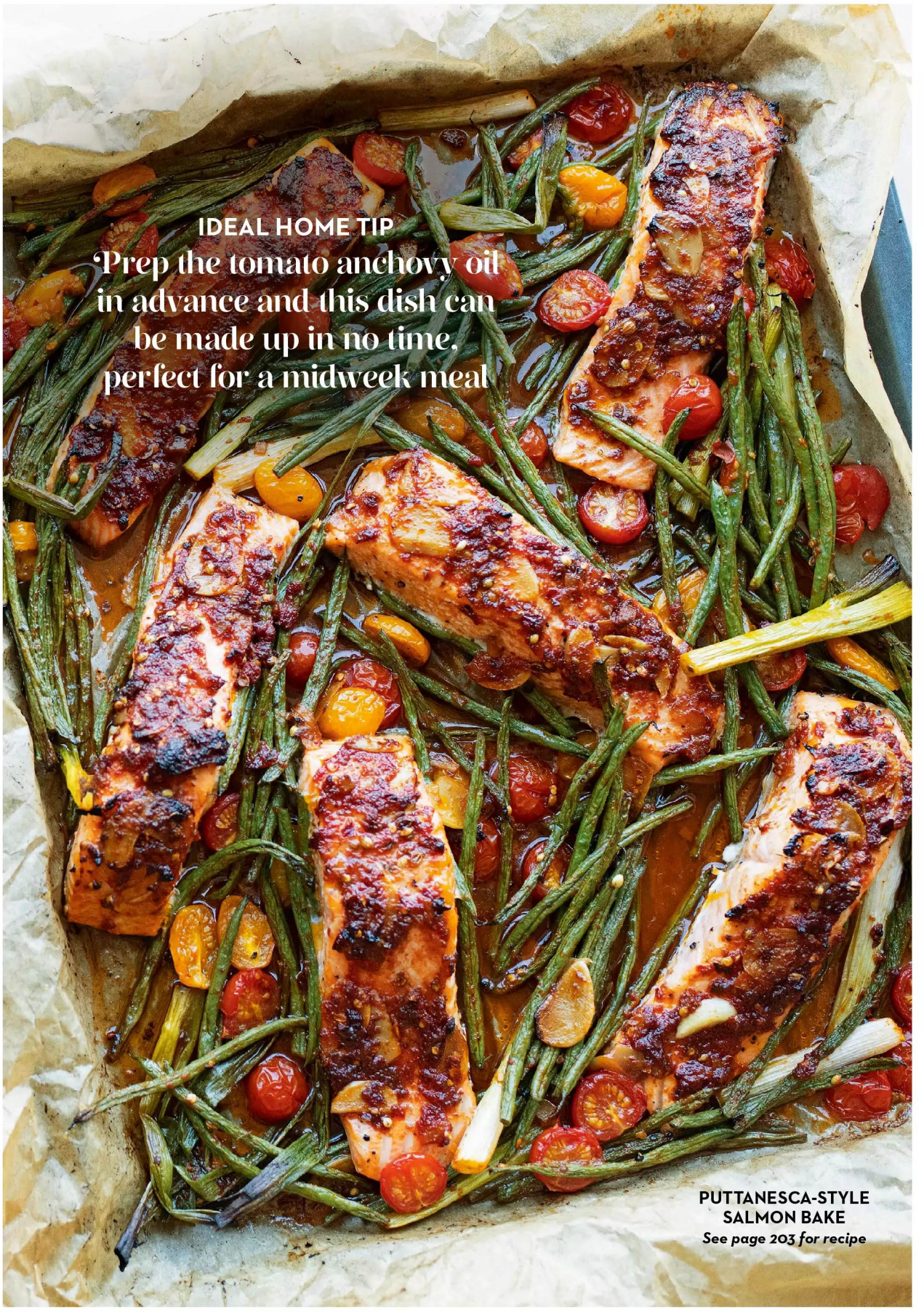
Modern comfort food

Need to feed the family with something that's warming and packed with flavour? Take a look at these tasty dishes from Ottolenghi Comfort



EGG SAMBAL 'SHAKSUKA'

See page 203 for recipe



IDEAL HOME TIP

'Prep the tomato anchovy oil in advance and this dish can be made up in no time, perfect for a midweek meal

PUTTANESCA-STYLE SALMON BAKE

See page 203 for recipe



'Helen's bolognaise

SERVES 4 READY IN 1 HR 10MINS

• 75ml peanut oil • 1 medium onion, finely diced • 1 large carrot, peeled and finely diced • 1 celery stick, finely diced • 2 star anise • 1 cinnamon stick • 2 bay leaves • 1 1/2tsp Sichuan peppercorns, roughly crushed in a pestle and mortar • 1tsp fennel seeds, roughly crushed in a pestle and mortar • 500g minced pork (or beef, or a mixture of both) • 3 garlic cloves, crushed • 40g ginger, peeled and finely chopped • 2tbsp Shaoxing wine • 100g doubanjiang (chilli bean paste) • 50ml light soy sauce • 310ml water • 1tbsp cornflour • 7 spring onions, finely sliced • 360g dried pappardelle

FOR THE DRESSED CUCUMBERS

• 1 large cucumber, cut into thin batons • 2tbsp rice wine vinegar • 1tsp runny honey • 1tsp sesame oil

TO SERVE • 5g coriander leaves, roughly torn • 1 1/2tbsp toasted sesame seeds

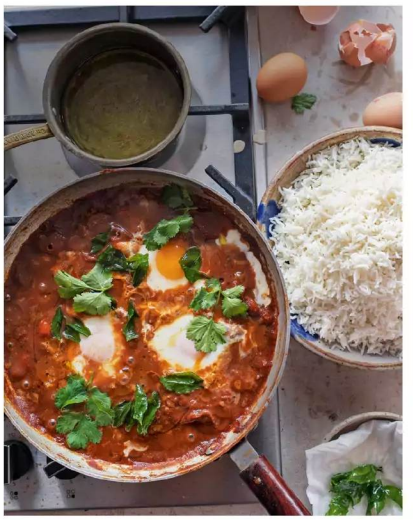
1 Put the oil into a medium saucepan, for which you have a lid, and place on a medium-high heat. Once hot, add the onion, carrot, celery, star anise, cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Cook for 5 mins, stirring frequently, then add the Sichuan peppercorns and fennel seeds. Cook for another 5 mins, stirring from time to time, until the vegetables take on some colour. Take the pan off the heat and, using a slotted spoon, transfer the vegetables to a plate, leaving behind the oil and any sediments.

2 Keep the pan on a medium-high heat and add the meat, garlic and ginger. Cook for 5-7 mins, stirring from time to time, until the meat is lightly browned. Add the Shaoxing wine, cook for a minute, then add the doubanjiang, soy sauce and 250ml of water. Stir to combine, partially cover, and simmer on a medium-low heat for about 25 mins, stirring from time to time.

3 While the meat sauce is simmering, mix the cornflour with the remaining 60ml of water and set aside. Return the cooked vegetables to the sauce, along with the spring onions and the cornflour slurry. Simmer for 5 mins, uncovered.

4 Meanwhile, place all the ingredients for the dressed cucumbers in a small bowl. Add 1/4tsp of salt, mix to combine and set aside.

5 Cook the pappardelle in salted boiling water until al dente, then divide between four bowls. Ladle over the meat sauce and top with some of the dressed cucumbers. Finish with the coriander and sesame seeds and serve, with the remaining cucumbers on the side.



Egg sambal 'shakshuka'

SERVES 4 READY IN 1 HR 10 MINS

• 1 1/2tsp fennel seeds • 2 whole cloves • Seeds from 2 cardamom pods • 1/2tsp ground cinnamon • 1 1/2tbsp medium curry powder • 60ml olive oil • 1/2tsp black mustard seeds • 20 curry leaves • 1 medium red onion, halved and thinly sliced • 10g ginger, peeled and finely grated • 5 garlic cloves, crushed • 10g coriander, stalks finely chopped and leaves to serve • 150g datterini (or cherry) tomatoes • 2tsp sambal oelek • 1 x 400g tin of crushed tomatoes • 100ml tamarind concentrate • 300ml water • 15g palm (or light soft brown) sugar • 5 eggs • Salt and black pepper

1 Put the fennel seeds, cloves and cardamom seeds into a small dry frying pan and place on a medium-low heat. Toast lightly for about 2 mins, until fragrant, then grind to a powder in a spice grinder or a pestle and mortar. Add the cinnamon and curry powder and set aside.

2 Put 3tbsp of the oil into a large lidded sauté pan (keep the lid for later) – about 26cm wide – and place on a medium heat. Add the mustard seeds and 10 curry leaves and cook for 1 min, until the seeds begin to pop. Add the onion and cook for about 7 mins, stirring frequently, until they are starting to colour. Add the ginger, garlic, coriander stalks and fresh tomatoes, cook for another 5 mins, then add the fennel spice mix. Cook for 2 mins, until fragrant, then add the sambal oelek, tinned tomatoes, tamarind, water, sugar and 1 1/4tsp of salt. Stir well and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook for 20-25 mins, uncovered, until thickened. This can be made in advance, up to this point (just before the eggs are cracked into the sambal). The sambal lasts well in the fridge for up to 3 days.

3 Crack the eggs into the sambal and sprinkle a little salt and pepper over each egg. Cover the pan and cook for 7-8 mins, until the egg whites are fully cooked and the yolks are soft.

4 Meanwhile, put the remaining tablespoon of oil into a small pan and place on a medium heat. Add the rest of the curry leaves, cook for about a minute, until very fragrant, then remove from the heat. When the eggs are ready, drizzle the oil and fried curry leaves over the eggs, scatter over the coriander leaves, and serve.



Puttanesca-style salmon bake

SERVES 4

READY IN 30 MINS PLUS COOLING

• 200g fine green beans, trimmed • 6 spring onions, cut widthways into thirds • 200g mixed cherry tomatoes, halved • 6 skin-on salmon fillets

FOR THE TOMATO ANCHOVY OIL

• 85ml olive oil • 8 anchovies, finely chopped • 2 1/2tbsp tomato paste • 1tsp chilli flakes • 2tsp coriander seeds, lightly bashed in a mortar • 8 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced • 2 preserved lemons, flesh and pips discarded, skin finely chopped • 2tsp maple syrup

FOR THE SALSA 60g pitted Kalamata olives, halved • 60g capers, roughly chopped • 1 preserved lemon, flesh and pips discarded, skin thinly sliced • 10g basil leaves, roughly chopped • 10g parsley leaves, roughly chopped • 2tbsp olive oil • 2tsp lemon juice

1 First make the tomato anchovy oil. Put the oil, anchovies and tomato paste into a small sauté pan and place on a medium heat. Once the mixture starts to simmer, cook for 5 mins, stirring from time to time. Add the chilli flakes and coriander seeds and cook for another minute, until fragrant. Remove from the heat and add the garlic, preserved lemon and maple syrup. Stir to combine, then set aside to cool. Preheat the oven to 240C/Gas 7.

2 Place the beans, spring onions and tomatoes on a large, parchment-lined baking tray. Drizzle over 3tbsp of the tomato anchovy oil, along with 1/4tsp of salt and a good grind of pepper. Toss to combine and place in the oven for 12-13 mins, until the beans and tomatoes are starting to soften and taking on a little colour.

3 Meanwhile, arrange the salmon fillets on a plate and, using a spoon, drizzle the remaining tomato anchovy oil (as well as all the solids) evenly over the fillets. Once the beans and tomatoes have had their time in the oven, nestle the salmon fillets among them and bake for a further 8 mins. Set aside for 5 mins, out of the oven, to rest.

4 While the salmon is baking, mix all the ingredients for the salsa in a small bowl and season with a good grind of pepper. Spoon half the salsa over the salmon and serve the fish warm (or at room temperature, which works just as well), with the rest of the salsa in a bowl on the side.



Find these recipes and more in *Ottolenghi Comfort* by Yotam Ottolenghi and Helen Goh (£30, Ebury Press)

RECIPES TAKEN FROM *OTTOLENGHI COMFORT* BY YOTAM OTTOLENGHI AND HELEN GOH (£30, EBURY PRESS)
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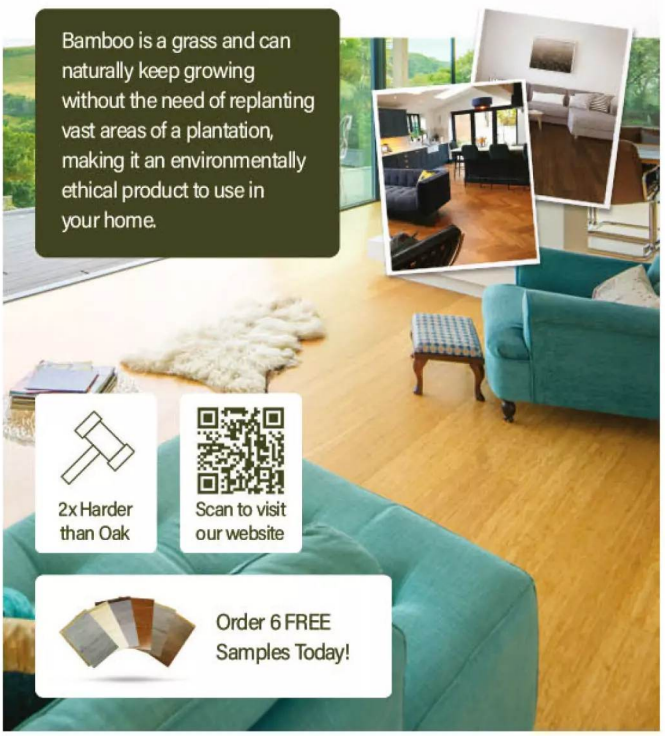
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MELISSA HEMSLEY GETS UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH HER HOME

The chef and cookery writer lives in London with her boyfriend Henry Relph, their daughter Summer and their Staffordshire bull terrier, Nelly



WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU DO WHEN YOU GET IN THE DOOR?

Take my shoes off and smother my dog with kisses. She's an old girl, almost 11 years old and recovering from cancer. Then I make a ginger lemon tea.

WHAT'S YOUR HOMEWARE ADDICTION?

Blankets! I buy my patchwork quilts from Angie (@angieburrett) and I love buying artisan blankets from Oshana (oshana.co.uk) – they're made by refugees and are absolutely stunning.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE HOMEWARE BRAND?

Falcon jugs for drinks and flowers; Howe London for stripy cushions; Our Place for pans... and I love Kilner jars for storage and keeping leftovers in the fridge.

WHAT SMELL SAYS HOME TO YOU?

Garlic frying in butter. And then at my mum's house, it's the smell of orange peel in a cooling oven. My mum would pop citrus peels in the oven when it was cooling to create her own free scent – she hates me wasting money on candles!

DO YOU HAVE ROUTINES AT HOME?

I aim for some meal prep once a week, usually a Sunday evening. I call it the 'Sunday Cook Off!' It helps us as a family start the working week off well with some healthy nourishing foods in our bellies. Normally I make my No-Bake Chocolate Peanut Bars which are a firm favourite from the fridge, a batch of savoury or sweet muffins for breakfasts, one big pot of something like my Big Batch Bolognese (seven different veg in it, as well as beef mince and lentils).

DO YOU THINK YOU'RE A GOOD HOST?

I think I've got a bit better. I used to get really frazzled until I drastically lowered my expectations of myself. Now I make one big sharing main, one wonderful dip (try my feta-mole – guacamole meets whipped feta), and then a simple chocolate pudding. And I let everyone help themselves and go at their own pace. If there are leftovers, everyone can take them home – which I ADORE when I'm at someone's home and they wrap us up leftovers – leftovers are the best.

WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HOME WHEN YOU'RE AWAY?

We've got a lovely big bed that sleeps all four of us – dog included!

IN THE HOT SEAT

Shoes on or off? Off

Eat at table or laps? At the table with the dog scrounging on the floor!

Lighting – bright or moody? Lots of lamps.

Quick shower or long bath? I'm a sweaty person! So a quick shower.

Colourful or neutral? Neutral wall colours, then colourful cushions and art.

Neat or creative chaos? Chaos, says my boyfriend!

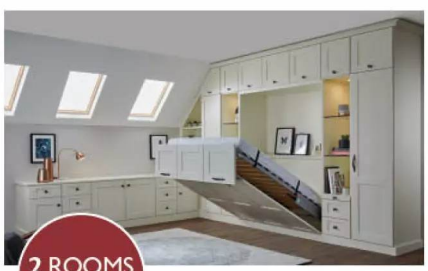
Music, TV or quiet? Music – it keeps me calm.

■ **Melissa's latest cookbook, the Sunday Times Bestseller *Real Healthy: Unprocess your Diet with Easy Everyday Recipes* (£26, Ebury), is available now.**

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI **PHOTOGRAPH** SARAH MALCOLM



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