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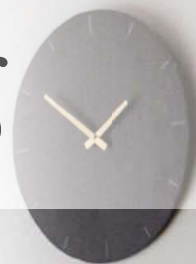
All the inspiration you need...

- ✓ Discover the latest looks for spring/summer 2020
- ✓ Design tricks to create the perfect kitchen-diner
- ✓ Beautiful bathrooms that save water and money
- ✓ Turn a spare room into a hard-working home office



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Welcome

After the dark, dreary days of winter, spring is finally here and with it comes a whole host of **exciting new interior trends**. On page 38 we've picked our favourite **new looks from the high street for spring summer 2020**.

With so much to choose from, I'm sure you'll find a look you love.

With flexible working on the increase, many more of us are working from home, but trying to work at the kitchen

table with family life going on around you isn't always the easiest option. So on page 44, we've got some **smart solutions** to help you **create a stylish home office** where you can work uninterrupted.

The kitchen has become the heart of our homes, but how do you make it work as a kitchen-diner where all the family can gather at mealtimes? On page 50 we have some **clever ideas to help maximise your space**.

If you're keen to cut your water bills this year, then turn to page 56 to discover how you can **save money on both your water and energy bills with the latest bathroom designs**, plus some smart tips that cost next to nothing but could save you £££.

Spring is often the time of year when homeowners look to put their property on the market. If you're thinking of doing the same, then check out our expert guide on **alternative ways to sell your home** which could save you time, money and hassle (p.108).

Anna-Lisa

Discover affordable buys for every room from all your favourite high street stores and online retailers



75

Our reader homes this month are packed with great ideas to steal

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Have you **missed an issue?**

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12-PAGE
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A toast to mum!

Treat your mum to a cream tea and stroll through a picturesque garden this Mother's Day. Many National Trust properties will be open across the country for Mothering Sunday this March, with a range of special activities. You can make a floral decoration



at Croft Castle in Herefordshire, bake your own bread at Saddlescombe Farm in West Sussex or learn about women in science at Woolsthorpe Manor in Lincolnshire, to name just a few! Yummy cakes, tea, prosecco and lunches will be available too, so you can sit back and enjoy some quality

time with your mum in idyllic grounds. Visit nationaltrust.org.uk for admission prices and times of their Mother's Day events.

THIS MONTH *we love...*

FOR
STOCKISTS
SEE P122

Make the most of March with the best things to do, see and buy this month

Hidden Gem: *Sam Wilson, Bath*

We're excited to see that award-winning designer and business-woman Sam Wilson has opened a third store in the heart of bustling Bath. The Cotswolds designer has made a name for herself with her striking printed fabrics and homewares made from original linocuts. She manages to create such an inviting, sumptuous atmosphere that it's more like walking into your dream home rather than a store! As if we needed another excuse to visit the beautiful city of Bath... You can find the new store at 36 Milsom Street, Bath, BA1 1DN or visit samwilsonstudio.com



BLOOMS FOR YOUR BREW

Get a floral fix with Marimekko's new spring/summer 2020 range. Their new line, Primavera (Spanish for spring) includes crockery and soft furnishings with some gorgeous lilac blossoms and luscious green leaf designs. They remind us of fragrant gardens and lighter evenings to come. Prices start from £15.50 for a mug.

Have a browse of the new collection at www.abodeliving.co.uk.

Feature Katie Dutton

THIS MONTH WE LOVE

GREAT IDEAS FOR... *St David's Day*

Celebrate Wales' national day with these Welsh-made and Welsh-inspired products



◀ **Nexus sheep doorstop**, £32, Melin Tregwynt

▶ **Hand-thrown milk jugs**, from £9 each, Adra



◀ **Wales Forever card**, £2.99, The Welsh Gift Shop

▶ **Denim 'Cwtch' bag**, £10, Museum of Wales Shop



◀ **Cwtch mug by Sarah Morley**, £9.95, Shop Wales

▶ **Welsh Cake soy candle**, £10.95, Valley Mill



◀ **Welsh Weatherman x Corgi thunder storm socks**, from £17, Corgi

Rise up

Make a statement this International Women's Day with these wonderful Girl Power vases from Audenza. They'd make the perfect gift for your female friends and family, or why not nab one for yourself? They're a great reminder of female strength, power and unity plus they're super stylish. Better yet, five per cent of the sales go to 'For all Womenkind,' a design initiative committed to raising money for organisations working to advance women's rights.

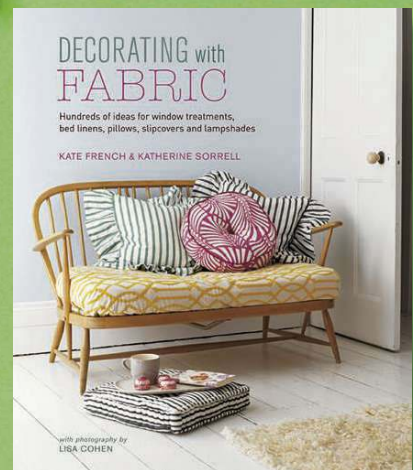
Girl Power vase, £35, Audenza



MATERIAL GIRLS

In this new book by textile designer Kate French and design writer Katherine Sorrell, you can learn how to easily transform a room and make your mark on a new or dull home with the fun, fab use of fabrics. Alongside inspiring photos, French and Sorrell share inventive and budget-friendly ideas on how to incorporate new colour, texture and patterns into your home for an instant injection of style.

Decorating with Fabric is released on 11th February by Ryland Peters & Small for £19.99.



SPRING OUT OF BED

The clocks go forward on 29th March, marking the beginning of British Summer Time – at last! Why not celebrate those lighter mornings and get prepped for sunnier days with some spring-themed bedside accessories? We love this cute and affordable alarm clock from Amazon and mustard hexagonal table from Furniture Village which will instantly liven up your mornings. If you're still in need of a little light though, try this bedside lamp from Oliver Bonas. It brings a pop of colour even when it's turned off!



Rabbit alarm clock, £13.79, Amazon



Julieta ceramic table lamp, £39.50, Oliver Bonas

Hexagonal table, £39, Furniture Village



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Abingdon Carpets Satin Touch Merino Grey (12.5mm Thick) 3.7m x 4m	£333.00	£147.99
Associated Weavers Invictus Scorpius Granite Grey 3.5m x 4m	£252.00	£149.99
Associated Weavers Isense Surprise Raven Black 3.7m x 5m	£462.00	£209.99
Associated Weavers Softissimo Super Soft Pisa Grey 3.4m x 4m	£380.00	£149.99
Hugh Mackay Tartan Ben Nevis Axminster 2.8m x 3m	£420.00	£209.99
Victoria Carpets Easicare Heartland 50oz Twist Inkberrow Grey 6m x 3.15m	£473.00	£207.99
Wilton Royal Balmoral Deluxe 50oz Wool Twist Valerian Steel Grey 4m x 4m	£360.00	£159.99
Altro Suprema Oatmeal Vinyl Safety Floor 7.5m x 2m	£390.00	£119.99
Modern Living Alba 793 Grey Wood Effect Vinyl 5.95m x 4m	£357.00	£154.99
Tarkett Goliath Authentic Beige Luxury Wood Effect Vinyl Flooring 4m x 3m	£216.00	£99.99
Sisal Large Boucle Mixed Beige 4m x 3.7m	£325.00	£199.99



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GET IN TOUCH

Your letters

Your Home needs you!

We love to hear what you've been up to, so send us your letters, tips, projects and photos. This month's prizes are provided by Sistema.

Tropical touch

I love *Your Home* magazine as it's always packed full of inspiration and decorating ideas. I decided that our en suite needed a bit of a lift so I chose a tropical theme. I love it. It always makes me smile on a cold, dark morning. Here's what it looks like now...

Lola Willcox, via email

Your Home says This is such a fabulous update to your bathroom, Lola! The tropical print wallpaper is a brilliant find. We really love it.

★ **Lola's letter has won her a healthy eating on-the-go bundle from Sistema. Send us your projects and photos and you could be next month's winner!**



Letter of the month

Raising the bar

As a 21st birthday present for my son, I bought an old bedside table for £5 and upcycled it into a drinks cabinet. My carpenter husband took the cupboard door off the bottom, moved the shelf up, then created a drawer. I painted it in the colours of my son's bedroom and stencilled the front of the cupboard before adding a bottle opener to the side and a door knob made out of a bottle cap. He loved it and we've now got space back in our drinks cabinet!

Tina McLellan, via email

Your Home says This is such an inventive project, Tina. We're so glad your son loves his new drinks cabinet!



Dresser of dreams

I love reading through your magazine to get ideas. As I've recently moved house, I've now been able to put some of the tips into practise. The previous occupant left a dresser base, so rather than take it to the tip I decided to paint it. As I like green, I chose Jurassic Stone for the colour and I was very pleased with how it turned out!

Michelle Miller, via email

Your Home says What a lovely upcycling project, Michelle. It's so important we make use of old furniture and give it a new lease of life. Nice work!

Light work

I used leftover cards and a tube that a gift came in to make this lamp for my shelf. I wrapped craft card and battery-operated lights around the tube, then cut the ladies out of the Christmas cards and stuck them on to the craft paper. To finish it off, I made some bracelets to adorn the top of the tube.

Tina Williams, via email

Your Home says What a lovely way to make use of old Christmas cards. We're sure this will really stand out on your shelf, Tina, thanks to the fairy lights and pretty bracelets.



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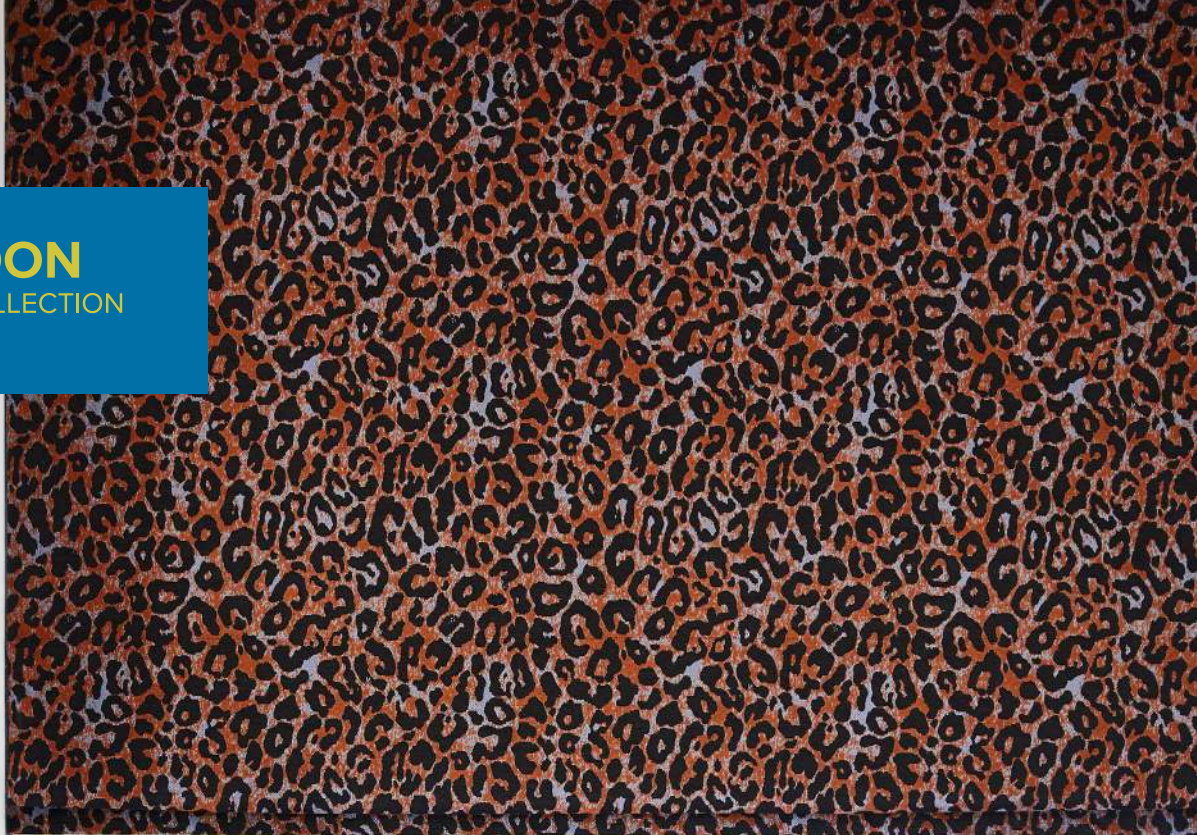
SEND YOUR TIPS, PHOTOS AND LETTERS TO:
Your Letters, *Your Home* magazine, Immediate Media Co, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol BS1 4ST or email Yourhome@immediate.co.uk. Letters may be edited. We apologise but photos cannot be returned.

Courtesy of Sistema, this issue's letter of the month will receive a healthy eating on-the-go bundle, including a Tritan active bottle, stainless steel bottle, salad to go box, soup mug and a snack capsule worth £45. Three runners-up will each receive a stainless steel bottle plus a snack capsule worth £25. Please note, colours will vary and prize winners must be UK based.



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Freshen up your home for spring with our handy tips and tricks

How to... organise your kitchen cupboards and shelves

No one needs the hassle of pots and pans spilling out onto the floor as they rifle through chaotic kitchen cupboards. Make cooking as stress-free as possible with these handy tips to organise your kitchen space...

- ✓ A logically ordered kitchen makes it much easier to find exactly what you need. Consider what items you use the most and place them in the easiest-to-reach areas. Items you only use every once in a while can be placed at the backs of cupboards or harder-to-reach areas.
- ✓ It also makes sense to group cookware and crockery by purpose so that when it comes to cooking or making something specific, everything is in one place. For example, keep all your glassware and mugs together. This is especially useful if you're into baking and need a designated cupboard to keep everything in order.
- ✓ Messy cutlery and utensil drawers can make it very difficult to locate that one item you're looking for. Organise these spaces using drawer dividers or cutlery trays – a simple way of separating your cutlery into sections. That way, all your knives are in one space while your spoons are in another, rather than a mishmash of items.
- ✓ For really aesthetically pleasing cupboards, try labelling glass containers and dispensing dried goods such as pasta and cereal into them. Scan the labels and find exactly what you need instantly rather than rifling through packets. This can also be a more sustainable way of storing food if your local shop offers loose refills of dried foods, such as rice, flour and sugar.
- ✓ If you want to go the extra mile, you could also try colour coordinating your shelves. A rainbow effect is always visually pleasing and will really impress any guests!



Q&A

How can I make my home as allergen-free as possible?

Hay fever can be a real nuisance at this time of year, especially as the weather starts warming up and it becomes increasingly tempting to open windows and doors. However, keeping them closed as often as you can will ensure dust and allergens stay at a minimum. Vacuuming regularly and damp dusting surfaces can also help to reduce dust levels in the home. If you have a pet, try to keep them well-groomed and off the furniture as much as possible.



Feature Ella Rhys-Jones Photo Getty Images

Editor's choice

Do you cringe at the thought of touching a dirty bin when you empty your rubbish? The EKO Morandi smart bin may be the one for you. A hygienic solution to waste, the bin opens with a simple wave of the hand over the lid. Lightweight and easy to clean, the Morandi also comes in a selection of contemporary colours. Available for £69.99 from Lakeland, Amazon and www.ekohome.co.uk.



What to look out for **THIS MONTH**



▲ If you're on the hunt for an eco alternative to toxin-filled laundry products, look no further than this trio of washing detergents. The set contains a 'signature' detergent, as well as specific formulas for silk, cashmere and wool

Eco laundry set, £35.50, Clothes Doctor



◀ Specifically designed to allow easy placement of clothes, and with 15 metres of space, this airer will make drying your laundry a breeze

Addis Easi airer, £29.99, Robert Dyas

▶ Microfibres, released from clothes during washing, are a major contributor to plastic pollution in our rivers and oceans. This fabric bag will filter out those tiny fibres before they can reach the water

Guppyfriend wash bag, £25, National Trust Shop



GUPPYFRIEND Washing Bag



◀ Butter up a loved one with this vibrant peg bag. It's the prettiest way to store your laundry pegs and ensure they don't get lost!

Buttercup and bee fabric peg bag, £10.50, Gisela Graham



▲ Upgrade your laundry storage with these bamboo baskets. The chic woven design will spruce up any bathroom

Woven bamboo oval laundry basket, £45; woven bamboo round laundry basket, £49.50, Oliver Bonas

Great Buy

Air pollution is not exclusive to the outdoors; the air inside your home could be just as polluted and in need of cleansing. That's where Blueair's purifiers come in, an effective gadget that removes up to 99 per cent of airborne particles including viruses, mould and smoke. Blueair offer a variety of models depending on the size of the room you wish to use it in. Our favourite is the Blue Pure 411, a small and compact purifier that also brings a pop of colour. Prices from £135, www.blueair.com/gb.



WE TEST... eco bathroom cleaners

We tried out a selection of eco bathroom disinfectants. Here's what we found...

WHAT WE CONSIDERED

- Does it smell pleasant?
- Does it work effectively?
- Is it as efficient as non-eco cleaners?

BATHROOM CLEANER, £2.85, BIO-D

Made from sustainable, plant-based ingredients, including detergents extracted from coconut oil, this bathroom cleaner is robust and reliable. It's effective at tackling acute levels of limescale, although an above-average amount of product was needed to do so. Reasonably priced with a light citrus scent and none of the nasties or toxins that are found in regular, non-eco bathroom cleaners.



8/10

BATHROOM SURFACE CLEANER, £3, METHOD

Made with non-toxic plant-based powergreen technology, this bathroom cleaner is versatile and effectively dissolves soap scum and hard water stains. You may have to leave the product for five minutes or so before wiping for complete effectiveness. Aside from that, it's rather effortless to use and leaves a pleasant eucalyptus mint scent in the bathroom.



7/10

BATHROOM CLEANER, £6.99, CLEAN LIVING

The eco-friendliest option, this bathroom cleaner is 100 per cent natural and helps to reduce single-use plastics. Containing enzymes that effectively fight limescale and dirt, you can rest assured that this cleaner will leave your surfaces just as shiny and fresh as a non-eco alternative. The product is packaged in refillable aluminium bottles which can be used again and again by adding sachets of concentrate and topping up with water.



9/10

ECOLOGICAL BATHROOM CLEANER, £1.99, WAITROSE

With a lovely watermint and sage scent, this ecological cleaner works effectively on taps, baths, mirrors and tiles. It doesn't emit the unpleasant chemical fumes of non-eco bathroom cleaners and therefore is perfect for anyone with allergies or sensitive skin. Covering all your bathroom surface cleaning needs, it is also the most affordable of the bunch so a great buy!



9/10



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Savvy ways to...

Recycle unwanted clothes

■ Simply hand in your bag of old clothes at the till at **H&M** and receive a £5 voucher towards your next purchase of £25 or more, in store or online. H&M promise that all donated clothes are reused or recycled, with none going to landfill.

■ **Marks & Spencer** and **Oxfam** have coined a term: Shwopping. Donate any old clothes to one of the department store's Shwop boxes and they will be passed on to Oxfam. The charity will then either resell them in their shops or online, organise for them to be reused in different countries around the world, or recycle them into new fabrics. You will receive a voucher for £5 off which is valid when you spend £35 in participating stores. And, if you are a Sparks card holder, you will get 50 points every time you Shwop.

■ **TK Maxx** runs a scheme called Give Up Clothes for Good, inviting customers to hand in good-quality clothing, accessories and homeware at donation points in every store. All items are then sold in Cancer Research UK

shops and each bag of donated items could raise up to £30 to support children and young people living with cancer in the UK.

■ If you're feeling lazy, then many **local councils** will take clean, dry and bagged clothes in your kerbside recycling box collection. To find out more, check on your local council website.

■ If you want to recycle your clothes the old-fashioned way, then you can find your nearest **charity shop** at www.charityretail.org.uk.

■ Is there a pack of knickers you've never opened or a bra that you hardly wear? **Smalls for All** collects and distributes underwear to help women and children in need in Africa and the UK. They'll accept new packets of ladies' or children's pants and gently worn bras via the post. Visit www.smallsforall.org.

■ **Zara** will take any item of clothing and deliver them to a network of non-profit organisations who will either donate them to those in need or ensure they are reused and recycled with funds going towards social projects.

FACT FILE

Homeowners spend almost **£21,000** over their lifetime replacing their **most-used** home items.

Source Origin

YH Fab find

Too Good To Go is an app that allows stores and restaurants to offer leftover food to the public at reduced prices. Choose your location, see what's on offer, pick a venue and purchase a Magic Bag! You'll never know exactly what's inside until you pick it up, but that's part of the fun. Venues give a price and time slot for collection, and there are even ratings from other app users too.



SMART SAVINGS

Thinking about getting more active this spring? On average, a gym membership costs £40 a month and £480 a year, so before you join on a whim, there are some other options to consider. Green Gym or Our Parks, in London and Bedfordshire, run free outdoor classes and the popular Parkrun offers free weekly timed 5km runs. With the money saved, you could buy a Crème Caferacer Ladies Uno Bike, £479.99, Wiggle.



TECH NEWS

It's a small addition, but a new LED display clock on the side of the Echo Dot smart speaker makes it perfect for bedside tables. The Echo Dot with Clock, priced at £59.99, has the same third-generation technology as its predecessor as well as a light sensor that adjusts the display according to daylight levels. You can ask Alexa to set an alarm, snooze, make a phone call or play music, with just your voice. You can even voice control any compatible electrical devices too, from lights to thermostats.



Feature Catherine Smalley Photo Getty images



Need a new motor but not sure whether to buy or lease a car? Our handy guide has all the info to get you started

Whether you're a first-timer or you're thinking about upgrading your existing car, it can be difficult to know where to start when it comes to getting a new motor. For many, long-term leasing is a more achievable goal while for others, buying a new car makes more financial sense. We've got the low-down on what the implications are for both and how to get the best deal.

TOP TIP

Buy from a dealer as your consumer rights are stronger than if you go with a private seller. You can also ask their advice, part exchange your current model, test drive the new car and get a good warranty.

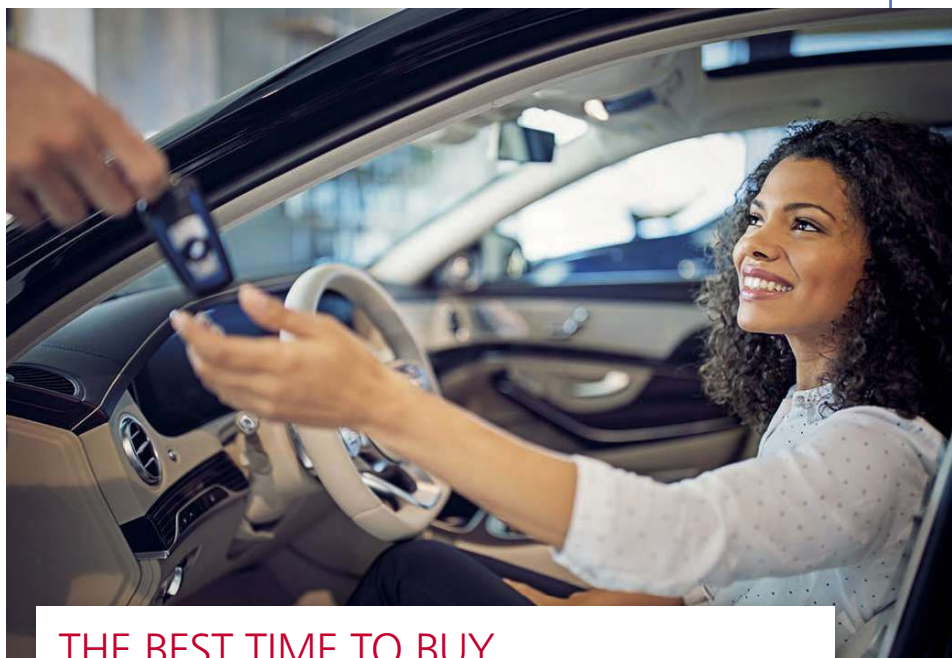
BENEFITS OF BUYING

There are advantages to buying rather than leasing a new car

- You'll pay less in the long-term, especially if you have all the money upfront.
- As you're the owner, you can sell it or part exchange when you want to change for something different.
- There's no limit on the mileage you can do.
- It means less stress as you won't have the same pressure to keep it looking like new.

TOP TIP

Purchasing a new car is a big investment, so don't be afraid to negotiate the price point.



THE BEST TIME TO BUY

There are certain times of the year that are better for buying a new car

- Car dealerships have targets to meet with bonuses for sales staff so they will be keen to get cars off the forecourt. This means they will be more likely to negotiate with the buyer and offer good finance packages.
- Usually, this is based on quarterly sales, which happen at the end of March, June, September and December, so these are all good times to buy a new car.
- Aim to avoid weekends or the start of the month, as these are the busiest periods and you want to go in when it's a bit quieter.
- New number plates are released every March and September so you may find more bargains around these times.

Q Will leasing a car affect my credit rating? *Julie Sanders, Bristol*

A When you apply, your lender will do a credit check and this will appear on your file as an application for credit. If you pay the lease off on time each month then it will help your credit score, as you'll be showing you are reliable. If however, you fail to pay on time, it would be marked as 'in default' and that will affect your ability to get a credit card, mortgage or other loan.

ADVANTAGES OF LEASING

There are many benefits over buying

- It can be cheaper, as you won't have to pay a large deposit upfront and monthly payments are less expensive than car finance.
- It should be covered by a warranty, which means you won't need to worry about repair costs during your contract. Vehicle tax and breakdown cover is also usually included and sometimes, servicing too.

HOW DOES LEASING A CAR WORK?

When you don't have the money for a large deposit or to buy upfront, leasing is a good option

- These long-term car rental agreements come with low monthly repayments. After the contract ends, you hand the car back to the finance company.
- Contracts run for two to four years, but this depends on how long you want the car before upgrading to a new one or ending the contract altogether.
- Make sure you know you can afford the monthly payments before you sign on the dotted line, and choose something less swanky if you need to stick to a lower budget.

USEFUL CONTACTS

- Find plenty of advice on buying a new car at www.autotrader.co.uk
- Search for car leasing near you at www.whatcar.com
- Compare car insurance deals at www.gocompare.com
- Read more about buying a car at www.moneyadvice.org



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Decorating

Spring into the new season with a fresh style



Succulent cement pot, set of 3, £6; printed linen cushion, £14; large glass candle, £12; faux fern in pot, £20; recycled glass jug, £10; watercolour painted double bed linen set, £21, Sainsbury's Home



Mini trend: Florals for spring

We know it's a cliché, but we like to think of this theme as a classic. After all, what better time can there be to bring the outdoors in than spring? This year's florals are more refined than they've been in recent years, with delicate and ditsy patterns creating a restful, contemplative atmosphere.

Floral rug, £60, JD Williams



Artificial floral in window box, £25, Next



Parakeet cushion, £16, Dunelm



Floral dinner set, £20, set of four mugs, £5, George Home

Make it personal

Join stylist Jessica Bellef as she visits the eclectic, real-life homes of families across Australia with photographer Sue Stubbs. Jessica's warm, informative writing style combined with Sue's engaging portraits create an inspiring read that aims to build confidence when embracing personal style and breaking the rules of traditional interior decoration. The story of each home is followed by Jessica's hints and tips for creating a personalised space, with relatable themes such as 'how to live with children without losing your own style' and 'how to balance form, function and style in a small space', so you've got no excuse not to give it a go. *Individual* by Jessica Bellef, £25 from Murdoch Books.



SHINING LIGHT



Mesh lamp in Pink, £70, houseof.com

The team behind houseof.com know a thing or two about designing beautiful, stylish lighting. Over the last 20 years, Helen White and

Michael Jones have worked with big brands such as BHS and Made.com. They design and manufacture every light for houseof.com themselves, which means they can keep the whole collection staggeringly affordable without compromising on quality, with prices starting from £35 for a copper pendant light. They also offer the option to create your own piece by mixing and matching their on-trend shades and fittings, using a brilliantly clear visualisation tool on the website. We love it!

Feature Hannah Tribe



CHECK OUT OUR NEW DECORATING PAGES AT WWW.YOURHOMEMAGAZINE.CO.UK

TREND ALERT... Classic Blue

This year's top tone is all about evolution, not revolution

In an uncertain world, Pantone's Colour of the Year for 2020 is a comfortingly familiar hue. Classic Blue is a step away from the bright, bold colours we've seen Pantone favour in previous years, such as 2019's Living Coral and Ultra Violet in 2018. This unassuming blue feels as though it's been around forever. It's the kind of blue favoured by financial advisors and solicitors, used to convey a sense of stability and trustworthiness. The announcement of such a familiar colour as this year's star shade is in line with the wider trend for sustainability that we're seeing across the world of interior design. It encourages us to stop and reflect on what we already own and consider how the addition of Classic Blue can slowly evolve our style, rather than encouraging us to throw everything out to start again with a new, modish palette.

Classic Blue is just on the edge of bland, but that doesn't make it boring; its stability makes it a fantastic colour to pair with just about anything. If you're fearful of acidic brights looking wacky, Classic Blue will make them feel more sophisticated. It'll add depth to muted pastels and will liven up neutrals. You can't go wrong with this tried-and-tested, timeless blue. 



Large pleated shade in Coral, £50, Houseof

Round velvet cushion in Mustard, Red and Pink, £40, Homescapes

▲ A touch of blue adds rich shadows to your scheme, preventing brightly lit rooms looking washed out

Anya dining table, £399; Celia dining chair, £69; Sienna three-light pendant, £79; blue glass conical vase with black metal stand, £16; clear glass hurricane vase with metal stand, £10; amber tumbler, £4; Elements dipped dinner set, £45, Dunelm

Rene midnight blue ottoman bed, £549, Danetti. Chicago rug in Red, from £60, Matalan



Balance deep tones with soft, pastel touches to create a sense of drama
Into the Blue, Ballet Shoes and Revival paint, £21.50 per 2.5l, Crown Paints

EXPERT COMMENT

'We are living in time that requires trust and faith. It is this kind of constancy and confidence that is expressed by PANTONE 19-4052 Classic Blue, a solid and dependable hue we can always rely on. Imbued with a deep resonance, Classic Blue provides an anchoring foundation. A boundless colour evocative of the vast and infinite evening sky, Classic Blue encourages us to look beyond the obvious to expand our thinking; challenging us to think more deeply, increase our perspective and open the flow of communication.'

Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute

A deep blue sofa is a style classic that won't date quickly

Sheldon velvet corner chaise, £799;
Anya coffee table, £299; Anya side table, £99; Elements quilted geo cushion, £12; Patchwork velvet cushion, £12; Clara navy velvet cushion, £20; Corduroy butterscotch cushion, £7; Lozenge mirror, £45; Sienna pendant, £18, Dunelm



▲ Use contrasting brights to create a strong sense of personality in small, transitional spaces

Constantine acacia wooden console table, £169; Lybia circles rug, from £12-£60; rooted belly baskets, £19; round gold lantern, £12; monochrome enamel bowls, set of two, £13.99; country tweed rug, from £89-£259; gold tealight holder, £6; Liberty round patterned rug, £325, JD Williams

Clockwise from top left: Eligna laminate flooring in Oiled Walnut, £20.99 per sq m, Quick-Step. Galerie Deco wallpaper, £44.95 per roll, John Lewis & Partners. Metro deep blue tile, £29.50 per sq m, Topps Tiles. GoodHome Gran Via paint, £12 for 2.5l, B&Q. Silk fabric in Mandarin, £40 per m, Stitched. Sapphire Springs 3 paint, £22 per 2.5l, Dulux



STYLE FILE



Brighten up an otherwise neutral scheme with playful blue elements

Busko rattan armchair, £95, IKEA

Clockwise from top left: **Checkerboard jute rug**, from £240, John Lewis & Partners. **Fine Décor birch tree wallpaper**, £15 per roll, Homebase. **Devon stripe maritime blue Roman blind**, from £22.46, Blinds 2go. **Metropolis star indigo tile**, £24.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain. **Ash Grey paint**, £47.50 per 2.5l, Farrow & Ball.



Noble berber-style rug, from £48.99, Carpetright

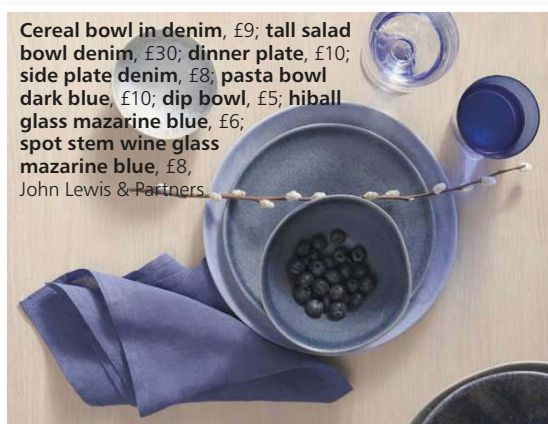
Magical garden indigo throw, £60, Lola & Mawu



Toulon pendant light, £85, Garden Trading



Cereal bowl in denim, £9; tall salad bowl denim, £30; dinner plate, £10; side plate denim, £8; pasta bowl dark blue, £10; dip bowl, £5; hiball glass mazarine blue, £6; spot stem wine glass mazarine blue, £8, John Lewis & Partners



Spend Vs Save

Put your feet up on these plush footstools

Sapphire velvet hexagon stool, £255, The French Bedroom Company



Vissera low stool in royal blue velvet, £89, Cult Furniture



Merge kelim cushion, £57, Abode Living

Mirella jug, £35, Oliver Bonas



Create the illusion of higher ceilings by darkening the lower portion of the walls
Square dining table, £125; **Albany dining chairs**, £160 for a set of two; **rug**, from £55, Next



TASTEFUL PIECES

Serve up in style with classic tableware



Fiskardo nibble bowls, £25 for three, Garden Trading



Picardie marine glasses, £15 for six, Habitat



Watercolour side plate, £2.50, Sainsbury's Home



Emmie mug, £15, Oliver Bonas



Blue star cereal bowl, £19.95, Emma Bridgewater



Classic ticking stripes create a cool, contemporary, pared-back feel
Carter bed, from £475; **navy stripe duvet set**, from £25; **navy large square cushion**, £16; **artificial needle palm**, £80; **Detroit table lamp**, £48, Next

We've made the most of an awkward space

Laura Ashman has turned an uninspiring open-plan reception into a warm and welcoming living area, complete with dedicated zones and retro-inspired décor

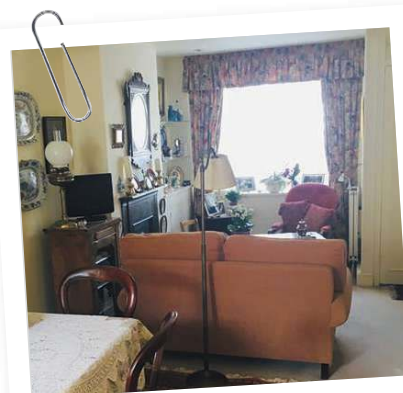
An informal mix of high street buys and second-hand pieces brings relaxed styling to the now inviting and usable living space. A mix of tonal green shades adds depth and interest

When Laura Ashman, 48, and her husband, Paul, bought their two-bedroom home in South London they were happy to trade a less-than-perfect layout for location. 'Like many Victorian terraces, two small receptions had been knocked through, creating a long, narrow space, complete with stairs and almost immediate access to the street, save for a tiny porch,' says Laura. She therefore planned to not only refresh the dated décor, but also help cosy things up and improve the proportion and flow by creating dedicated relaxing and dining areas – whilst still allowing for easy access to the kitchen beyond.

STEP ONE As Laura had always wanted a wood-burner, it soon became her top priority once work began. 'The old fire looked great but was extremely inefficient, and we needed a reliable heating source,' she says. The couple wisely left the removal of the fire and subsequent stove installation to the professionals. However, whilst they knew the work would be disruptive, what they hadn't bargained for was the collapse of the surrounding floor! 'Luckily, it turned out to be a fairly easy fix, thanks to some hidden support,' smiles Laura. And having revealed a large section of original floorboards, the couple decided to take the opportunity to rip up the remainder of the carpet and restore the boards by sanding and staining throughout.

Good idea!

VINTAGE FINDS HELP INJECT CHARACTER INTO A ROOM – AND SAVE MONEY. LAURA SOURCED HER RETRO SIDEBOARD ON EBAY, BUT SECOND-HAND AND CHARITY SHOPS ARE ALSO GREAT FOR FINDING UNIQUE BARGAIN BUYS.



Before

► The couple's dramatic dark green feature wall helps tie the living and dining areas together, whilst a compact dining table, complete with freshly painted contrasting legs, takes into account the need for a natural route to the kitchen

▼ Laura made sure she prioritised including a feature she'd always wanted – a wood-burner. She's kept the rest of the fireplace surround simple, with an oval vintage mirror and log basket, to give it pride of place



STEP TWO With the messy work complete, Laura could turn her attention to the layout and décor. 'While I was keen to create two distinct areas for relaxing and dining, I still wanted the overall room to look cohesive,' she explains. The solution was a clever arrangement of furniture, inspired by a previous layout, and the use of varying shades of relaxing tonal green – including a bold feature wall that now runs the entire length of the room and effectively ties the two areas together. Although Laura is quick to point out that before she could even contemplate picking up a paintbrush, there was the small matter of removing 165 nails from the walls. 'The previous owner collected plates, and they had been hung everywhere!' she laughs.

STEP THREE Rather than invest in all-new fixtures and fittings, the couple opted to work around existing pieces, including a retro sideboard, recently bought online, and an inherited dining set and bureau. 'I love mid-century modern styling, but was still surprised at just how well my retro pieces have fitted into our Victorian home,' says Laura. 'The sideboard is also great for storage, and the table and chairs are just the right size to ►



Feature Paula Woods Styling Jo Rigg Photos Laura Ashman

The bureau belonged to Laura's grandmother and was made by a family member, so has real sentimental value and takes pride of place by the front door

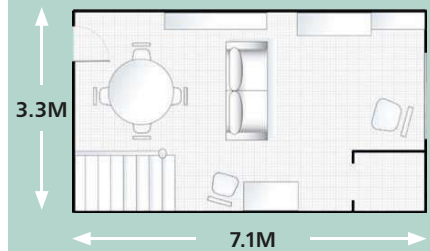


▲ To save money, Laura supplemented existing furniture pieces with well-chosen high street buys, including this tactile, woven, Scandi-style chair, spotted in IKEA

allow kitchen access.' A brand-new compact sofa now acts as a neat divide between the dining and living areas, which have been further enhanced through the clever use of large contrasting rugs and lighting. 'All the lights can be operated separately and the wall ones in the dining area can be dimmed to create a more intimate atmosphere. They cost just £45 each in a local sale,' says Laura.

STEP FOUR As the living room is close to the street, privacy was a must, so Laura opted to add easy-fit film to the bottom section of her windows, as well as a new velvet Roman blind. 'I can't tell you what a difference it has made to the feel of the room,' she says. In fact, it worked so well she immediately invested in a more decorative design for the back door! An array of collected artwork, plus supplementary seating and soft furnishings from the high street, were then used to complete the final look. [VH](#)

ROOM PLAN



THE DETAILS

PAINT	£211
SEATING	£44
FURNITURE	£215
WOOD-BURNER	£1,002
WINDOW FILM	£133
LIGHTING	£90
BLIND	£155
TOTAL	£1,850

SHOPPING LIST

Walls painted in **Ambleside** and **Aquamarine Pale**, chimney breast painted in **Aquamarine**, all Absolute matt emulsion, £45 per 2.5l, and dining table legs painted in **Scree** Intelligent Eggshell, £31 per litre, all Little Greene. **C-Four wood-burning stove**, £1,002, Charnwood. **Herron two-seater sofa in Marl Grey**, £299, MADE.com. **Retro sideboard**, £200, and **graphic weave kilim cushion**, £11, both eBay. **Ulriksberg rattan armchair**, £90, **Stockholm pouffe**, £99, **Gladom tray table**, £15, **Angrim chair**, £55, **Skarreso grey rug**, £99, **Nodebo green rug**, £26, **Ludde sheepskin**, £29, **Skold sheepskin**, £50, **Ottill cushion cover**, £8.50, **Windflakt plant pot with stand**, £25, **Tokabo green glass lamp**, £8, **Lisverk green vase**, £4.50, and **Ivrig blue glasses**, £5 for a set of four, all IKEA. **Luxe Velvet Roman blind**, £155, Blinds 2Go. **Molecule decorative window film**, from £25, **plain etched silver frosted film**, from £19, both Brume. **Large wooden battery indoor lantern**, £19.99, Lights4fun. **Hollywood Hills mantle clock**, £95, Newgate Clocks. **Woven baskets** from £15, TK Maxx. **Pondicherry loop chevron cushion**, £15, B&Q. **Rob Ryan mug**, £21, Rob Ryan.

3 OF THE BEST... *chevron accessories*

£4.95 from Bombay Duck
Chic wood and resin knobs are an easy way to transform the look of an old piece of furniture.

£67 from Sweetpea & Willow
Add texture with this subtle zigzag woven cushion design in a cosy mix of wool, viscose and cotton.

£199 from Audenza
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Colour shown: Hobgoblin

My new-look room hides a quirky secret!

A lack of useable wall space and excess doors meant Sara Pierson had to get creative with a unique storage solution when redesigning this problematic room

When Sara Pierson moved into her two-bedroom 1950s home in Wiltshire with her partner Craig, she knew it required serious updating, and nowhere was this more apparent than in the living room. 'The tired decor and hideous stone-clad fireplace definitely had to go, but a more pressing issue was how to work around a room dominated by doorways,' says Sara. In fact, with four entrances to contend with, the couple were not only left with few options for the layout, but a setting that was hardly conducive to the inviting, modern country look Sara was dreaming of.

STEP ONE With Sara needing time to think about the layout, the couple's first task was to rid the room of its ugly fireplace. 'Someone did actually suggest taking out the chimney breast to gain more wall space, but that was never an option, as for me a fire is an essential part of any cosy living room scheme,' she says. Removing the old electric fire proved straightforward, but the couple soon realised that stripping

out the stone would require the help of a local builder. 'We also decided to enlarge the fireplace opening and, having seen what good condition the original brickwork was in, we then chose to strip the remainder of the breast before simply re-plastering the lower section,' recalls Sara, who is delighted with the rustic exposed brickwork.

STEP TWO Sara then teamed a dramatic blue-black feature wall with neutrals and tactile parquet flooring. 'The look was inspired by the dip-dyed fabric used to make my curtains,' she says. 'I particularly love how the dark wall highlights the brick.' However, Sara wasn't so confident of success when it came to layout, as with glazed double doors leading to both the kitchen and garden, plus entrances to the hall and an office, she soon concluded that they all needed to remain. 'We did consider reducing the kitchen entrance but were worried about light, and it still left us with four doors to look at!' she explains. Surprisingly, the rather unusual solution was inspired by a television drama. 'It featured a door behind a bookcase and I just knew I could create something similar,' she says. 'It cost £135 to fit my made-to-order bookcase to the office door and it really has visually transformed the room, as well as provided much-needed storage.'

STEP THREE Luckily, the couple didn't need to invest in expensive fixtures and fittings because they had decided to keep most of the furniture from their previous home. 'As the sofa and chairs are quite traditional, I thought they would suit my modern country scheme, so I simply had them professionally dry-cleaned, along

The couple are pleased with the feature wall, rustic exposed brickwork and characterful parquet flooring – however, it's the hidden door that is definitely the star of the show and the topic of conversation with family and friends



Before

TOTAL COST
£3,194.78

LIVING ROOM MAKEOVER

Good idea!

A CLEVER SECRET DOOR INSTANTLY IMPROVED THE PROPORTIONS OF SARA'S ROOM AND OFFERED EXTRA SHELVING. THE MADE-TO-MEASURE BOOKCASE WAS PUT ON WHEELS AND THEN ATTACHED TO THE DOOR BY A CARPENTER.



◀ An old lamp can be tied into a new scheme by simply covering the shade with new fabric

▼ A compact writing desk and revamped second-hand chair have transformed a once-wasted corner



▶ Robust engineered timber parquet helps inject instant character into this large space, while a luxurious rug provides added texture and comfort underfoot

Good idea!

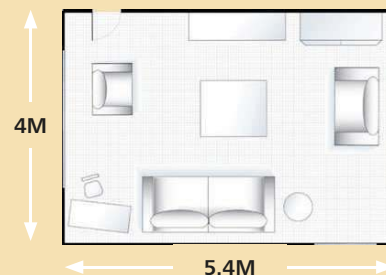
ADDING WHEELS TO A LOG BASKET NOT ONLY MAKES AN INDUSTRIAL STYLE STATEMENT, BUT ENSURES IT WILL BE EASY TO MANOEUVRE AROUND THE ROOM.





◀ A traditional snuggler chair sits happily alongside a modern footstool and side table, thanks to a unifying palette of neutral and timber tones. The impressive Chinese-style cabinet was a gift from Craig's parents and now holds their television

ROOM PLAN



THE DETAILS

PAINT	£121
SEATING	£7
FURNITURE	£876
FLOORING	£1,539.78
LIGHTING	£215
CURTAINS	£411
CASTORS	£25
TOTAL	£3,194.78

SHOPPING LIST

Walls painted in Basalt and French Grey in Absolute Matt Emulsion, £45 per 2.5l; woodwork painted in French Grey in Intelligent Eggshell, £31 per litre, all Little Greene. Brooklyn Pebble Herringbone oak flooring, £69.99 per sq m, Direct Wood Flooring. Sorrento six-arm ceiling pendant, £215, Laura Ashley. Made-to-measure bookcase, £596, Jali. French writing desk, £199; butler's tray, £29, both Scumble Goosie. Raleigh side table, £81, Perch & Parrow. Curtains in Amore Ink fabric, £68.50 per m, Clarke & Clarke. Brooklyn rug, £119.95, The Rug Seller. Ladder, £89, Nordic House. Wicker basket, £13.99, Fine Nordic. Castors (for log basket), £6.25 each, Ironmongery Direct. Strimsporre cushion cover, £3.50; Sänglärka cushion, £9; Vårkrage throw, £4, Härliga glass dome, £15, Pepparkorn vase, £12; Entusiasm patterned mugs, £8 for a set of four, all IKEA. William Morris cushion, £40; blue jersey cushion, £5, both John Lewis.

with the footstool – and now they look as good as new,' smiles Sara. In fact, the only furniture bought specifically for the room, apart from the door bookcase, was a small writing desk, side table and chair! 'The tables are new, but the chair cost just £7 from a local junk shop and has been revamped using leftover paint and fabric remnants,' she says.

STEP FOUR Sara was soon busy upcycling again to create key pieces for

the room. 'I'd always earmarked our log basket for the fireplace, but adding wheels has given it a more industrial edge, and our old floor lamp has definitely benefited from my DIY shade,' she says. These now sit alongside a smattering of finishing touches, including a gorgeous deep-pile rug and super-stylish pendant, and Sara couldn't be happier with the final look. 'I love it all! It's now a great place to relax, and the bookcase concealing the door is, of course, my favourite feature,' she laughs. 🏠

3 OF THE BEST... *woven baskets*

£35 from Habitat

If storage space is limited, these hand-woven stackable baskets are an ideal solution and come in a two-tone palette of orange and grey for added warmth and colour.

£49.50 from Oliver Bonas

This jumbo seagrass basket ticks the boxes for both durability and style, with its rich teal hue, decorative stitching and sturdy rope handles.

£48 from Rose & Grey

Go for a twist on classic wicker with a basket duo in two useful sizes, woven with natural and white for a contrast zig-zag design.



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Opening up two adjoining rooms has made all the difference

Knocking through from the living room has given new life to an unused back reception room and improved the flow of family life for Lucy Hooker



The curve of the fireplace has been echoed in the circular shape of the dramatic metallic light fitting. Lucy also found a round mirror in grey to replace the old square one

TOTAL COST
£4,871

LIVING ROOM MAKEOVER

◀ Getting the opportunity to design the shelving herself, Lucy has made sure there's plenty of room for her favourite pieces to have their own sections, including the star of the show, her artichoke lamp

▼ An old bow-fronted cabinet, originally from Brissi, moves with Lucy wherever she lives, as does her ceramic pig. Both of these favourites have found the ideal spot in the new living room set-up



Feature Stephanie Smith Photos David Giles



Before

Buying an Edwardian house with two separate reception rooms just over 18 months ago, Lucy Hooker always knew she was going to open up the two spaces to bring flexibility. Lucy, an interior designer, her husband David, a marketing director, and their twin sons, Felix and Jack, seven, moved from a large two-bed flat in Battersea into the four-bedroom semi in West Dulwich to get more space and a garden. The front room was a good size, but dull, with an impractical cream carpet, while the back room was dark and dingy with an orange pine floor in a bad state. 'I just knew if we didn't do something, then the back room would become a dumping ground.' Lucy used the skills honed through setting up her interiors business, Athelton Eve, to rethink both spaces and come up with a scheme that would tie the two rooms together.

STEP ONE

Opening up the wall between the two rooms was the obvious first move, and Lucy and David had a builder in place to start in October. 'We have made sure that the hole is exactly the size of double doors, if we decide we want to be able to screen the rooms off, particularly when the boys get older,' said Lucy. As the couple had brought serviceable sofas, a coffee table, a bow-fronted chest and some lamps with them from their flat, they had to decide where to spend the budget wisely. A solid oak floor was the big must for Lucy. 'It's our single most expensive purchase, but it's so worth it. Parquet flooring has become popular again in the last 10 years, and it looks wonderful. We've gone for bigger sections than usual as it's a large expanse to cover.'

STEP TWO

The colour of the walls was next on Lucy's list, but her first paint choice turned out to be a mistake. 'We went for a dark grey in the hall, so we thought a lighter blue grey would be nice in both rooms. I painted them myself, the same colour, but it just didn't work. It made the rooms look dingy. One of the things I loved about the living room was how bright it was, so we repainted the front room a very pale grey. It taught me a lesson which I pass onto clients, to retain the things you like about a room.' A spectacular metallic circular lightshade was also added to make an impact.

STEP THREE

The back room had been earmarked as a family snug, with the television being moved out of the living room for good. 'Because of that, I decided to paint the back room the same dark grey as the hall for a cosier feeling.' The couple got their carpenter to make new bookshelves in the snug, and the shelves in the living room were reconfigured to provide a wall of different-shaped boxes for display. 'I really



▲ Some leftover fabric has been turned into a cushion by Lucy's mum, Cherry, to add interest to the sofa, and has been teamed with a co-ordinating Orla Kiely design ▶



▲ The existing green velvet sofa ties in with Lucy's new colour palette, and she's added two vibrant velvet cushions to bring in a pop of yellow, as well as putting up a wall hanging as an alternative to a painting

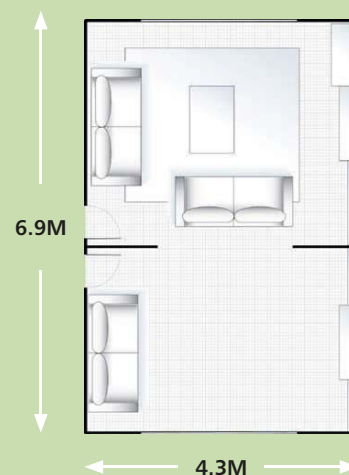
The previously little-used back room has become a favourite family spot for watching TV and reading on the sofa, complete with new bookshelves

wanted to be able to show off my artichoke lamp with the yellow shade, so it's got a cubbyhole all of its own.'

STEP FOUR

With the walls, lights and shelves in place, Lucy started accessorising the rooms in her chosen palette of yellow, green and grey. 'I'd got the fabric for the blinds before I bought anything else,' Lucy painted the existing coffee table in a pale grey and brought in texture with different types of fabric in cushions and throws, as well as some metallic hints with vases and photo frames. She's documenting the house's journey on Instagram @a_dulwich_diary. The last piece of the jigsaw was the rug. 'I was thrilled to find a large rug with yellow and grey as the dominant colours. Now we're using both rooms all the time.' **YH**

ROOM PLAN



THE DETAILS

FLOORING	£1,890
LIGHTS	£1,045
PAINT	£186
BLINDS	£510
RUG	£600
MIRROR	£160
ACCESSORIES	£480
TOTAL	£4,871

SHOPPING LIST

Oak Parquet Millrun OWNO/600 flooring, £69 per sq m, The Natural Wood Floor Company. **Downton large chandelier**, £895, Graham and Green. **Walls painted in Shadow White and Pigeon**; photo frames painted in Sudbury Yellow; coffee table painted in Hardwick White estate emulsion, £47.95 for 2.5L, all Farrow & Ball. **Blind fabric in Kiku print**, £89 per m; **Manipur cushion fabric**, £98 per m, both Designers Guild. **Artichoke lamp**, £221, Pooky. **Circular mirror**, £125 (for similar); **wall hanging**, £95 (for similar), both Mrs Robinson. **Yuzu Cream 280 x 200cm rug by Louis De Poortere**, £720; **metallic vases**, £30 each; **Acorn Cup cushion**, £45, all John Lewis & Partners.

3 OF THE BEST... *artichoke accessories*

Orris lamp, £138, dār lighting

Take inspiration from Lucy's statement lamp with this vintage-look ceramic base. To finish, add your own choice of shade.

Cushion, £27, Sophie Allport

Sit comfortably on this subtle repeat-print cushion, with a removable outer made in 100 per cent cotton and a luxurious duck feather-filled inner cushion.

Old Bowl, £49.95, Emma Bridgewater

This bowl with a glossy finish makes a great decorative piece, and is large enough for serving up salads in the summer too.



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THIS SEASON'S *hottest trends*

New season, new look. Step into spring with these four interior schemes that are sure to become this year's defining styles

Artistic abstract

Bold colours, geometric prints and striking shapes combine to create a fun space with bags of character

Whether you want to celebrate the new decade or just create an uplifting space to escape to, the abstract trend is great for injecting some fun and positivity into your home. Taking inspiration from expressionist artwork, this style is all about eye-catching patterns, zingy colours, hand-drawn sketches and strong shapes. Embrace the trend's go-with-the-flow style by mixing and matching prints, clashing colours and throwing different shapes into the mix for plenty of interest. While this look can easily take control of an entire room, you can subtly work the trend into your interiors with curved furniture, geometric patterns, conversation starter wall art and quirky home accessories. Whichever way you decide to implement this trend, remember to have fun with it! This style is anything but serious.

12-piece dinner
set, £25, JD
Williams



Abstract cushion,
£8.99, H&M

Elements lady face
cushion, £14, Dunelm

Hexagon pink stone pot,
£8, M&Co



French Connection
Hoxton three-seater
sofa, £949, DFS

DECORATING IDEAS

Orla Kiely dachshund
oven glove, £19.95,
Annabel James

STYLE TIPS

- Include different shapes in your décor. An easy way to do this is through geometric patterns in cushions, throws and tableware. For more of a statement, decorate your space with large circular mirrors and hexagonal lighting.
- Sketched illustrations are a subtle and stylish way to tap into this trend. In addition to wall art, look for line drawings of faces and people in tableware, cushions and vases – they're everywhere this season – for an elegant take on the style.
- If you're going full-on with the abstract look, set it in a minimalist room scheme. A clean, sleek design will tone down the trend's bold colours and striking shapes, letting these statement pieces take centre stage and make an even greater impact in your living space.

Axle printed cushion,
£16, Made

Abstract print,
£16, Urban Coo

Wall hanging,
£38, Oliver Bonas

Gold
pendant
light, £49,
The French
Bedroom
Company

Hex table lamp,
£25, John Lewis

LollyChaise four-seater
sofa, £1,195; fabric scatter
cushion, £29; chic fabric
accent scatter cushion, £35,
all Furniture Village

Rattan table lamp, £25;
woven giraffe, £4; llama
planter, £8; bamboo mirror,
£8; vase, £10; giraffe set,
£14, all George Home

Rattan lampshade,
£85, Cloudberry Living

Candle holder,
£25, Artisan

Ombre mixer
glass, £1, Tesco

GLOBAL

Embrace globally-inspired patterns,
colours and designs to create an exotic
look and feel – no travel required

Inspired by adventure, the global trend
allows you to create the well-travelled look
without leaving home. With its scheme
of terracotta tones, bold animal prints
and rustic materials, you can evoke far-off
places. Whether you want to replicate
a safari of a lifetime, a little Moroccan
magic or European chic, this style comes
with tonnes of wanderlust. It's easy to
implement the look into your home with
this season's collections of animal prints,
decorative cushions and souvenir-style
ornaments. Whatever your preference, and
be it redecorating an entire room or just a
corner where you can get away from it all,
with this style, the world's your oyster.

Aryn mirror, £60,
Sweetpea & Willow

Black and white
spotty vase,
£20, Amara

STYLE TIPS

● Consider what kind of ambience you want to create. For example, if you're looking to reflect exotic Morocco, go for jewel-coloured fabrics and tinted glass. If you're more into a laid-back, safari-inspired vibe, animal prints and a neutral colour scheme will work best.

● Pair natural materials with vibrant colours and prints to create that on-holiday feeling. Summery shades work best – pick greens, oranges, reds and golds for a sizzling look.

● Keep the backdrop of your space neutral. Not only will this help create a soothing, relaxed space, it will allow you more freedom to add different pieces that you collect from your travels – or trips to the shops – in the future.

● Let your accessories do the talking. Decorative cushions, hand-painted tableware or trinket ornaments are all things that you would pick up on your travels, so make these central to the look. You can also swap and change these easily, as and when you like, so there's no chance of you getting bored.

Gold monkey
ornament, £6,
Sainsbury's Home

Rattan globe,
£35, Next

Seagrass
baskets,
£25,
Oliver Bonas

Rattan chair,
£79.99, H&M

Cow print
cushion, £7,
George Home

Scandi cushion,
£12, JD Williams



Wooden
tray, £17.99,
H&M



Lustre glass vase,
£28, Oliver Bonas



Jug, £22.50,
Habitat



Dipped
candle
holder,
£5.95,
Rex London



Console table, £299; Landon
mirror, £149, both Furniture Village



North wall shelf,
£34.95, Beaumonde

STYLE TIPS

- Add a pop of colour to create warmth in your space. Two-toned accessories, painted furniture and colour-hued glassware are a great way to do this. Stick to soft shades such as calming blues, cool greens and light greys and pinks.
- Choose quality over quantity. It's still all about stylish simplicity with this look, after all. Update pieces you already have with key accessories to make your space spring-ready.
- Bring nature into your look. Scandi interiors are designed to boost wellbeing, so breathe life into the space with a collection of potted plants. For even more of a natural vibe, incorporate sustainable and renewable materials, such as bamboo and wood.

Dining table, £399; rattan dining
chairs, £169 for two; pendant light,
£22; glass jug, £12, all Dunelm



Spring Scandi

Scandinavian style is sticking around, but in 2020 it comes with pattern, texture and hints of colour

With its clean lines, neutral colours and less-is-more ethos, the Scandi look ticks all the boxes for creating chilled-out, calming spaces. While the interiors world is still giving a nod to the Nordic look, the trend has got an update for 2020 with understated patterns, textured accessories, splashes of colour and statement lighting, refreshing the look for spring.

Metal shade, £10;
mint and grey chairs,
£45 each, Argos



DECORATING IDEAS

Deckchair, £39.99, Very

RIVERBANK

Create a soothing sanctuary in your home with calming colours, wildlife prints and natural materials. We're all aware of the benefits of nature, so it's not surprising that the trend for bringing the outdoors in is set to stay for 2020. Influenced by the British countryside, this style will transport you to lovely, lazy days by the waterside with its soothing colour palette of soft greens, delicate floral patterns, natural materials and a collection of riverbank wildlife. There are so many ways you can implement this trend through your décor, from filling a space with living plants – more is more! – to choosing natural accessories and decorating with painterly patterns. Perfect for reconnecting with the great outdoors, it's this year's way of enjoying a little slice of country living, wherever in the world your home is.



Oslo chair, £599; cone floor lamp, £80; Peru rug, from £189.99, all Very

Mini basket, £28, Bohemia Design



Tea towel, £3, M&Co



Rope mirror, £150, Amara





Spring lampshade,
£149, Mint & May



Fern throw, £75,
Clarissa Hulse

STYLE TIPS

● Swap stylised flower arrangements for handpicked blooms from the garden. Not only will this create a more natural, undone look that's in keeping with the trend, it'll save you time and money too. If you don't have an outdoor space, go for artificial single stems with rustic romance.

● Choose soft, subdued colours, like salmon pink and mint green, for your living space. These colours will help lift and brighten the scheme while also creating a homely feel. From kitchenware to table settings and soft furnishings, there is plenty of homeware available in these springtime shades.

● Champion local wildlife in your décor. Lots of big brands are featuring some of the cutest critters this season – find them on cushions, tableware and as adorable ornaments.



Artificial stem, £6.75,
Sainsbury's Home

Pitcher jug, £18;
foliage mug, £8;
large vase, £10, all
National Trust Shop



Assorted artificial plants,
from £5.25, Gisela Graham



Leaf print plate, £8,
Maisons du Monde



Green ceramic vase,
£6, Gisela Graham



Bee cushion,
£26, Sophie Allport



Otter ornaments
£12,
Sainsbury's Home

Wooden letter rack,
£15.95, Melody Maison



CREATE A HARD-WORKING HOME OFFICE

Be clever with flexible furniture and accessories that combine functionality and style for a practical, customisable space

More of us are working at home than ever, be it full-time or as an after-hours side hustle, but where we live isn't always the easiest place to tick off a to-do list. With all the distractions of home life to interrupt your work flow, it's important to have an office that's designed to help you get in the zone, with modular furniture, smart storage, functional lighting and inspiring hues for peak productivity. [VH](#)



←
WALL TO WALL

Make good use of wall space to keep the rest of the room clear so you can focus on the task at hand. Choose a variety of shelving styles with a mix of drawers and open boxes to create storage that's unique to you. Combining different units that are all the same colour will give a coordinated finish.

Bekant storage unit on castors, £200; **Eket wall-mounted shelving unit**, £20 each; **Ekby Alex shelf with drawer**, £44 each; **Skarsta desk**, £179, all IKEA



DESK GOALS

One of the most important pieces of furniture in any office, the desk is where you'll likely be spending the most time, so it's worth investing in the right one. A big desk that's height-adjustable for comfort will give you plenty of space to spread out stationery and paperwork. This one has a stylish, industrial feel, but isn't just about looks. With six height settings and a large, sturdy wood work surface, it's practical too.

Workshop trestle desk, £550, Garden Trading

GOLDIE LOCKS

Lockers have come a long way since the ones we used at school. Now they can be a statement piece, with a variety of bright colours and useful sizes available. This skinny style comes with a removable rail, four shelves and two hooks, in eight on-trend shades. No one needs to know about the clutter hiding away inside!

The Skinny, £229, Mustard





FLYING COLOURS

Your home office should be as inspiring as it is functional, so make your desk area distinct with a simple painted mural. Go with soft, tonal shades for a calming vibe, or a bright, clashing palette to enhance creativity.

Matt emulsion in White Mist, Mint Macaroon, Warm Pewter, Urban Obsession and Goose Down, £25.36 per 2.5L, all Dulux



DECORATING IDEAS

BRIGHT IDEA

If you're working into the evening, adjustable clip-on lamps are a great way to get some light on the subject. They can be clamped to the edge of a worktop or shelf and easily moved to where you need them most.

Bobby clamp desk lamp in brushed steel, £11, Habitat. **Osaka clip lamp**, £19.05, dār Lighting

FLOOR FILLER

For a desk in a multi-use room, use accessories to separate it from the rest of the space for a clear distinction between work and play. Adding a rug, such as this wool-cotton mix, is a simple way to create a more defined office area and will be cosy and soft underfoot.

Zuiver salmon Nordic pattern carpet runner in multi colour, £103, Cuckooland



SHOW YOUR METAL

Make the most of your work surface with these geometric metal trays, which slot neatly together for a space-saving storage idea. Mix and match the different sizes and shades for keeping your stationery to hand in style.

Kaleido trays, from £13, Hay

RETRO REVIVAL

Picking out an office chair is often a choice between style and comfort, but this one offers both. A classic, retro-inspired design, it has a comfy padded seat and is height-adjustable, plus its teal cover will add a little colour to your working day.

Lloyd chair, £169, Made.com



WORK'S A TREAT

From plants to perfumes, experts share four easy additions that will make your desk area a pleasure to work in

- 1 Try a mood-lifting fragrance. 'Scents can have a huge impact on our mood, so invest in a subtle diffuser. Lemon verbena in particular is known to aid concentration, while vanilla and cinnamon can help boost creativity.' Tania Adir, founder and interior designer at www.uncommon.co.uk
- 2 Keep things light. 'A bright office space will inspire productivity and help you to stay alert. Placing your desk in front of a window will give you lots of natural light and a view outdoors while working.' Katie Myers, upcycling expert at www.sarruhome.co.uk
- 3 Create a personal display. 'Open shelving on the wall is a cost-effective way to increase storage and is the perfect place to stamp your own personality on the space – use colourful boxes, photo frames, books or speakers.' Joanne Cross, designer at www.hammonds-uk.com
- 4 Zone your space. 'Create a clear distinction between the areas that are your sanctuary for personal time, and the places for hard graft. It helps to use totally different accents and highlights or accessories to cordon off your work space.' David Ewart, director and buyer at www.pavilionbroadway.co.uk

More POWER to you

Discover the freedom of cordless power tools with these eight essentials

Whether you're assembling a new piece of furniture, sanding a vintage find or getting stuck into a more involved build, using the right power tools will make things easier and quicker, especially if you go cordless. Battery-powered options offer great flexibility, as there's no need to worry about being close to a plug socket or finding the right extension lead. Our eight must-have cordless tools will see you through a variety of DIY projects, with no cables to hold you back. Just charge them up and get started! **YH**



▲ For detailed DIY jobs, a multi-tool like this one by Dremel is a great investment. A compact all-rounder with a powerful 7.2v motor and variable speed, it can carve, engrave, rout, cut, sand, grind, sharpen, polish and clean and is ideal for working on small, tricky-to-reach surfaces. It'll be a real time-saver if you've got a variety of home projects on the go, as the EZ Twist nose cap makes it quick to switch between the different attachments.

8100 multi-tool, £79, Dremel

Multi-purpose tool



Ideal for upcycling

▲ Achieving a professional end result starts with the prep, so don't skip sanding! It may not be everyone's favourite task, but it'll be finished in no time with a cordless sander to do the hard work for you. Ryobi's random orbit sander is light and easy to control and has a 2.5mm orbital sanding motion for a smooth, swirl-free finish when moved in any direction – just the thing for revamping a vintage piece of furniture.

Sander, £70, Ryobi

For the home and garden

▼ If you're tackling jobs both inside the house and out in the garden, you'll get plenty of use out of a reciprocating saw. Grab this versatile tool for making deep cuts in wood and flush cuts next to walls, as well as slicing through steel, plastic, chipboard, rubber and plasterboard. Bosch's AdvancedRecip 18 has a counterbalanced design for low vibrations, and a well-designed ergonomic shape with multiple grip positions that make it easy to handle and use.

AdvancedRecip 18, £74.99, Bosch



◀ Putting together a tool kit from scratch? This 94-piece set has all the necessary basics covered. Included is a powerful 3.6v li-ion cordless screwdriver with a three-hour charge time, five torque settings, a variable speed trigger and two LED work lights, plus a wrench, spirit level, tape measure, claw hammer, pliers and more, all in a stylish rose gold finish and with a sturdy storage bag.

3.6v li-ion cordless screwdriver set, £27.99, VonHaus

Quick and easy

► Swap your hammer and nails for a speedier cordless nail gun. With no need for compressors, cables or air cartridges, it's a lightweight, convenient solution for fitting skirting boards, woodworking and assembling furniture. Ryobi's 18v cordless nailer fires 16-gauge (1.6mm) nails from 19 to 65mm long, has two firing modes – one for precision, and one for speed – and a low-nail indicator so you'll know when it's time to reload.

18V 16G nailer, £199, Ryobi



Great value set





► Every home needs a drill, but not every drill can handle all the jobs your home might throw at it. Having a couple of different types in your kit will make sure you've got every possibility covered, so this duo by Black + Decker will be a useful addition to your toolbox. The lightweight combi is able to drill into a variety of material types, including masonry and concrete, so is the one to reach for when putting up shelves and mirrors, while the impact drill can tighten up nuts and screws on flatpack furniture with ease.

18v combi drill and impact drill set, £160, Black + Decker



▲ Neat finishing touches such as skirting boards, beading and trims can make a real difference to the overall look of a room, so add a mitre saw to your tool collection if you'll be DIYing these. Mitre saws can make quick, accurate crosscuts at selected angles, and cordless options are lightweight and easy to move around to use wherever you're working. Ryobi's includes a laser guide for maximum accuracy, and pre-select mitre angles from 0-45° and a 0-45° bevel to suit a variety of different tasks.

18v ONE+ cordless mitre saw, £142.49, Ryobi

► Jigsaws are ideal for intricate cut-outs and curves, and a cordless one will give you even more manoeuvrability. These relatively small, nifty saws are most often used for cutting curves and shapes, so if you fancy getting creative with plywood and making your own shelves, planters and other Insta-worthy home projects, you'll need one of these. Erbauer's has advanced brushless motor technology for more power and higher torque, a variable speed for optimal performance, and a built-in blower function that will help to keep the cut line clear of sawdust while you work.

18v cordless four-stage pendulum action jigsaw, £70, Erbauer



BUYER'S CHECKLIST

Follow these tips from Craig Simpson, shop products category manager at Howarth Timber & Building Supplies, for choosing and using cordless tools

- ✓ Although lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries can cost twice as much or more than nickel-cadmium (NiCad) batteries do, they're worth it. They're small and lightweight, run at top power for longer, are good for two to three times more charge cycles than NiCads, and they can sit for months without losing charge.
- ✓ You can make your Li-ion batteries last longer by charging them frequently – it's best not to let them drop below around 20 per cent capacity – and at the right temperature (5-29°C is optimum). Charge them indoors or out of direct sunlight, and use your batteries frequently. The battery will degrade more rapidly if it's not used at least every couple of months. If you have two batteries, be sure to use them both.
- ✓ If you plan on extending your range of cordless tools over time, choose a system from the same brand or manufacturer so you can share batteries between units and ensure good quality without compatibility issues. Some systems will include other useful items such as torches and radios as well.
- ✓ Never underestimate a power tool – you can hurt yourself even with the smallest tool. Protect your eyes with safety glasses, minimise the damage to ears with earplugs, wear a mask to prevent inhaling harmful minute particles, and protect your body with the right clothing. Clothes that cover the entire body are best.
- ✓ Keep your work area clean and clear of clutter. Maintaining a clean environment will help to reduce the accumulation of dust, as these particles in the air can be ignited with a spark. Be sure to also keep flammable liquids away from your power tools.

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Featured Products: Roman Blinds, Ombre Ochre from £31.15
Curtains, Dill Ochre from £45.55 by Clarissa Hulse for Blinds-2go and Curtains-2go

www.blinds-2go.co.uk

Kitchens & BATHROOMS

This month, blue is the hue to choose



Monreale bath, £530,
BC Designs



Sumptuous soaking

For a hint of bathtime luxury without the hefty price tag, renowned brand BC Designs is offering an affordable collection. The Monreale is a standout piece, a single-skinned, fitted bath with an impressive 205 litre capacity. Produced from high-quality insulating materials, the bath offers a luxurious, hassle-free bathing experience as the water stays warmer for longer. It will also stand the test of time due to the material's resistance to UV rays, meaning there will be no discolouration to disappoint you after a couple years of use. Priced at £530, visit www.bcdesigns.co.uk for more information.

TRIAL AND TEST

Try before you buy with Methven's £1 shower handset trial. There's no need to commit to a full installation before you've tried the product for yourself and are completely satisfied. With guidance on which handset will work best for your water system, Methven allow you to try one or all of their offerings. Simply unscrew your existing handset from the hose and replace with the Aio or Maku handset. The trial period lasts for 30 days after which, if you're happy, you'll be charged the remaining balance. Prices start at £29.10. Visit www.methven.com for more details.



Brew-tea-ful

Add some glitz to your teatime with the Doolittle collection from Bombay Duck London. A modernised version of a classic tea set, finished with a glamorous gold speckle pattern and dazzling piping, this collection will impress any guest. We love the splatter sugar bowl and milk jug (pictured) – they're perfect for adding that little extra something to an afternoon cuppa with a friend. Prices from £14.95. To browse the range, visit www.bombayduck.com.

RIGHT ON BLUE



Midnight blue isn't set to fade anytime soon, especially in the kitchen. Part of B&Q's first new range in over 10 years is the Artemisia Matt Midnight Blue Shaker, from £1,298 for an eight-unit kitchen. The colour looks great in all size rooms and now more of us can hop on the trend thanks to B&Q's affordable GoodHome range. The doors come in a matt finish and pair perfectly with marble worktops. For more information, visit diy.com, or book a free kitchen planning appointment.

Feature Ella Rhys-Jones



VISIT WWW.YOURHOMEMAGAZINE.CO.UK FOR MORE KITCHEN & BATHROOM INSPIRATION

Create the perfect kitchen-diner

Make the most of your space and transform how you live with these clever ideas

Hankering after a kitchen-diner, but not sure where to start – or even if you have room for one? You'd be surprised at what you can achieve in a relatively small space thanks to clever planning, plus the latest units, accessories and everything in between. Read on and be inspired to create the perfect multifunctional room for cooking and dining.

▼ Banquette seating helps divide the kitchen and dining area and creates a cosy nook. Paired with a narrow table, it can make great use of space

Durham Collection, from £10,000, LochAnna Kitchens

Top tip

'Sophisticated dark palettes are on the up. Warm shades (think amber or rust) are also all the rage and go well with blues, greys and golds. Cheerful yellow is the accent colour of the year, while vivid cobalt blue is on-trend too. Stronger pastels and warmer whites will also be hot, as well as greens which combine well with natural materials like wood.'

Nina Bailey, UK Design Manager at Formica Group



▲ Vinyl flooring can give you the look of tiles or wood without the cost and maintenance issues. Plus, it's warm underfoot and easy to install. We also love the wooden room divider in this space that breaks up the zones but keeps a spacious feel and adds some warmth to the scheme

Starfloor tile cube 3D luxury vinyl in Grey, £29.99 per sq m, Carpetright

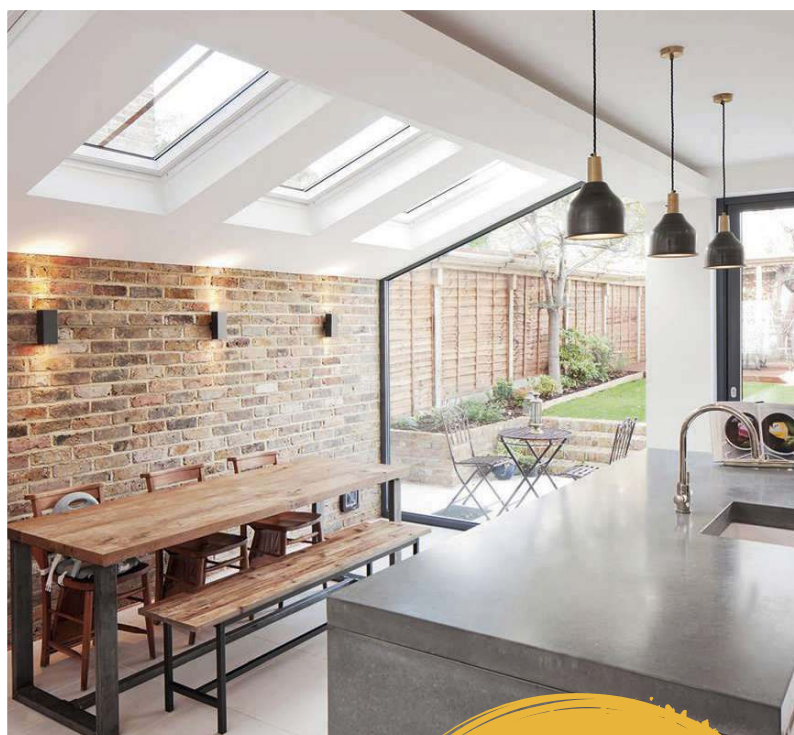
KITCHEN IDEAS

◀ Make sure furniture and accessory styles, materials, finishes and colours work well together. Here, black gloss kitchen units tie in with the window frames, while a wooden table, breakfast bar and coloured wall link the spaces

Metz graphite kitchen, from around £8,200, or £228 for a 600mm high-line base unit, Caple

▼ Layer your lighting using pendants and wall lights, as well as recessed and track ones, to create a space that's both practical and atmospheric. Try clustering the pendants over a kitchen island or dining table and use dimmable bulbs to create the perfect ambience

Sleek cone pendant 7-inch pewter, £69, Industville Ltd



◀ Worried an island will take up too much valuable space? This compact IKEA one works really hard, with an area to perch and a space above it for hanging accessories and stacking crockery, plus low-level open shelving on one side

Vadholma kitchen island with rack, black, oak, 79 x 126 x 193cm, £410, IKEA

Top tip

'While natural light is important (think skylights, picture windows and bi-fold doors), we spend a lot of time cooking and entertaining in the evenings. Using separate dimmers in the dining space will provide elegant mood lighting, while keeping the kitchen well-lit for cooking.'

Ben Burbidge,
Managing Director
at Kitchen Makers

KITCHEN IDEAS

► Extend a lower tabletop out from a small island unit to make the most of a smaller space. Plan a place for sockets so you can plug in your laptop for a bonus work area too

Soho gloss light grey kitchen,
from £1,626 for an eight-cupboard kitchen,
Benchmark Kitchens and Joinery

Top tip

'In a compact kitchen, half-depth units or shelving above worktops make the valuable workspace below more practical to use. It's easy to grab your glasses and crockery from open shelves, too. Build your units up to the ceiling to make the most of every inch.'

Charles Bettes, Managing Director
of Architecture and Interior Design
Practice, Gpad London

▼ Your dining table needs careful consideration, especially when space is limited. Round or oval shapes take up less room, and glass works well as you can see right through it, giving the illusion of space. An extending dining table is a good all-rounder – keep it compact most of the time, then open it out when you have guests

Brackley extending table and four Darcy chairs,
£1,099, Harveys





◀ This versatile, compact piece of furniture can be placed in the middle of the space or with one end against a wall. There's a useful storage cupboard at the front

Portobello painted breakfast bar island with stools, £599, Cotswold Co.

▼ A compact kitchen area can blend into the background or look like dining room furniture with a bit of clever design. The light grey palette here creates a calming, Scandi feel, and the unobtrusive glossy splashback bounces light back into the room

Warm grey splashback, £109 per 900 x 800mm or 900 x 600mm panel, AluSplash

Top tip

'The modern kitchen has to be able to accommodate an impromptu pasta night with friends. It's also a work base, a relaxed office space and a home bar. An island counter or baker's table will provide a welcoming gathering place, especially when lined with textural barstools.'

Tom Howley, Design Director at Tom Howley



◀ Soft furnishings and accessories can help pull the look together. Stick to a colour palette and theme, though. Here, the four fabrics are all in the same Wedgwood shade from the nature-inspired Sketchbook range, complementing each other, the units and the wooden features in the room to create a comfy, lived-in feel

Blinds in Laurie fabric, from £41 per m; armchair in Etched Vine fabric, from £22 per m; cushions in Shaker Check fabric, from £46 per m; table runner in Harper fabric, from £60 per m, all ILIV



PLANNING THE SPACE



Where do you start with a complex project like this? Nicci Aplin, a qualified interior designer with a specialism and expertise in kitchen design at Nicci Aplin

Interiors (nicciaplin.com), takes you through how to get it right.

'For a cohesive look, think about it as a single space with two parts from the very start,' she says. 'This way, it'll turn out as a single space with two parts, not two rooms that you then try to fuse together.'

STAGE ONE: Plan your space. Think about how you use your current room and list the pros and cons. Can't see the kids while you're preparing dinner? Trip over each other when you're cooking with your partner? Love how you can get from the fridge to the cooker in two steps? Go into detail if possible – do you want a low-level oven or one up higher? Do you want built-in appliances or items on show? How many small appliances do you have and how many plug sockets do you need, and where should they go?

STAGE TWO: Find your style. Have you got a favourite piece of furniture that you want to incorporate and can base your style around? Flick through magazines and use the internet to get inspiration. Online shops often have their products displayed as part of a showroom. You could even have a look at some real homes on rightmove.co.uk! Visit showrooms to see things in situ. Most suppliers will send you small samples. Collect all your ideas – take photos and screenshots, rip pages out of magazines and jot ideas down. You'll soon get a feel for the look you're gravitating towards. Be honest with yourself, though. Even if you love the look of a sleek, pure white, minimalist kitchen, will it work for you? And if you really love that Swarovski jewel-encrusted, rose-gold tap (and you can afford it) then go with it. It's your space, it's your money, it's your tap. You do you!

STAGE THREE: Bring it all together. Once you know what kind of space and style you want, make some decisions. Make a mood board so you can see how colour, texture and finish work together. Think flooring, lighting, furniture, taps, tiles, appliances, cupboard doors, worktops... Keep the palette relatively simple – choose a plain base colour and just use one or two material finishes and accent colours to tie the spaces together. Be bold and true to your own style – you need to feel at home in the space.

My home is so much

Moving a window allowed Sarah Waterworth to re-design her kitchen-



INSIDER INFO

WHO LIVES HERE?

Sarah Waterworth, 37, a supply chain specialist, lives in a three-bedroom 1960s semi in Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire, with husband Jon, 36, a cost and estimating coach, and their children Charley, 10, and Maisie, 7.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE NEW SPACE?

'Everything flows and we have a good working triangle. I can be on one side of the peninsular prepping while Jon can be on the other doing something else.'

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

'I would've extended the worktop to create a proper breakfast bar. The light flooring also drives me nuts as it shows up the dirt!'

WHAT WAS THE OLD ROOM LIKE?

'It was dark, with a distinct lack of storage and worktop space. There was also no gas feed for a hob and the white appliances were on show.'



Before



LUXE FOR LESS

Before steaming headlong into the kitchen renovation, Sarah and Jon made sure they gathered ideas from showrooms first and ensured they were getting the best price by enlisting the help of a family friend. By doing so, they were able to create a dream kitchen within their budget.

When Sarah and Jon Waterworth bought their home in 2014, a previous owner had already knocked through the kitchen-diner and added French doors, but the L-shaped layout didn't work for them. With a costly extension out of the question, the couple realised that a re-design to maximise every inch of space was the best option for their budget.

After getting ideas from several showrooms, Sarah discovered a joiner called Stuart Cox who made bespoke kitchens. Her friend's husband, who's a builder, had worked with him so he came highly recommended. 'It meant we weren't limited to standard sizes, so could fit much more in,' she explains. 'He even got us the solid oak

worktops for the same price as laminate, and we could ask for little tweaks like rounding the corners after it was fitted. It actually worked out a lot cheaper.'

A key change was bricking up the side window and installing a new one overlooking the rear garden. This allowed them to flip the hob and sink around, so the sink is now under the new window. 'It's so much brighter now and you feel more private as the garden's not overlooked,' says Sarah. As there wasn't enough space for an island, the couple opted for a large peninsular instead. 'It had to work hard,' says Sarah. 'So it houses the bin and dishwasher on one side and the washing machine on the other. I like having everything hidden.'

lighter and brighter now

diner to make the best use of the space and let more light into the room

If you don't have room for an island, then make the most of the space, like Sarah and Jon, by adding a peninsular instead to store the appliances you don't want on show



ADD VINTAGE TOUCHES

The Orla Kiely wallpaper was put up a year before the new kitchen was installed, and works well with the vintage Ercol dining table and chairs from Gumtree. Sarah stripped the dark wood table herself, but outsourced the fiddly job of revamping the chairs

SHOPPING LIST

Bespoke kitchen units (including sink, tap and worktops), £5,700, Stuart Cox Joinery. For similar, try **solid oak 3m worktop**, £125, Wickes. **Lunar Fusion splashback tiles**, £162.74 per sq m, Topps Tiles. **Castle travertine cream satin stone-effect ceramic floor tiles**, £17 per sq m, B&Q. For similar, try **Smeg graded Alba stainless steel double bowl undermount sink**, £109, Appliance Depot. For similar, try **Ben sink pull out single lever monobloc tap** by Belfry Kitchen, £103.99, Wayfair. For similar, try **Neff five-ring gas hob**, £382; **Neff built-in single oven**, £479, both John Lewis. **Neff 90cm chimney hood**, £570, Marks Electrical, is similar. **Neff integrated fridge freezer**, £609, AO, is similar. Try **Urban vertical radiator in Anthracite**, £159.95, Victorian Plumbing. Try **Aveiro round dining table**, £349; **Thelma bar stool**, £99, both MADE.com. **Flamingo Design chair seat pads**, £18 each; **Flamingo oven mitt**, £14, both Sophie Allport. **Optra sideboard**, £259.95, Furniture in Fashion. **Orla Kiely giant rhododendron wallpaper**, £55.50 per roll, Fashion Interiors. **Hanging light**, £24, Amazon. **Pompom garland**, £9.99, Wool Couture Company, is similar. Try **Thornback & Peel cactus and bird tea towel**, £12, Amara. Try the **pantry wall clock in hot pink**, £35, Black by Design. **Heico pineapple light**, £70, Hurn & Hurn, is similar. Try **small cactus vase**, £6.50, Rose & Grey. **Addcore flamingo light**, £9.49, Amazon. Try **llama glass cutting board**, £30.87, RememberNovemberInc on Etsy. Try **mini balloon dog statue**, £13.95, Gadget Nora. Try **Garden Trading wirework letter holder**, £19.95, Trouva.

TOTAL COST: **£9,029**

The three-week project ran pretty smoothly as Stuart did the plumbing and organised the electrician and gas fitter, while Sarah hired trades to do the tiling and fit the radiator. 'We took the opportunity to add more sockets, as well as LED light strips under the countertop and cupboards, plus a hanging light over the peninsular,' says Sarah. 'I use the strip lights all the time and never really have the existing overhead spotlights on.' When it came to the finishing touches, Sarah wanted vibrant accessories to add a fun touch. 'If you take out the colourful accessories and wallpaper, it's quite a neutral kitchen,' she says. 'So I really wanted to jazz it up. I think in a kitchen you can get away with more quirky stuff.' 



UPDATE WITH HEXAGONS

Sarah originally wanted mirror mosaic tiles, but realised they would be a nightmare to clean. Instead, she chose a hexagon design with the odd reflective metallic tile as a compromise

Easy ways to save water in the bathroom

Did you know that 60 per cent of the water we use in the home is in our bathrooms? It's never been more important to try and reduce this figure and there are some great products and useful advice out there to help

It's no secret that water is one of the most precious resources on Earth. Population growth, climate change and urbanisation have turned it into a valuable commodity that we need to protect. Not only will saving water in our bathrooms have a positive impact on water preservation, but it will also have a noticeable effect on our energy bills. In fact, 25 per cent of our domestic utility bills are associated with heating up the water that we use in our homes. With a few small changes and a bit of clever purchasing, however, you can make big changes to the amount of water you save and the energy you use. [YH](#)



◀ This shower head can be fitted to your existing set-up and reduce water flow and energy usage by up to 60 per cent. It's also easy to clean, which is vital to keep it working efficiently

Hansgrohe Crometta Vario EcoSmart two spray hand shower, £15.95, Victorian Plumbing

SHOWER POWER

Here's another stat for you – 22 per cent of water used in the bathroom is in the shower! But there are a number of products on the market that can really help to reduce this volume without taking away the enjoyment of a lovely hot rinse. In turn, this will save water and money by reducing the energy required to heat that volume of water.



This exposed thermostatic shower features a specialised eco-flow to limit the use of water to a maximum of 8.5 litres per minute, which is especially important in areas with high water pressure
Ryde dual control mini valve with fixed kit in Chrome, £420, Heritage Bathrooms

BATHROOM IDEAS

◀ This tap from B&Q is fitted with in-built aerators, meaning that even though it uses 40 per cent less water, the aeration gives you the same strong water flow

GoodHome Piana 1 lever top mount basin mixer, £70, B&Q

Did you know...

- On average, people spend 7-9 mins* running the shower before they get in
- People take up to 20 mins* in the shower each time
- If a family of four each reduced their shower by one minute every day, they'd save roughly £200* a year

*BMA (Bathroom Manufacturers Association)

TAP TECHNOLOGY

We all know we should only run bathroom taps when we absolutely need to, making sure we turn them off during teeth brushing and fix dripping taps as soon as possible. But have you ever noticed how powerful the volume of water is that comes shooting out of most bathroom taps? There are some great products that can help to reduce this volume to a level that, although still perfect for our everyday needs, is not so wasteful.



▲ This tap features infra-red technology, meaning it detects when you place your hands under the tap, only dispensing water when the sensor is activated. When the tap is in operation, a water- and energy-saving aerator contained within the mechanics of the tap ensures water flow is limited to 5.7 litres per minute, which helps to save water without your experience being compromised

Bau Cosmo E infra-red touchless tap, from £202, Grohe



Smartap is an innovative piece of technology, designed to help reduce water consumption. Compatible with digital and smart showers, as well as basins, you can fully control and customise the flow rate of your shower and taps. You can also integrate it with your own smart home system, such as Amazon Alexa or Google Home

Smartap shower system, from £629, Victoria Plum



BATHROOM IDEAS

DOUBLE TROUBLE

If you buy a new toilet, more often than not it will feature a dual flush; pressing the small button uses less water to flush than the larger button, encouraging you to only use the larger volume when it's absolutely necessary! However, if you do own a toilet without a dual flush system then there are steps you can take to save water.

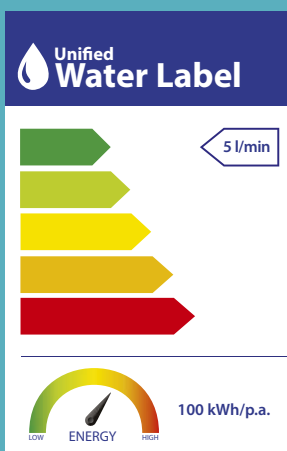


Simply pop the Save-A-Flush into the cistern and reduce water usage by 1.2 litres every time. The bag contains a biodegradable polymer, which swells on contact with water and reduces the volume of the cistern. When it's time to replace the Save-A-Flush, you can empty the contents on to your garden (the polymer will aid water retention in the soil) and the bag can then be recycled. These aren't suitable for dual flush systems

Save-A-Flush, £1.99, Save Water Save Money

SAVE WATER AND ENERGY IN YOUR HOME

When buying new bathroom products that are water-related, always look out for the Unified Water Label. This can be found on all responsible bathroom products across Europe and it provides valuable information on water and energy usage. It's very simple to understand with its green to red scale; green is more efficient than red. The label will enable you to make new purchases that not only deliver environmental but also cost-saving benefits, without compromising on performance.



▲ The dual flush button is now a standard feature on new toilets, encouraging you to flush with less water

Amyris wall hung pan and soft close seat, £199, Bathrooms to Love

A LONG SOAK

There's nothing better than a long, warm soak in a bath, and nothing should stop you from enjoying it, but by simply reducing how deep you fill your tub can have a huge impact on your energy bills. When the time comes to purchase a new bath, opt for a smaller tub; this will give you the same deep soak, just without using a high volume of water.

◀ This smaller-capacity tub (152 litres) means you can still enjoy a nice deep bath, without using the same volume of water needed to fill a larger bath

The Bath Co. Winchester slipper free-standing bath with chrome claw feet, £399, Victoria Plum



SIZE MATTERS

Although designed to fit in tight spaces, a small hand basin also has a really positive secondary benefit too. It encourages the user not to turn the tap up to full volume, which delivers an unnecessarily strong blast, resulting in you getting splashed with water! People then get used to washing their hands and face with a lower, but perfectly adequate, volume of water – a clever example of design impacting user behaviour.

▼ This compact basin brings a designer look to your bathroom, as well as the benefits of encouraging you to run the tap at a lower volume

Gutviken countertop washbasin, £40, IKEA



Pair this relatively small basin with a sleek cabinet and contemporary tiles for a stylish finish

Skottviken single washbasin, £150, IKEA

HEAT FOR LESS

◀ This energy efficient, compact radiator uses considerably less water than a standard one, to achieve the same levels of heat

Mini wall energy efficient radiator, from £49.18, The Radiator Centre



Don't miss out on free water-saving devices

If you go to savewater.savemoney.co.uk and type your postcode into the home page, you can check what FREE water-saving devices you are eligible for from your local water company, based on your location and living set-up. There's also a selection of products available on the site that can be retro-fitted into your bathroom.



▲ These timers help children and adults alike keep an eye on how long they've been running their shower and bathroom taps



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▲ Learn how to lay sleek laminate or engineered wood flooring for a fresh new look



▲ Keep clutter organised with a colourful geometric pegboard



Sew yourself a handy recipe book cushion

► Get up to date with the latest crafty buys and spring events



Make mesh bags for your delicates

With spring comes a need to refresh the house with some home-made updates, and we have a selection of new makes to help you do just that! To get you started with your spring clean, we've got a geometric pegboard to give you a place for those all-important letters and notes. We've also got a useful recipe cushion to keep your go-to cookbook stain-free, a set of home-sewn mesh bags so you can wash your delicates and keep them intact, plus so much more! Turn the page for your first project...

MAKE, DO & CRAFT

Give your spring clean a boost with these practical makes

ROPE BASKET

Keep smaller bits and bobs organised in a painted rope basket

SHOPPING LIST

• Cotton rope, 1cm x 5m • Hot glue gun • Clear glue sticks • Large bowl • Acrylic paints • Paint brush • Heatproof mat • Cutting mat • Scissors

TOP TIP

Before painting, draw the design onto the rope in pencil or create a paper stencil.

1 Heat up the glue gun, then coil the end of the rope. Squeeze a few blobs of glue onto one side to secure the first coil, being careful not to touch the glue, and hold in place for 30 seconds to allow the glue to set. Continue to coil the rope around, gluing 10cm sections at a time and holding them in place while the glue sets. Carry on until you have a flat base which is the same diameter as the bowl.

2 Place the base coil onto the heatproof mat. Continue winding and gluing, shaping the coils around the bowl and gluing them on the inside edge so the glue can't be seen. Once the coils have reached the top of the bowl, form the first handle by easing out the top coil to create a bump. When you're happy with its length and height, glue it in place where it joins the basket and then repeat to make a handle on the opposite side. Wind the rope around the top, back to the inside of the first handle, then cut it off at an angle. Glue the coil in place neatly.

3 To decorate the basket, paint a triangle pattern around the outside in the colours of your choice. We also painted along the length of the centre coil in a different shade. Leave to dry before using.



WOVEN HANGERS

Weave your way to a tidier wardrobe with these bright clothes hangers

SHOPPING LIST

- Wooden clothes hangers • Rexlace plastic craft lace: 8m for wrapping; three 50cm pieces in coordinating colours for weaving • Duct tape • Scissors • Clear-drying craft glue

- 1 Attach the three weaving pieces to the back of the hanger using duct tape, about 2cm from the edge. Add a long piece of wrapping lace to the hanger by sticking it diagonally behind the weaving ones, under the duct tape.
- 2 Wrap the lace around the hanger at least six times then begin weaving. We made our first wrap lie under the bottom and top weaving laces, and over the middle one. Switch up which pieces of lace lie over and under the wrapping. When you reach the metal hanger, keep the lace close to it, yet still flat against the wood.
- 3 At the end of the hanger, tape the weaving pieces to the back as before and finish with the same number of plain wraps you started with. Thread the tail under the weaving pieces on the back of the hanger. Place a small dot of craft glue under the tail and allow to dry before trimming the excess lace from the back.



Feature and step photos Jesse Mackenzie

MESH LAUNDRY BAGS

Sew a set of mesh bags to protect delicates in the wash

SHOPPING LIST

- Cotton fat quarter • Laundry mesh: 25cm x 26.5cm for the front; 25cm x 39cm for the back • 35cm zip • Iron • Pins • Scissors • Sewing machine • Thread



- 1 From the fat quarter, cut two 5cm x 35cm strips for the side binding, two 5cm x 25cm strips for the zip binding and one 13cm x 25cm for the bottom. Fold the side and zip binding in half lengthways, wrong sides (WS) together. Open out, fold so the long edges meet, then fold in half again and press. Fold the short edges of the two side seam strips under by 1cm. Fold the two long edges of the bottom strip to the WS by 1cm, then fold in half lengthways and press. Pin and sew one of the zip binding pieces around a short edge on the bag back.
- 2 Repeat with one short edge of the bag front and the other zip binding piece, then pin and sew the bound edge of the bag front, right sides up, centrally on top of the zip tape. Repeat to sew the bound edge of the bag back piece to the other side of the zip. Trim the zip ends in line with the binding.
- 3 Move the zip slider to the centre. Place the bottom short edges of the bag front and bag back with WS together and tack along the bottom and side edges. Fold the bottom fabric strip around the bag bottom edge and topstitch. Repeat with the side seam binding strips to finish.

Feature Jessica Entwistle Photos Philip Sowels, Dave Caudery, Jessica Entwistle

REVAMP, REPAIR, Recycle

Upcycle spare plywood into a storage board for office clutter

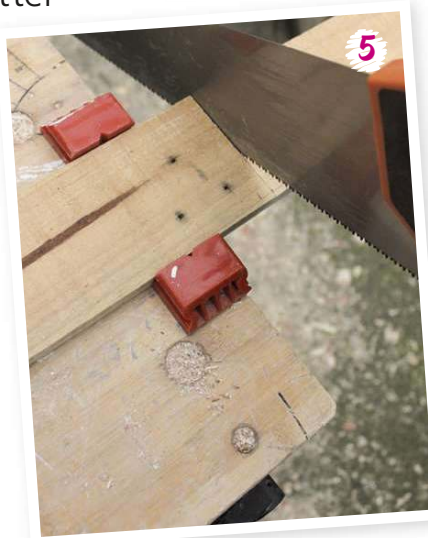
Part pegboard, magnetic memo board and storage, this versatile, easy-to-make plywood design is the DIY solution to a messy desk. Paint it in your favourite colours and choose the size and shape of each section for a board that's fully customised to fit your work needs.

YOU WILL NEED

- ◆ 61 x 122cm plywood sheet, 12mm or 18mm thick
- ◆ 4mm wood drill piece
- ◆ 18mm paddle drill piece
- ◆ 90cm wooden dowel, 18mm thick
- ◆ 50 x 8cm timber, 1cm thick
- ◆ Magnetic primer (we used Rust-Oleum)
- ◆ Furniture paint in pink, mustard and grey
- ◆ 15 x 16 x 25cm wire basket
- ◆ Washi tape
- ◆ Painter's tape
- ◆ Saw
- ◆ Sandpaper
- ◆ Paint brushes or rollers
- ◆ Strong thread
- ◆ Metal ruler



BEFORE PAINTING



1 Using washi tape and the final image as a guide, tape off three triangle shapes – a large one on each of the two long edges pointing inwards, and a small one on the short top edge pointing downwards.

2 To create the pegboard in the large triangle on the right, make a washi tape grid, spacing the parallel strips of tape 5cm apart from one another. Drill a pilot hole with the 4mm drill piece at every point where the tape crosses over.

3 Use the paddle drill to make holes big enough to fit the dowel. The pilot hole helps you to drill a neater hole with less risk of the wood splitting. Sand the edges of the drilled holes and the surface of the board smooth with sandpaper, then wipe away any dust.

4 To create the pegs, use the saw to cut the dowel into seven 9cm lengths. You can cut more or fewer of these, depending on how many items you need to hang on your board. Make the ends of the pegs smooth with sandpaper.

5 Create the two pegboard shelves by cutting the timber plank into a 17cm and a 33cm length. Sand the cut edges to smooth them.

6 Apply painter's tape along the outside edges of the washi tape. Remove the washi tape. This will ensure the painted sections will have neat edges. Make sure the tape is smoothed down completely as you go, so no paint can get underneath.

7 Paint the magnetic primer on the large triangle on the left. Use the furniture paint to colour the large triangle pink and the small triangle grey. Paint the shelves and pegs with the pink furniture paint. Once the magnetic primer is dry, apply a coat of yellow furniture paint.

8 Drill holes in the grey triangle to attach the basket, then string the basket up by tying strong thread through it and the holes, and knotting at the back. Insert the pegs and balance the shelves on top. For safety, tether the board to the wall at the top before use.

18mm-thick
plywood board,
£19.80, B&Q. All
items stylist's own

TOP TIP

This versatile design isn't just for the home office! It would be an ideal family noticeboard for the kitchen or hallway, too. You could even add a section in chalkboard paint for keeping note of birthdays and events.



REVAMP, REPAIR, RECYCLE

Feature and photos Hester van Overbeek

Sew simple

It'll be easy to follow a new recipe with this spill-proof **cookbook** cushion

Whether you're a master chef or a star baker, we could all use a helping hand in the kitchen. So, keep a cookbook on display while you're working your culinary magic with this useful cushion. Made in practical, wipeable oilcloth fabric for easy cleaning, it's ideal for messy baking sessions with the kids too.

YOU WILL NEED

- 50cm x 135cm oilcloth fabric
- Bag of rice
- Polyester fibrefill
- Knitting needle
- Pins
- Scissors
- Sewing machine
- Matching thread

1 Cut the fabric into two pieces measuring 35cm x 50cm for the front and back. Trim two triangles 6cm in height and 35cm in length for the sides, an end piece measuring 6cm x 50cm, and a 6cm x 45cm piece for the band.

2 Pin and sew the long side of one triangle right sides (RS) together with a short side of the cushion front, matching the raw edges. Trim the tops so they are level.

3 Repeat with the other triangle on the other short side of the cushion front. Pin, then stitch the short sides of the cushion back to the raw long edge of the triangles as before and trim any excess at the top edges.

4 Take the band piece and fold one long raw edge over to the wrong side (WS), then fold the other raw long edge on top so it folds into thirds and the edges meet, as shown. Pin and sew in place.

5 Mark the centre of the top and bottom long sides of the cushion front, then place the short ends of the band centrally over these points so it runs vertically down the cushion. The band should be RS up on the RS of the cushion front. Pin into place, but not too tightly as it needs to be a little loose to fit a book under.

6 Pin the cushion front and back together across the bottom edge; this is the edge which has the points of the triangles. Stitch together across the bottom edge, encasing one end of the band as you go. Pin the end piece into place at the top of the cushion so it is RS together with the front, back and side triangles.

7 Stitch all the way around, but leave a 20cm turning gap in the centre of the cushion back seam. Turn the cushion the right way out through the turning gap so it's ready to be filled. We added a bag of rice to give ours extra weight, but this does mean you can't wash it with this inside. However, oilcloth fabric is easy to wipe clean.

8 Place the bag of rice inside and fill the rest of the cushion with polyester fibrefill until it is plump but not too firm. Use a knitting needle or similar blunt tool to gently work the fibrefill into the corners. Finish the cushion by hand-stitching the turning gap closed using ladder stitch.



Oilcloth fabric,
from £3.50 per m,
from a selection at
Stoff & Stil

HOW TO SEW WITH OILCLOTH FABRIC

Follow these simple steps for working with this versatile, practical material

- Practise sewing on scrap oilcloth fabric to test the settings on your sewing machine before you start the main project.
- Pinning oilcloth will leave permanent holes in the fabric, so pin within the seam allowance or use clips to hold the pieces together.
- To help the fabric glide through the sewing machine and prevent it from slipping, use a Teflon or roller sewing machine foot, or put masking tape on a standard presser foot.
- Stabilise the fabric by sewing the pieces together with a layer of tissue paper, then tear it away once you've finished sewing.

TOP TIP

FOR A REMOVABLE COVER, ADD A ZIP TO THE OUTER AND MAKE AN INNER CUSHION FOR THE FILLING.

SEW SIMPLE



Feature Hester van Overbeek **Photos** Philip Sowels, Jesse Wild, Dave Caudrey, Hester van Overbeek



masterclass

Install your own laminate and engineered wood flooring



If you're seeking something durable, easy-to-clean and attractive for your home, then both laminate and engineered wood flooring make the perfect choice. Available in a large variety of styles, there is something for all interiors, from contemporary kitchens to traditional living rooms. And for the home DIYer, the click-together fitting system makes it faster and easier to install than solid wood flooring, with no gluing or screwing. Still, there are certain factors to consider and rules you will need to follow to ensure your floor lasts and performs for years to come.

YOU WILL NEED

Essential ♦ Jigsaw or handsaw ♦ Hammer or mallet ♦ Tape measure ♦ Pencil ♦ Pull bar ♦ Combination square ♦ Spacing wedges ♦ Tapping block

MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE

■ To understand the total cost of a new floor, the first thing you will need to do is calculate the size of your room. To do this you must work out the area of the room in m².

■ The ease of working out the quantity of flooring you need is dependent on the layout of your room. Rectangular rooms can be calculated easily by multiplying the length by the width. However, if your room is L-shaped, has alcoves or bay windows, it may initially look impossible, but all you need to do is divide your room into separate rectangles. Once you've done that, simply add the values of the rectangles together to come to your final quantity.

■ Don't forget to add at least 10 per cent to your final quantity to allow for any wastage that comes from trimming and awkward layouts. The easiest way to do this is to multiply the m² area of your room by 1.10 to get the final total including wastage.

SETTLING IN

Once you've bought your new flooring, it's important to let it acclimatise in the room. Remove any packaging and leave the planks for a minimum of 48 hours before installation for laminate and seven days for engineered wood.



Series Woods professional laminate flooring in Raven Oak, from £16.99 per m², UK Flooring Direct

TOP TIP

When acclimatising planks, do not stand them on their ends as this can make them bow, causing permanent and irreversible damage.

LAMINATE VS ENGINEERED WOOD

■ **Laminate** is constructed from HDF (High Density Fibreboard), a man-made composite manufactured from compressed wood fibres, with a high-resolution wood-effect image on the surface, topped by a protective resin.

■ Laminate floors come in different thicknesses depending on the durability required. The AC Rating is a way of determining the suitability of the laminate for the room in question. You might choose AC3 for a bedroom or AC5 for a busy hallway. Laminate can be a very affordable option, often cheaper than engineered wood. However, the more you pay, the more hardwearing and realistic-looking the product.

■ It's important to bear in mind that while laminate can be lightly mopped, wood is a natural product, so you need to avoid fitting these planks in high-moisture environments, such as bathrooms, which can cause the floor to swell and warp.

■ **Engineered wood** is made up of many layers, including a wooden bottom layer, a softwood or HDF core and, importantly, a real hardwood top layer. The hardwood gives the floor a genuine natural look, while the multiple layers beneath means it's stable and less prone to shrinking or warping with changes in environmental conditions. Like laminate, this makes it suitable for use with underfloor heating systems, but it should still be avoided in high humidity environments.

■ Engineered wood flooring uses less hardwood than a solid floor, so if you're looking for a more unusual species, such as ash, maple, or walnut, you are more likely to find them in an engineered floor.

■ The hardwood top layer can have a brushed finish to show off the texture of the grain or be sanded smooth for a clean and sophisticated look.

STEP-BY-STEP



1 Decide on the direction you want to lay your flooring. A good general rule of thumb is in the direction of natural light or along the longest wall. There's no hard-and-fast rule.

2 If possible, roll out your underlay in the opposite direction, ensuring it runs from edge to edge and that seams are taped for a more impervious joint. Check that it is free from ripples or bumps.

3 Place your first plank in the corner of the room, remembering to use your spacers to leave a 10mm expansion gap between your flooring and the skirting. The 'male' part of the plank's profile should face the skirting.

4 Place your next plank and use the tapping block and hammer to bring the ends together. Ensure your expansion gap remains consistent by using another spacer. Continue in this way until you reach the end of your room.

5 You'll more than likely need to trim the last plank. Don't forget to take off 10mm for your expansion gap! Mark, rule and cut the final plank. Place to the end of the last and use your tapping block, pull bar and hammer to bring the ends firmly together. Check the end of every plank to make sure they are fitted tightly.

6 Use the off-cut from the last plank of the first row to begin the next, remembering to

use a spacer at the end closest to the skirting. Angle the plank at approximately 45° into the 'female' of the first row. Push down firmly and the planks will 'click' together [a].

7 Lay the next plank in the same way, using your tapping block and hammer on the ends and sides [b]. Continue in this way until you have laid your floor. Remember that joins should be staggered between rows.

8 Once you have completed laying your floor, you'll need to cut and install your scotia to hide the 10mm expansion gap you've left around the perimeter [c]. Glue or nail this to the skirting only – your floor needs room to move!

MIND THE GAP

As it is made of a natural material, both laminate and engineered wood will expand and contract slightly due to changes in environmental conditions, although less than real wood. You therefore need to allow an expansion gap at the edges of your room, either by removing and refitting the skirting above the flooring, or by fitting a decorative scotia, as suggested in our step-by-step guide.



GOOD FOUNDATIONS

Laminate and engineered wood flooring can be laid on most types of subfloor that are clean, dry and level. If your concrete subfloor looks cracked and uneven – as above – then you will need to seek a professional to screed and level it. Equally, if you're installing onto floorboards, plywood or chipboard, make sure it is solid, free from vertical movement, and that any nails or screws are flush with the surface.



TOP TIP

Before you fix your floor, loose lay the first two or three rows to ensure they look good together. You should work from three or four open packs to ensure a good variation and a more natural look.

WHAT LIES BENEATH

Underlay is a barrier that sits between your subfloor and laminate or engineered wood flooring and is essential for a successful 'floating' installation, i.e. not nailed or glued. There are different types of underlay, including rubber and foam, with specific purposes:

- to prevent moisture damage with damp proofing
- for use with underfloor heating
- to eliminate uneven subfloors
- to provide thermal insulation
- to reduce sound



Aqualock laminate flooring in Stable Oak, from £15.99 per m², UK Flooring Direct

Ask the EXPERTS

We answer your DIY and maintenance questions with a little help from the experts

Q One of my New Year's resolutions is to try and make more eco-friendly choices in my home. What are some of the best steps I can take?
Rosie Smyth, Cambridge



A **Matthew Currington,** technical director of *The Lighting Superstore,* has the

following suggestions...

There are lots of ways you can make your home more eco-friendly. For example, look for furniture and accessories made from natural materials such as wood, wool and organic cotton. Also, shop with independent retailers and local craftspeople, as their carbon footprint

will be smaller and items may be handmade. If your budget allows, invest in a connected home with smart meters and lighting, which help reduce energy consumption. If you can't go smart, be savvy about energy usage. Adjust timers to switch on when you're at home and unplug appliances when you're not in.

When redecorating, consider putting unwanted furniture on a local buy and sell website or donate it to charity, rather than taking it to the dump.

Make small but effective eco-friendly choices by swapping out everyday items with sustainable alternatives. Exchange plastic and paper straws for reusable ones, buy unpackaged food and store them in containers and use eco-friendly household items such as compostable bin bags and ethical cleaning products.



Photo Getty Images

Q My fridge isn't working properly and keeps leaking on the kitchen floor. What can I do?
Kathy Hawthorne, Blackburn



A **Ad Casey,** head of brand at *eSpares,* has the following suggestions...

Rather than buying a whole new fridge, first find the source of the leak. Check the defrost drain. This is the small hole at the back of your fridge and its job is to drain the condensation created within the freezer compartment. If blocked – either by debris or ice – water will back up, begin to pool and start to leak. To clean the drain, use a cotton bud to dislodge any blockages. The water should then drain freely. To check for cracks or holes in the drain pan, remove the front guard from your fridge and take out the drain pan. If you're still unable to locate the cause of the leak, pull the fridge away from the wall and check the hose fittings at the back, tightening them if they're loose. For more than one million spare parts and 'How to' videos, visit espares.co.uk/fixfirst.



Q I'm thinking of having rooflights installed in my new living room extension. Can you explain the different types of glazing options available?
Olivia Barker, London



A **Paul Trace,** director of *Stella Rooflight,* says...

Glazing can be a tricky subject when specifying a rooflight because there are so many different types available. Double, triple or even quad glazing is the first choice you will face. Unless you require a conservation rooflight, opt for triple glazing as this will have a big impact on the thermal performance.

Consider whether you need a solar control element, which minimises solar heat gain by allowing sunlight to pass through the glass while radiating and reflecting away the sun's heat.

You can choose toughened or laminated glass for protection against falling objects. Self-cleaning glass is another option which involves a photocatalytic process that, once exposed to daylight, breaks down any organic deposits. This is great for rooflights, where cleaning access is limited. These are just a few of the common glazing options available, but there are many other specialist types, for which you should seek further expert advice.

Q I'm thinking of installing a stove in my living room. Please can you explain the benefits and considerations of gas?

Laura Buchanan, Glasgow



A *Stewart Clements, director of the Heating and Hotwater Industry Council (HHIC), says...*

A gas stove provides an efficient and economical method for heating your home, particularly when used as a single source of heat. If you'd like a log-burner in your home, but could do without the daily maintenance, then gas stoves are a great alternative; perfect for creating an inviting atmosphere through a range of models and finishes.

Natural gas is still the lowest cost fuel when it comes to supplying a comparable amount of kilowatt

usage. Gas is about three to four times cheaper than electricity. Today's gas stoves and fires combine high heat efficiencies with low running costs, delivering affordable warmth and that much-loved focal point.

It is often very difficult to visually tell the difference between a gas stove and a solid fuel one.

There is a gas stove to suit old or new properties, on- or off-grid, as well as all styles, tastes and budgets. And it doesn't matter if you have a chimney or not, there is a gas stove option available to you.

To find out more, visit www.hhic.org.uk/resources/5 for a range of consumer resources from HHIC.



Q I am considering renovating my kitchen this spring, but don't know where to start. Any tips? I want to make sure it's money well spent!

Michael Mills, Milton Keynes



A *Andy Briggs, resident interior designer at Optiplan Kitchens, says...*

Purchasing a new kitchen is a big step, so it's important that you're taking on the renovation for all of the right reasons. It's easy to get carried away with the finer details as you're excited about the new room you will be creating, but the most important part of this update is the planning. Start by looking at your current kitchen space and making a note of all the features that you like and dislike. This will help you to realise what you want from your new kitchen.

Begin gathering ideas and inspiration from the likes of Pinterest and Instagram, as well as browsing home interest mags and kitchen brochures. The more you see, the more you'll start to get a feel for the style of kitchen you prefer, which is something you can pass



onto a kitchen designer. This will allow them to create what you want from the outset, with less amends along the way. When it comes to budgeting, it's important to agree on a reasonable figure, but make sure to keep an additional 10 per cent for any unplanned expenses.

Visit your local kitchen showroom and book a one-to-one consultation. At Optiplan Kitchens, we have a number of showrooms across the UK with expert designers who are

able to offer a wealth of kitchen inspiration and expertise and may suggest some ideas and solutions that may not have considered.

If you have a DIY or maintenance question, write to Ask the Experts, Your Home, Immediate Media, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4ST or email asktheexperts@yhmag.co.uk

CRAFT STASH

Check out the latest
crafting news,
workshops and
brilliant buys

*must
haves*

THE STITCH FESTIVAL

From the 27th February to the 1st March, the Business Design Centre in London will be hosting the ultimate spring crafting show, The Stitch Festival. Hundreds of exhibitors will descend upon the capital to show off their latest and greatest products, and you'll be spoilt for choice when it comes to workshops. There'll be opportunities to try your hand at everything from Indian hand embroidery techniques to rag-rugging for beginners. Our friends at **Mollie Makes** will be curating a special exhibition, and The Stitch Stage will host talks and demonstrations from the stars of the sewing world. **Your Home** readers can take £2.50 off standard advance adult tickets and £1 off standard advance concession tickets by using the code **YOURHOME20** before 23:59 on 26/02/2020. Book online and see T&C's at thestitchfestival.co.uk or call 0844 8541 349 to book by phone

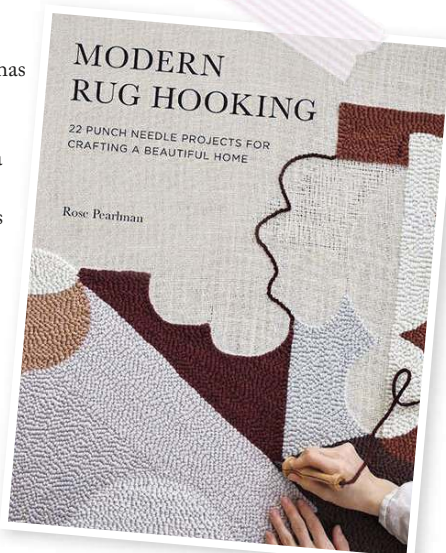
THE
STITCH
festival



LEARN A SKILL

Pack a punch

Learn a wonderful tactile craft that has many more applications than simply making rugs. Rug hooking – also known as punch needling – creates a deliciously bobbly surface that lends itself well to cushions, wall hangings and baskets. You'll be able to make all these things and more with guidance from Rose Pearlman in this neat little book. She expertly outlines the basics, including her top tips for success, before moving onto projects which progress in difficulty as your confidence grows. *Modern Rug Hooking* is priced at £18.99 at major book retailers.



WORKSHOP



Chalk it up

Brush up on your painting skills at this chalk paint workshop for beginners at Doodledash Interiors in Banbury, Oxfordshire. As well as being taught how to use the paints to the best effect, you'll be shown how to prepare your projects before giving them a new lease of life. The course costs £60 and will include all the materials you need for the day, plus a Frenchic colour chart and sugar soap to take home with you. To find out more and to book your place, visit doodledash.co.uk.

Soft touch

Karen J Gerrard's painful experience of sore, dry hands on a millinery course inspired her to create SEAMS Couturiers hand cream. The lightweight but hydrating cream instantly absorbs, so you can care for your hardworking hands without worrying about staining your projects. It's already a hit with seamstresses backstage at ITV and *Dancing on Ice* plus, it's great for taming unruly threads! A 75ml tube of SEAMS Couturiers hand cream costs £14 at seamsbeauty.co.uk.



ON THE TOWN



Sara Mulvanny's new fabric collection for Cotton+Steel, 'London Town,' is a celebration of the city, from ubiquitous red buses to adorable corgis, in a range of subtle tones. We particularly love the Box Hill pattern with its undulating fields and delicate floral motifs. Priced at £4 per fat quarter or £16 per metre at craftymastermind.co.uk.



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The CDA Group

www.cda.eu

Reader homes

Turn the page to be inspired by this month's style-savvy homes



76

Linda's created a family home packed with creative touches

Show off your hard work in *Your Home*

Have you just finished decorating your home? If so, we'd love to see some photos and who knows, they may even be featured in a future issue! You can share them on Instagram using [#YHlovemyhome](#) and [#YourHomemagazine](#), or email yourhome@immediate.co.uk



88 Bronagh and Ivan blended simple styling with nifty storage solutions



Sophie loves to add pops of colour with accessories and striking wall art

82

PLUS IDEAS TO STEAL



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87



FIND MORE INTERIORS TO INSPIRE YOU AT WWW.YOURHOMEMAGAZINE.CO.UK

We discovered our unique decorating style

By experimenting with different looks, Linda Duffy has designed a fun-filled family home packed with personality and creative touches



Having outgrown their rental apartment, Linda and Gavin were more than ready to buy their own home – but weren't so confident about how to decorate it. They started their search on the outskirts of Limerick, where Gavin grew up. 'We had been renting for some time and were keen to get onto the property ladder. We wanted to be in an area that we knew and that had good schools, with easy access to the city centre,' says Linda.

In 2014, the couple found a house that was the perfect size and in the ideal location, but was also in need of updating, an exciting yet intimidating prospect for the first-time homeowners. 'As we'd lived in rental accommodation for so long, we had never really done much decorating and weren't really sure of our style,' explains Linda. 'We knew we needed to do something creative to the house to give it a more on-trend and colourful interior.'

The first room they decided to decorate was the master bedroom, which provided them with a space to try out a few initial ideas before unleashing their new-found decorating confidence on the rest of the house. 'We played it safe in here with muted tones, introducing



COME ON IN...



WE ARE Linda Duffy, a blogger at Make Do and DIY, my husband Gavin, an analytical chemist, and children Emilia, seven years old, four-year-old Max and two-year-old Cora.

OUR HOME is a four-bedroom semi-detached house on the outskirts of Limerick.

I LEARNT not to be afraid of colour, but to embrace and experiment with it.

MY ADVICE IS to pick out what's going into the room first, particularly large pieces of furniture, such as sofas, then work the rest of the space around that.



◀ A simple free-standing central island, found in IKEA, is a budget-friendly way to boost storage in the kitchen, featuring plenty of shelving as well as space for casual seating with industrial-look bar stools from Homebase. Linda has also fitted a modern ceiling light from Made.com above the island to make it a focal point

▼ Linda's kitchen is truly the hub of the home, thanks to her chalkboard wall, finished in blackboard paint from Aldi. It has transformed a plain, unused wall into a special area for the family to leave messages, drawings and reminders of important dates. 'I did this for the children. They derive hours of pleasure from it!'

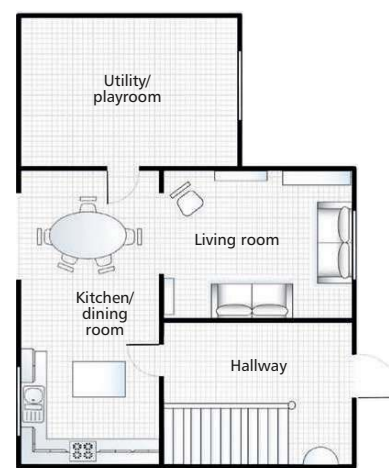


colours with accessories and artwork. This gave us a good insight into our style, which we built on as we did more work to the house. We have definitely brought in more colour as we've grown more confident.'

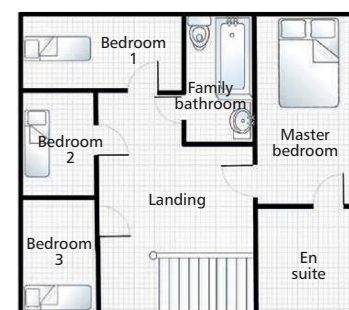
Keen to tackle the kitchen, the couple decided to give it a lift by painting the dated tan cabinets a bright white using Dulux Satinwood. They then changed all the handles and replaced them with ones found on eBay, and covered the dark speckled worktops in white vinyl from Woodie's. Linda was also determined to replace the rather dated floor tiles, which were a combination of terracotta and cream. 'I hated the tiles and knew it would be costly to replace them, but it was high on my list of priorities and has made such a difference. The plain tiles make the space feel less cluttered and much lighter,' she says. 'I also wanted a central island that would offer me some extra storage and much-needed workspace. I found the perfect free-standing one in IKEA, which I teamed with industrial-style bar stools and sourced lights from Made.com.'

The dining area to one side of the kitchen is fitted with IKEA shelves and furnished with ▶

GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



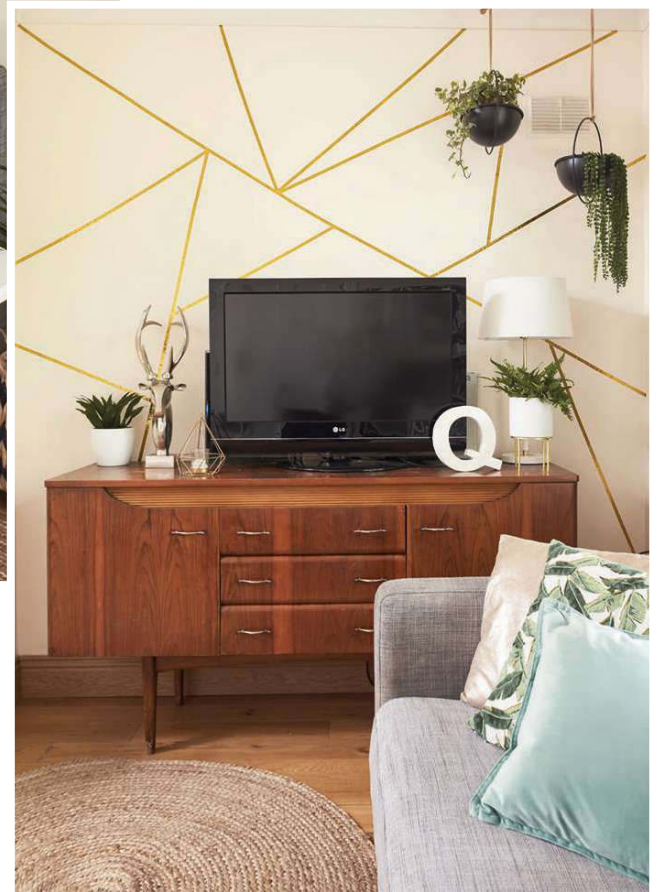
REAL HOME

a table from a charity shop and a set of Eames chairs. 'They're very practical. They can easily be scrubbed if anything gets dropped on them!' enthuses Linda. Organising family life has been made more fun – and a lot easier – with the addition of a blackboard wall. 'This is a very important wall, as all our dates and notes are put on here. It's so handy to have.' Elsewhere, a narrow wall space that might otherwise be overlooked has been made a feature of, with an attractive display of mix-and-match plates, all found by Linda in various charity shops.

Wanting the downstairs to feel more open-plan, the couple decided to open up the space between the dining area and the living room. 'The sitting room felt a bit pokey, but by opening up the doorway between the two rooms, we have more of a flow between them and more natural light in the sitting room.' Linda furnished this room with an eclectic blend of old and new. 'The sofas are from IKEA, I found the sideboard and armchair in a charity shop, and the glass cabinet was given to me by a friend. I updated the fireplace with ▶



▼ Linda's decorating confidence shines through in the living room, where she's used gold tape found in B&Q to create a geometric statement wall. It showcases a vintage mid-century sideboard Linda found in a charity shop, along with leafy hanging plants and white, gold and silver accessories



▲ By layering a couple of round jute rugs from Home Store + More, Linda has added texture and interest to the wooden floor in the living room; an economical idea for filling floor space as an alternative to a large rug or carpet. She's opted for simple, classic furniture to make it easy to change the room with accessories, including a grey IKEA sofa dressed with colourful cushions from TK Maxx, and floating shelves from IKEA featuring a selection of photos and prints that can be swapped around to refresh the look

▼ One of Linda's favourite pieces is this vintage cabinet in the living room, which was a gift from a friend. She's made the most of it by creating a pretty vignette of glassware, decanters and bottles on a metallic tray, then has given this depth with a round mirror and foliage



▼ Undeterred by being unable to find the perfect carpet for the stairs, Linda happened across three runners in Dunnes Stores that she loved and has cleverly stapled them together to create her own runner that fits the staircase, and her hallway scheme, perfectly



▲ Getting more confident with colour, Linda created a nautical stencilled wall in the family bathroom using a mix of green and blue paints. A simple cabinet from Woodie's provides practical under-sink storage, and unusual dark-blue grouting ties in the tiles with the palette of the rest of the room



▲ A tucked-away nook is the ideal place for essential storage, and hanging a coat rack and fitting a chest of drawers from IKEA cleverly utilises this tricky space under the stairs. The feature wall painted in black chalk paint provides a spot for Linda to display her collection of mirrors, which have been found in Primark, Dunnes Stores and charity shops



► The first room in the house that Linda decorated, the master bedroom, is decked out in muted grey, pink and cream tones. It's furnished with plenty of luxuriously strokable textiles, including cushions made in fabric from Style Library and soft throws from TK Maxx layered on the bed for maximum cosiness

Good idea!

RATHER THAN WALLPAPER, USE METALLIC STICKERS TO CREATE A UNIQUE FEATURE WALL CHEAPLY.

▲ Keeping daughter Emilia's room neutral ensures it can be easily changed as she grows, with details such as wall stickers from a craft shop and a name sign made by Linda's mother. The bunk beds from IKEA provide an extra bed for sleepovers with friends without taking up valuable floor space

► Linda has put together a calm yet creative space for Emilia. This corner is kitted out with colourful bunting, fun artwork, animal-themed accessories and bright shelving from Tiger, along with a boho wicker chair from Linda's mother-in-law and a useful bargain-find cabinet from Aldi



▼ Linda created a dreamy, star-lit bedroom for her son Max, with a mural inspired by his passion for all things space. A fluffy yellow throw from Harry Corry and mustard cushion from Primark make it a comfy place to hang out and sleep



IDEAS TO STEAL

Illuminate your space with industrial-style pendants arranged in groups, as Linda has done in her home.

Vintage sleek edison wire pendant in Copper, £29, Lime Lace



Use decorative mirrors around your home to add texture, pattern and light to a room.

Large round copper metal wire wall mirror, £55.95, Melody Maison

Bring the outside in with some realistic faux alternatives to the real thing.

Faux leather fern spray, £14.95, Audenza



Portable bar stools are perfect for casual dining, and to use as extra seating for guests when entertaining.

Moda metal bar stool, £115, Cult Furniture

Go for practical style with on-trend chairs that can be wiped clean.

Eames-style DSW chair, £69, Zazous



FOR STOCKISTS SEE PAGE 122




▲ The statement piece of the compact en suite is a painted cabinet Linda found in Home Store + More. 'I really wanted a sink cabinet but they were all too expensive so I came up with this solution, teaming the old with the new. I bought a basin and fitted it to the top of the old cabinet, which I painted in Off-Black by Farrow & Ball.'

a chalk paint and created some visual interest with a feature wall using gold strips of sticky back plastic.'

Upstairs, Linda has introduced more colour to create inspiring rooms for her children. 'You can be really creative with children's rooms and go a bit mad, using lots of colour by painting murals and using wall stickers. My son loves space, so this inspired me to follow this theme in his room. My daughter's room is lighter, with decorative shelving from Tiger, pretty bunting and a den-style bed that's perfect for sleepovers,' says Linda.

When it came to the main bathroom, Linda decided to use a stencilled scalloped paint effect on one wall. Introducing blues and greens for continuity, she used a blue grout between the white tiles and painted the radiator a deep green. A gallery wall of creative artwork done by the children adds another fun element to this room.

There are creative ideas everywhere you look in Linda's home. It's a wonderful example of how, with a bit of inspired thinking, you can create a stylish abode even on a tight budget. 'I'm really pleased with how the house has come together, how my style has evolved and what I have learnt from tackling the jobs myself. I'm much more confident with colour now... and a dab hand with power tools!' laughs Linda. 



It was the ideal doer-upper for us

Making their mark on an unloved former rental flat, Sophie and Joe have created a unique home with personalised art and an airy kitchen layout

Sometimes, a property just needs someone with creative vision to see its full potential, and for this Victorian maisonette that person was Sophie Kreyer-Peake. Sophie and her fiancé Joe Janney, both management consultants, lost out on several properties before eventually striking it lucky with this one.

'As we have a dog, we were looking for a two-bedroom garden flat near my family in South London,' explains Sophie. 'We were after a doer-upper that we could put our own stamp on.' They'd been looking for over a year and offered on eight properties, but

pretty much every house went to sealed bids. 'Being on a tight budget, we lost out on all of them. But, when it came to this one, no one else wanted it. Our offer was accepted and it was perfect for us,' says Sophie.

It had previously been rented out and looked pretty unloved and dismal, but the couple were able to look past the worn brown carpet and dull magnolia walls and imagine what they could do with it. Sophie and Joe also had the practical skills to be able to do all of the decorating work themselves. 'We took up the carpet, sanded and varnished all the floorboards, and

did all the painting, tiling and grouting,' explains Sophie. 'But we got a builder in to do the structural work, the plumbing and electrics and to fit the kitchen.'

To make the apartment feel brighter and more spacious, the couple removed the wall separating the kitchen and dining room to create one free-flowing space opening out onto the garden. 'To blur the line between the kitchen-diner and the garden, we raised the patio by two feet, so that it was level with the house, installed bi-folding doors and used the same floor tiles inside and outside on the patio,' says Sophie. ►

Good idea!

NO ROOM TO STORE CHOPPING BOARDS IN A COMPACT KITCHEN? INVEST IN BEAUTIFUL WOODEN ONES AND HANG THEM ON THE KITCHEN WALL.

► Sophie has made a feature out of the tall chimney breast alcove by tucking a mini range cooker within it and tiling this area with striking hexagonal tiles. An extractor fan has also been hidden in here, while a Studio wall clock from Jones Clocks adds interest to the space above

◀ To make more of the side return and extend the garden, Sophie and Joe replaced the window in the side of the kitchen with a door. The anthracite-coloured Kungsbacka kitchen unit fronts, Metod cabinets and Klingsta custom-made wall panel splashback are all from IKEA. By overhanging the worktop, Sophie has created a small breakfast bar area in the island unit



'I didn't have a huge amount of space to work with here, but every inch of it is well used.'



▲ Sophie has been clever with choosing storage in the kitchen. The door to the right of the dining table conceals the washing machine, ensuring there's more room for drawers and cupboards in the kitchen. The brightly patterned geometric rug breaks up the monochrome palette and helps to separate the dining area from the cooking space

COME ON IN...



WE ARE Sophie Kreyer-Peake and Joe Janney, both management consultants, and we have a cockapoo named Willow.

OUR HOME is a purpose-built Victorian two-bedroom garden flat in South London.

MY FAVOURITE FEATURES are the high ceilings and cornicing, which you would never get in a new-build property.

I'M MOST PROUD OF the customised IKEA Billy bookcases either side of the sitting room fireplace. They look built-in, something we could never afford!

THE ITEM I LOVE is the hall console table. I saved up for it, so it was a special purchase.



Feature and styling Anna Tobin Photos Rachael Smith



◀ A contemporary floor lamp throws a cosy glow over the generous three-seater sofa, which can comfortably host four people when entertaining. The plump cushions and throw also make it an extra-welcoming place to sit and relax

Good idea!
CUT BEADING AND MDF PANELS TO SIZE, GLUE ON TO WALLS AND PAINT TO CREATE TRADITIONAL-STYLE WALL PANNELLING.

‘We had a really stressful time when our builder ran off halfway through the job!’

▼ Sophie and Joe restored all the period features in the lounge room themselves, including painting the ceiling cornices a lighter colour than the walls to emphasise the room’s height. They also sanded the original floorboards, and added a double layer of rugs to warm up the space. The geometric cushion and herringbone throw in a bright jade hue add a pop of colour and pattern to the plain snugly armchair

The project wasn’t all smooth sailing, though. ‘We had a really stressful time when our builder ran off halfway through the job – he said he would come back if we paid a ransom of £5,000! It was awful. We couldn’t afford it and rather than pay it and get tied up with him again we found some new builders to finish the job, while Joe and I got on with the decorating.’

Sophie has always been into interior design, but as she’d only previously rented properties she was limited in what she could do. Having a place of her own finally gave her creative juices free rein. She took a lot of inspiration from Instagram and Pinterest and found online interior design tools incredibly useful too.

‘Being on a tight budget, we opted for an IKEA kitchen,’ says Sophie. ‘One thing I’d always wanted was a kitchen island unit, as I love cooking and it gives you that extra bit of workspace. It was difficult to see how we would fit one into the space we had, but by using the IKEA kitchen planning tool, I managed to work out how to fit a small one with a breakfast bar in the space and I was able to get 35cm-deep drawers in on both sides too, which gives us lots of useful storage as well.’

In the more formal living room, Sophie made the period fireplace the focal point and shielded the windows, which open out on to the street, with floor-to-ceiling curtains. ‘I went for a cosier, slightly more traditional feel in here,’ she says. ‘I’m particularly pleased with the IKEA Billy bookcases, which I made look bespoke by adding wooden beading and painting them.’





▼ The fanlight above the front door brings light into the otherwise dark hallway, where a slim console table adds interest and provides a display space for a select collection of ornaments. Shropshire Design's Aula gold mirrored console table is a similar style to Sophie's



Sophie also installed the panelling in the hallway, which is so realistic it looks like the original Victorian fittings. And she created most of the artwork that adorns the walls of the home. 'My favourite are the three line drawings that hang above our bed,' she

says. 'I designed them to fit the space.' Relaxing and simple was the design brief that Sophie set herself for the bedrooms. Both beds are dressed with plump pillows, cushions and duvets, set against a backdrop of soft neutrals, while a supporting cast of furnishings ►



◀ The slim, clean lines of the four-poster bed in the guest bedroom – a £120 bargain from Studio – and the subtle monochrome accessories continue the classic-contemporary feel that flows throughout the apartment

Good idea!

PUT YOUR GCSE SKILLS TO GOOD USE AND CREATE YOUR OWN ABSTRACT ARTWORK. IT WILL LOOK AS GOOD AS ANY GALLERY PIECE!



▼ The symmetry of the master bedroom's scheme, together with the upholstered headboard, which comes from an eBay store called SleepStyle, and layers of bed linen, pillows and cushions, give the room an air of a luxurious yet welcoming boutique hotel room. The chests of drawers are from IKEA, which Sophie has painted in Farrow & Ball Railings for a luxe finish



IDEAS TO STEAL



Bring the outdoors in and help improve the air quality with a few leafy house plants.

Present Time Small Coy ceramic plant pot, £9, Cult Furniture

Make your garden feel like a second living room with armchair-style outdoor seating.

Essentials Danta garden chair, £69, MADE.com



Opt for a deep neutral sofa that you can dress up with cushions and throws for extra cosiness.

Mid Grey three-seater sofa in a box, £899, Snug Shack

Add drama to a small bedroom with a striking slimline contemporary four-poster bed.

Pino four-poster bed, £345, Cuckooland



Hide away less attractive toiletries in a wall-hung vanity drawer unit and display the prettier pieces on the wide edges of the sink.

Rustic Oak 900mm wall-hung vanity unit with basin, £219.97, Bathroom Takeaway

FOR STOCKISTS SEE PAGE 122



▲ Arranging the wall tiles in a herringbone pattern emphasises the compact room's high ceiling. Sophie has also made a point of having flowers, foliage or houseplants in every room to give each space in their garden flat that indoor-outdoor feel

◀ Sophie searched out a double drawer vanity unit to maximise the hidden storage space in the small bathroom. For a similar design, see the Ronda chestnut 900mm-wide floor standing vanity unit at Victorian Plumbing

and accessories add splashes of colour. Sandwiched in between the guest bedroom and the kitchen is a compact but practical bathroom. 'We were limited by space here, but I managed to get a wide vanity unit with drawers in, which provides lots of storage, and I chose tiles that help to push the walls out a little. So it still feels like quite a restful space,' says Sophie.

Sophie and Joe are delighted with the finished result. 'It's exactly as I envisaged

it would be, and in some ways it's actually exceeded my expectations,' says Sophie. 'I didn't have a huge amount of space to work with, but every inch of it is well used. We spend a lot of time entertaining and enjoying the kitchen and garden space and hanging out in the living room. It's not our forever home, as we want to get a house eventually, but it's been a great learning experience and I can't wait to do the same thing all over again one day.' 🏡



We used colour to make the ordinary beautiful

Bronagh Fleming and Ivan Daly have brought their empty-shell bungalow up to date with a mix of bright hues, bargain finds and some self-taught DIY skills



When Bronagh and Ivan began to look for their first house on a small budget, it took going back for a second viewing on their now-home to fully see its potential. 'We'd looked at lots of properties and actually viewed this house but dismissed it. We came back a few months later and decided there and then we could do something lovely with it,' explains Bronagh.

It was in the perfect location close to their family, in a lovely spot on a quiet road on the outskirts of Shannon, but the house was just a shell and had been empty for years. The previous owners had installed triple glazing,

insulation and solid wood doors throughout, but it still needed a considerable amount of work. That didn't deter them though. 'We got the keys to the property just before Christmas and moved in straight away. The excitement of owning our first home and no longer paying rent made us so happy,' smiles Bronagh.

Taking stock of what needed to be done, and what was possible with their finances, the couple camped out in one room and got to work on the house, with lots of help from Bronagh's father. 'We had a very tight budget, so apart from the electrics and plumbing we had to do as much of the work as we could

◀ Reconfiguring the kitchen allowed the couple to find a space for their large dining table, which was a wedding present. The chairs were picked up in charity shops. To add character, Bronagh has created a feature wall using a collection of pretty mismatched patterned plates. Bronagh's passion for all things vintage is also on show with her display of quirky old signs

▶ The kitchen has a traditional feel, with a Belling range and a simple splashback created using pieces from Right Price Tiles. A rail also provides practical hanging space for utensils and herbs right where they're needed

▼ The new base and wall cabinets, supplied by Instore, have made the space feel lighter (for a similar look, try the Classic Shaker kitchen from Homebase). To add a pop of colour, Bronagh painted the kitchen shelves and the fridge in the utility room in Fruit Crumble by Colourtrend



▶ The utility room door opens out into the garden, so the wood-effect vinyl flooring from Banner Carpets, fitted by Ivan, and the round jute rug from Home Store + More are practical and hard-wearing additions



Good idea!
A STATEMENT COLOUR, SUCH AS THE PINK USED IN BOTH THE UTILITY ROOM AND KITCHEN, IS A CLEVER WAY TO TIE TWO ROOMS TOGETHER.

COME ON IN...



WE ARE Bronagh Fleming, a 44-year-old interior design blogger at Fox Hollow Style and digital media manager, and Ivan Daly, a 41-year-old landscape artist. We live here with our dog, a Cairn Terrier called Scruffy.

OUR HOME IS a two-bedroom bungalow located near Shannon in Co. Clare, Ireland.

I'M MOST PROUD OF having fun with colour, trying out DIY ideas and encouraging others to do the same.

MY TOP TIP is to check your local free pages for furniture. You will be amazed at what people are getting rid of. On the flip side, offer items you no longer need, as there will always be someone in need of them.

THE NEXT BIG THING we're planning to do is the garden. We want to use the space much more, but this will be a project for weekends that we'll do over a few months. You can't rush a garden!

I LOVE SHOPPING AT auctions as you can always find a bargain, including good-quality furniture and china. Just remember to set your limit and don't be tempted to go over it.

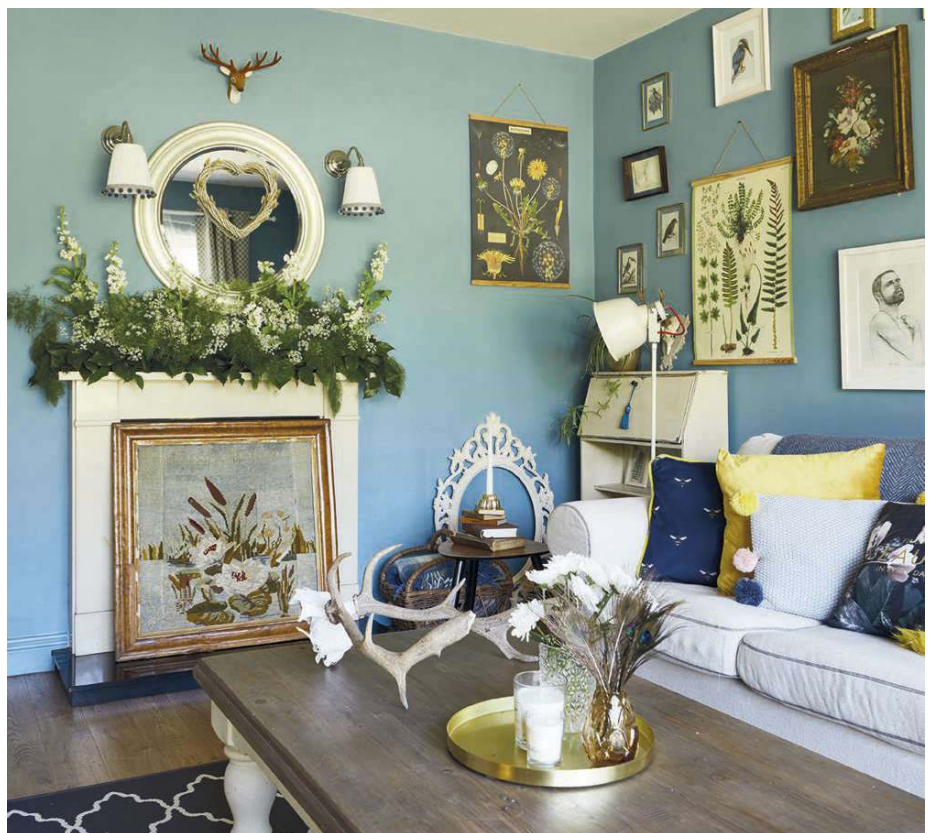




▲ The couple prove you can never have too many cushions or pieces of art with their eclectic living room scheme. The IKEA sofa is brightened up with a mixed stack of cushions from Primark and Asda, as well as a fluffy sheepskin throw from Harry Corry. The button-back chair from Made.com adds a little opulence, as does a pompom-trimmed lampshade made by Bronagh in Liberty fabric – she found the base on a local free page, then painted it using Beag by Colourtrend

► Bronagh's love of all things botanical and natural is on show in the living room, with foliage and florals in various forms throughout the room – including artwork, cushions, and dried and fresh flowers – creating an interest-filled corner with a boho-luxe feel. She's also continued the outdoorsy theme by bringing in additional nature-inspired accessories, including antlers, a woven wicker basket and hanging heart, and even a fun stag's head ornament above the mirror

‘We started putting our stamp on the house in the cheapest way we knew how, by painting it.’



ourselves.' This included upgrading the heating system, installing a new bathroom, reconfiguring the kitchen and upgrading the electrics. Ivan is an artist and needed some studio space, so the couple also converted the garage into a workable room for him.

'With the help of my brilliant father we worked really hard throughout January and most of the work was finished by February. Ivan did all the tiling and fitted the laminate flooring and insulation,' says Bronagh. The

couple are very hands-on and will give most tasks a go – with a little help from the internet. 'There is so much information online that even if you don't have the knowledge you can learn enough to get by and ultimately save yourself a huge amount of money.'

Once the main building work was done, the couple were then able to concentrate on their forte – making the space as colourful as possible. 'We began putting our stamp on the house in the cheapest way we knew, by painting

it.' Starting with the living room, the couple envisioned doing something special. 'It's the first room you see when you come into the house, so I wanted a bold colour, art on display and a really welcoming vibe,' says Bronagh. The room is north facing, so the couple ended up embracing this by painting it a dark blue that totally transformed the space. 'All of a sudden it was a fun place to be in, with the artwork and collectibles that we have accumulated over the years, all stylishly arranged. It spoke volumes



▲ Bronagh has created a unique gallery wall in the office by painting a contrast square using scalloped Frogtape as an outline. 'I measured the square, stuck down the Frogtape and painted the inside with French Mists by Dulux'

◀ Although it is designed for work, Bronagh's study is anything but boring. Painted in Moda Gatsby by Dulux, the room features useful IKEA furniture and inspiring accessories, including trunks picked up at a local auction for a juxtaposition of vintage and modern styles

Good idea!

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX – BY PAINTING ONE ON THE WALL! A CONTRAST, SCALLOP-EDGE SQUARE MAKES A GREAT FOCAL POINT AND IS SIMPLE TO DO.

REAL HOME

about us a couple, and it's now our favourite room,' smiles Bronagh.

The house is furnished with an eclectic mix of pieces they have found in charity shops, local free pages and auctions, and the internet. 'We did an IKEA trip to get some basics, such as beds, and practical wardrobes for some all-important storage. It makes for a stylish and functional combination,' explains Bronagh.

The couple now feel that their house is an extension of themselves, and have poured a huge amount of their ideas, time and energy into making it so. 'We have created beauty in the ordinary. People have contacted me on Instagram to say that my house is the same as theirs – the same layout, same dark narrow hallway – and we have given them so many ideas for what to do with it. This makes me really proud of our house – it's a really special thing to hear,' says Bronagh.

Working within a budget has certainly made this home a goldmine of creativity and the couple's love of design shines through in every room. With a few jobs outstanding, their decorating journey isn't quite over yet though. 'We still have work to do, but we will finish each room slowly when we can afford bits and pieces and will definitely appreciate it when it's all done,' concludes Bronagh. [YH](#)



Good idea!
CONTINUE THE WALL PAINT SHADE ACROSS THE DOORS FOR A UNIQUE LOOK, AS WITH BRONAGH'S PAINTED STRIPES IN HER GUEST ROOM.



▲ The bedroom has a dreamy, boutique vibe thanks to its delicate colour palette and plush textiles. The wardrobe's botanical print and the quirky flying parrots on the wall nod to the tropical trend. Soft pink walls, painted in Lipsync by Dulux, give a calm finish

◀ The guest room has been given an injection of creativity using an interesting combination of paint colours, with 70s-inspired burnt orange on the lower section of the wall (painted in Rustic by Dulux), a peachy pink on the upper wall and ceiling, and a touch of metallic with a stripe painted in Taika Gold. The ornate wicker chair was another freebie from Freecycle



◀ Bronagh has created a striking entrance with a statement wall painted in Colourtrend's inky Priory Wall shade, which is the perfect backdrop for a variety of different prints. The mid-century sideboard was one of her many lucky finds from a local free page and provides a home for a collection of leafy plants in bright pots

▼ To ensure they'd have plenty of storage, the couple opted for a sink cabinet from Ger Malone, and made shelves to fit neatly into the limited space next to it for display-worthy towels and toiletries. Keeping the styling simple, monochrome accessories offset the rich, dusky colour on the walls, which are painted in Bowman Blue by Colourtrend

IDEAS TO STEAL



Enjoy lush greenery all year round with botanic prints.

Monstera Palm
Leaf art print
framed poster,
£25, Cult Furniture

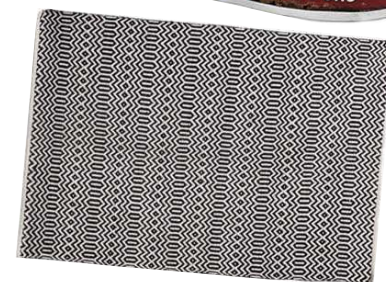


Drape a soft, fluffy sheepskin rug over the sofa to bring extra colour and warmth to a living room.

Luxury mustard Mongolian sheepskin,
£102, Audenza

Liven up your walls with old-fashioned light-up car signage for a retro look.

Holden Garage
mountable
light-up tin sign,
£53.68, Yellow
Octopus



Introduce both texture and pattern with an eye-catching geometric rug in modern monochrome.

Ostara geometric patterned floor rug (120cm x 170cm), £99, Cult Furniture



Add soft pastel shades to a bedroom with cushions to create a fresh, calm feel.

Regency
pink velvet cushions
(45x45cm), £50 for a set
of two, Habitat

FOR STOCKISTS SEE PAGE 122



Good idea!
MAKE THE MOST OF A SMALL ROOM BY ADDING OPEN SHELVES. USE WOOD THAT CONTRASTS WITH THE REST OF THE BATHROOM SCHEME FOR EXTRA DETAIL AND COLOUR.

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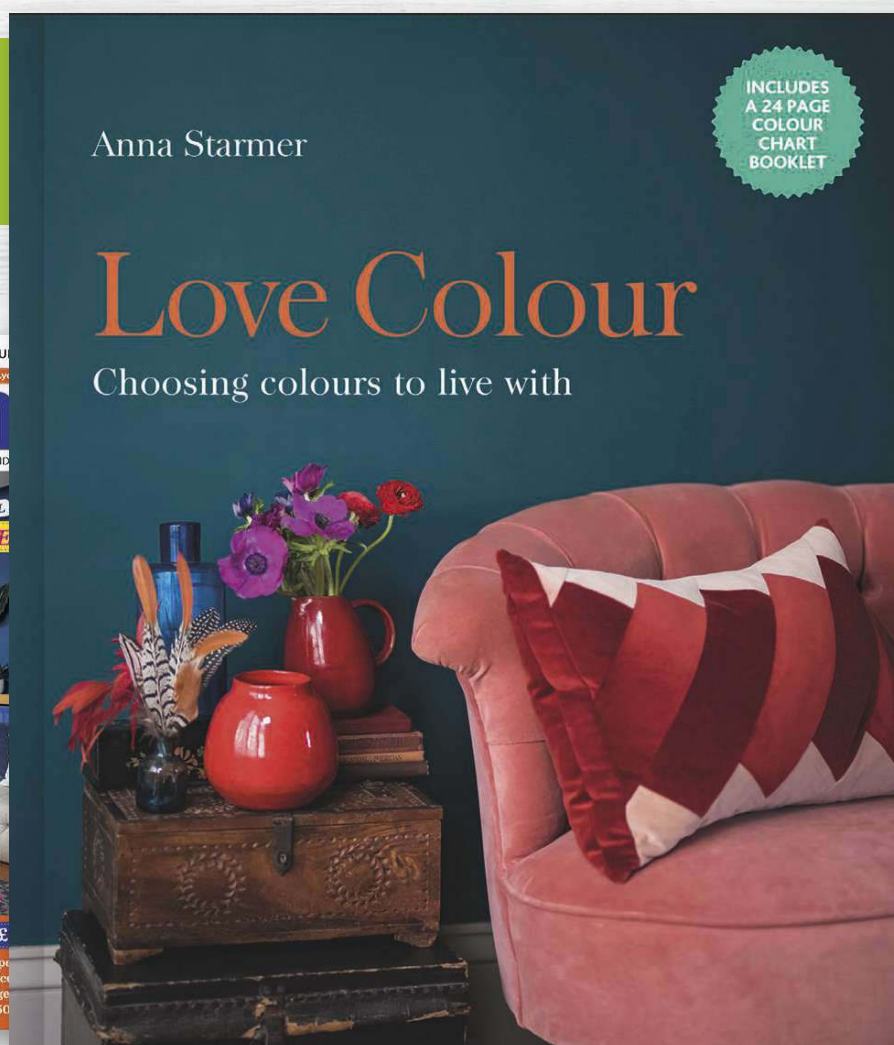
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Food & drink

Discover our favourite foodie finds and turn over for some seasonal recipes...



3 ways with... rhubarb

- * For a simple dessert, cut **600g rhubarb** into bitesize pieces. Add them to a large pan along with **50ml water**, the juice and zest of **1 orange** and **100g caster sugar**. Bring to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes until the rhubarb is soft. Serve with **ice cream**.
- * Use the stewed rhubarb recipe above as the base for a fruity crumble. Heat the oven to **180°C/160°C Fan/Gas Mark 4**. Make the topping by combining **100g plain flour** and **75g butter** with your fingers, then stir in **50g oats** and **75g light brown sugar**. Sprinkle the topping over the rhubarb in an ovenproof dish and bake for 30 minutes or until golden.
- * Add a touch of sweetness to savoury dishes with this rhubarb butter. Place **150g rhubarb**, **50ml fresh orange juice**, **2 tsp fresh grated ginger** and **2 tbsp honey** in a pan and bring to a simmer. Cook for about 5 minutes until the rhubarb is soft, then drain. Mix the rhubarb with **100g butter** until smooth. Serve as an accompaniment to a chicken or pork dish.



If you do one thing this month...

Try some gluten-free baking with Davina Steel's easy kits. Delicious baked goods need not be reserved for those without intolerances anymore,

as Davina's kits allow you to make wholesome gluten-free breads simply and quickly.

We love the Garlic & Rosemary Focaccia, but for something a little sweeter try the Chocolate Chip version. Prices start at £2.49 and the full range is available from Ocado. For more information, head to www.davinasteel.com.



THIS MONTH WE LOVE...

From the UK's favourite olive oil brand, Filippo Berio, comes a delectable new range of pesto. Forget ordinary green pesto and experiment with these Chargrilled Pepper and Grilled Vegetable varieties. Perfect with pasta or as a marinade for meat and fish. Available from Ocado for £2.



Try me...

Switch up your snacking this month with Munchy Seeds; tasty and nutritious roasted seed mixes priced from just 80p. If you tend to nibble on plain nuts and seeds, then these packets will revolutionise your snacking experience. Available in five flavours including Sweet Chilli, Honey Roasted and Warm Cinnamon, they are the perfect afternoon pick-me-up. You can find them in Ocado and Co-op.



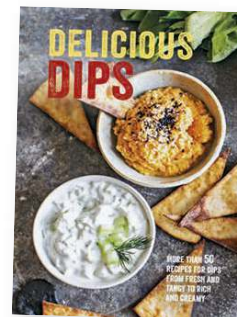
Eat me...

Pip & Nut is now offering a trio of nut butter cups to accompany its award-winning spreads. Yes, you heard correctly. If you've got a sweet tooth and need that after-dinner treat to satiate your cravings, one or two of these cups will do the job. The Dark Chocolate Almond Butter is our top pick! Each pack, £1.49, contains two nut butter cups.



Buy me...

Who doesn't love chips and dips? With over 50 recipes to offer, *Delicious Dips* is your fail-safe guide to creating the best condiments around. Try an updated version of a classic such as guacamole, or discover new dinner party staples like mango, kiwi and coriander salsa. £7.99, Cico Books.



Feature Ella Rhys-Jones



CHECK OUT WWW.YOURHOMEMAGAZINE.CO.UK/RECIPES FOR MORE TASTY TREATS

BREAKFAST IN BED

Dazzle your number one on Mother's Day morning with these decadent treats



Breakfast berry brioche

YOU WILL NEED

100g raspberries ✓ 100g blueberries ✓ 100g strawberries, roughly chopped ✓ ¼ tsp ground cinnamon ✓ 2 tbsp maple syrup ✓ 4 slices brioche ✓ 250g Alpro Simply Plain yoghurt

DIRECTIONS

■ Put the fruit in a bowl and sprinkle over the cinnamon. Roughly crush with the back of a fork and drizzle over 1 tbsp of the maple syrup. Set aside for 10 minutes to let the juice run from the fruit.

■ Toast the brioche slices on both sides until golden. Fold the fruit through the Alpro Simply Plain yoghurt and spoon on top of the toasted brioche slices. Drizzle over the remaining maple syrup to serve.

Recipe and image courtesy of www.waitrose.com/recipes

PREPARATION
TIME 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
5 MINUTES
SERVES 4

Maple, cherry and mascarpone French toast

YOU WILL NEED

400g stoned and drained cherries ✓ 2 tbsp maple syrup
 ✓ 250g mascarpone ✓ zest of ½ grated orange ✓ 2 tbsp
 icing sugar, plus extra for dusting ✓ 8 slices of fruit bread
 ✓ 4 eggs ✓ 160ml milk ✓ 1 tsp ground cinnamon, plus
 extra for dusting ✓ 20g unsalted butter

DIRECTIONS

- Place the cherries in a bowl and soak in the maple syrup. If using fresh cherries, first gently poach them in a small saucepan over a low heat.
- In a separate bowl, mix together the mascarpone, orange zest and icing sugar. Spread the mascarpone mixture on two slices of fruit bread and top with a spoonful of maple syrup and the cherries. Place the remaining fruit bread slices on top to make a sandwich.
- In a wide-rimmed, shallow bowl, whisk the eggs and milk together and add the cinnamon. Gently lift and place the sandwich into the egg mix, turning over to cover each side.
- Melt the butter in a frying pan and, when hot, lay down each sandwich and cook until light golden brown and crispy. Make sure the egg is cooked thoroughly on each side.
- Serve onto a plate and sprinkle with ground cinnamon and icing sugar. Cut in half and serve.

Recipe and image courtesy of www.maplefromcanada.co.uk



PREPARATION
TIME 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
5 MINUTES
SERVES 4



PREPARATION
TIME 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
5 MINUTES
SERVES 1

Tropical mango smoothie

YOU WILL NEED

Flesh from ½ a mango (reserving a few slices to garnish) ✓ 1 tsp ground turmeric ✓ ½ a banana ✓ 200ml coconut milk ✓ squeeze of lime juice (plus a little zest to garnish)
 ✓ 8 California walnut halves ✓ Handful of raspberries and blueberries ✓ 1 passion fruit
 ✓ 1 tbsp of coconut flakes

DIRECTIONS

- Place the mango, turmeric, banana and coconut milk into a blender and blitz until smooth. Add lime juice to taste and blend again until combined.
- Pour the smoothie into a bowl and garnish with the reserved mango, berries, walnuts, passion fruit, lime zest and coconut flakes.

Recipe and image courtesy of
www.californiawalnuts.co.uk

Oaty coconut granola yoghurt pots

YOU WILL NEED

300g Waitrose Duchy Organic jumbo rolled oats
✓ 120g mixed seeds ✓ 60g flaked almonds
✓ 60g desiccated coconut ✓ 2 tbsp Waitrose
Leckford Estate rapeseed oil ✓ 100ml Waitrose
Canadian Amber maple syrup ✓ 2 tbsp clear honey
✓ 3 tbsp apple juice ✓ 500g natural yoghurt
✓ 2 bananas ✓ 150g raspberries

DIRECTIONS

■ Preheat the oven to 150°C/130°C Fan/Gas Mark 2.
Stir together the oats, seeds, almonds and coconut.

■ Gently heat together the rapeseed oil, maple syrup, honey and apple juice in a small saucepan. Pour over the oat and seed mixture and stir until evenly combined.

■ Divide the mixture between two large, lined baking trays and cook for 30 minutes, stirring once or twice, until the mixture is golden brown. Leave the granola to cool completely on the trays, then transfer to an airtight container or tin.

■ To serve, layer the yoghurt, bananas, raspberries and 200g of granola into four glasses or bowls.

*Recipe and image courtesy of
www.waitrose.com/recipes*



PREPARATION
TIME 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
30 MINUTES, plus
cooling
SERVES 4

Grilled halloumi on sourdough

YOU WILL NEED

4 slices of sourdough bread ✓ 1 tbsp olive oil
 ✓ 225g halloumi, thickly sliced ✓ ½ medium courgette
 ✓ 1 ripe avocado, sliced ✓ **To serve** 1 tbsp sunflower seeds
 ✓ 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds ✓ Small bunch of dill

DIRECTIONS

■ Heat your griddle or sandwich maker on a high setting. Place the slices of halloumi on the grill and lower the lid, or flip, if there's no lid, to cook on both sides until the cheese is golden brown.

■ Drizzle the sourdough with olive oil. Remove the cooked halloumi from the grill and replace it with the sourdough slices. Again, cook on both sides until golden brown.

■ Meanwhile, cut the courgette using the spiralizing attachment on a food processor, such as the Cuisinart Expert Prep Pro.

■ To serve, place the pieces of halloumi onto the toasted sourdough. Follow with a layer of avocado. Top with the spiralized courgette, seeds and dill.

Recipe and images courtesy of www.cuisinart.co.uk/recipes



PREPARATION
TIME 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
15 MINUTES
SERVES 2



PREPARATION
TIME 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
20 MINUTES
SERVES 2



Banana pancakes

YOU WILL NEED

2 medium ripe bananas ✓ 4 large eggs
 ✓ ¼ tsp baking powder ✓ 80g oats
 ✓ Butter for greasing the plates ✓ **To serve**
 Handful of blueberries ✓ Maple syrup

DIRECTIONS

■ Break the banana up into a high-sided container, then add the remaining ingredients. Using a hand blender, mix on a medium speed until well combined and smooth. Allow the batter to rest for a couple of minutes.

■ Preheat a griddle to 180°C, in a fully open position. Grease the plates with a little butter, then drop 2 tbsp of batter for each pancake onto the griddle plates. Cook the pancakes for approximately 5 minutes until the edges start to look like they are setting.

■ Gently turn the pancakes over and cook for another 2 minutes or until golden brown. Cook in batches, keeping the prepared pancakes warm in the oven. Serve with blueberries and maple syrup.

Recipe and images courtesy of www.cuisinart.co.uk/recipes

GET READY FOR GREENS!

After the heavy root vegetables of winter, we celebrate the fresh and seasonal leaves and shoots to look forward to this spring



PREPARATION
TIME 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
5 MINUTES
SERVES 4



Asparagus with gnocchi in a sage and lemon butter

YOU WILL NEED

✓ 80g lightly salted butter ✓ 2 garlic cloves, sliced
✓ 1 small bunch of fresh sage ✓ juice and zest of
1 lemon ✓ salt and cracked black pepper ✓ 500g
gnocchi ✓ 2 bundles of asparagus, trimmed and cut
into 3cm lengths ✓ 50g grated parmesan

DIRECTIONS

■ Put a large pan of salted water on to boil, then
heat a large frying pan and add the butter. When
the butter begins to brown slightly, add the garlic

and sage leaves and cook for a minute or until the
sage begins to crisp at the edges. Add the lemon
juice and zest. Season with salt and pepper and
remove from the heat.

■ Place the gnocchi and asparagus in the pan of
boiling water and cook until the gnocchi rises to the
top of the water, approximately 2-3 minutes.

■ When the gnocchi and asparagus are cooked,
strain in a colander, then tip them into the frying
pan with the sage and butter. Gently toss the pan to
make sure the butter coats the gnocchi.

■ Serve in warm bowls, sprinkled with parmesan.

*Recipe and image courtesy of
www.enjoyasparagus.com*

Sesame Burgundy Broccoli with oriental salad

YOU WILL NEED

✓ 1 tbsp sesame oil ✓ 1 tbsp dark soy sauce ✓ 1 tbsp honey ✓ 1 lime, juiced and zested ✓ 1 tbsp olive or rapeseed oil ✓ 2 tbsp sesame seeds, lightly toasted
 ✓ 2 heads Burgundy Broccoli ✓ Chinese leaf or other cabbage, thinly shredded ✓ 1 carrot, peeled and thinly sliced ✓ 5 spring onions, thinly sliced

DIRECTIONS

■ Mix together the sesame oil, soy sauce, honey, juice and zest of the lime, and olive or rapeseed oil until it emulsifies. Add half of the sesame seeds and allow to marinate.

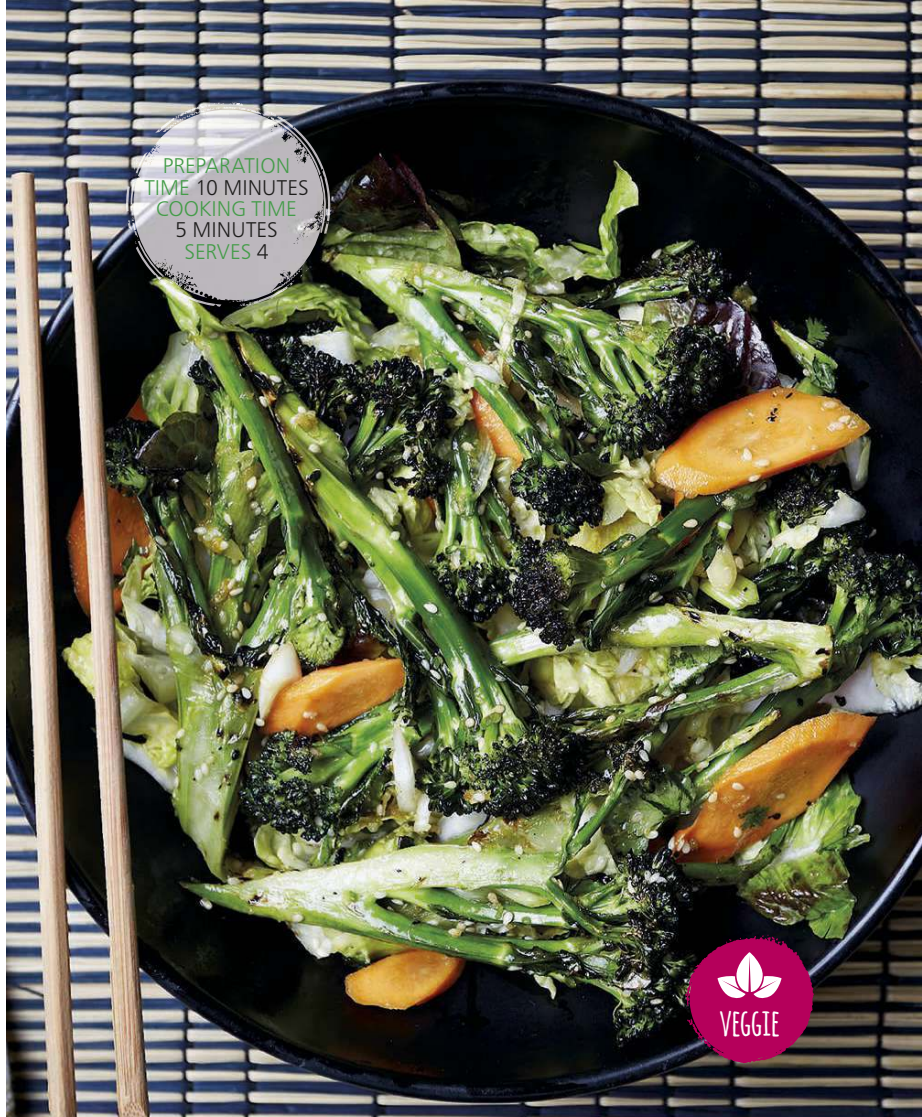
■ Cut the Burgundy Broccoli into large wedges and place on a heated griddle pan or frying pan. Char gently until the broccoli is gently cooked (this should take no more than 2 minutes).

■ Place the washed and shredded Chinese leaf or other cabbage onto a plate.

■ Put the griddled broccoli in a bowl, together with the carrot slices and the spring onions, then pour half the dressing over the top. Place the contents of the bowl on top of the Chinese leaf.

■ Sprinkle with the remaining sesame seeds and pour over any remaining dressing. Serve warm or cold.

Recipe and image courtesy of
www.burgundybroccoli.com



PREPARATION
 TIME 10 MINUTES
 COOKING TIME
 5 MINUTES
 SERVES 4

VEGGIE



PREPARATION
 TIME 10 MINUTES
 COOKING TIME
 15 MINUTES
 SERVES 4

Spinach haddock chowder

YOU WILL NEED

✓ 150g baby new potatoes, sliced ✓ 300ml vegetable stock
 ✓ 200g smoked haddock, skinned and cut into chunks
 ✓ 100g frozen sweetcorn
 ✓ 300ml semi-skimmed milk
 ✓ 260g bag of spinach

DIRECTIONS

■ Cook the potatoes in the stock, covered for 8 minutes. Add the haddock and sweetcorn and cook for 2 minutes.

■ Add the milk and bring to the boil, then stir in the spinach until just wilted.

■ Serve with crusty brown bread.

Recipe and image courtesy of
www.discovergreatveg.co.uk



Spring greens with caesar dressing

YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ 3 anchovy fillets ✓ 1 small, peeled garlic clove ✓
- 1 large egg yolk ✓ 2 tbsp lemon juice ✓ ½ tsp Dijon mustard ✓ sea salt and freshly ground pepper ✓ 75ml extra virgin olive oil ✓ 50g Parmigiano Reggiano ✓ 400g spring greens

DIRECTIONS

- Put a pan of salted water on to boil. Place the anchovy fillets, garlic clove, egg yolk, lemon juice and Dijon mustard in a small blender or food processor. Season with a little salt and pepper. Blitz to make a paste, then add the olive oil, one teaspoon at a time, gently whizzing after every addition until you have a smooth dressing. No blender? Finely chop the anchovies and crush the garlic. Mix them with the lemon juice, mustard and egg yolk, then whisk in the oil, one teaspoon at a time.
- Finely grate 15g of the Parmigiano Reggiano and stir into the dressing. Taste and add salt, pepper, lemon juice and mustard, if you think it needs it.
- Put a large saucepan of water on the hob to boil. Trim the woody cores off the spring greens. Finely shred the leaves. When the water in the pan is boiling, add the spring greens and simmer, lid off the pan, for 3-4 minutes until tender. Drain well, shaking off any excess water. Steam dry in the colander for 1-2 minutes.
- Toss the spring greens with the dressing. Coarsely grate over 30-40g Parmigiano Reggiano and serve.

Recipe and image courtesy of
www.abelandcole.co.uk

PREPARATION
TIME 25 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
5 MINUTES
SERVES 4-6

Three greens soup

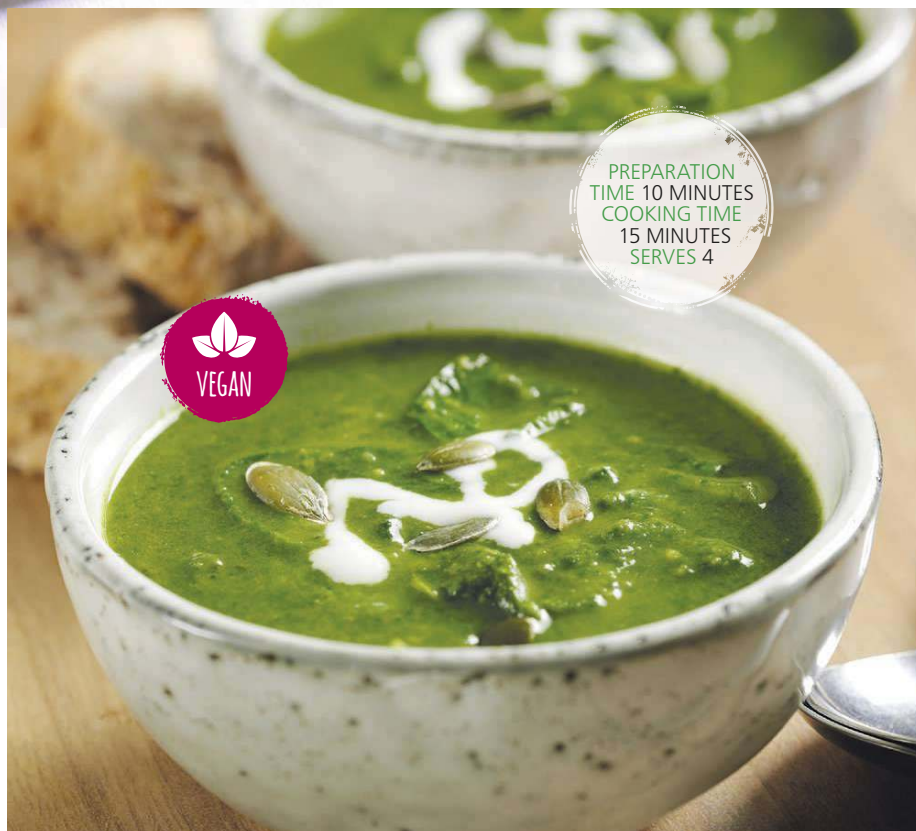
YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ 1 tsp olive oil ✓ 1 onion, chopped
- ✓ 1 potato, diced ✓ 100g kale ✓ 150g frozen peas, defrosted ✓ 1 litre vegetable stock ✓ 450g bag spinach

DIRECTIONS

- Heat the oil in a large saucepan and fry the onion and potato for 3-4 minutes. Add the kale, peas and stock. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 5 minutes.
- Reserve 3 handfuls of spinach and stir the remaining leaves into the soup. Cook for 1 minute until just wilted. Blend until smooth.
- Stir in the reserved spinach until wilted and season to taste. Serve with a swirl of yogurt, pumpkin seeds and crusty wholemeal bread.

Recipe and image courtesy of
www.discovergreatveg.co.uk



PREPARATION
TIME 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
15 MINUTES
SERVES 4

VEGAN

The meanest, greenest pizza

YOU WILL NEED

✓ 220g of shop-bought pizza dough ✓ 2/3 jar of pesto ✓ 115g sun-dried tomatoes packed in olive oil, drained ✓ 60g crumbled goat's cheese ✓ 135g stemmed and shredded kale ✓ 230g fresh mozzarella, torn ✓ 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus more for greasing ✓ 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar ✓ zest and juice of 1 lemon ✓ 1 tsp honey ✓ Crushed red pepper flakes ✓ 4 cups rocket leaves ✓ 2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 230°C/210°C Fan/Gas Mark 8. Grease a baking sheet.
- Make the pizza. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the dough to a 1cm thickness.

Carefully transfer the dough to the prepared baking sheet. Spread the pesto over the dough, leaving a 3cm border, then layer on the sun-dried tomatoes, goat's cheese, kale and mozzarella. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes until the crust is golden and the cheese has melted.

■ Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the 2 tbsp of olive oil, vinegar, lemon zest and juice, honey, and a pinch each of salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Add the rocket leaves and sesame seeds and toss to coat.

■ When the pizza comes out of the oven, spread the salad on top, slice and serve.

Recipe and image courtesy of Half Baked Harvest Super Simple. Copyright © 2019 by Tieghan Gerard. Published by Clarkson Potter, an imprint of Penguin Random House, LLC.



PREPARATION
TIME 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
10-15 MINUTES
SERVES 4

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Home IMPROVEMENT

Discover all you need to know about alternative ways to sell your property

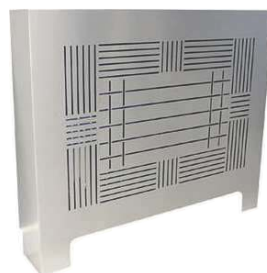


Conscious construction

With sustainability being a hot topic at the moment, and rightly so, Sell House Fast has conducted research into the eco-friendly building materials set to rise in popularity in 2020. It found that the majority of property professionals (74 per cent) believe that bamboo is the material on the rise for 2020, with straw bales trailing closely behind with 69 per cent. Clearly, the property industry is taking note and realising the importance of sustainable building practises. For more information, visit www.sellhousefast.uk.

Dis-cover these

Have you got an outdated radiator that causes a bit of an eyesore in your home? Walldex's collection of radiator covers may be the solution to your problem. Available in a range of stylish metals, sizes and digitally-printed finishes, there's an option for everybody. Walldex even offer a bespoke service so you can get your very own personalised radiator



cover that is easy to install and remove. Prices start at £275 with no plumbing necessary. Visit www.walldex.co.uk for more information.

Bee kind

Lend a helping hand to the wildlife that visits your garden with a bee or birdhouse from Green&Blue. The award-winning Bee Brick offers a safe nesting place for solitary bees and is made using 75 per cent waste material. There are also ceramic birdhouses, inspired by the shape of nests, that provide shelter for small birds and look elegant hanging in the garden – it's an ideal gift for a wildlife lover. All products are made in the UK and are priced from £18.75, www.greenandblue.co.uk.



FRESHEN UP

With spring nearly upon us, it's probably about time to start freshening up your garden furniture. Outdoor paint needn't be purely practical, it can be pretty, too. Frenchic's Al Fresco range is designed to protect your furniture while also offering you the option to jazz up your outdoor space with some bright colours. The chalk paint is weatherproof and certified child safe with little to no odour. Our favourite colours are Dusky Blush, a playful pink (pictured left), and Oopsy Daisy, a sunshine yellow. Prices start from £6.95, and you can find the whole range at www.frenchicpaint.co.uk.

Feature Ella Rhys-Jones Main image Getty Images



FOR MORE EXPERT ADVICE AND CASE STUDIES GO TO WWW.YOURHOMEMAGAZINE.CO.UK



Hybrid agency Yopa's team of local agents do everything a traditional estate agent does, such as producing professional property particulars and photos, www.yopa.co.uk

Alternative ways to sell your home

Want to save money or boost your chances of a speedy sale? Try one of these methods

The average cost of moving house in the UK is now £10,414, according to new research from [reallymoving](http://reallymoving.com) (www.reallymoving.com). This jumps to nearly £14,000 in the East of England and more than £24,000 in London, though wherever you happen to live, a sizeable sum goes on estate agency fees which vary from 1-3.5 per cent of the selling price. Even the input of an experienced agent is no guarantee that your home will sell quickly, and Zoopla reports that properties in British cities typically take 12 weeks to sell, compared with eight weeks in 2016. If you want to cut costs of selling or speed up the process, why not try another route? We take a look at what's on offer.

SETTLE FOR A PRIVATE SALE

1 Selling your home privately may seem an attractive proposition as there are no estate agency fees to pay. However, going it alone requires time, patience and resilience as you'll be managing every aspect of the process yourself. Start by setting the price, guided by the value of similar local properties. Next, write a description, commission an Energy Performance Certificate and get professional photos taken. You're now ready to advertise on dedicated private sale sites, Gumtree, eBay, social media and in the local press. You won't, however, be able to list on leading portals, Zoopla and Rightmove, where 95 per cent of house hunters begin their search. You'll also have to conduct viewings, negotiations and agree the final price.

▼ Leading online agent Purplebricks has teamed up with Amazon Alexa so that customers can use voice commands to receive updates on the sale of their home, www.purplebricks.co.uk

Nothing beats the buzz of an auction room, plus knowing that an offer, once accepted, is binding, gives peace of mind, www.auctionhouse.co.uk





Yopa and other online agencies can save you more than £8,000 in fees when selling a £500,000 property, www.yopa.co.uk



Sally Smith, Director & Auctioneer at Loveitts, takes bids from the floor during a property auction. If you're lucky a bidding war could ensue for your property

GO WITH AN ONLINE ESTATE AGENT

2 Online agents are cheaper than traditional agents as they don't have high street offices to fork out for, so pass savings on to their clients. As fixed fees range from £99 to about £1,500, you could be quids in. Customers generally pay upfront, regardless of whether or not their property sells, though they may be given the option of waiting until completion. Check exactly what's included – all companies should list on Rightmove and Zoopla and conduct negotiations, but you may have to write your own advert and host viewings, or pay extra for these add-ons. Hybrid agencies, such as Purplebricks and Yopa, offer a similar service to high street agencies, with dedicated agents to handle your sale.

OPT FOR AN AUCTION

3 Selling your property at auction gives you speed and certainty. Once the hammer falls, the buyer enters into a binding contract and can't backtrack. Expect to pay the auctioneer about 2.5 per cent of the sale price and be sure to appoint a solicitor in advance as all the paperwork must be in order prior to the auction. There's no guarantee the property will sell or achieve the hoped-for figure, though you can set a reserve price – undisclosed to bidders – which is the minimum you're prepared to accept, and any offers below this figure will be rejected. The advertised guide price can be set low to entice buyers, and if you're lucky on the day of the auction, a bidding war could ensue.

CHOOSE A QUICK HOUSE SALE COMPANY

4 When you're in a hurry to sell – for example, if you're relocating for work or disposing of an inherited property – it's worth considering a quick house sale company that will buy your property at a discount. Tread carefully, as this sector of the market is unregulated, with unscrupulous firms employing tricks, like dropping prices at the last minute. Leading home buyer Quick Move Now (www.quickmovenow.com) pays 80-85 per cent of a property's market value and advises that a genuine company should have a turnover of at least four million and a current balance of one million plus. They will also never ask you to pay any fees or sign a contract that ties you in for a period of time. ►

Feature Andrea Dean

Part exchange is offered to buyers trading at many new developments, such as The Croft in Burgess Hill, West Sussex, by Charles Church, www.charleschurch.com



Ensure your home is well-presented, clean and tidy to give it the best chance of selling swiftly, www.evolutionwindows.com





Quick house sale experts, Property Solvers, will buy your home at up to 75 per cent of its value within seven days, or aims to get a firm offer at full market value within 28 days, www.propertiesolvers.co.uk

Getty Images

EXPERT ADVICE

USEFUL CONTACTS

- www.auctionhouse.co.uk is the UK's largest residential property auctioneer. Find a user-friendly guide to selling at www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-sell-a-home/how-to-sell-a-home.
- HomeOwners Alliance, www.hoa.org. uk offers expert advice on all aspects of selling. Other online agents include www.purplebricks.co.uk, www.yopa.co.uk and www.housesimple.com.
- www.theadvisory.co.uk provides free, detailed information for sellers.

OTHER WAYS TO SELL


5 Buying agents or property finders are employed by purchasers to source their ideal home, so contacting a local company via Google could boost the prospects of selling your property privately. This is free, as fees are paid by buyers, and you're more likely to be successful if your home has a USP like a great view or being in a sought-after school's catchment. Vendors upsizing to a new-build may be able to take advantage of the developer's part-exchange incentive or get assistance with selling from a scheme such as Redrow's Help to Sell (www.redrow.co.uk). You could even organise a competition with your home as the prize, though the red tape is complex and success rates are low.

▼ Be sure to factor in additional costs when selling your home, such as a removals team to help with the move, www.reallymoving.com

'The big advantage of selling at auction is that once the hammer goes down, the property is sold. There's no danger from a property chain collapsing or a buyer backing out. To achieve the most interest, set your guide price carefully, taking advice from the auctioneer – you can always set a reserve price that you won't sell below. Engage a solicitor from the outset as all the documentation will need to be prepared.'

Sally Smith, director and auctioneer at Loveitts, www.loveitts.co.uk

PREPARE YOUR PROPERTY

6 Whichever method of selling you choose, making your home as presentable as possible for the marketing photos and viewings will increase its chances of selling quickly and achieving the best possible price. Tidying the front garden, pruning overhanging branches, repainting the front door and repairing rickety fencing will instantly enhance its kerb appeal. Declutter rooms, clean surfaces thoroughly – paying particular attention to the kitchen and bathrooms – let light flood in and ensure it smells good when potential buyers look around. Don't forget that you're required to produce an Energy Performance Certificate, detailing the property's energy efficiency. This is normally arranged by the estate agent, but if selling privately, find a Domestic Energy Assessor to undertake it at www.epcregister.com. 



This beautifully renovated Victorian house in North London's Kentish Town, valued at £2.1 million, is one of the latest in a long line of homes to be offered as the prize in a draw via www.winmydreamhome.com



CASE STUDY

*'Selling online saved us over £2,000,
and the service couldn't have been better'*



▲ Philip and Verity were thrilled that their property sold so quickly online, and for such a reasonable fee



▲ Combining contemporary touches with period details, it's no wonder that the freshly renovated end-of-terrace house was snapped up so fast

When Philip and Verity Brierley were ready to sell a newly refurbished three-bedroom house in Staining near Blackpool, they chose hybrid agent Yopa, and were delighted with the experience of selling their property online, as Philip explains. 'Having used different estate agents over the past 15 years after moving home several times, I decided to get other valuations to see how they compared. I called David Rothwell from Yopa's North

West team as I knew him from around the local area and the first thing I noticed was the difference in fees. The majority of agents I had used previously charged around 1.5 per cent plus VAT. David's quote of £889 including VAT had already given me a saving of over £2,000. From the initial meeting to valuing the property, everything was smooth sailing. The fee quoted was very reasonable and I was surprised that an online agent could provide everything the other agents offered for the same price.'

Philip was initially sceptical about online agents, especially as the valuation was at the slightly higher end of the scale at £165,000, but went along with David's suggestion of holding an open day, two weeks into marketing. 'Immediately, from the property going live, we were notified of early interest through YopaHub, which is a transparent online service where sellers, buyers and the agent can communicate with each other. David assured me that, with the right marketing and a proactive approach, £165,000 was more than achievable. Sure enough, within the first two weeks we'd had 12 viewings booked and a good offer from the open day. He eventually negotiated a full asking price offer with a lovely couple who were looking to complete and collect their keys quickly. One argument you often hear against online agents is that they don't work hard for you; they just put the property up on the portals and wait for the viewings to come in. From our experience, this couldn't be more wrong – David worked tirelessly to negotiate an asking price offer for us, even though the eventual sale price had no bearing on his take-home pay. We were delighted at the level of interaction and service we received from selling our property online.'



Work has been carried out to a high standard throughout and includes a new Shaker-style kitchen with double doors into the garden, as well as a sleek bathroom incorporating a free-standing tub



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WIN! A stunning gas fire worth £1,500



With a chill still in the air, we've teamed up with the Heating and Hotwater Industry Council's Love Gas Fires group to offer you a Valor Inspire 400 gas fire in Anthracite, with mirrored liners, worth £1,500.

This stunning, glass-front gas design has an authentic 'campfire' log fuel bed and, in a first, Valor's Luminaire under-bed LED lighting technology creates an additional warming glow from within the fire. The variable heat output means you can set the temperature exactly as you need it, and even alter it via a handy remote control, hassle-free. The Inspire 400 can be

wall-mounted or set into a fireplace to suit your room's needs.

Gas fires are a great secondary heat source, providing instant and effective warmth with a cosy, 3D flame – all at the turn of a switch and without the need to put your entire heating system on. Perfect for those fresher evenings when you want to curl up on the sofa and relax. With no ash residue or odours, gas is extremely clean and requires minimal maintenance too.

As well as creating a striking centrepiece in the heart of your home, gas fires are very economical. Electricity is more expensive than gas so, compared to their electric counterparts,

gas options tend to be cheaper to run. As a homeowner you can benefit from the comfort of a flickering fire effect, without having to worry about excessive bills.

For further information about the Heating and Hotwater Industry Council and gas fires, please visit www.lovegasfires.co.uk.



To enter, visit www.yourhomemagazine.co.uk, choose the WIN tab, find the prize draw you'd like to enter and fill in your details. Closing date 31 March 2020 at 11.59pm.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS 1 Promoter: Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited. 2 The promotion is open to all residents of the UK, including the Channel Islands, aged 18 years or older, except the Promoter's employees or contractors and anyone connected with the promotion or their direct family members. 3 By entering the promotion, you agree to be bound by all the rules of the promotion including these terms and conditions. 4 The Promoter may share the details of the winner with the prize provider for the purposes of fulfilling/delivering the prize. 5 The Promoter excludes liability to the full extent permitted by law for any loss, damage or injury occurring to the participant arising from his or her entry into the promotion or occurring to a winner arising from his or her acceptance of a prize. 6 The Promoter reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. 7 Only one entry per prize draw will be permitted per household, regardless of method of entry. Bulk entries made by third parties will not be permitted. Entries received after the closing date of the promotion will not be considered. 8 No responsibility accepted for lost, delayed, ineligible or fraudulent entries. 9 The prize does not include installation. 10 The prizes are non-refundable, non-transferable and not for resale. The prizes cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers, promotions or discounts. There is no cash alternative. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute the prizes with other prizes of the same or greater value. 11 Closing date for entries is 11.59pm on 31 March 2020. 12 Winning entries will be chosen at random (after the closing date) from all entries. 13 The winners will be notified of their win within 28 days via email. 14 Winners must claim their prize within 28 days of notification. In the event that a winner cannot be contacted or fails to claim their prize within 28 days, the Promoter reserves the right to offer the prize to another entrant, or to re-offer the prize in any future promotion. 15 The Promoter's decision as to the winner is final and no correspondence relating to the promotion will be entered into. 16 The prizes are as stated above. 17 Entrants must supply to Immediate Media Company Limited their full name, email address or daytime telephone number. The Promoter will use entrants' personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy (immediate.co.uk/privacy-policy). 18 The surname and county of residence of the winners will be available upon request by sending an SAE to Your Home March 2020 Giveaways, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4ST within two months of the closing date of the promotion. The Promoter will contact the winners before releasing this information and provide the winners the opportunity to object or limit the amount of information shared. 19 The promotion is subject to the laws of England.



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Gardening

Great buys and advice to help your garden grow



A head for heights

This is the ideal time to prune conifers and hedges, but if yours are tall you may be reluctant to climb a ladder to tend to them. However, Henchman's tripod ladders have been specifically designed to make the job easier and safer. Strong and lightweight, they are available in four different sizes from 6ft-16ft and feature either one or three adjustable legs created for use on uneven or sloping terrain. This three-leg 'milking stool' principle makes it impossible to wobble and extremely difficult to topple, while the wide, clawed feet are designed to grab soft ground to prevent slipping or sinking. A 18cm-deep platform rung allows you to tuck your legs in and gain added support against your thighs, without hitting your shins on the rung above, while the top rail allows for one-handed support while working; or for leaning against while using both hands. The narrow top and third leg make it easy to access tight, awkward spaces.

Tripod ladder, from £225 with free delivery to UK mainland, Henchman



Bye bye blight

March is the perfect time for sowing tomatoes. If you've had problems with blight in previous years, then this year try Tomato 'Consuelo.' With its tangy, large cherry-sized fruits, it has the double benefit of great disease resistance together with superb tomato taste. It is suitable



for growing outside or in an unheated greenhouse and will produce ripe fruits in late July outside and even earlier in a greenhouse or polytunnel. They will continue to crop until the first frost outside and into November if kept under protection.

Burpee's Tomato 'Consuelo,' £1.25 for 10 seeds, from www.justseed.com

It's a snip

Make pruning a pleasure with these stylish ergonomic secateurs by Burgon & Ball, featuring original artwork from British illustrator Brie Harrison, whose love of all things botanical has a huge influence on her work. The secateurs come complete with a waxed canvas holster, which has a handy belt loop and brightly coloured lining. They cost £19.95 from Annabel James.



GET SHED ENVY

In *Shed Style*, £19.99 published by Ryland Peters & Small, stylist Selina Lake reveals how even the smallest garden can be home to an outdoor retreat. From the traditional potting shed to a writer's cabin or an artist's studio, Selina explores sheds, cabins, huts, greenhouses, pods and all manner of garden structures, providing ample inspiration for anyone dreaming of their own garden hideaway. In this beautifully photographed book, she reveals how to create the shed of your dreams, presenting hundreds of fresh ideas for decorating and styling both the interior and exterior as well as suggestions for lighting, fabrics, furniture and other accessories.



For label lovers

Label your newly planted seedlings effortlessly with this set of six slate plant tags, £12 from Garden Trading. The set comes complete with a square soapstone pencil that's tapered to a point and is beautifully soft and wax-like to write with. This allows you to interchange the labels with what's in season or current family favourites. Sold in a natural cotton drawstring bag and individually boxed – this set would make a lovely gift.

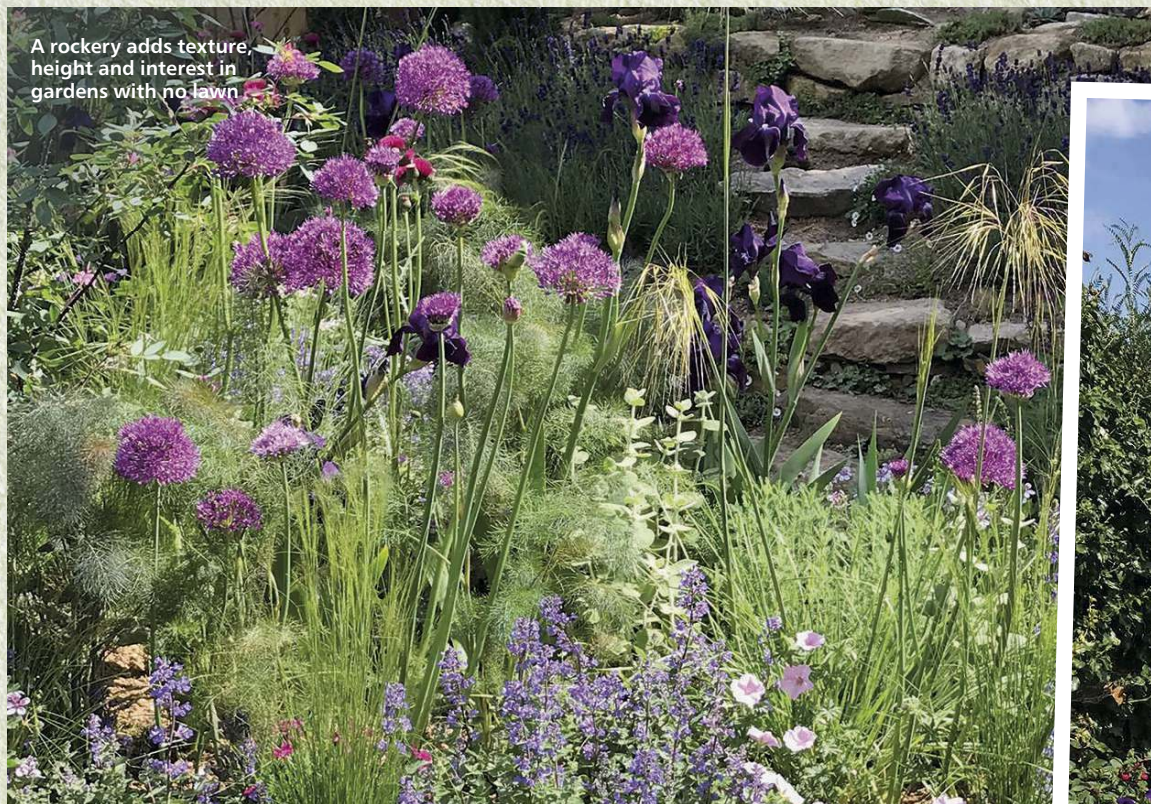


Feature Anna-Lisa De'Ath



FOR MORE EXPERT ADVICE AND CASE STUDIES GO TO WWW.YOURHOMEMAGAZINE.CO.UK

A rockery adds texture, height and interest in gardens with no lawn



IN YOUR GARDEN *this month...*

The spring equinox falls in March, making this the month of new beginnings and extra time to spend in the garden



STYLE YOUR *Garden*

While a lawn may be at the heart of many large gardens, smaller plots often offer less-than-ideal conditions for lush green grass to thrive. Shade cast by neighbouring buildings or boundary fences can create areas of sparse growth and, if the ground is subjected to constant heavy footfall, even the toughest grass will struggle to grow. The inevitable appearance of bald patches will make the garden look untidy and unloved. The sensible option is to select an alternative surface that complements the style of the house and reflects the owner's

personal style. This in turn frees up valuable storage space used to house a lawnmower and also reduces the maintenance required to keep a lawn in tip-top condition.

It's never a good idea to cover the whole area with a hard surface, such as tarmac or paving stones, as this prevents rainwater draining away naturally and is also very inhospitable to wildlife. Instead, look to installing more forgiving surfaces, such as gravel or recycled bricks, which don't have to be laid in one neat block like a

traditional patio, but can be arranged across the garden diagonally or in interesting shapes. Intersperse these with beds, borders and seasonally planted containers and you will add a completely new and fresh dynamic to your garden.

To compensate for the lack of a verdant lawn, add evergreen climbers to fences, various shrubs and small trees for interesting focal points and maybe even a small water feature, all of which will be appreciated by wildlife, both resident and visiting.

The Lark Ascending English shrub rose, from £18, David Austin Roses



Tottering by Gently English shrub rose, from £19.50, David Austin Roses

You don't need grass to have a beautiful garden. Have fun with combining other surfaces such as gravel, brick and wood instead



WHAT TO DO *in the flower garden*

Plant roses for bees

Make space in your garden for a beautiful rose that has single or semi-double blooms, because these uncomplicated-shaped roses are loved by all manner of bees and insects, as they can easily access the pollen-rich stamens. English roses, bred by David Austin in the 1950s, combine the beauty and fragrance of old roses with the vigour and repeat-flowering qualities of modern roses. At this time of the year, while dormant, they are still available to plant as bare-root specimens.

Bare-root roses flower in their first year, establish quickly, are easier to handle, and are less expensive than containerised ones. While it's important to get them in the ground as soon as they arrive, do avoid planting them when the ground is either waterlogged or frozen.

You will find an extensive range of bee-friendly roses at www.davidaustinroses.co.uk

Make a start on weeding

On fine days, spend a little time in the garden weeding before the plants have had time to flower and set seed; this will reduce the number of weeds present in the garden over the growing season. At the same time, look out for any clumps of self-sown annual, perennial or biennial seedlings, such as forget-me-nots, *Verbena bonariensis*, pot marigolds or foxgloves, that can be transplanted around the garden to give a more even spread of interest throughout your borders.



Prune deciduous grasses

Cut back last year's growth of deciduous grasses as soon as the new growth is visible. This varies for each plant and is usually at some point between early March to late April. Remove the old, straw-coloured stems to just above ground level, about 8-10cm. Remember to be careful not to damage any new growth. Deciduous grasses include *Miscanthus*, *Molinia*, *Pennisetum* and *Calamagrostis*.

Evergreen grasses, such as *Festuca glauca*, do not need to be hard pruned, as a little maintenance is all they need. Run your fingers through their mass of blades and pull out the dead material, but remember to wear gloves to prevent cutting your hands on the sharp edges of the leaves.





MARCH'S *garden visitors*

It's during March that garden birds begin to partner up and make their nests. March can be notoriously cold and activity among our feathered friends in the north may not be evident until the end of the month when temperatures start rising.

Of all birds, robins are perhaps the most intriguing. They can be surprisingly tame and with a little patience will feed directly from an open hand. Their parental instincts are highly developed, which has led to many reports of them feeding the fledglings and chicks of other species. However, they are fiercely territorial with their own species and an average-sized garden will only have space for one pair to set up home and breed.

Most couples produce two broods in a year, but it's not uncommon to produce three, even four, in a good year. Each brood contains four or five eggs, which hatch after being incubated for about 13 days. These chicks will fledge roughly 14 days later. Young robins bear little resemblance to adult ones as they have speckled breasts. The red colouration appears after their post-juvenile moult, which takes place within their first year.



WHAT TO DO *on the veg plot*

✓ Sow parsnips

Sow parsnip seeds outside towards the end of this month. Use only fresh seeds and be very patient as parsnips are notoriously erratic at germinating. With this in mind, place two or three seeds into each hole to improve the chances of germination. Prior to planting, it helps to cover the ground with plastic sheets or cloches to slightly raise the temperature of the soil.

✓ Sow shallot sets

For those who are new to growing their own vegetables, have a go at growing shallots from sets, as they are so easy to grow, need little attention and taste deliciously sweet. Sets are essentially immature bulbs, but unlike onions, which produce one large bulb per set, shallots will produce a cluster of small bulbs from each set. Plant each single set into well-drained soil in a sunny position about 20cm apart and leave the top half peeking out of the soil. Birds find the sight of these little top shoots intriguing and given the chance will pull each and every one out of the ground, so cover the crop with fleece for the first few weeks until they have rooted.

✓ Get ready for runner beans

Prepare the ground for runner beans by digging in some nutritious organic matter. These climbing vegetables are greedy feeders, need plenty of water and will put on heaps of growth during their cropping season. The addition of well-composted manure or compost will bulk up the soil and help it retain moisture. Try also to keep it weed-free before planting out the runner beans when all risk of frost has passed, usually by mid-May in the south and the end of May in the north. For a succession of beans, plant a second crop at the beginning of July.

✓ Grow vegetables and herbs in pots

With the exception of very few larger varieties, vegetables and herbs can be grown in containers of all descriptions, even an old wheelbarrow, allowing the millions of homeowners who may only have a balcony or tiny garden the possibility of growing some delicious edibles throughout the year.

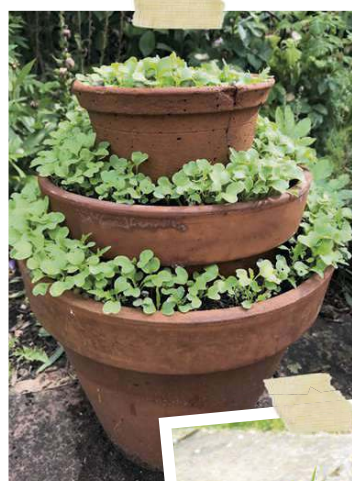
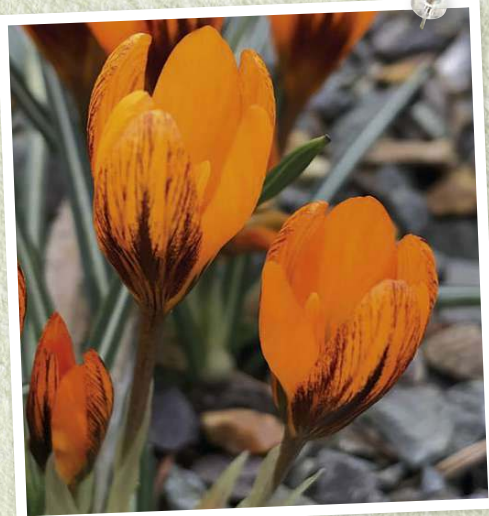


Image courtesy of Sutton's



TOP THREE PLANTS

for March**CROCUS 'ORANGE MONARCH'**

A clump of this vibrant little crocus is hard to miss, and, being a little less common than its purple, yellow and white cousins, demand closer inspection when their orange blooms first appear. The outside of the petals is striped with purplish-black lines and inside amber stamens tempt insects to taste their pollen, which is invaluable for early foraging bees at this time of the year. Left to their own devices in grass, they will multiply freely over the years. Just allow the foliage to die down naturally before mowing the lawn.

**ILICIIUM SIMONSII**

A shrub of rare beauty which chooses February and March to produce its exquisite buttermilk, lightly fragranced blooms set against dark, shiny evergreen foliage. Over time it will grow into an upright pyramid-shaped shrub which remains attractive all year round and can be a great foil for shrubs with paler tones of foliage or any flowering plants that perform later in the year. Plant in well-drained soil, in sun or semi-shade.

WHAT TO DO *in the fruit garden***PRUNE FRUIT BUSHES**

Boost the harvest of mature redcurrant, white currant and gooseberry bushes by pruning them while they are still dormant. Aim to give the plants an open goblet shape by removing some of the central shoots. This allows the free flow of air and sunlight to reach any ripening fruit and also discourages sawfly damaging the plants by laying eggs that develop into copious caterpillars within congested branches. Reduce the height of the remaining main stems by a quarter and cut out any dead wood.

ADD NUTRIENTS

Feed fruit trees and bushes to enhance their yield with a general fertiliser. Acid-loving blueberry shrubs will benefit from an ericaceous fertiliser.

USE STRAWBERRY RUNNERS

If you managed to grow new strawberry plants from the young plantlets found growing on the end of the strawberry runners last year, these can now be planted out into a new strawberry bed. A sunny site is essential. If you want an early crop, cover the plants with cloches, but remember to remove them on warm days to increase ventilation.

Strawberries grow well in containers too, where they may escape the attention of hungry slugs and snails. Use loam-based John Innes compost which retains moisture and nutrients more efficiently than ordinary potting compost. Just be mindful that frosts in April and May will ruin the fruit so cover the plants at night with fleece.

**MUSCARI / GRAPE HYACINTHS**

Named after their resemblance to little bunches of grapes, these cone-shaped blue flowers are a welcome addition to any garden setting in spring. The bulbs tend to produce masses of foliage – which incidentally starts to appear in the autumn of the previous year – and few flowers if they are grown in rich soil. For this reason, plant new bulbs in poor, stony ground, gravel paths or underneath the canopy of a tree, where less foliage and a proliferation of flowers will result. The little florets of grape hyacinths contain nectar-rich pollen and are loved by spring-flying insects, especially bees.



We have fabulous goodies up for grabs this month!

Win a cooling Slumberdown mattress topper

It can be difficult to sleep well when feeling hot and bothered, which is why we are giving away four Slumberdown Airstream Memory Cool Mattress Toppers of your preferred size, worth at least £69 each.

Cool and unbelievably comfy, this mattress topper may help improve your sleep. Airstream technology means the mattress topper contains breathable fibres, which allow air to move more freely. At 4.5cm thick, the topper offers a firmer support, while a soft-knit Coolmax cover will help make sure you are not too warm during the night. The easy-fit elasticated corner straps mean it will stay put all night long. The topper is also easy care and suitable for machine washing at 40°C.

To find out more, visit www.argos.co.uk/product/5276451



★
FOUR LUCKY WINNERS

Win a stylish EKO smart sensor bin

We have teamed up with EKO to give away three Mirage X Sensor Bins, worth £99.99, which offer a new way to manage your waste.

Intuitive and almost magical to use, with a simple hand wave the bin lid opens silently and smoothly, ready to receive your waste. This clever, no-touch bin offers a hygienic solution whenever hands are full or when you're doing messy tasks in the kitchen. It's also perfect if you have limited mobility.

The EKO Mirage X Sensor Bin has a large, 45-litre capacity and fits snugly to walls. Plus it's made with high quality, fingerprint-proof, brushed stainless steel.

Discover the full EKO Home range at www.ekohome.co.uk



★
THREE LUCKY WINNERS

Win a tropical lampshade and luxurious velvet cushion in matching hand-painted designs

Give your home a dreamy update with a tropical lampshade and opulent velvet cushion in matching hand-painted designs. This month, we are offering one lucky reader the chance to win this gorgeous combo, together worth £315, from Avalana.

Avalana's new high-end, tropical collection encapsulates the extraordinary beauty of our natural world and seeks to inspire a sense of wonderment and escapism for home owners across the UK. The blush pink sunset offsets the earthy greens with a pretty, modern twist on the botanical scene. Think jungle canopy at sunset.

The lampshade has a height of 25cm and a diameter of 40cm, and can be chosen in two fitting styles – ceiling or lamp base – but whichever you choose the gold interior make this a statement piece with a serious 'wow'-factor. You'll love the matching cushion too. Each design is digitally printed onto beautifully soft velvet fabric, so they really do feel as good as they look! Be the envy of all your guests with these made-to-order pieces.

For more information, visit www.avalanadesign.co.uk



★
ONE LUCKY WINNER



Win a Flymo Easilife Robotic Mower

Make your life easy with leading lawnmower super-brand Flymo as it unveils the all-new battery powered, fully automatic robotic lawnmower, the EasiLife, guaranteeing a tidy lawn with zero effort. This month, we are giving one lucky reader a chance of winning an Easilife, worth £599.

Designed to save time and make life easier, the EasiLife offers convenience, ensuring you have time to relax and enjoy your garden. The device boasts new features, including the intuitive Assist-U interface for easy scheduling, monitoring and communication – all of which can be done from an onboard keypad and LCD display or via the smartphone app.

With LawnSense and FrostSense technology, the Easilife also automatically adapts the cutting schedule based on the weather and lawn growth conditions. The robotic mower can make its way around every corner of the garden without human intervention, trimming the tips of the grass to let micro clippings form a mulch to feed the lawn, meaning no more emptying grass boxes or collecting cuttings. This efficient, Lithium-Ion battery powered device is quiet, emission-free and capable of effectively mowing a lawn area up to a maximum of 200m², 350m² and 500m².

Visit www.flymo.com/uk for more information.



Win tickets to the National Homebuilding & Renovating Show

If you are planning an extension, are halfway through updating your interior, or dream of building a sustainable house from scratch, a visit to the National Homebuilding & Renovating Show from 26-29 March at NEC, Birmingham, will give you the practical help to turn your ambitions into reality. We are offering a pair of tickets to the show, worth £24, to 21 lucky readers.

With insider knowledge from property experts and a range of free talks and consultations, this show could prove invaluable, regardless of your stage in the building or renovation process. Discover both national and local exhibitors, free daily bite-sized seminars and tailored masterclasses. Through talks on key topics, including extensions, conversions and home DIY, you will leave with the confidence to maximise your home to its fullest potential.

Swap hours of scouring the internet for free face-to-face consultations with architects, planners, builders and *Homebuilding & Renovating* magazine's experts, and view hundreds of products under one roof. From

small plots to big builds, the event is the place to pick up tools, tips and techniques to transform any space into a home.

Visit www.homebuildingshow.co.uk/national for more information.



To enter, visit www.yourhomemagazine.co.uk, choose the WIN tab, find the prize draw you'd like to enter and fill in your details. Closing date 31 March 2020 at 11.59pm

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Our 3-step set up makes things easy and with large wheels, this

lightweight cordless mower makes manoeuvring around the lawn seem almost effortless, helping you move freely around the bends of your garden - not just in straight lines. Once you've mowed, charge the removable battery and fold the mower down for clutter free storage. Its lightweight frame and carry handle make it easy to transport to the shed and back, too.

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Fall in love with the gorgeously designed Burgon & Ball watering can and twine in a tin, which feature intricate artwork inspired by the RHS Lindley Library's collection of botanical art. Just right for tending to houseplants, the Flora and Fauna indoor watering can is available for £16.95, while the handy twine in a tin costs £9.95, both from Annabel James.

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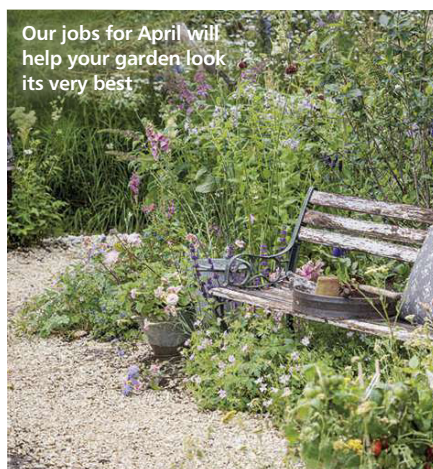
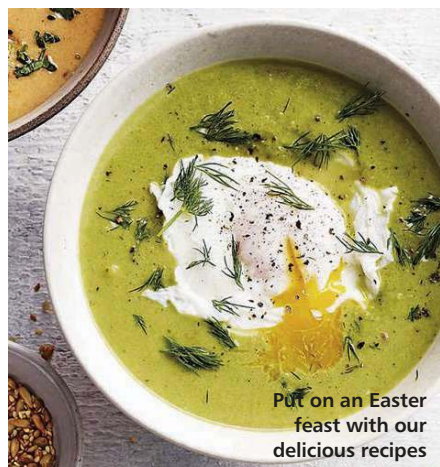
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◀ **Whisk**, £2; **ladle**, £2; **slotted spatula**, £2; **scraping spatula**, £2, all Flying Tiger Copenhagen

CLEAR SEAS

If you haven't managed to pick up a reusable bottle yet, this one from Ion8 and Friends of the Earth is a great choice. The 100 per cent leakproof, insulated steel bottle will keep your drinks warm for up to 12 hours, cold for up to 24 hours, and is wrapped with an exclusive design from Friends of the Earth. Every time you pick the bottle up, the stunning underwater scenes will remind you of the habitats you're helping to protect by reducing your use of plastic bottles. Best of all, 25 per cent of the profits made from the sale of these bottles will be donated to Friends of the Earth to support its campaign to end plastic pollution across the world. To choose your favourite design, priced at £24.99 each, visit leakproof.co.uk.



One Brew cafetière, £21.99

Brew hope

Barista & Co has reissued three of its most popular products in a striking teal colourway to help support coffee-growing communities across the world. They'll be donating a percentage of each product sold to Project Waterfall, which brings clean water, sanitation and education to communities in Africa and Southeast Asia.

Choose from One Brew, the first cafetière without a press, £21.99; Brew It Stick, which makes coffee in less than five minutes, and can also be used for brewing loose tea leaves, £11.99; and Core Coffee Press, a strong and sturdy plastic-free cafetière, £26.99 for the three cup, £36.99 for the eight cup. All available at baristaandco.com.

Out of the woods

Make room on your worktop for the latest range of kitchen utensils from Flying Tiger Copenhagen. The CRAFT range is made from beautifully smooth, sustainable FSC-certified beech wood and has already won three international design awards for its refined Scandinavian simplicity. Pop into your local store to find the full collection, priced from £2. You won't want to keep these beauties in a drawer.



Dustpan and brush, £6.49; **dish brush**, £3.99; **window wiper**, £3.99; **scrubbing brush**, £3.99, all Greener Cleaner

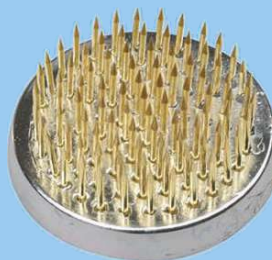
TOOLS FOR CHANGE

Clean up your home while helping the planet with these clever tools from Greener Cleaner. The Eco-Flek range is made from 100 per cent recycled materials, comprising of 60 per cent recycled plastic and 40 per cent wood pulp from sustainable sources, making use of waste that may have otherwise gone to landfill. See the full collection at greenerc.com. Prices start at £2.99.

3 OF THE BEST... vessels for foam-free floral displays



Glass jar with net cover, £5.95, The Hambledon



▲ **Brass Kenzan**, starting from £5 for 36mm, Niwaki



Recycled glass vase, £7, National Trust Shop



1965 Rolex GMT-Master Pepsi
Estimate: £15,000
William George & Co



George IV silver candlesticks
Estimate: £350-520
Adam's



Coffee table, Herman Miller
Estimate: £760-1,150
Wright



Marble bust
Late 19th/early 20th century
Estimate: £11,500-15,500
Christie's



Andy Warhol, Mick Jagger
Estimate: £30,000-50,000
Sotheby's



Pumpkin, Yayoi Kusama (b.1929)
Hammer price: £550
Forum Auctions



Hermès bag Kelly
Starting price: £7,500
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Estimate: £450,000-650,000
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Mahogany dresser
Estimate: £500-660
Uppsala Auktionskammare



Swivel chair by Hans J. Wegner
Estimate: £2,460-3,300
Bruun Rasmussen



Style of Serge Mouille, ca. 1950s
Estimate: £300-460
Rago Arts



Edwardian Art Nouveau frame
Estimate: £200-300
Tennants



Emerald cut diamond ring
Fixed price: £27,400
Once Upon A Diamond



Without title, Alexander Calder
Estimate: £430-600
Artcurial



Edwardian arm chair, ca. 1910
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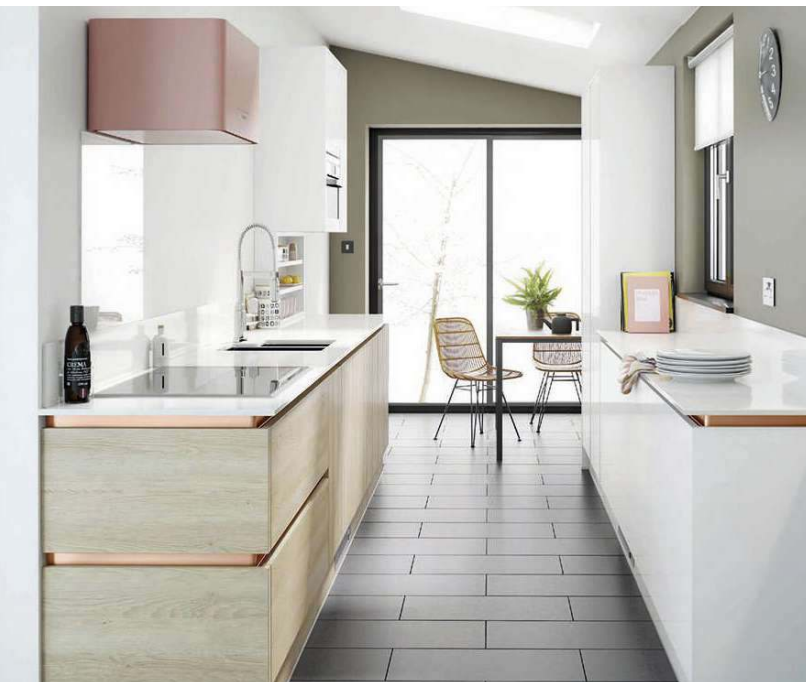
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WELCOME

If you've decided it's time to update your kitchen or bathroom this year we're here to help. We understand that they are often the projects that are most expensive and cause the most upheaval for your family, so we've filled this special magazine with lots of ideas and expert advice to help you smoothly through the process.

If you want a whole new look, but don't know exactly which style to go for, we've put together our pick of the **latest kitchen and bathroom trends** to showcase the best

new designs to suit every taste and budget (p.4 and p.20).

But if you don't fancy replacing your kitchen cabinetry or bathroom suite, there are lots of easy ways you can still create a fresh new look. **A new floor**, for example, instantly lifts the look and feel of a room and there are heaps of new designs out there designed specifically for these hard-working areas (p.18).






If you're thinking of giving your kitchen or bathroom a lick of paint to brighten it up, on page 16 we take a look at the **paints specifically designed for these areas**, packed with added properties such as moisture-resistance and scrubbable finishes.

A new oven can make all the difference to your kitchen if you're a keen cook, so on page 12 we explore **the latest electric ovens** and explain their key features and functions. Even if you're not looking to replace your oven, a thorough clean can work wonders at making it feel as good as new. Turn to page 15 for our **expert tips** for how to bring its sparkle back.

If, like most of the UK, your bathroom is small and cramped, we've found a host of **clever storage solutions** to hide the clutter and make it feel more spacious (p.28). And, don't forget, we always love to see photos of your home makeovers, so if you're undertaking a **kitchen or bathroom revamp**, do send us some photographs on social media.

Amy-Lisa

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KITCHEN TRENDS

▼ If a boiling water tap is on your wish list, consider one in this year's rich metallic finishes. This stylish three-in-one copper tap delivers steaming 98-degree filtered water, as well as hot and cold.

Pronteau Prostyle three-in-one monobloc in Urban Copper, £849, Abode



WHAT'S HOT IN

the kitchen

Thinking of updating your kitchen? Then check out our pick of the latest looks and style-savvy solutions



Bargain buy

▲ Create a covetable kitchen with deep forest greens, then go all out by taking the cabinet colour up onto walls

Metod/Bodbyn kitchen in Dark Green, £895 for eight units, worktop, sink and tap, IKEA

DEEPLY DARK

Embrace dramatic kitchen interiors that are rich in colour and texture. Flexible palettes of navy and grey have been around for a while now, and this season a range of sumptuous shades, including forest green, charcoal black and deep purple, join the mix, alongside Pantone's 2020 colour of the year, Classic Blue. Pair these rich colours with a few neutral elements, soft burnished metals, crisp white marbles and timber tones for a look that glows with luxurious warmth.

Good idea

◀ For a hassle-free new kitchen, check out customised replacement doors and drawers – our favourite is this lovely dark door with cutout handles
Ladbroke replacement doors in Samphire, from £1,000 for a small kitchen, Naked Doors



Opt for hand-painted finishes, and cabinetry can always be updated in the years to come. Constructed from solid wood, this classic kitchen is available in 28 shades

Suffolk kitchen in Walnut, from £12,000, Neptune



TOPTIP

'Accentuate darker kitchen schemes with luxe metallic accents – gold, copper and bronze are all set to be popular choices when it comes to door handles, taps and even sinks.'

Paul Jenkinson,
LochAnna
Kitchens



▲ Versatile navy is the chameleon of the coloured cabinetry world, and should prove a safe bet in both modern and traditional surroundings

Shaker kitchen painted in Little Greene's Royal Navy, from £20,000, Harvey Jones

◀ Conjure up extra storage space with the latest two-tier drawer systems, complete with a shallow, internal drawer ideal for cutlery and utensils

Cobham kitchen in Antique Green, from £6,564, Optiplan Kitchens

▼ A one-stop shop for all those kitchen essentials, a larder cupboard is guaranteed to curb the clutter – opt for internal drawers and organisers to maximise space

Somerton kitchen in Baltic Green, from £15,000, Kitchen Makers



▶ The new kid on the block, when it comes to colour, bold berry shades tend to work well with classical or Shaker-inspired kitchen styles

The Georgian Collection kitchen in Damson and Lavender, from £7,300, LochAnna Kitchens





◀ If you haven't heard of a dining island, then you soon will! Better than a breakfast bar, this simple island extension allows for a fully integrated and sociable dining experience – keep it high for a seamless finish, or go low when teaming with chairs

Handleless Light Grey Gloss kitchen, from £10,000, Trend Interiors

Bargain buy

▼ Smooth slab doors and integrated handles offer clean lines and a modern finish, without the designer price tag!

Copperbridge Urban kitchen in Ice Blue, £1,763.10 for eight units, Homebase

TOPTIP

'Choose a high-gloss finish to help bounce light around the room. Combining tall units and deep drawers will also keep open-plan spaces organised and clutter-free.'

Steve Tough, Masterclass Kitchens

MODERN MINIMALISM

If you're dreaming of a sleek, contemporary kitchen this year, then it has to be handleless! Offering pared-back, streamlined styling, this trend is all about simplicity and a focus on finish – be it matt or gloss. Understated slab cupboards act as the perfect backdrop for exploring feature fixtures, such as statement lighting and splashbacks, but bear in mind this look demands you clear the clutter! Keep appliances integrated and team larger cabinet expanses with smart open shelving.

▼ For those looking for longevity, this chic, minimalist, white gloss kitchen should stand the test of time – and is even approved by a Michelin-star chef!

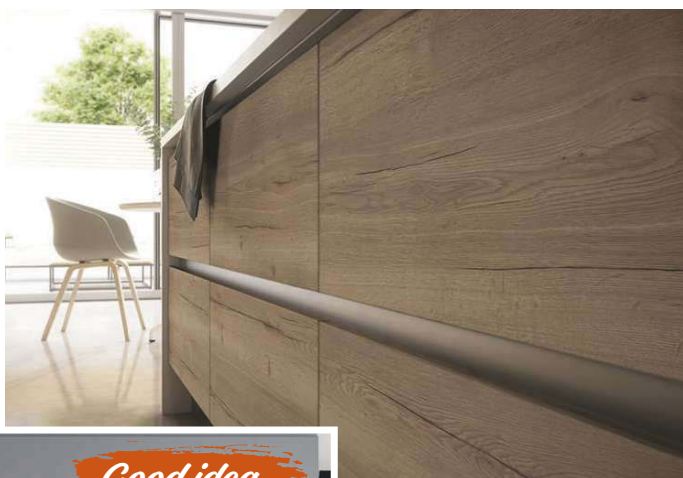
Prouve white gloss kitchen, from £9,000, Roux Kitchens



▲ Keep it sleek with this clever integrated cabinet light that replaces the base of B&Q's Caraway wall units, for illumination both inside and out. Use the motion sensor to turn on and off and switch between task and ambient lighting

GoodHome Tasuke integrated wall cabinet light, £28, B&Q





Good idea

▲ Ask about colour-match carcasses that allow you to team those integrated handles with matching or contrasting profiles, for the ultimate designer touch

Linea kitchen in Halifax Oak with Urban Handles, from £4,406, Optiplan Kitchens

◀ Opt for innovative, electronically controlled cabinetry and you'll never have to worry about opening and closing those chic hi-line units

Cucina Color Lastra Electronic Bi-fold unit, £1,332, Mereway Kitchens



▲ Accentuate handleless units by opting for the latest extra-wide drawers – available up to an impressive 2m wide, and 65cm deep, these are the widest we could find

Hampton H Line kitchen, in Mussel, Terracotta Sunset and Mayfield Oak, from £12,000, Masterclass Kitchens

◀ A lack of protruding handles makes these modern units an ideal option for more confined spaces, such as a galley kitchen – plus we just love that unique copper detailing

Milano Elements kitchen in Oak Lodge and Super White, from £4,002, Wren Kitchens



EXPERT ADVICE

'Handleless units lend themselves to the contemporary kitchen thanks to the simplicity of their design, while clean lines and an uncomplicated, continuous look can also aid visual flow in open-plan spaces. Choose from neatly concealed handles that are built into the door or integrated within the design itself; and push-to-open doors which remove the need for any visible handles altogether.'

Andy Briggs, Optiplan Kitchens

KITCHEN TRENDS

LUXE LOOKALIKES

Manmade doors, panels and worktops that emulate the appearance of luxurious timber, metal, concrete and stone are set to shake things up in 2020. So if you're looking for a kitchen with guaranteed 'wow'-factor, these visually stunning, fuss-free finishes could be for you. Choose a common all-over hue to tie the look together, or opt for maximum impact with mix-and-match finishes. Sticking to clean lines and graphic shapes ensures a distinctive, yet eminently liveable look.

► Bring a touch of luxury and drama to the kitchen with this bold textured stone-effect slab door, teamed with elegant matt green and lustrous bronze trim

Profile Slab kitchen in Jupiter, Fjord Matt Green and Bronze, £14,552, Trend Interiors



TOPTIP

'Integrate appliances for a streamlined finish – use simple cabinetry to conceal a dishwasher or fridge, and a hidden station to keep the kettle and toaster from cluttering up worktops.'

Ben Burbidge, Kitchen Makers



Good idea

► This clever pop-up unit makes the most of dead space in corner cupboards and ensures easy access at the touch of a button

Qanto Pull-Up Unit, £750, Magnet

◀ Combine two trends in one by teaming a distinctive natural stone-effect finish with must-have modular open shelving

Meteor Nero kitchen, from £10,000, Crown Imperial



EXPERT ADVICE

'The latest faux finishes are perfect for creating a modern design statement without the price tag or maintenance of the real thing. Natural stone effects will add timeless sophistication to the kitchen, and can work equally well when balanced with a neutral shade or paired with more contemporary matt or gloss colours – and don't forget to go handleless for the ultimate luxe feel'

Tony McCarthy, Crown Imperial

► Complete your new look with a show-stopping steel sink and precision-control black tap

Belfast stainless steel sink, £499, Atlas Professional single lever mixer tap in Matt Black, £499, both Abode



KITCHEN TRENDS

◀ Eco-friendly solutions are big news this season, so check out this striking stone-effect cabinetry made using sustainable materials – available in Basalt or Slate

Langham Basalt island unit, from £3,600; **kitchen**, £15,000, both Daval Furniture



▲ Style up those surfaces with the latest solid, non-porous, compact laminates, for a hard-wearing, budget-friendly alternative to stone, marble and concrete worktops

Concrete solid laminate, from £255 per 3m, Worktop Express

◀ Strongly veined marble is a designer must – so take a tip from the professionals and match cabinetry, worktops and splashbacks, then offset with wood-effect tones

Arcos Edition Marmor marble-effect kitchen, from £10,000, Schmidt Kitchens



▲ Add an industrial vibe with a contrasting on-trend, concrete-effect waterfall kitchen island and worktop **Cucina Colore kitchen in Futura Concrete and Tobacco Oak**, from £13,766, Mereway Kitchens

▶ This dark, wood-effect finish brings warmth and texture to the kitchen, and a non-reflective, matt surface means fingerprints are less visible

GoodHome Chia Horizontal Woodgrain, £948 for eight units, B&Q



Essential

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KITCHEN ACCESSORIES



▼ Enjoy a refreshing drink with this recycled gin glass and pitcher
Recycled gin glass, £10; recycled glass pitcher, £20, National Trust



▲ Add a touch of tropical style with a bold leaf-shaped platter
Yolanda leaf platter, £15, Oliver Bonas

▲ A stylish food cover will keep those pesky flies at bay
Green botanical food cover, £6.50, Sainsbury's Home



▼ Embrace everything Italian with this contemporary oil and vinegar bottle combo
Emilia oil and vinegar bottle, £12.50, Oliver Bonas

▼ Upgrade your worktop accessories with a pop of colour
Four-slice NewGen toaster in Mint Green, £195, Dualit



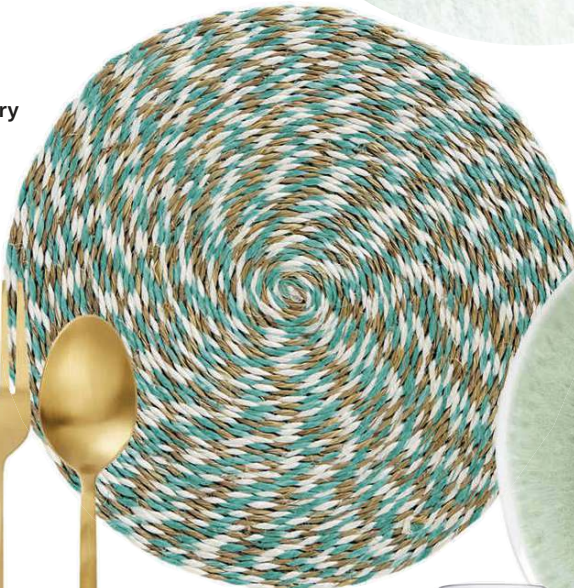
Spring GREENS

Go green in your kitchen with this season's freshest colour



▼ These plant-based dyed cloths will make quick work of the spring clean!
Plant-based dye cleaning cloths, £13 per set of three, National Trust

▼ Gold cutlery tones will complement all types of greenery
Gold cutlery, £16 for a 16-piece set, George Home



▲ This grass-flecked placemat is great for adding texture to your table décor
Woven grass-flecked placemat, £9 each, John Lewis & Partners

► Embrace the great outdoors in your kitchen with a faux houseplant
String of Pearls faux plant, £8, George Home



▲ Get ready to take your dining al fresco with this gorgeous melamine plate design
Modern Country crackle glaze melamine plate, £7, John Lewis & Partners



▲ Celebrate the season of new beginnings with some stylish glasses
Pastel mixer glasses, £8 per set of four, George Home



Feature Matilda Bourne

BUYER'S GUIDE

► Digital mini oven, Lakeland

Price: £149.99

Energy rating: n/a

Capacity: 22.5L

Dimensions: H35cm x W50.5cm x D41cm

If space is at a premium, this free-standing, mini oven could be a good solution. It's also a handy addition to any kitchen if you often find yourself needing some extra cooking space. It has eight cooking modes so offers great flexibility in a small package.



► Beko Select BXIF35300X single oven, Curry's PC World

Price: around £199

Energy rating: A

Capacity: 82L

Dimensions: H59.5cm x W59.4cm x D56.7cm

This affordable fan oven offers everything you need for everyday cooking, with five different functions. All the family favourites will fit in its extra-large capacity, and the full-width grill is a really useful addition.



▼ BI602MFPY built-in multi-function oven, Belling

Price: from around £329.99

Energy rating: A

Capacity: 73L

Dimensions: H59.6cm x W59.5cm x D55.5cm

This model boasts an LED programmable timer, soft-close door, and a variable grill. It also features a pyrolytic function to make cleaning much less of a chore. It's shown here alongside an integrated microwave with a warming drawer beneath.



Cook up a storm WITH A NEW ELECTRIC OVEN

Update the hub of your home with an oven that suits both your lifestyle and your kitchen design

Whether you see yourself as a future *Great British Bake Off* contestant or just enjoy cooking for friends and family, a new oven will help to ensure that all of your culinary creations will be baked to perfection. There's plenty of choice available, from top-of-the-range, technologically advanced designs to more affordable yet highly functional models. So, if your oven isn't working as hard as you'd like it to, read on for some handy information on what to consider when buying one, as well as some of our favourite electric oven buys for every budget.

► Stoves Sterling 600E electric cooker, John Lewis & Partners

Price: £647

Energy rating: A

Capacity: top oven 35L; bottom oven 69L

Dimensions: H90-93cm x W60cm x D60cm

We love the striking black finish of this Stoves design. The top cavity has a conventional electric oven and grill, while the main oven below it provides fanned electric cooking, as well as a defrost option. The ceramic hob has four zones and six heat settings, giving you precise control over your pots and pans.



▲ Rangemaster Classic CLAS60ECCR/C electric cooker, Argos

Price: £629.99

Energy rating: top oven - B; bottom oven - A

Capacity: top oven - 38L; bottom oven - 61L

Dimensions: H89.5cm x W59.5cm x D59.8cm

If you're after for a more classic look, this free-standing model is just the ticket, with its arched baker's window and traditional styling. It boasts a multi-function oven, conventional oven, grill and ceramic hob with four cooking zones. Catalytic liners help to take the hassle out of cleaning.



BUYER'S CHECKLIST

- ✓ **Functionality**
Think carefully about your household's needs before you choose your new oven. For example, if you do very little cooking, it could be a waste of money to splash out on an expensive, all-singing, all-dancing model with more functions than you need.
- ✓ **Cleaning**
If donning the Marigolds to clean the oven is one of your least favourite chores, consider a design which has catalytic or pyrolytic cleaning technology, which will make this task much quicker and easier.
- ✓ **Location**
If you're simply taking out an oven and replacing it with another, then make sure that the dimensions are the same so that it can simply slot in. On the other hand, if you're buying a new oven as part of a complete kitchen refit, you may want to change the layout of your appliances to make your kitchen more of a practical space for cooking. Your kitchen designer will be able to advise you on possible new layouts, or try an useful online planning tool, such as the one on IKEA's website.
- ✓ **Ventilation**
Most oven manufacturers recommend a certain amount of ventilation space at the back of the oven. Your contractor will take this into account when installing your new oven.
- ✓ **Installation**
An electric oven must be hard wired and installed by a qualified electrician. Many appliance retailers offer their own installation service for an additional fee, but you're likely to save money by using a local electrician. Always use an electrician who is NICEIC registered for complete peace of mind.



◀ Aria KFW 3844 H IX built-in single oven, Indesit

Price: from around £269.99

Energy rating: A+

Capacity: 71L

Dimensions: H59.5cm x W59.5cm x D55.1cm

This oven offers features you wouldn't expect at such an affordable price. The Turn&Cook function means that it will cook any one of over 80 recipes perfectly, in just one hour. It also has an EcoClean function which uses the power of steam to help break down food residues, making cleaning much less effort.

▶ Bush DHBEDC50W 50cm electric cooker, Argos

Price: £289.99

Energy rating: main oven A; second oven B

Capacity: top oven 31L; bottom oven 50L

Dimensions: H90cm x W50cm x D60cm

Make light work of busy family mealtimes with this double oven, which has both fan and conventional ovens with easy-clean enamel interiors, as well as a ceramic hob. Its 50cm width makes it an ideal choice for those with smaller kitchens, who don't have the standard 60cm width available.



▲ Absolute AKZ9 6270 IX single multi-function pyrolytic oven, Whirlpool

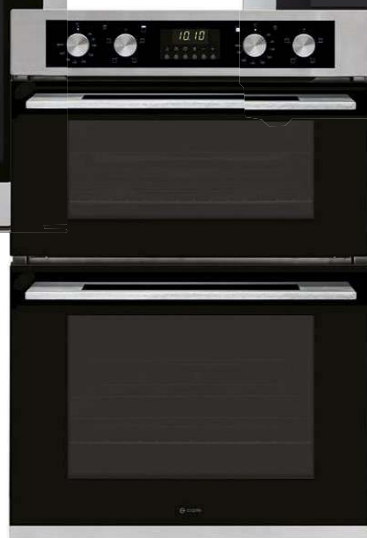
Price: from around £479.99

Energy rating: A+

Capacity: 65L

Dimensions: H59.5cm x W59.5cm x D56.4cm

With a stylish design and great functionality, this single oven benefits from many features and functions to help make life easier in the kitchen, including pyrolytic cleaning. Its 16 different settings, including pizza and bread as well as a conventional oven, make cooking easy and stress-free, while over 30 automatic 6th Sense pre-programmed recipes mean that the oven sets the time and temperature for perfect results. Ready2Cook eliminates the need to pre-heat the oven, and the Cook3 system gives you the freedom to cook up to three dishes at the same time without any mixing of flavours.



▲ C3246 built-in double oven, Caple

Price: from around £748

Energy rating: A

Capacity: top oven 40L; bottom oven 61L

Dimensions: H88.8cm x W59.5cm x D54.6cm

With plenty of functions for all your culinary needs, this double oven also offers a large capacity for family meals. The stainless steel finish, along with a smart LED display and programmable electronic timer, give it a sleek and sophisticated look, while the enamel interior is easy to clean. The top oven offers top heat, base heat, conventional heat and full grill functions, while the bottom cavity has fan heat, turbo grill and turbo defrost.



◀ Electric free-standing cooker, Amica

Price: around £310

Energy rating: A

Capacity: top oven 44L; bottom oven 65L

Dimensions: H90cm x W60cm x D60cm

With a main fan-assisted oven and a second conventional oven with grill, this model offers a good capacity suitable for medium-sized households. Both oven cavities have catalytic liners to aid the cleaning process, while the ceramic hob has residual heat indicators and a temperature limiter for added safety – ideal in a family kitchen.

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HOW TO CLEAN YOUR OVEN *the right way*

Give your oven that long-awaited spring clean with our handy tips and tricks

Before you start handling the cleaning products, make sure your hands and arms are protected with impermeable gloves and arm covers, that your kitchen is well ventilated, and your oven is turned off at the mains. To clean your oven racks, we'd recommend using Lakeland's cleaning trays to allow you to fully submerge them in your cleaning solution, or using the resealable tray bags that come with oven cleaners such as Oven Pride. If your oven racks are only lightly dirty, place them into the tray, cover with warm water and some washing-up liquid, and leave to soak for 30 minutes before then removing the burnt-on food with a damp scourer – we'd recommend the Oven Mate Grill Gremlin sponges from Lakeland. If your racks need a more thorough clean, use your oven cleaner as instructed, either in the tray or in the accompanying bags to remove stubborn stains. Once they are clean, rinse any cleaning products off and leave to dry.

Next, lay a protective cloth underneath your oven door to catch any burnt food. Open the oven and use a dry scourer to brush off any baked-on foods from the main oven cavity.

Apply your oven cleaner to the sides, roof and floor of the oven, making sure it is covered in an even layer. If your oven includes a grill element, then you may be able to move it to clean behind it, if not then avoid the roof of the oven, as well as any gas elements, lights and fans. Leave the cleaning product on for the recommended time, then wipe clean with a damp cloth. For stubborn stains, use a scrubbing brush or a scourer. Finally, dry the oven's interior with a few paper towels or a microfibre cloth.

To clean your oven door, open it flat or remove the glass if your oven allows you to. Use a glass scraper to remove the first layer of burnt-on food. Then cover the door with a glass-safe oven cleaner, leave for the recommended time, and wipe off the product and the dirt with a damp cloth and then wipe the surface dry.

Finish by wiping down the outside of the oven with a regular multi-purpose cleaner and a damp cloth. To get underneath any control knobs, use a cotton bud soaked in warm soapy water and gently swipe the debris away.



Essential equipment

FROM TOP Fast-acting gel oven cleaner, £3.19, Dr Beckmann

Extra-tough outdoor rubber gloves, £3.99, Marigold

Oven Mate Grill Gremlin sponge, £3.49 per pack of two, Lakeland

Oven rack soaking tray, £11.99, Lakeland

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY...



Susan Farmor, Dr Beckmann Spokesperson

'I'd recommend using an active gel that will cling to vertical surfaces such as oven walls and doors to cut through tough burnt-on food, grease and grime to leave your oven sparkling clean.'



Jason Blosser, Laundry Senior Trade Marketing & Category Manager, Whirlpool

'It is a good idea to wipe the oven door whenever necessary to prevent any spills baking on. Doing this at least once a week will help you keep on top of it and avoid greater elbow grease when it comes to giving the oven a deeper clean.'





Soft whites and greys combine to create a restful scheme. Wickes' bathroom paint is designed for rooms exposed to moisture, so you can enjoy a hot soak at the end of the day knowing your walls are covered

Frosted White No. 135 Bathroom Soft Sheen emulsion, £16 per 2.5l; City Statement No. 215 Bathroom Soft Sheen emulsion, £16 per 2.5l, both Wickes

Jazz up your kitchen with a rainbow of pastel colours

Walls: **Lemon Mivvi 195**; units from top left: **Cupboard Green 201**; **Spearmint 202**; **Milk Thistle 187**; worktop: **Grace 193**, all absolute matt emulsion, £45 per 2.5l, Little Greene

Essential guide to KITCHEN AND BATHROOM PAINT

We've lifted the lid on this speciality paint from our favourite brands so you can decorate with confidence

Washable, mould-resistant and with a gorgeous matt finish, Farrow & Ball's modern emulsion is perfect for the demands of a kitchen, while this blue, marble and copper combination is bang on trend

De Nimes No. 299 modern emulsion, £46.50 per 2.5l, Farrow & Ball

With so many paints on the market, it's easy to get confused about what you should be using and where. Kitchens and bathrooms are the busiest rooms in the house, tackling grease, mould, moisture and steam on a daily basis, so it's important to arm the walls with the best defences possible. These specific paints boast properties that can deal with these elements head-on so you don't have to worry about redecorating each season. Check out these eye-catching colours, clever schemes and impressive paints to help you keep your kitchen and bathroom looking at their best for longer.



With anti-mould technology and a 99% solvent-free formulation in 16 different shades, Crown's bathroom paint will allow you to be bold and creative all in one go

Crown Bathroom Breatheasy Soft Duck Egg mid-sheen paint and Crown Bathroom Breatheasy Soft Steel mid-sheen paint, both from £20 per 2.5l, Crown Paints

KITCHEN AND BATHROOM PAINT

We love this deep, rich colour of Valspar's V500 kitchen paint – plus it's mould-resistant and can stand up to the knocks and scuffs of family life

Velvet Curtains V500 Kitchen paint, £27 per 2.5l, Valspar

Carry your colours around the room, such as on furniture, for a coordinated look.



'The way we decorate our kitchens and bathrooms has changed over the years to suit the needs of the modern home. Perfect for decorating your kitchen or bathroom, our Modern range has been developed to better cope with the scuffs, stains and spills of life. Durable and versatile, Modern Emulsion is perfect for the walls, whereas Modern Eggshell is great for woodwork. It combines a sophisticated matt finish with a tough formula that's washable, wipeable and mould-resistant.'

Charlotte Crosby,
Head of Creative, Farrow & Ball



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW...

Mark Bannister, Technical Expert at Crown Paints, gives us the low-down on the properties of specialist kitchen and bathroom paint and why it's a must-buy for these demanding rooms.

'Crown Paints' unique Anti-bacterial+ formulation is designed specifically for kitchens. In a high-traffic area with surfaces frequently covered in cooking stains and greasy films, your walls can take a lot of abuse. However our range of hard-wearing paints will ensure your kitchen remains fresher for longer. Made with a formula that can kill 99% of household germs on paint surfaces, it keeps harmful bacteria and smells from lingering on the walls too. It is also extremely durable, meaning surfaces can be wiped down regularly while maintaining the colour and finish. Crown's range of kitchen paints also comes with the Breatheasy formula which eliminates the 'toxic, freshly painted' smell that could linger, allowing you to get back into the room on the same day, providing the paint has dried. There are subtle differences with Crown's bathroom paint range, with a carefully considered palette full of muted and calming colours. Crown's Bathroom mid-sheen emulsion collection comes with a Mouldguard+ formulation that resists steam and condensation to prevent mould growth and to keep bathroom walls looking fresh and cleaner for longer. It is easy to maintain and doesn't require frequent redecorating as, like the kitchen range, it is highly durable and can withstand daily wiping down and excess condensation.'

Feature Lara Berry

▼ Dulux's Easycare Bathroom+ paint protects against mould for five years and with their paint mixing technology there's a whole host of colours you can choose from to create that perfect retreat

Paint Mixing Easycare Bathroom+ Soft Sheen in Restful Slumber, Sea Urchin 1 and Nigerian Sands 6, £33.32 per 2.5l, Dulux



▲ We love the deep, rich tones of this wall colour, ideal for a kitchen full of style and warmth. The unique clay recipe of Earthborn's paints means it's hard-wearing and highly breathable – and it's a great choice for allergy and asthma sufferers too

Ladybug Claypaint, £43 per 2.5l, Earthborn

► Use paint to zone areas of your kitchen – the wipeable properties of Crown's kitchen paint makes it the perfect splashback solution

Crown Breatheasy Kitchen Lemon Squash matt paint, from £20 per 2.5l; Crown Breatheasy Kitchen Splash of Pepper matt paint, from £20 per 2.5l; Crown Breatheasy Kitchen Marble Top matt paint, from £20 per 2.5l; Crown Breatheasy Soft Shadow standard emulsion matt paint, from £14 per 2.5l, all Crown Paints



FLOORING

Vinyl is an affordable option for bathrooms, and what's not to love about it with patterns such as this subtle hexagonal design?

Essential Mehndi dark vinyl flooring, £18.95 per sq m, Lifestyle Floors

Great buy

Achieve a period-style feature floor with decorative porcelain mosaic tiles. Then all you need is a roll-top bath to complete the look!

Churchill Snow and Midnight Chequer mosaic tiles, £5.95 per 29.1cm x 29.1cm sheet, Walls and Floors

TRANSFORM YOUR SPACE WITH NEW FLOORING

A new kitchen or bathroom can be a big investment, so why not consider replacing the floor for a more affordable makeover?

Bargain buy

We love the neat, structured circle pattern of this chic, modern vinyl, which is sure to make an impact in any contemporary kitchen. It's also slip-resistant, making it an ideal choice for high-traffic areas such as kitchens and bathrooms

Mardi Gras 95 Dots vinyl, £15.99 per sq m, Carpetright

These high-quality porcelain tiles have a decorative parquet-effect pattern and will make a style statement in any space

Antoinette Parquet Maple Jazz wood tiles, £69.95 per sq m, Walls and Floors

FLOORING

One are the days when flooring was just a practical surface in your home – now the latest designs, materials and colours mean that it can play an important part in your décor scheme. From stunning porcelain tiles to wood-effect, water-resistant laminate, there are plenty of options which make it easy to create a real statement in your kitchen or bathroom, without spending a fortune. So, take a look at these great ideas, along with some expert advice to help you make the best choice.

Introduce the warmth of wood, without the hefty price tag, with this wide plank laminate which is finished with knot and grain detail for an authentic look. Its 4V groove edging means that every plank has a bevelled edge, and the 5G clicking system makes it easy to install, ensuring that each plank simply slots into place

Tegola Soft Oak Nature laminate, £14.99 per sq m, Carpetright

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Luxury vinyl flooring in Classic Oak, £39.99 per sq m, the LayRed collection by Moduleo

Metropolis Star Black tiles, £24.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain

Signature laminate in Painted Oak White and Painted Oak black, both £29.99 per sq m, Quick-Step

Andie Rural Oak tile, £54.81 per sq m, Topps Tiles

Churchill Snow and Midnight Chequer mosaic tiles, £5.95 per 29.1cm x 29.1cm sheet, Walls and Floors

Heritage Hatfield 31.6cm x 31.6cm ceramic tiles, £4.29 each, Tons of Tiles

Luxury vinyl flooring in Fairground, £59.95 per sq m, Atralfloor

BUYER'S CHECKLIST



David Snazel, Buyer for Hard Flooring at Carpetright, offer this handy checklist on what to consider when choosing flooring:

Kitchens usually see a lot of traffic, so always opt for a slip-resistant, durable flooring that is low maintenance, easy to clean and will stand the test of time.

Laminate flooring is a durable, practical and affordable option for kitchens. The effects laminates can create, such as wood, slate and stone, are incredibly realistic.

Many laminates are ideal for DIY installation. Carpetright laminate flooring is installed using a click system, meaning installation is easy and there is no need for adhesive.

Bear in mind that not all laminates are suitable for use in a kitchen or bathroom as moisture can cause them to warp.

Prioritising safety in the **bathroom** is essential, so consider how practical and slip-resistant flooring is before you invest. Opt for easy care, low-maintenance designs.

Vinyl flooring is stylish, affordable and highly water-resistant. Modern vinyls can recreate realistic effects such as tile or wood. It's a great choice for busy families as it is durable, while at the same time being soft and warm underfoot.

Luxury vinyl emulates more expensive design styles, while being practical and durable. Just as easy to maintain as vinyl flooring, luxury vinyl is also compatible with under-floor heating – perfect for keeping your toes warm in the bathroom.

For the luxury look of marble at a more affordable price, try this porcelain design, which creates an elegant, on-trend look and is offered in a choice of three sizes

Torrano Calacatta tiles, £45.49 per sq m, Topps Tiles

THIS YEAR'S HOTTEST bathroom trends

Switching up your scheme? Find inspiration from our round-up of the key looks for 2020

DOUBLE TAKE

If you need to speed up your routine, side-by-side basins are a growing trend for 2020. 'Twin basins are ideal for a busy family bathroom,' says Ian Parkinson, senior product manager at Bathrooms to Love, 'and when teamed with a vanity unit, you double up on storage space and keep clutter to a minimum. Dual basins also create a luxurious boutique-hotel feel, especially if you opt for striking shapes and finishes.' Whether you choose an all-in-one or separate units, there is a wide choice of designs and finishes to suit your room.

▼ **Rosie mirror** (with front lit LED and touch sensor), £375; **Morina 600mm wall-hung modular vanity units in Elm Grey**, £295 each; **White gloss laminate worktop**, from £40; **Layla wash bowls**, £215 each; **Morina wall-hung tall unit**, £265; **Wall-mounted Primo basin mixers**, £115 each; **Primo floor-standing mixer**, £350, all Bathrooms to Love

Luxe for less

◀ **Bathstore Aero basin mixer tap in Brushed Brass**, £120, Homebase



▲ **Mode Spencer square gold basin mixer tap**, £59.99, Victoria Plum



▲ **Hoxton Sim basin mixer in Brushed Brass**, £159; **Shoreditch 100cm double drawer matt blue unit with worktop**, £949, both Britton Bathrooms

◀ **Mode Spencer gold free-standing bath filler tap**, £379, Victoria Plum

THE NEW TWIST ON TAPS

One easy and affordable way to elevate a tired bathroom is to update brassware – and the latest gold trend will give any space a luxe finish. 'Gold is the new chrome,' says Nicky Kingston, resident visual stylist at Victoria Plum. 'People want to add an elegant touch and gold adds richness to any scheme. This look is great when paired with stronger, organic textures such as stone, quartz and marble. Gold also injects warmth, so if you're looking for a cosy yet elegant bathroom this is the perfect choice.'



BOOST YOUR TILE STYLE

With so many homeowners looking for a timeless look that won't date, it's not surprising that plain white tiles are leading the design popularity stakes on Instagram. Easy to team while giving the illusion of space, these fresh neutrals tick all the boxes for classic and practical style. For instant 'wow'-factor, use bold geometric patterns – they're a huge trend right now. 'Geo designs allow you to play with proportions by creating a sense of depth,' says Harriet Goodacre, brand communications manager at Topps Tiles. 'Use intricate or tessellating patterns to inject added interest into your room; and classic black and white combinations never go out of style.'



Classic style



Insta-worthy

Swing décor night and day tiles, £28.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain

◀ **Metro white tile**, £19.50 per sq m, Topps Tiles

▼ **Mr Jones azure tiles**, £17.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain

Hexagon white lustre tiles, £24.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
Hester ocean tile, £14.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain

Hester silver tile, £14.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain

Illusion white gloss marble-effect tiles, £11.88 per sq m, B&Q

Brixton tile, £60 per sq m, Topps Tiles

Feature Alice Butler

BATHROOM TRENDS



▲ **Dark tropical leaves mural**, £27 per sq m, Wallsauce

◀ **Avola close coupled WC and basin cloakroom suite**, £209.97, Bathroom Takeaway

▶ **Victoria basin**, £285; **Abingdon washstand in Vintage Gold**, £500; **Hartlebury taps in Vintage Gold**, £395; **mirror**, £145, all Heritage Bathrooms



▶ **Arthouse tropical palm wallpaper**, £13 for a 10m roll, Wilko

▶ **Hummingbird tropical wallpaper in navy**, £10.99 for a 10m roll, Cult Furniture

PALM PARTY

According to Pinterest's recent top trends report, searches for statement wallpaper grew by 401 percent last year with lush, tropical prints leading the way. Charlie Williams, interior designer at Heritage Bathrooms, says to 'take inspiration from nature and opt for deep greens. Rich shades including hunter and emerald are perfect for creating a contemporary look with a traditional feel. Bring your bathroom to life with high-shine tiles and opulent exposed brassware. Use wallpaper to push the boundaries and create a statement by pasting it on the ceiling, too.'

Insta-worthy

Design+ Chrome 900mm hinged door, £545; **Design+** Chrome 900mm side panel, £295; **Wisp** Chrome thermostatic shower valve with two-way diverter, £449; **MPRO** chrome wall outlet single mode handset and hose, £149; **MPRO** chrome showerhead 300mm, £205; **MPRO** chrome ceiling shower arm, all Crosswater





▲ **Bathstore Noir frame with basin**, £1,000; **Bathstore Noir twin handle basin mixer**, £200; **Bathstore Noir bottle trap**, £100; **Bathstore Noir rectangular mirror**, £230; **Bathstore Noir shelving unit**, £300, all Homebase

MOODY HUES

If you're after a dramatic scheme, you'll love the new rich-toned interiors which have grown out of a trend for navy walls and black ceilings, says Victoria Plum's resident visual stylist Nicky Kingston. 'It's a luxurious statement look that creates a relaxing ambience when paired with considered feature lighting. It doesn't stop at wall coverings: be brave and team a black vanity or a rich-coloured bath (think moss green or navy blue) with a dark tone wall, or calm it down against a lighter shade with opulent texture.'

Quick update

Bathroom emulsion in Tin Bath, from £20 for 2.5l, Crown Paints

► **Matt emulsion in Charcoal Drift**, £27.56 for 2.5l, Dulux

► **Matt emulsion in Sea Urchin**, £27.56 for 2.5l, Dulux

Luxe for less

► **Loft wooden cylindrical faux**, £10, Sainsbury's Home

TOUGH LOVE

Graphic, strong and bold, the industrial look is really gathering momentum. Nicky Kingston, resident visual stylist at Victoria Plum, notes: 'We've seen a swift turn in interiors to the minimal styling of the industrial look. Slim black frames, elegant matt black taps and bold anthracite heated towel rails are becoming very popular. People are shying away from chrome and braving a statement finish. For a complete scheme you can find a whole collection of taps, enclosures, heating, mirrors and more.'



► **Tavistock Haze basin mixer black tap**, from £131.50, Roper Rhodes

Quick update

► **Blyss matt black towel warmer**, £62, B&Q

▼ **Matt black tumbler**, £3; **dispenser**, £5, both Sainsbury's Home



Mode Hale grey gloss double vanity unit with ceramic countertop and basins, £623.20, Victoria Plum





SHOWER SPELLS

With more of us embracing a modern minimalist look, sleek walk-in enclosures have surged in popularity. 'They're so versatile,' says Barry Hoyne, commercial director at Merlyn. 'Creating beautiful open spaces in any size of bathroom, their accessibility makes them a good futureproof choice and they're easy to clean.' If you're looking for a quick update, opt for an easy-install retrofit design, such as Grohe's digital Rainshower SmartConnect which has a range of sprays you can tailor to your mood. And keep an eye out for the dual shower micro trend – it's officially a 'thing', according to Zoe Jones, visual content manager at Roper Rhodes.

SAVVY STORAGE

Modern homes might be shrinking, but storage design is keeping pace to help us capitalise on compact floorplans. Cue streamlined fitted furniture, cabinets with integral lighting and organised drawers with dividers and secret compartments where we can neatly stash essentials. Brands such as B&Q are keeping rental tenants in mind too, devising covetable free-standing solutions that can be packed up when it's time to move on.

▼ **Semi recessed basin unit in White**, £279; **tall unit 300mm in White**, £379; **back-to-wall WC unit with dual flush**, £349, all Britton Bathrooms

▲ **Showerwall**, from £337.61, Merlyn

Micro trend

► **Dual Wessex Shower Systems**, from £580 each, Roper Rhodes



◀ **Good Home Adriska White & Natural storage unit**, £85, B&Q

► **Green speckle tumbler**, £3; **dispenser**, £5, both George Home

▼ **Senzo modular vanity unit 900mm with sit-in basin in White Mountain Larch and Denim Blue**, £595, all Bathrooms to Love



BATHROOM TRENDS

◀ **Bathroom emulsion in Linen Cupboard and Tin Bath**, both from £20.50 for 2.5l, Crown Paints

BIG SOFTIES

A luxurious, free-standing bath makes for the ultimate focal point and oval shapes are flying out of bathroom showrooms. 'A free-standing design draws the eye and makes for a centrepiece in any modern scheme,' notes Ian Parkinson, senior product manager at Bathrooms to Love. 'It's a must-have for anyone wanting to create a spa-style scheme and really makes a statement.' If you're short on space, check out the growing choice of 1300mm compact designs, then complete the look with one of the latest floor-mounted filler taps.

◀ **Chalk paint in Svenska Blue**, £19.95 per litre, Annie Sloan

◀ **Matt emulsion in Soft Stone**, £29.16 for 2.5l, Dulux

▼ **Belmont free-standing bath**, £930, Bathrooms to Love



▲ **Good Home Bathroom Soft Sheen emulsion in Merida**, £16 for 2.5l, B&Q

▶ **Trailing plant and hanging basket**, £8, Sainsbury's Home

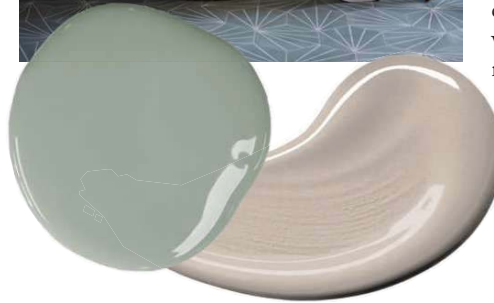
▼ **VEMA Timea black floor-standing bath shower mixer**, £1,200, Bathrooms to Love

CURVES AHEAD

At the paler end of the colour spectrum compared to the dark hues seen on page 23 is a more gentle palette for spring/summer 2020. Think soft greys, pinks and greens, such as Dulux's Colour of the Year Tranquil Dawn which, according to the brand, is 'reminiscent of the horizon on a hazy spring morning.' Over at Crown, colour consultant Judy Smith advises on choosing hues 'inspired by the natural environment. Deep and mid-grey work in harmony to open up the space and lend a stylish, pared-back look, perfect for rest and relaxation.'



▶ **Lyla side table**, £30, Matalan



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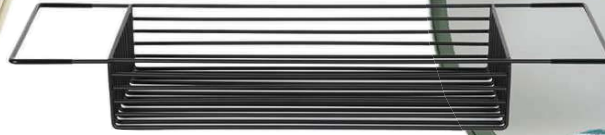
▲ Create a timeless bathroom design with subtle grey and marble accents
Deuce wall light IP44 in Grey and Marble, £138, Dār Lighting

▼ Leave your bathroom feeling fragrant all day long with a gorgeous reed diffuser
Wildflower reed diffuser, £27, The White Company



► Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?
Vogue round wall mirror in Jade Green, £59, Cult Furniture

▼ Show off your lotions and potions with a chic bath tray
Calypso wire bath tray in black, £20, Made



► Brighten up your towel rack by opting for a clean geometric pattern
Geo bath towel in teal, £7, George Home



Modern MINIMALISM

◀ Decorative ladders are a super stylish alternative to standard towel rails

Black bamboo decorative ladder, £48, Rose & Grey

▼ Opt for accessories in calm, mute tones for a relaxed bathroom design
Revive bathroom sign, £8, George Home

Maximise your minimalist décor with these top bathroom accessories



▲ Organise your toiletries with a slogan washbag

Dirtbag canvas wash bag in grey, £22, Alphabet Bags at Etsy

◀ Complement your bathroom's white porcelain with an array of cool blue and teal tones

Blue striped bath mat, £9, George Home

► Get a good look with this wooden close-up mirror
Magnify close-up mirror, £83, Nest



▲ Introduce some texture to your accessories with a minimalist terrazzo design

Speckle black soap dispenser, £10, Habitat

◀ Upgrade your towel hooks and create a chic industrial style

Black metal and wood hook, £8, Sainsbury's Home



► Pop this tiered tray next to your bath and keep all your products in easy reach!

Round wooden three-tiered tray, £160, Nest



BATHROOM STORAGE SOLUTIONS



◀ This handy shower caddy can attach around the shower head or over the shower door. Made from flexible silicone, it's a solution for storing toiletries right where you need them

Umbra Flex shower caddy, £25, Red Candy

▼ We love the curves on this unit, plus combining a mirror and shelf storage in one makes it a must-have piece

Gold shelf, £18, George Home



Laundry boxes and baskets in coordinating prints will give your storage a coherent look

Patterned storage tray, £7; laundry bin, £12; towels, from £5; bath mat, £9; soap dispenser, £5; tumbler, £3, all Matalan



STORE AND ORDER

Ensure your bathroom is clutter-free with these handy solutions that will make your morning routine a breeze

Often the smallest room in the house, our bathrooms have to work hard for all the family, so it's no wonder that they can become chaotic and messy. This month, spend a little time considering the different solutions that can help your bathroom routine go from unruly to dreamy in no time, from free-standing solutions and wall-mounted cabinets, to colourful baskets and handy caddies. It's also a great opportunity to have an overhaul of the items you store in this hard-working room. Throw out old, half-used products that you haven't touched in months, and store your daily essentials together in an easy-reach solution. Move less frequently used items to a cabinet and store cleaning products neatly out of sight too. It's amazing the potential you'll unlock after a great sort out and investing in some new, sleek storage. Check out some of our favourite buys...

◀ Slimline, free-standing units come into their own in the bathroom. Open shelving and cupboards with doors allow you to display your favourite finds and hide away those unsightly essentials

Nomad tallboy cabinet, £120, Argos

▼ If you're always searching for somewhere to store the spare toilet rolls then this is the solution for you!

Shearan the Sheep toilet roll holder, £25, Red Candy

▼ Make use of that wasted space underneath your basin with this decorative unit that simply slides into place

Under sink cabinet, £230, Next



► Ensure your bathroom works for you and your family by putting every inch to good use – consider free-standing units, wall-hung shelving, baskets and hooks to keep your space clutter-free

Bali leaning bookcase, £149; Umbra hub round mirror black, £150, all John Lewis & Partners

▼ A bath rack is a great addition not only while you're enjoying a soak in the tub, but you can store all of your bathing essentials here so everything is to hand whenever you're in need of some me-time

Bath rack, £10; Hygge candle blush pink, £5; Elements blush tumbler, £5; Zen bubble glass tumbler, £4, all Dunelm



◀ Fix this wall-mounted cabinet above the sink to make the most practical use of your space and store your everyday necessities neatly inside
Hemnes mirror cabinet with one door, £90, IKEA

▼ Ideal for a rustic bathroom, these baskets will keep knick-knacks tidy
Three-drawer wicker storage unit, £27.99, Von Haus

▼ Add a splash of colour with these baskets made from 100% recycled plastic bottles
Shell, gooseberry and teal braided baskets, from £15, Weaver Green

WHAT TO CONSIDER...

Lisa Cherry, Bathshop Buyer & Partner at John Lewis & Partners, shares her top advice for ensuring your bathroom is a clear and organised space.

'With the average UK bathroom size being approximately the size of a double bed, making the most of this space is essential. Investing in storage that works hard for you and your family's needs will help make the bathroom look and feel organised and uncluttered. Ensure there's a place for everything with well-organised drawers or cabinets; consider small caddies to help keep toiletries and cleaning products separate and accessible; and opt for shower baskets to keep your everyday toiletries within reach while in the bath or shower. Consider separate drawers or baskets for each family member so they have their own space to keep morning routines swift and easy. Illuminated cabinets offer great storage, as well as providing an additional light source in the bathroom.

In a compact bathroom, towel ladders offer plenty of storage with a minimal footprint, giving the illusion of greater floor space. Use door hooks for dressing gowns or bath robes. For those who have a little more room to play with, a tall free-standing unit is a great way to house spare towels and display your favourite beauty essentials. It's also a great spot for adding a touch of colour and interest with a plant or two. Go for glass to make it feel more spacious!'

Feature Lara Berry





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London - Richmond	0208 3329166
London - Watford	01923 369706
Melksham	07500 520140
Polegate	01323 409222
Purbeck	01929 422345
Salisbury	01722 328777
Seaton	01297 22559
Sherborne	01935 817111
Storrington	01903 741004
Tiverton	01884 251675
Tring	01442 827997
Trowbridge	01225 759800
Wadebridge	01208 813231
Waterlooville	02392 176380
Whitstable	01843 593069
Winscombe	01934 844144
Witney	01993 704105
Wokingham	0118 9783393
Worthing	01903 201901

Wales

Aberdare	01685 813869
Abergavenny	01873 850911
Cardiff East	02920 485888
Cardiff West	02920 593969
Dyffryn Ardudwy	01341 242015
Haverfordwest	01437 765814
Hay-on-Wye	01497 821374
Nefyn	01758 721081
Newport	01633 252187
St Asaph	01745 582786
Swansea	01792 790088

Channel Islands & Isle of Man

Guernsey	01481 710500
Isle of Man	01624 623222
Jersey	01534 865750

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*Price does not include appliances, worktops, sink, taps, flooring or lighting.