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Welcome

Isn't it funny, no matter how many years ago you left school, **September always comes with an air of new beginnings and fresh starts.**

Whether it's the kids going back to school, the older ones leaving home and heading off to Uni, or just us grown-ups fancying a new lunchbox for work or a fresh new look for our home. So if you've got the itch to make a few changes around your home, **we've made sure there's plenty to inspire you in this issue.** On page 36 we take a look

at **the hottest trends on the high street** for the coming season. From **cosy woodland touches**, **glamorous metallics** mixed with sultry dark tones, chic and **simple Scandi-inspired pieces** or **flamboyant florals**, we're sure you'll find something you'll want to add to your home to freshen it up for the months ahead.

And, if your kitchen or bathroom floor needs a bit of an update, then check out our **guide to the latest flooring designs** that are

both pretty and practical (p.48). Don't forget to check out our **gorgeous bathroom makeovers** too for even more **great ideas to steal** (p.24).

Meanwhile, if your kids have flown the nest, and you're **considering downsizing**, then do **read our essential guide** on page 106 to see if it's right for you. Even if you're not planning any major decorating projects this month, you can still get in the 'back to school' spirit, with our **brilliant recipe ideas** (p.100). Go on treat yourself to a new lunchbox and spoil yourself with our **tasty lunchbox treats!**

Anna-Lisa



Here's our Craft Editor Sophie adding the final touches to this month's craft shoot. See the finished projects on page 60.



Our Deputy Editor Lara has been checking out this autumn's hottest new home trends. Find out more on page 36.

Go digital...

Download our app version for your mobile, tablet or PC and you can take *Your Home* with you on the go. See page 86.



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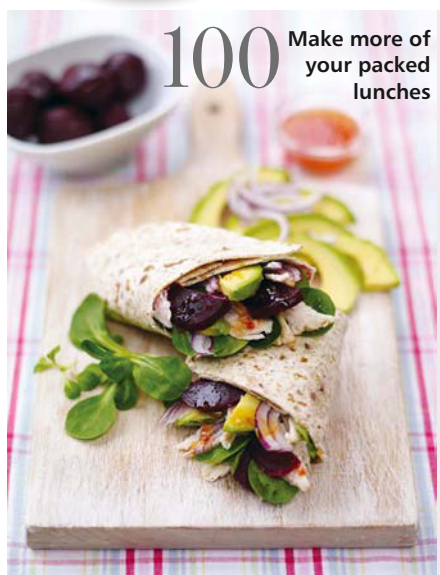
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Have you **missed an issue?**
Call **01206 851117** to order backcopies

You dream, we deliver

A black clawfoot bathtub with chrome fixtures is shown in a bathroom setting. A wooden chair is visible to the right. A teal starburst graphic is overlaid on the image, containing text about the price of roll top baths.

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Handmade haven

Back for its second year, The Handmade Fair will be at Hampton Court Palace from 18th-20th September with countless stalls, exhibitors and supplies to get your creative juices flowing. Host and crafty queen, Kirstie Allsopp, will be on hand to offer crafting tips and inspiration and she'll be joined by the likes of Annie Sloan and cake baker extraordinaire Fiona Cairns who'll also be hosting workshops. Plus, there will be lots of amazing food and drink on offer for when you're feeling all crafted out. Full Experience tickets cost from £26 and include a Super Theatre session, Skills Workshop and a Grand Make. Find out more at www.thehandmadefair.com.

Reader
treat

We have 10 pairs of Full Experience day tickets to give away to lucky readers.

To enter, send your name, address and contact details to Your Home September Handmade giveaway, HBM UK, The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester, Essex, CO4 9HU, before 20th August 2015.

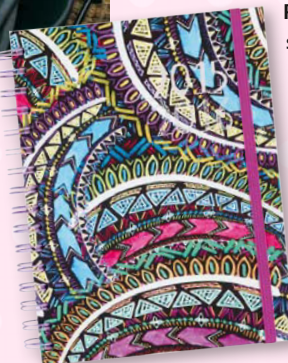
Top of the class

This month, send the kids back to school with some stylish supplies that will have them counting down the days until term time.

Paperchase's stationery and accessories never disappoint and their latest collection is as fun as we'd hoped. Our favourite is the Wild Aztec collection,

with Aztec-inspired prints in bright colours on everything from diaries to lunch bags.

Wild Aztec lunch bag, £12; Wild Aztec mid year diary, £8, both Paperchase



This month *we love...*

Make the most of September with the best things to do, see and buy this month For stockists see page 120

Hidden gem:

Joules 'Beside the Seaside'

Your Home favourite, Joules, has opened up its first ever concept store, meaning you can browse and buy its gorgeous homewares, clothing and accessories while still enjoying the charming atmosphere of an independent shop. 'Beside the Seaside' opened in March and has become a must-visit spot for coastal-inspired gifts and homewares. You'll find Joules' signature hand-drawn prints on everything from cushions to kitchen accessories and there's even a range of seaside must-haves, including postcards and buckets and spades, to make your visit there really feel like a holiday. Drop by the store at 72 High Street, Southwold, Suffolk, IP18 6DN.



GREAT IDEAS FOR...

Retro revival

The Goodwood Revival Meeting takes place from 11th-13th September this year. Get in the spirit with our retro-inspired home accessories

► Indulge your sweet tooth with this colourful biscuit jar

Ben de Lisi Home biscuit jar, £16, Debenhams

▼ Serve up retro snacks on this quirky plate

Flamingo serving plate, £14, Rose & Grey



► Brighten up your walls with this vintage sign

Ice cream and fancy cake wooden board, £29.95, Dotcomgiftshop



► Be on time and on-trend with this wooden clock

Wooden clock, £10, Wilko

▼ This set would make a great gift or home office pick-me-up

Kellogg's milk carton notebook set, £9.99, Truffle Shuffle



Time for tea

The kids are back at school and the autumn weather is just around the corner, meaning there's only one way to spend your afternoon – with a steaming pot of your favourite tea.

The new 'Tea for One' set from Cornishware includes a small Betty teapot and cup and saucer in the company's signature striped stoneware and would make the perfect gift for tea lovers. What's more, the teapot can be personalised with up to 12 letters, at £1 extra per letter. We'll be hinting heavily for this little set.



Tea for One set, £30, Cornishware

You've got mail

If any of your loved ones have a special occasion or milestone on the horizon, step away from the e-card

and make sure you send them a card that's extra special. Online card boutique, Cardology, specialises in Kirigami greeting cards that are individually laser cut to produce delicate, intricate designs that will knock the socks off a regular greeting card. The range covers everything from birthdays to graduation and they've just introduced some fun, new designs that include this adorable card featuring a taxi cab and London landmarks – miles better than a message landing in their inbox.



London taxi card, £5.50, Cardology

Organise your home

Whether you're a domestic goddess or cleaning novice, we bet you'll wonder what you ever did without this book. Keeping House by Cindy Harris, is a one-stop guide to cleaning and organising your home in a way that won't make it feel like a chore. There are sections on everything from stain removal to organising your kitchen shelves, and even daily, weekly and annual checklists to keep you on top of things.



Reader offer

We have five copies of Keeping House to give away to lucky readers. To enter send your name, address and contact details to Your Home September Keeping House giveaway, HBM UK, The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester, Essex, CO4 9HU, before 30th September 2015.



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Protect it this National Home Security Month

Whether you live in a city flat or a cottage by the sea, there is nothing more important than feeling safe and secure in your own home.

National Home Security Month is a nationwide initiative designed to raise awareness of the importance of home security during the dark autumn and winter months when crime levels increase.

Offering tips and advice on all aspects of security, it is designed to help keep you, your family, and your possessions safe, no matter where you call home.

To find out more, visit homesecuritymonth.com or search for National Home Security Month on Facebook and Twitter.



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GET IN TOUCH

Your letters

We answer your questions and discover what you've been up to this month...

Seaside study

Q I've been painting furniture for about six months, but had only attempted small projects until my mum asked me to update a 1970s G Plan unit for my dad's study. After reading your 'Life's a beach' feature in the June 2015 issue (page 42) I was inspired to update the unit in a nautical style. I painted it in duck egg blue and stencilled some anchors and yachts onto it before applying a coat of wax. The unit takes pride of place in my dad's study and I now have the confidence to keep challenging myself with the items I paint.

Samantha Feather, via email



Your Home says You've done a fantastic job with this, Samantha. We love the beach hut paper you've used to line the back of the cupboards and bet your dad is thrilled with the finished result. We look forward to seeing your next project!

Blooming marvellous

Q I loved your 'Household Hint' on how to get the most from an inexpensive bunch of flowers in your June issue (page 13) and thought I'd give it a go. I used a selection of old jars and bottles, decoupaged them with some lovely vintage graphics and then added a few stems of flowers to make this windowsill arrangement. It brightens up my kitchen and the scent is gorgeous. Thank you so much for the inspiration!

Di Griffiths, Warrington

Your Home says What a lovely display! This is a great idea and goes to show you don't need to spend a fortune to add style to your home.



Get online

 Tweet us your pictures and comments @your_home or like our Facebook page 
www.facebook.com/yourhomemag

Pallet pride

Q I took inspiration from Cara Taylor's living room makeover in the April issue of *Your Home* (page 28) to make my own pallet coffee table. My husband sourced a pallet from work and trimmed the width for me. I then sanded it, applied four coats of Wilko satin wood stain in Medium Oak, with light sanding in between coats, and bought four 4-inch casters from eBay to finish it off. I think it looks really smart and the kids love how it can be wheeled to different areas!

Lisa Brown, Brighouse

Your Home says We love the idea of upcycling wooden pallets and you've done an amazing job with this one, Lisa. We're sure it'll take pride of place in your living room for years to come.

YOUR HOME NEEDS YOU!

We love to hear what you've been up to, so send us your letters, tips and photos and you could win up to £120 of WallpaperDirect vouchers.



Laura
Editorial Assistant

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I have just finished reading your May issue, having bought it on impulse when I was shopping and found I only had £2.50 left on me.

I went for what I could afford – what a stroke of luck I didn't have £5 – and

I have to say that *Your Home* impressed me so much. It's full of loads of great ideas, upcycling tips, inspired, tasteful colour schemes and all the homes featured look like real people live there, which is sadly not usually the case. So thank you, you have a new reader and I will be sure to pass my copy along to my creative friends – once I've re-read it!

Jennie Morris, via email



Your Home says This made the *Your Home* team's day, Jennie! It's great to hear such lovely feedback and lucky for us you like a bargain as much as we do. Hopefully you'll enjoy this issue just as much.

Jennie's letter won £120 of WallpaperDirect vouchers. Send us your views, thoughts and ideas and you could be next month's winner.



SEND YOUR TIPS, PHOTOS AND LETTERS TO:
Letters Editor, *Your Home*, Hubert Burda Media UK,
The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester, Essex CO4 9HU
or email yourhome@burdamagazines.co.uk

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Our Letter of the Month will win £120 of WallpaperDirect vouchers, plus every letter printed will receive a £20 WallpaperDirect voucher to be spent online.
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HOW TO... go paperless

If piles of paperwork are overwhelming your office space it might be time to go digital, and free-up your desk. You will, however, need to keep some stuff on good old-fashioned paper. Here's how to get started ...

- ✓ There are some things that you will need to keep hard copies of. These include personal documents such as birth and marriage certificates; deeds; loan and mortgage documents; warranties; pay, P60 and P45 slips.
- ✓ Request PDF versions of insurance certificates and ask for paperless billing on your household bills so you can view them online rather than having them posted. You can also request to view your bank statements online, unless you need to complete a tax return, for which you will need hard copies.
- ✓ Set up a filing system on your computer for bills, statements and certificates, with different folders for each type of document, as you would have done with your paper versions. Then within each folder create another for the year, or even the month. It will make it much easier when it comes to locating them.
- ✓ Unless you need to complete a tax return, keep a year's worth of bank statements, bills and payslips (until you receive your next P60). If you are self-employed then you should keep them for longer. Mortgage and any pension or investment documents should be kept indefinitely, as should P60 and P45 slips. Once you've sold a car and it's in the new owner's name, then you can destroy any servicing details and MOT certificates. Likewise, once an insurance policy has been terminated, or a switch is fully completed, then you can destroy the documents.
- ✓ Always backup your computer files to an external hard drive in case anything should go wrong with your computer or laptop.

Laura's choice



'Ideal for a lazy weekend breakfast, this elegant cafetière has double wall insulation to keep tea and coffee up to 18% hotter than a conventional glass cafetière, allowing you to enjoy your brew at a more leisurely pace. The dual-filter also reduces sediment, for a smoother ground coffee or loose-leaf tea.'

Dual-filter cafetière, £49.95, Dualit



Q&A

There are so many cleaning cloths available these days, all for different tasks, what do I actually need?

A pack of multi-purpose micro-fibre cloths should see you through most household chores, but there are a few specifics that will make

some tasks easier. A thick micro-fibre cloth is great for dusting and buffing surfaces; for kitchens choose something spongy for absorbing spills; a cloth with a non-scratch scouring side for scrubbing soapy grime is great for bathrooms, and a buffing window cloth is good for getting a high-shine on mirrors and shower-screens, as well as windows. Spontex has a collection of cloth kits that are great for tackling specific tasks, including bathroom, kitchen and window, priced at £4.99 for two cloths.



What to look out for **THIS MONTH**



► Platters are great when feeding a crowd, and this vibrantly patterned collection will add instant colour.

Pol's Potten blue bowl, £7; Da Terra folklore platter, £35; Jigsaw aluminium bowl, £32, all John Lewis

► The Sizzle and Serve collection is perfect for fajita night! With three gratin dishes to choose from, and an oval platter with detachable handle, the cast-iron dishes each come with a heat-resistant wooden stand to take them straight to the table.

Judge Sizzle and Serve round gratin dish, £13; Oval gratin dish, from £15, both Emporium Cookshop



Bitossi Home large grey oven dish, £27; medium pink oven dish, £23, both Unique & Unity

▲ These gorgeous stoneware oven dishes are just asking to be taken straight from the oven to the table – you won't be able to resist showing them off.

Great buy



Clean windows and shower screens, remove condensation, and clear up spills, with one handy tool. The new Window and Glass Vacuum from Black & Decker is a really versatile multi-functional tool to keep around, perfect for taking care of chores around the house, as well as the car. The spray trigger allows you to spray water or detergent directly onto the area to be cleaned, while the washable micro-fibre pad will wipe it away. Twist

the head and the tool becomes a battery-powered wet vacuum cleaner with a squeegee for a streak-free finish on glass. The lithium-ion battery allows 23 minutes of run time, perfect for ensuring you can complete your task without running out of power.

Black & Decker window and glass vacuum, £49.99, Amazon



We test... cake tins

We tried out a selection of sandwich and muffin tins, here's what we found...

THINGS WE CONSIDERED

- How sturdy did the tin feel?
- Was it easy to pick up?
- Was it easy to release the cake from the tin?

PYREX ASIMETRIA METAL EASY-GRIP 12-CUP MUFFIN TRAY, FROM £13.99; 20CM CAKE PAN, FROM £9.99

These carbon steel tins were quite lightweight. The extra wide, slanted handles made them really easy to grip when coming out of the oven, making them feel comfortable to use. The safe non-stick coating was good in the round tin and it offered good heat distribution, however there was some sticking in the muffin tin.



7/10

SILVERSTONE 12-CUP MUFFIN TIN, £14; 9" ROUND CAKE TIN, £8.50

These ceramic tins were surprisingly lightweight, although sturdy, and the wide handles made moving them in and out of the oven really easy. We used the round cake tin to bake a cheesecake, which came out perfectly and left virtually no mess in the pan. The muffin tin was the perfect size for Yorkshire puddings too. They're not dishwasher-safe but they were so easy and quick to clean that this wasn't an issue.



8/10

KITCHENCRAFT MASTER CLASS SMART SILICONE RIGID 6-HOLE PAN, £14.95; 20CM ROUND CAKE PAN, £11.95

This clever cookware has silicone insides for easy turning out, while the non-stick, rigid frame makes it really secure to handle. The six-cup pan worked really well for muffins and Yorkshire puddings, which came out cleanly without any mess. We used the cake tin for a tried and tested carrot cake recipe with great results. Both pans are fridge, freezer and dishwasher-safe, making them a practical choice for any busy kitchen.



8/10

MARY BERRY 12-HOLE PUSH-PAN, £24.99; 20CM SHALLOW PUSH-PAN, £12.99, LAKELAND

The tins were very strong and held their shape well, and had an outer lip to help grip the tin. The loose bottoms of the cake and muffin tin slid up easily once the cake was cooked. The silicone coating on the bottoms meant they didn't slide up too quickly, allowing full control when releasing the cakes.



10/10

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The secret to
a great night's sleep

Consumer NEWS

Stay on top of the latest issues and hot topics with our monthly round-up of news

Tough switch

According to research by Gocompare.com, mortgages are now the most difficult financial product to switch. Just 59% of people who recently switched their mortgage provider described the process as 'easy', which is over 10% less than back in July 2014. This reduction suggests that the new Mortgage Market Review, which was introduced at the end of April 2014, is continuing to frustrate customers. The new system means that anyone needing a mortgage to buy a home, increase a current mortgage or re-mortgage needs to pass a more stringent affordability test, while interest-only applicants need to be able to demonstrate a credible repayment plan. To compare rates across the whole UK mortgage market, visit www.gocompare.com.



Be aware of added insurance risks

Renting out your home for holidays via a site such as Airbnb can seem like a great opportunity to make some extra money, but be aware that there can be insurance implications which you need to consider. Insurance Startup, Bought By Many, offers these top tips to help you ensure that you don't get caught out...

- You must tell your insurance company if you're an Airbnb host. If you don't make them aware that you have guests staying at your house, even occasionally, they may refuse to pay out on an insurance claim you make, even if the claim has nothing to do with an Airbnb guest.

- Airbnb's Host Guarantee is not the same as home insurance, and there are lots of things that it doesn't cover.

- Having Airbnb guests to stay can make you liable for things that happen to them, and there is no personal liability insurance included as part of Airbnb's Host Guarantee. So, if a guest were to sue you after harming themselves in some way, and believed that you were responsible, the guarantee would not cover you.

- If you want to be insured against these extra risks, you will need to arrange it with your current insurance company, or consider switching to a specialist.



Coeliac confusion

Despite one in five people in the UK thought to have a food allergy or intolerance, it seems that we are still a nation that is ignorant of food intolerances. Although more than one in 10 of us have switched to a gluten-free diet, more than three in 10 believe that gluten is a type of carbohydrate that is found in potatoes, bread and pasta. Holly Wales, product development director at Udi's Gluten Free, says: 'Just under a half of the UK feel sorry for those living a gluten-free diet. People who are coeliac or living a gluten-free life don't want to be felt sorry for, they want to eat free-from foods where they don't have to compromise on taste.' To see the full range of Udi's gluten-free products visit the website at www.udisglutenfree.co.uk.



Modern family

New research by Barratt Homes has revealed that children rule the roost in British homes, with 55% having free run of the whole house, including their parents' bedroom and the 'posh' lounge. To enable children to have more dedicated space in the home, one in five adults have forgone a dining room, and 15% have sacrificed space which would otherwise be used to store and use fitness equipment. 26% of children in today's homes are lucky enough to have a play room, while 12% even have their own computer room.

Keep cables clutter-free

Three quarters of UK homes now contain more than 20 electrical products, according to new research by cable management specialist D-Line.

This can lead to around 170 metres of unsightly wiring, which can look untidy and also cause a trip



hazard. D-Line's range of cable management solutions can help to solve this problem, and includes cable tidy units to hide multi sockets and other items, and trunking, to keep cables safely tucked away, reducing the risk of any accidents.

Consumer news... IN FOCUS

We look at the growing trend for house swapping between parents and their children

Selling your home and buying a new property on the open market can be extremely stressful, exhausting, time consuming and expensive but what if there was another way? Many retired people find that they are rattling around in a large house while their children struggle to get further up the property ladder, perhaps stuck in a small flat or terraced home that they and their family have long-since outgrown. Wouldn't it make sense then, to simply swap?



Top tip

Do a trial run first – ideally one in the summer months and another in winter, to make sure both sides are happy all year round.

The benefits

There are plenty of advantages to swapping with your loved ones:

- ✓ Large houses cost a lot more to heat and maintain than smaller properties so older relatives would save time and money by downsizing.
- ✓ They will probably be really attached to their home, especially if they have lived there for years or if one partner has passed away. By house swapping, the property stays within the family.
- ✓ They won't have to deal with the stresses of house hunting and can be assured of moving to familiar surroundings with neighbours that they perhaps know already.
- ✓ For their grown-up children, this could be the perfect way of achieving a larger home that they could never afford otherwise.
- ✓ Any home improvements would add value to the house, which will benefit everyone.

Q How do I find an independent financial advisor who can help the whole family?

Jane Peters, Halifax

A Start by asking other family members and friends for recommendations. You will also find a network of IFAs at www.unbiased.co.uk while some Citizens Advice Bureaus have volunteer IFAs as part of the Moneyplan scheme.

Financial gain

There are other plus points to swapping:

- Parents could enjoy substantial estate planning benefits if their property is worth a lot more than their children's.
- A Potentially Exempt Transfer (PET) means that parents can effectively gift assets to their child's family if the parents survive at least seven years beyond the swap. A financial advisor can give more information.

Before you go ahead

You need to ensure both parties are happy and protected legally:

- Have a survey done on both properties, so any repairs or renovations are clearly stated.
- A formal house swap is a legal transaction, changing ownership on the title deeds.
- Both parties should take legal advice before going ahead and drawing up a transfer deed, when each party transfers their property.
- When children still have a mortgage in place, they will need the agreement of the mortgage company to transfer it to their new home.
- This could be the perfect time to look for a better mortgage rate but bear in mind any exit penalty costs.

Things to think about

There's a lot to consider before you take the plunge:

- ✓ Parents' circumstances may change and if their wealth is tied up in their house, they could find it difficult to manage.
- ✓ If a parent needs to live in a nursing home in later years, the local authority could take the view that a house swap has been done to deliberately deprive themselves of assets, which will affect contributions to care fees.
- ✓ To prevent this, don't wait until the possibility of a care home is imminent and ensure you have all legal agreements in place, clearly stating everybody's intentions.
- ✓ Both parties should re-do their wills to take the new arrangement into account.

Dos and don'ts

Bear in mind these rules of thumb:

DO...

- ✓ Get professional legal advice.
- ✓ Involve other siblings to see how they feel about it.
- ✓ Review all wills, especially parents'.
- ✓ Think about taking out a term assurance policy to protect a PET against Inheritance Tax.

DON'T...

- ✓ Rush into anything.
- ✓ Do it unless it suits everyone's needs.
- ✓ Go ahead without the proper surveys and valuations in place.
- ✓ Get upset if the other party completely redecorates or changes the way they use the property. It's theirs now and it will be given a new lease of life, which you in turn can do with your new home.

Useful contacts

- www.mortgageadvicebureau.com has independent advice from over 600 UK-based advisors.
- www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk has information on everything from mortgages to insurance, budgeting and managing money.
- www.homeswapper.co.uk has advice on a council house exchange.
- www.moneysavingexpert.com has sections on tax, which could help.

Decorating

Discover the latest autumn trends to update your home



Options
Maya Sunset
orange
blind, from
£30.25 for a
40cm x 40cm
blind, Tuiss

All for a good cause

Blind and curtain retailer, Tuiss, has teamed up with Muscular Dystrophy UK to raise money for this fantastic cause with the launch of a new blind design, featuring the charity's familiar orange logo. The unique design started out as a one-off commission for a fundraiser whose son has Muscular Dystrophy, but Tuiss has now added the design to its range of roller blinds, with all profits going to the charity. So whether you'd love to help out a good cause, or are just a fan of the geometric trend, make sure you pick up this blind to brighten up more than just your home.

Feature Laura McLeish



Dash bed linen, from £17; **Still navy square pillowcase**, £25; **Bud grey scatter cushion**, £55; **Sail navy throw**, £120, all Murmur

A new name in homewares

We always get excited about a new homeware brand, and this one is no exception. Murmur is the first home collection from bedding and bath brand, Bedeck, and the rustic, natural style is perfect for creating a laid-back but sophisticated scheme. The range includes everything from ceramic dinnerware and kitchen accessories to bed linen, towels and cushions so you can kit out your entire home. We love this Dash bed linen that looks as comfy as it does stylish.

Trend: Origami

Origami is the beautiful art of paper folding, but you needn't be a whizz at it to enjoy this trend. It's all about showing off the unusual shapes of the origami-inspired accessories, so try to opt for plain colours rather than prints, which might distract from the design. If you're looking to make a statement, why not update your pendant lights with origami shades? The pleats and creases will look fantastic when lit up and the unusual shape will be a talking point with guests. If you'd like something a little more subtle, look out for cushions, bed linen and throws with pleated details and smaller accessories, such as fluted vases and geometric trinkets, to add interest to plainer furniture.



Orikomi
lamp shades,
£35.99 each,
Casafina

Bring your photos to life

Getting your personal photos printed onto canvas is a great way to inject personality into your house and make it into a home. If you're looking for something a bit different though, photo printing specialist Albelli is now printing photos onto wood, and we think they look great. Using pine wood planks from sustainable forests to create the canvas for your image, the wood is then whitewashed to make the colours really pop. Choose from rough or planed wood, vertical or horizontal planks and up to 15 different sizes, to create something you'll be itching to hang on your wall. Prices start from £34.95 for a 20cm x 20cm size.



Reader
offer

Albelli is offering 10% discount on all online purchases to *Your Home* readers. Just enter the code UKHMPR10ALL at the checkout on www.albelli.co.uk before 30th September 2015 to redeem your discount.



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TREND ALERT...

Loft living

Live the high life with the loft living trend



With many people knocking through their living areas to create light and airy open-plan spaces the loft living look has become more and more popular and no longer exclusively suitable for fashionable city-dwellers living in converted warehouses. This style has in the past been very industrial using the building's exposed bones as part of the design, such as bare brickwork, and steel beams. This, however, is a cleaned up version

making it incredibly easy to achieve in a modern family home.

Furniture choices are key – everything should serve a purpose so that it's functional as well as stylish, whether that's because it has hidden storage, or acts as a room divider. Modular storage and sofas are perfect as you can adapt them to make your space work as hard as possible. Choose designs that are streamlined, using pared-back materials. Pale greys and light woods should be the backdrop to simple geometrics and splashes of bright colour.

Laura

Lifestyle Editor

Use blocks of colour on walls to differentiate between living and dining areas

Retro-style vases, £25 for two; snakeskin cushion, £12; Punky dogs cushion, £12; storage boxes, £25; Paris dining set, £449; Anneka pendant, £19, all Very.co.uk



Feature Laura Higgins Background wallpaper Votna 11112 from Levande collection, £36 per roll, Scion

Divide an open-plan space into zones by cleverly positioning the furniture

Switch sofa bed, £1,550; House Espen glass cabinet, £599; House framed rug in steel, £99, all John Lewis



Use modular furniture and sofas to best utilise the space that you have

Modular corner unit, £249; Modular sofa unit, £199, both M&S





Clockwise from top left: **Metropolis Smoke luxury vinyl** from Spacia collection, from £37.50 per sq m, Amtico. **Plains Two 140513 fabric**, £20 per m, Scion. **Aina grey fabric**, £8 per m, Ikea. **Plains Two 140520 fabric**, £20 per m, Scion. **Collective Coral matt emulsion**; **Sincere Brew matt emulsion**, both £24.49 per 2.5l, Dulux MixLab.

Choose understated designs in greys and bold hues for a stylish scheme

Small clear hurricane jar, £25; geometric teal bowl, £18; orange spot vase, £15; Hoxton one-drawer chest, £229; teal wooden vase, £40; wooden candle sticks in yellow or teal, £16 each; Hoxton double bedstead, £749; Grey matalasse cushion, £40; Juxtapose jacquard double duvet set, £80; yellow geometric bedspread, £85; Kennedy grey table lamp, £62, all Linea at House of Fraser



Team pale woods with flashes of bold colour

Teal vase, £40; yellow vase, £45, both House of Fraser



Spend vs Save

Bare bulbs and worn materials will help to add an industrial touch



Vintage arrow industrial light, £299.95, Shoreditch Lighting

Black matt arrow light, £95, Bhs

Add shots of vibrant colour with the use of cushions and throws

Loft neon cushions in blue and green, £15 each, M&S



STYLE FILE



Use geometric shapes and patterns

Geometric teal bowl, £18, House of Fraser



Combine shades of grey for a layered, softer take on city-chic

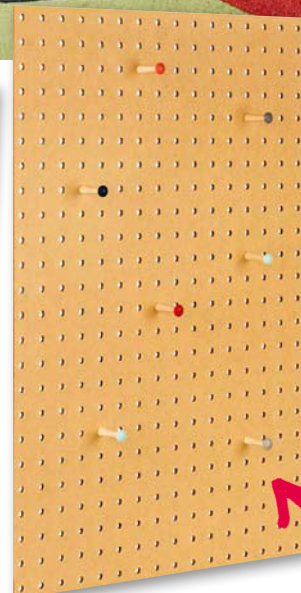
Distressed rug, 120cm x 170cm, £170; basket weave throw, £20; Parker three-seater sofa, £1,299; Cole floor lamp, £150, all Bhs



Team brick-effect walls with punchy primary colours and grey tones

Mason large sofa in Poeme Charcoal, £999.99; Elements Geo square cushion, £12.99; bold circles rug, from £44.99; Elements telephone table, £69.99; Tate desk lamp, £9.99; ceramic ridged bottle vase, £8.99; metal candlestick, £9.99; wooden house shelf with drawers, £12.99; metal barrel vase, £14.99; wooden painted drawers, £7.99; illuminating light up my life wall art, £7.99, all Dunelm

Clockwise from top left: Plains Five 131191 fabric, £36 per m; Taimi 120363 fabric from Levande collection, £28 per m, both Scion. Brick 31045 wallpaper from Albany Collage 2015 collection, £10.50 per roll, Wallpaperdirect.com. Ramie 130844 fabric from Khalo weaves collection, £35 per m, Scion. Dry Stone Cinder luxury vinyl from Spacia collection, from £37.50 per sq m, Amtico. Monument Grey Travels in Colour matt emulsion, £24.49 per 2.5l, Dulux MixLab.



Pared-down accessories are key to this simplistic trend

House peg board, from £40, John Lewis



Key things to consider...

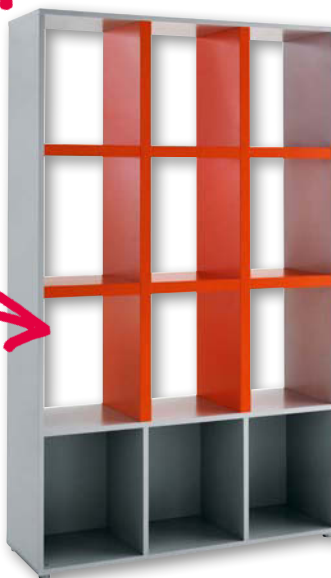
- Try to incorporate a few industrial-style hints with brick-effect wallpaper; worn, metal finishes, and bare bulb light fittings.
- Choose light-toned woods for furniture, flooring, window-dressings and accessories.
- Accessorise with geometric prints and details, in vibrant primary, or neon colours. Choose fine lines, triangles and dots for a contemporary finish to your scheme.

Try to keep compact and open-plan spaces free of clutter

Firth printed fabric storage boxes, £30 for three, Habitat

Make sure storage is stylish as well as functional

Oxo grey shelving unit, £395, Habitat



Loft living wallpaper

Give your walls a striking new look



Mind the gap LW1455/01 from Art House collection, £75 per roll, Linwood

Sketch Cityscape, £12 per roll, B&Q



Illusions collection LL29534, £32.95 per roll, Galerie

Tiling On A Roll, £12 per roll, B&Q



Brick 226706 from Albany Plains & Stripes 2014 collection, £12 per roll, Wallpaperdirect.com



Pick streamlined furniture for a clean, contemporary look, and team with funky accessories

Westwood shelving unit, £250; Avignon grey chair, £170 per pair, both Debenhams. Clock, £20; storage, £14; stacking mugs, £20; tray, £10; bowl, £15; apron, £14; espresso cup and saucers, £22.50 for four; salt and pepper shakers, £12; tea, coffee and sugar tins, £18 for three; cookie jar, £25; tea towels, £14 for three; oven glove, £14; bread bin, £20; cushion, £25, all Ben De Lisi at Debenhams

It's gone from dark and dated, to bright and beautiful

Clever planning and design ideas allowed Sheena Watson to create a light, airy bathroom, that meets all her family's showering and bathing needs

When Sheena Watson moved into her three-bedroom terrace, in Margate, with husband, Craig, and sons, Sam and Alex, she was well aware that it needed more than just a coat of paint to bring it up-to-date. 'It hadn't been decorated for decades, and the bathroom with its shabby turquoise suite, grubby walls and stained carpet was perhaps the worst room of all,' recalls Sheena. 'What's more, a huge cupboard, complete with antiquated boiler, meant there was no room to manoeuvre when it came to adding a much needed shower.' However, Sheena was sure she could rise to the challenge and create an inviting and practical family bathroom.

STEP ONE As a shower lover, Sheena was determined to fit a generous free-standing enclosure into her new bathroom, and having re-instated a new boiler elsewhere, the solution seemed obvious – remove the now redundant heater and cupboard, in order to free up space for a showering area. A brand new suite could then simply replace the old, thus negating the need to reconfigure expensive pipework. Unfortunately, before work could begin, Sheena discovered that the existing window desperately needed replacing. 'However, this gave me the opportunity to increase its width and let more light into what was a rather dark room, so I considered it a positive,' smiles Sheena. 'Which in turn, also proved a good excuse to invest in a lovely bespoke wooden blind, to ensure privacy.'

STEP TWO Removing the large cupboard also revealed an unexpected quirk to the room's layout. 'I had never really noticed before, but the room isn't actually square, and it was the newly revealed sloping wall that we were ▷



Before

The site of the former boiler cupboard is now graced with a large shower enclosure. While the use of curved lines on both enclosure and basin, aid movement around, what is essentially, a fairly narrow space



Good idea!

The latest electric showers not only look fantastic, but offer great flow and power, while taking the pressure off overworked boilers.

Total Cost
£3,572

Sheena's bathroom, with its soft soothing scheme, characterful detailing and space-saving slipper bath is now a relaxing haven for all the family



Good idea!

Smart, inexpensive, open shelving is a great way to make the most of wasted space, created by awkward nooks and crannies.

‘hoping to site the enclosure on,’ explains Sheena. Undeterred by this Sheena came up with the inspired idea of straightening things up by building a false wall. The area behind was then shelved and pipes and electrics for the shower neatly housed in the new stud wall. ‘We also removed the old pipework and boxing-in by the bath, plus the hideous tiles,’ continues Sheena. And rather than re-plaster, the couple opted to patch any damaged areas and cover the rest using tongue and groove panelling. ‘I think it really helps add character to the room,’ comments Sheena.

STEP THREE

When it came to choosing a new suite, Sheena decided to shop around. ‘I found my lovely free-standing bath and enclosure online, while the basin and WC were chosen for their space-saving lines,’ she says. ‘I also opted for an electric shower so hot water is always guaranteed – an important consideration for our busy family.’ The striking glass fascia was specifically chosen to complement the iridescent mosaics, which are Sheena’s pride and joy. ‘I spotted them while visiting friends, but as they were discontinued stock and we couldn’t drive home and measure-up, I bought the lot for £400 – it was a lucky gamble, as we tiled the entire shower area with just two sheets to spare!’ she laughs.

STEP FOUR Sheena always knew she wanted the room to have a fresh blue and white scheme. So having picked out a subtle blue tone in her tiling, for the walls,

she then painted the panelling a soft grey to complement the new vinyl flooring.

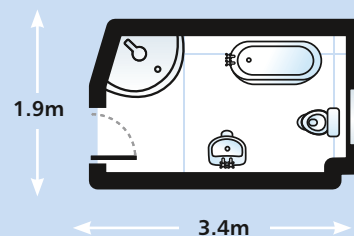
A lover of all things vintage, the room was completed with an assortment of inherited, pre-loved and high street finds. ‘The ladder was my best bargain as we found it in a cupboard when we moved in,’ says Sheena. ‘The mirror is from my previous home, and the cabinet, spotted at a local emporium, cost just £15.’ While Sheena would never describe the room as spacious, she is pleased that, even with the new enclosure, the finished room looks and feels much bigger. ‘I’m delighted with the result – it’s a lovely bright and relaxing space to spend time in.’ **YH**



Good idea!

Try using a ladder rail to store bulky towels – go vintage or simply head to the high street where you’ll find plenty of designs on offer.

ROOMPLAN



THE DETAILS

Paint	£91.50
Lighting	£32.50
Storage	£85
Suite & taps	£1,247.95
Shower & enclosure	£697.90
Flooring	£319.92
Panelling & tiles	£600
Blind	£118
Heating	£379
TOTAL	£3,571.77

Shopping list

Walls: Glass Samphire super emulsion, £41.50 per 2.5l; **panelling and wall unit:** Platinum Pale acrylic eggshell, £50 per 2.5l, both Fired Earth. **Farnham pedestal basin,** £149; **Langdon close coupled WC and cistern,** £343; **Cloud 9 bath filler,** £285; **mono basin mixer,** £171; **series 503 towel rail,** £379, all Hudson Reed. **Azora 9.8kw electric shower with frosted glass fascia,** £520.80, Mira. **Slipper bath,** £299.95; **offset quadrant shower enclosure,** from £139.95; **tray,** from £47.95, all Better Bathrooms. **Livyn Essential Click vinyl plank flooring in Patina Oak light white,** £39.99 per sq m, Quick-Step. **Essential Collection 50mm slat timber blind in Polar White,** from £48.70 for 40cm x 120cm blind, Sunwood. **Lipco light,** £32.50, Amazon. **Wire wall rack,** £70, Cox & Cox. **Vintage mirror cabinet,** £15, Scott’s Furniture Mart. **Aqua towels,** from £3; **face cloth,** £1; **woven caddies,** from £3.50; **tumbler,** £1.50; **small round glass bottles,** £3 for three; **Relax sign,** £6, all Wilko. For similar iridescent tiles try, **San Domino mosaics,** £9.95 per 330mm x 330mm sheet, Walls and Floors.

Feature Paula Woods Photos Lizzie Orme

3 of the best... *stylish towel holders*

£34 from Roman at Home

This chrome bathroom towel rail is ideal if you don’t want to drill holes in the wall. It measures H104cm x W39cm D27cm.

£35 from Next

Make sure your bathroom is bang on trend with the copper-effect Moderna towel store. It measures H43cm x W18cm x D13cm.

£75 from John Lewis

The Croft Collection kitchen ladder in a subtle grey and wood is a beautiful way to display your towels. It measures H170cm x W46cm.



REAL
BEAUTY
IDEAL
LUXURY



Ideal Standard, the leading provider of innovative and design-driven bathroom solutions has unveiled its latest breakthrough in bathroom design.

Introducing the stunning Dea bathroom suite. This new collection combines beautiful design and functional excellence. Dea embodies Ideal Standard's commitment to creating a beautiful use of space.

Dea has won multiple awards for Product Innovation and Best Bathroom Product.

Find your nearest exclusive Interiors dealer at Ideal-Standard.co.uk or call our customer services team on 01482 346461



A
BEAUTIFUL
USE
OF
SPACE



Total Cost
£4,419

A double-ended bath, complete with sleek wall-mounted tap, is the focal point of Helen's new bathroom which, thanks to the addition of a longed-for shower, is now the perfect place to relax and unwind at the end of the day

It's all change in my compact bathroom

Stealing a little extra space allowed Helen Middleton to turn a cramped bathroom into a modern, light-filled room

BATHROOM MAKEOVER



A simple scheme of white, grey and orange keeps this small bathroom light and spacious



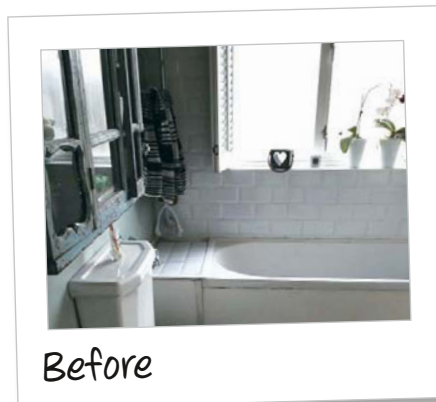
▲ An oak-effect laminate was chosen for its water-resistant quality and simple, fuss-free finish

▼ A wall-mounted bath filler, from Hudson Reed, allows Helen to enjoy a good soak in the tub without having to negotiate awkward taps. Positioned neatly within the tiled splashback, the look is sleek and minimal



When Helen Middleton, her husband, Phil, and two children, Jamie and Jodie, moved into their 1930s end of terrace in Beckenham, the cramped and tired bathroom was the first room on their list for a remodel. However, it wasn't just the suite and feature tiling that were the problem. 'Everything was falling apart, and while the suite and décor could easily be replaced, it didn't address the fact that the room was simply too small and impractical to cater for busy family life,' explains Helen. What they wanted was a modern functional space, complete with bath and separate shower.

STEP ONE Surprisingly, the solution lay outside the bathroom, as the couple discovered that by pushing out onto their spacious landing, they could gain a small but vital 70cm. 'It was just enough to help open up the room and, as it was a stud wall, it was done and dusted in a weekend,' says Helen. However, with only one bathroom in the house, Helen was now even more determined to add a free-standing enclosure in the still small room, despite



Before

Phil's scepticism. And having considered various layouts, she decided to keep the bath under the window, remove the built-in cupboard from behind the door and squeeze in a shower enclosure instead, while the new WC and basin would then face one another. 'To be honest, I wasn't totally convinced it would actually work, despite having measured everything, and I was still quietly worried about available space when the work started!' she smiles.

STEP TWO When it came to sourcing the suite, size was inevitably everything, and an inspired choice of soft curved designs helped to visually open up the available floor space. 'The all-glass quadrant enclosure was also designed to allow the eye to travel around the room unhindered, again making it appear larger,' says Helen. However, before the carefully selected purchases could be fitted there was the small matter of preparing the room. 'Removing the old tiles caused ►


Good idea!

Helen's oak-effect laminate not only features authentic wood graining but also has a unique water-repellent coating that ensures it is completely waterproof.

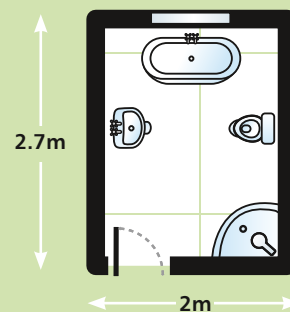
➔ A neat quadrant enclosure, complete with sliding door, provides ample room for showering without compromising on the surrounding floor space

◁ so much damage that we ended up re-plastering, while the soil pipe also had to be re-routed – although luckily this didn't prove quite as difficult as anticipated,' says Helen. Of course, moving the bath and adding a shower also meant extending existing pipework, but this simply involved relaying it under the floorboards.

STEP THREE Having removed the original radiator, Helen replaced it with a space-saving wall-mounted heated towel rail, before turning her attention to the floor. 'I had originally considered painting the boards, but lifting the old lino had revealed quite a lot of damage, which was only made worse when the plumber laid the new pipework,' recalls Helen. Phil was also worried about fitting new timber flooring in a bathroom, so in the end the couple opted for smart, low maintenance oak-effect laminate. 'I think it adds a real warmth to the room, and it is also water-resistant,' she continues.

STEP FOUR It was always Helen's plan to opt for light-enhancing white and pale grey walls, however, a last-minute decision to introduce contrasting deep grey brick tiling really lifts the scheme. 'I spotted the tiles while researching floors, and just knew they were the finishing touch I needed,' says Helen. What's more by restricting their application, she only required a few metres, thus saving money for those all important finishing touches, including a smart roller blind and quirky storage. Despite her initial misgivings regarding space, Helen was delighted to discover room for a handy stool – perfect for stowing a towel when showering. In fact, Helen is happy to report: 'The finished room looks and feels much bigger than anticipated, there is ample floor space, and I'm thrilled with the result.' 

ROOMPLAN



THE DETAILS

Suite	£2,038.50
Taps	£254
Shower & enclosure	£797.98
Paint	£38.98
Tiles	£97.50
Radiator	£995
Flooring	£167.94
Blind	£29.52
TOTAL	£4,419.42

Shopping list

Walls: Brilliant White emulsion, £13.99 per 2.5l, Dulux. **Grey Steel 4 emulsion**, £24.99 per 2.5l, Dulux MixLab. **Ludlow bath**, £913; **Tec single lever wall-mounted bath filler**, £125; **Kia Eco-click mono basin mixer**, £129; **600mm Memoir wall-mounted unit**, £483.50; **Dakota mirrored double cabinet**, £260; **Langdon WC**, £382; **mix thermostatic shower panel in gun metal**, £588, all Hudson Reed. **V6 Quadrant shower enclosure**, £119.99; **stone tray**, £89.99, both Victoria Plumb. **Impressive Ultra laminate in saw cut grey oak**, £27.99 per sq m, Quick-Step. **Metro tiles in grey**, £32.50 per sq m, Topps Tiles. **Greenwich heated towel rail**, £995, Fired Earth. **Rimini roller blind in Dove**, £29.52, 247 Blinds. **Umbra conceal metal miracle floating bookshelf**, £13.70, Amazon. **Copper wire shelf**, £50; **hooks**, £7.50 each, both Oliver Bonas. **Orla Kiely orange towel**, £14; **chrome extendable bath rack**, £99, both John Lewis. **Grey and striped towels**, from a selection at Habitat. **Bathroom digital scales**, £10, Tesco.

3 of the best... patterned bath towels

£10 from Next

Create pattern and interest in your bathroom with the Bosphorous Geo striped hand towel.

£10 from M&S

We love the eclectic mix of patterns on this multi tile hand towel.

£14 from John Lewis

Perk up your space with this retro floral design from Orla Kiely.



£10



£10



£14

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BATHROOM MAKEOVER

Total Cost
£7,486



Having conjured up room for both a statement bath and walk-in shower, Kerry was able to create a classically-inspired bathroom, complete with modern facilities and a striking monochrome scheme

Good idea!

Shutters offer a good combination of light and privacy, and are a fuss-free option in wet areas. Kerry's may have been fitted prior to the update, but they still look as good as new.

It's both sophisticated and family-friendly

Kerry Quayle reconfigured an awkward layout in order to create a spacious bathroom, complete with feature bath and glamorous touches

When Kerry and Rob Quayle moved into their three-bedroom semi-detached period home in Cheshire, they knew it required serious updating. However, it was to be a further eight years before they turned their attention to the problematic bathroom. 'After a while it's far too easy to ignore problems, such as the lack of showering facilities, especially when there is an entire house renovation to keep you busy,' explains Kerry. And while the couple did carry out cosmetic improvements over the years, including painting over the lurid pink walls, and fitting shutters for privacy, it was the imminent arrival of their first child, Darcie, that finally spurred them into action.

STEP ONE Kerry's first challenge was how to fit a luxurious shower into the awkward 'L-shaped' layout. 'Although a good size, the room was dominated by a massive cupboard, that originally housed an equally large boiler,' explains Kerry. 'And this severely limited our options.' However, having swapped the boiler for an efficient, compact model, the couple realised it made sense to also reduce the size of the cupboard. 'I think we must have halved its size and the results were amazing – suddenly we had room to site a bath next to the cupboard, while moving the WC along the window wall and placing the sink opposite the newly narrowed cupboard freed up the entire recessed area, for my walk-in shower,' smiles Kerry.

STEP TWO When it came to putting her ideas into practice, Kerry always knew she wanted the room to remain in keeping with the age of her home. 'We live in a 19th-century house, and while I wanted a modern bathroom, I was also keen to inject a traditional touch – so getting the mix right was vital,' she comments. Luckily her supplier, Anfield & Co, was happy to help. 'They spent ages drawing my plans to scale and researching all the various styles available,' recalls Kerry. 'They even came up trumps, when I requested a bateau-style bath they would guarantee I could fill, as our previous tub simply drained the water tank every time it was used,' she laughs. In the end Kerry settled on a traditional suite teamed with modern enclosure and classic fittings. 'The basin and WC are actually an Art Deco design, but I think their crisp geometric lines work really well in the space, while I ▷

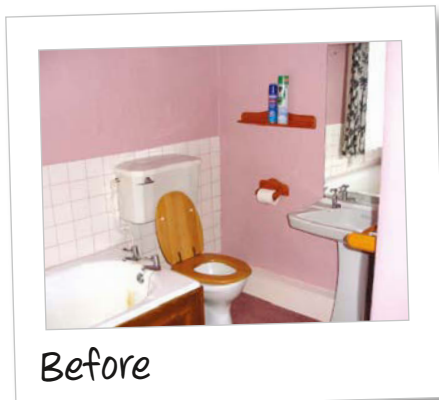


Good idea!

Fitting LED floor lights around the bath adds the 'wow' factor and allows for a change of mood when soaking in the tub – however do ensure they are suitable for bathroom use.

★ The super stylish black and white vinyl flooring provided Kerry with a great starting point for her monochrome scheme

★ Kerry's glass shower enclosure may be modern, but its minimalist lines blend perfectly with her choice of traditional shower and sanitaryware



Before



➔ Carefully considered fittings, such as the traditional pedestal basin and floor-standing towel radiator pay homage to the age of the house

Good idea!

Sleek glass shelving provides a useful place for everyday toiletries and trinkets, without distracting from the overall scheme.



◁ felt a simple minimalist glass enclosure was less likely to dominate the room,' she explains.

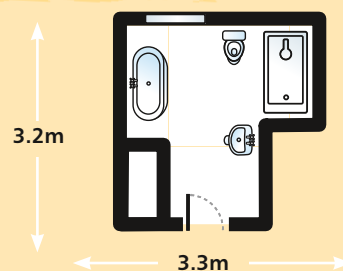
STEP THREE Kerry then turned her attention to the décor, and with the walls stripped of wallpaper, looked to satisfy a desire for clean, uncluttered styling, by choosing classic brick tiling, topped with a Victorian-style dado tile and striking black trim. 'We are lucky enough to have high ceilings, so I think it helps to break up the space,' say Kerry. 'The soft grey walls were suggested by local design boutique, Emma Jane Interiors, in order to add warmth and depth to the scheme.' In fact, Kerry is a great fan of shopping locally, and readily acknowledges that her best port of call during the six week project

has to be Chester-based Maltby's. 'This is where I was first shown the fantastic vinyl floor,' she says. 'I instantly fell in love, and it also provided the inspiration for my smart monochrome scheme.'

STEP FOUR For that added touch of glamour Kerry then fitted discreet mood enhancing low-level lighting around her newly installed bath. A handy stool, borrowed from the bedroom, also provides useful everyday storage, as does sleek glass shelving. However, it is not quite all black and white in this new look room, as Kerry has also introduced a welcome pop of colour in the form of yellow accessories and towels. While a picture of husband, Rob, as a young boy, adds a very personal finishing touch, to what is now: 'The ideal chic retreat, for both adults and children alike.' **YH**



ROOMPLAN



THE DETAILS

Shower & enclosure	£1,518
Suite & taps	£2,784
Paint	£43.50
Tiles	£1,445.94
Flooring	£840
Lighting	£355.86
Radiator	£499
TOTAL	£7,486.30

Shopping list

Admiral free-standing bath, from £1,399; **glass shelf with rail**, £99; **Trafalgar radiator**, £499, both Burlington. **Astoria deco pedestal basin**, from £275; **close-coupled WC**, £496, both Imperial. **Belgravia luxury shower head**, from £105; **lever thermostatic valve with three-way diverter**, £795; **shower handset**, £169; **lever three-hole basin taps**, £285; **lever bath mixer**, £329, all Crosswater. **Design walk-in shower panel**, from £199; **25mm stone resin tray and waste**, from £250, both Simpsons. **Brilliant white half field tile**, £76.45 per sq m; **field tile**, £46.95 per sq m; **skirting tile**, £8.95 per tile; **Victoria moulding**, £4.65 per tile; **Jet Black Omega moulding**, £2.65 per tile, all Artworks collection by Original Style. **Astro bathroom lights**, £177.93, Love Lights. **Walls: Inox Grey Intelligent emulsion**, £43.50 per 2.5l, Little Greene. **Camaro Black and White Oilshale luxury vinyl tiles**, in bespoke Dogtooth design, £140 per sq m, Maltbys of Chester. **Charcoal and Sunshine towels**, from £3; **face cloths**, £1 each; **gloss soap dispenser**, £2.50; **bath sign**, £3; **glass jar**, £1, all Wilko.

Feature Paula Woods Photos Lizzie Orme

3 of the best... wall lights

£18 from Ikea

The simple design of the Vitemolla wall light has a timeless appeal that will diffuse light beautifully across your bathroom.

£25 from John Lewis

For a light boasting classic charm choose the Lucca wall spotlight.

£28.94 from

VictorianPlumbing.co.uk

If you're after a sleek, modern design opt for the Corvus Modern bathroom light, which would look ideal above a mirror.



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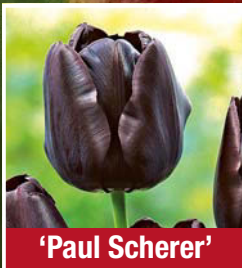
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6601-43	'Paul Scherer' (pack of 12 tulip bulbs)	£7.95		
6601-35	'Paradise' - Mixed (pack of 15 tulip bulbs)	£7.99		
6566-99	Garden Gloves* *Only available with bulb order.	£1.95		
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AJ

Spruce up your home with a whole new look

Get prepared with our style guide of the latest autumn/winter trends to get your home looking warm and welcoming this season

Cosy retreat

This rural, country feel is sure to warm up your home, ready for the chillier months ahead. Think cosy nights in with roaring log fires and woodland-inspired accessories. Bring autumnal shades in from the outside using burnt orange and woody browns to make sure your room glows, creating your very own relaxing retreat.



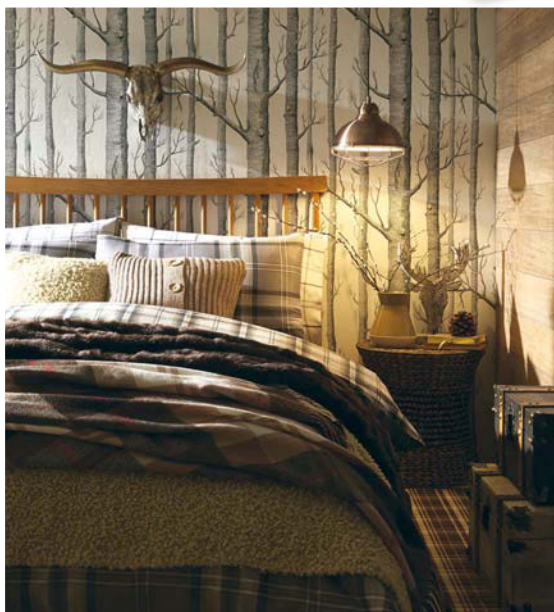
▶ A furry friend is perfect for cheering up a plain chair

Fox cushion, £10, Very



▶ If you go down to the woods today...you're sure to be inspired by this

Tapestry bear cushion, £10, George Home



▶ Create your very own bedroom hideaway to keep the chills away at night. The tree print wallpaper sets the rustic scene, ready for cosy cushions and knitted throws

Dylan caged easy fit pendant, £29; knitted cushion, £15; antique-effect trunks, £99 for two; Kelso duvet cover set, from £20; faux fur throw, £20; retro vases, £25 for two; multi check throw, £25, all Very. Cole & Son Woods wallpaper, £72 per roll, all John Lewis

▶ Create your very own rural idyll with a checked armchair adorned with a farm animal print cushion

Feature Emma Fishman



Curl up on your sofa comforted with woodland-inspired cushions, soft throws in warming colours and the glow of candlelight for the ultimate homely feel



Sheep cushion, £15; Shepperton chair, £499, both Very



Owl tea light holder, £3; copper lantern, £8; owl candles, £3; wood wick jar candles, £6; bronze sitting hare, £8; rabbit and stag cushion, £8; dogtooth cushion, £8; fringe check cushion, £10; large velvet cushion, £12; stag throw, £5; orange throw, £10; orange check storage stool, £30, all Matalan

Get the look

Mags Milliken, Homeware Buyer for Matalan, says:

'Get ready for chilly nights with our warm and cosy cottage range. Woodland animals and stag cushions look great with lush and plush velvets in autumn colours. Luxury checked throws and cushions with tassel detailing in russet orange, taupes and rich cream are ideal to curl up on the sofa with. To complement the rich colour palette, metallic copper is the important highlight colour. Wooden log boxes, woodland animal ornaments and lashings of lanterns and candles will finish off this autumnal look.'

▼ Give your guests a warm welcome with this deer print doormat

Deer doormat, £11.99, Suburban Living



▼ Capture the feel of autumn with these cute animal print accessories inspired by the great outdoors

Good Things cushion, £8; hedgehog cushion, £8; squirrel cushion, £8; stag head, £12; creative hanging sign, £4; watercolour votive, £6; ceramic lamp, £30; trinket box, £10; hedgehog plate, £4; fox ornament, £10; hedgehog lamp, £15, all George Home



► Add a quirky lamp to inject some fun. This lamp is sure to be a talking point with visitors

Abigail Ahern beagle lamp, £85, Debenhams



◀ Position one or more wooden lanterns by the fireside or on a sideboard, filled with candles to give your room a golden glow

Tapered wooden lantern, £15, Tesco



▲ Transform your sofa with some knitted throws for extra warmth

Check throw, £25; orange knitted throw, £16; Arctic faux fur cushion, £16; faux leather suitcase, £25, all Sainsbury's



Jewel in the night

Go for glamour! This trend is all about the look of luxe and gleaming metallics set on a contrasting dark and moody background. Choose a mix of gold, silver and coppery finishes to shine bright against a night time palette for maximum effect.



▲ This must-have mirror will add a vintage vibe to your room

Starburst mirror, £235, Joanna Wood



This dazzling Lotus light shimmers day and night adding glamour against a darker palette

Lotus pendant light, £199, M&S



Zeus pineapple lamp, £80, House of Fraser

▶ We love this quirky lamp that will add a tropical feel to any room

▶ Arrange glass vases in groups for an attractive display

Smoked swirl bulb vase, £55; pillar candle holder, £25; amber swirl vase, £40; decorative tray, £12, Biba Home, all House of Fraser

Create a magical space with an oversized floor lamp in shiny copper against darker tones

Gold angled floor lamp, £180; The Rock luxe seat, £385, both The French Bedroom Company



Chevron cushion, £35, Betty Jackson Black, Debenhams. Shiny cushion, £39, Bo Concept



▶ Glam up your sofa in an instant with these glitzy cushions



▲ This metal light has a distressed gold finish inside to add extra sparkle to your room

Confident form pendant light, £80, The French Bedroom Company



▲ Create a mystical mood with some candles scattered around the room to add a warming glow

Candle filled glass jars, £20 each, Star by Julien MacDonald, Debenhams



▲ This copper vase will add glamour to your mantelpiece, whether it's filled with flowers or standing alone

Metallic facet vase, £50, House of Fraser

► This versatile side table stands proud in copper and will have numerous uses holding a lamp or a vase full of flowers

Alana bedside table, £79, Made.com



Get the look

Fiona Lambert, Vice President of George Home, says:

'Our Luna collection is a key trend for the season ahead. A dramatic combination of a shadowy colour palette with flashes of metallic epitomises decadence and brings a contemporary style to any home. This eclectic mix of precious metals shining bright against graphite black and smokey greys creates a mysterious ambience and makes a bold impact in any room of the home. Bring in texture with monochrome marble-effect, hammered metals and glittering chunky knits, and make a statement with gold, silver and copper accessories with a difference.'

▲ Create a wall using copper tiles or shimmery wallpaper and accessorise with dark woods, sultry greys and flashes of sparkling copper tones

Wild Woods duvet set, £12; copper slogan cushion, £7; charcoal cushion, £7; grey faux mohair throw, £20; wolf faux fur throw, £25, all George Home

► Give your kitchen a sophisticated look with shiny copper tiles against a black painted backdrop for maximum contrast. Accessorise with copper and black accessories to make it glow with glamour

Copper tea canister, £4; copper biscuit canister, £5; egg cups, £3; Luna mug set, £6 for four; Luna dinner set, £25 for a 25-piece set; small ribbed jar with copper lid, £2; copper coffee canister, £4; espresso cup and saucer set, £4 for two; copper sugar canister, £4; Midas cutlery set, £20 for a 20-piece set; glazed canister, £5; copper plated cafetière, £5; constellation tray, £5; milk carton jug, £3, all George Home. Copper leaf tiles, from a selection at Original Style



Pure & simple

This pared down look is perfect if you're after a relaxed and calming vibe in your home. Choose clean lines and simple shapes for a tranquil, uncomplicated feel. Muted, chalky shades will create a soft, understated look that can be highlighted with light wood and pastel accessories. If you've had enough of pop brights, then this one's for you.



◀ Snuggle up into this enveloping chair for a laid back look

Kolton Whisper grey chair, £449, Made.com

Create a calming cocoon full of cosy fabrics and textures in a neutral palette for a simple, yet welcoming, look

Chelsea love seat, £1,249; Chelsea ottoman, £679; willow basket, £35 for two; woven knit throw, £75; knit cushion, £35; linen embroidery cushion, £40; Heath floor lamp, £165, all House of Fraser



▶ Layer up comforting textiles in effortless neutrals and subtle prints to warm up your bedroom and create your very own sanctuary

Isra grey curtains, from £132; Riviera Dusk Roman blind, from £148, including measuring and fitting, Hillarys

▶ This painted metal light oozes industrial style and will suit any room

Croft Aiden metal painted ceiling pendant, £80, John Lewis



◀ Choose inexpensive artwork to add interest to a shelf, in keeping with the muted, pared down look

Abstract hand painted canvas, £39.99; ceramic vase, £9.99; ceramic filled candle, £9.99; Harry desk lamp, £24.99, all Dunelm



Expert advice

Claire Sollis, Product Director at Dunelm, says:

'Simple, uncomplicated, calm and meaningful are the words used to describe a desirable lifestyle in today's hectic world. Our Simplicity story endeavours to bring the essence of that ideology into your home. Shapes are simple and lines look hand drawn, rather than crisp and straight. Rooms should be moderately furnished with useful items and clutter kept to a minimum. The colours of the palette are derived from the materials used: porcelain, linen, wood, glass, felted wool, marble, slate and washed indigo. Most of the surface interest is derived from the natural grain, weave or patina of the materials used, so there is little need for additional fuss or frills.'

Get the look

Judy Smith, Crown Colour Consultant, says:

'Faded Simplicity is a soothingly simple colour palette that uses clever combinations of muted neutral tones to great effect. The trend is brought to life through the subtle interplay of powdery matt finishes. Juxtapose soft creamy tones with complementary shades of blue, grey and pink for a fresh twist on a neutral room scheme.'

▶ Give your sofa a stylish lift with this smart grey felt cushion

Felt tiles cushion grey, £19, Very

▼ These subtle neutral shades will create a tranquil oasis in your bedroom. Layer up botanical print fabrics in soft pastel hues with light woods and light-coloured ceramic accessories



Decorate a shelf with these exquisite, glazed ceramic vases. It's hard to believe they're from a supermarket

Grey glaze ceramic large bottle, £12; grey glaze ceramic small bottle, £8; ceramic tea light holders, £5 for three, all Sainsbury's



▶ Declutter your home with attractive storage such as this thick rope basket, to create a tidy home

Rope storage basket, £7.99, Dunelm



▲ Choose simple, but functional, objects to give your home a timeless feel

Croft jug, £18, John Lewis

Pile your sofa high with cosy cushions in warming neutrals and traditional textures, to create your own comforting sanctuary

Cushions, from £35 each, Murmur



Diamond woven cushion, £14; Harmony tree cushion, £12; knitted cushion, £14; abstract tree bed linen set, from £25; storage basket, £22 for two; wooden pendant, £32; ceramic large bottle, £12; small bottle, £8; small pink vase, £8 for three, all Sainsbury's



▶ Serve your dinner up in style

Bali dinner set, £24.99 for a 12-piece set, Bhs



Flamboyant florals

There are new florals in town and they're definitely not for the shrinking violet – bold, big and beautiful all the way. Much darker in shade this time and more folksy, they give greater impact for this latest winter look. Dot a few statement floral accessories around your home, in a darker, deeper palette to inject extra drama.



▶ Carry your drinks with ease on a pretty floral tray

Painted tray, £25, Berry Red

▶ Keep all your reminders safe and organised in this pretty notebook

Notebook, £20, Amara



Layer up your flowery prints with darker tones for a grown up take on florals. Team with navy and purple tones to add character and depth



Midnight Bloom bed linen, £25 for a double set; gold sequin cushion, £15; purple chenille throw, £16, all Sainsbury's

▶ Update a sofa and instantly add a pop of colour with a statement cushion

Floral print cushion, £12, Bhs



▶ Add some dramatic prints to your bedroom with floral bed linen to instantly transform your room

Pixel duvet set, £50; Pixel cushion, £12; butterfly duvet set, £50; butterfly cushion, £12; floral panel duvet set, £50; floral panel cushion, £12; blurred floral duvet set, £50; blurred cushion, £12, all Bhs



▶ Show off your love of florals with this timeless comfy sofa

Chiltern compact sofa in Carmen Floral Ruby, £1,299, M&S



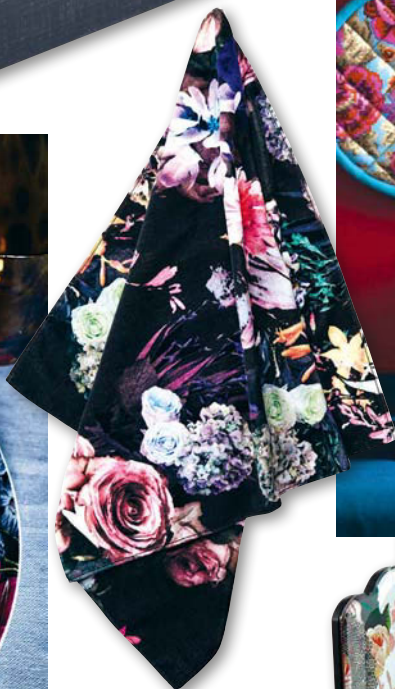
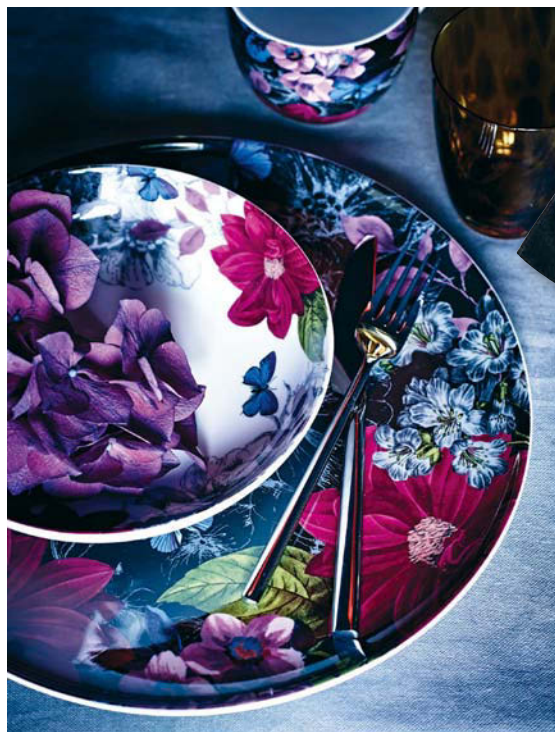
DECORATING INSPIRATION

► Choose a gorgeous jewellery box to keep all of your knick-knacks neat and tidy

Trinket box, £8, Wilko

▼ Midweek meals will never look dull again with this stylish crockery

Midnight Bloom mug, £3.50; Midnight tumbler, £4; Midnight Bloom platter, £10, all Sainsbury's



▲ Give your bathroom a feminine touch with this floral towel

Floral towel, £17.99, H&M



Go wild for fancy florals in your kitchen with ornate storage jars and tins

Folk floral tea towel, £6; Folk cake tins, £15 for two; Folk biscuit tin, £9.50; Folk pot holder, £6; Folk tea, coffee and sugar tins, £12.50, all M&S



◀ This decorative mirror will add a vintage touch to your bedroom, creating the perfect dressing area

Floral mirror, £50, Laura Oakes, Debenhams

► Pop this gorgeous tea light candle by the bedside or mantelpiece to continue the floral theme

Floral candle, £6.99, H&M



Make a bold statement with this folk-inspired chair and cushions in vivid colours and decorative floral prints

Madeline armchair in Lovari floral, £899; floral penny cushion, £19.50; floral cross stitch cushion, £35; Arabella cushion, £19.50, all M&S

Get the look

Andrew Tanner, Head of Home Design at Sainsbury's, says:

'Building on this summer's obsession with all things botanical, this dramatic trend focuses on a love of striking flora and fauna. Combining oversized painterly florals with bird and animal prints with a moody dark palette, the look is ostentatious and glamorously feminine. Heavy velvets sit alongside decadent jacquards meaning the mood perfectly marries the past and the present. Glittering metallic accents add a layer of luxury.'

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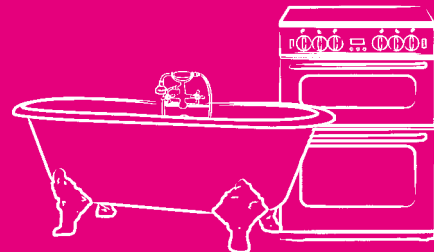
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Kitchens & BATHROOMS

Discover stylish and practical flooring



Trend: Autumn pastels

Summer is on its way out, but that doesn't mean that you suddenly have to banish all bright colours from your home. Simply swap any neon shades for calmer colours such as sage green and dusky blue, and if you're really holding onto summer, have fun with brighter accessories and kitchen-top appliances. If you're on a budget, pick up some tester pots in a variety of colours and paint each cupboard in a different, complementary shade. You could even have a go at transforming your wooden dining set, using tape to create different patterns if you're really after the 'wow' factor. If you have a little more cash, a colourful splashback is an easy, practical way of introducing this trend into your kitchen. Now all that's left to do is to choose your colours!



A quick change

When we think of fitting bathroom furniture, we imagine the inconvenience and the disruption to our morning routine. Luckily, Croydex's new range of Click 'N' Lock vanity units could help make all that a thing of the past. The units feature an integrated ceramic basin and because the different components can be clicked together, you won't need a drill, screws, or messy glue to fit them. Plus, Croydex claim they can be assembled in less than 20 minutes, meaning you can update your bathroom in a flash.

Boston vanity unit, £374.98; Chinnock 36cm vanity unit, £333.32, both Croydex

Make it metallic

Copper continues to be the metal of the moment and now your bathroom can get in on the action with the new copper-effect bathroom accessories from Matalan.

There's a towel ring, toilet roll holder, handy over-door hooks and this gorgeous round mirror that'll look great hanging above your sink. Team them with warm neutrals to create a cosy bathroom that's perfect for the cooler months to come.



Copper-effect mirror, £18; towel ring, £6; toilet roll holder, £6, all Matalan

Get creative with colour



Choosing the colour of your kitchen cupboards can be a big decision and it's often hard to really imagine what your finished kitchen will look like, even with the help of samples. Thankfully, Crown Imperial has added a Colour Explorer design tool to its website to let you try out countless different colours and finishes in just a few clicks, meaning you can try out unlimited combinations before you spend your hard earned cash on your dream kitchen. Visit www.crown-imperial.co.uk/colour to have a go.

Image Crown

Feature Laura McLeish



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

Bright, bold highlights

Simple, cream units will stand the test of time, but with colourful accessories, Zara



Insider info

WHO LIVES HERE?

Zara Everard, 40, lives with her partner, Gavin Price, 40, and sons Charlie, seven, and Cody, four, in a 1940s, three-bedroom semi in Hereford.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU PASS ON?

'If your budget can stretch, pay for professionals to do the job from start to finish. I wasn't confident about scheduling the plumber, tiler and so on, and with youngsters, I wanted the work completed quickly. Leaving everything to our builder cost more, but was definitely worth it.'

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PLEASED WITH ?

'We're delighted with the whole room, and we use it so much more now. It's a great day-to-day family space and also works when we have friends round.'

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE OLD ROOM?

The old kitchen was dark and extremely small, with no space to move or cook with ease. With Zara and Gavin's growing family, the kitchen just wasn't fit for purpose anymore.



Before

When Zara Everard and her partner Gavin Price first moved into their house, the tiny kitchen was perfectly adequate, but eight years later, with two young boys, the lack of space had become a real issue. 'The kitchen was OK for a couple, but not for a family,' says Zara. 'It was dark, cluttered and cramped and I felt completely isolated in there. My back would bump the washing machine when I opened the oven door, and we had to keep the fridge-freezer in the downstairs cupboard. I couldn't even enjoy cooking with the boys, because there wasn't enough space.'

Zara and Gavin discussed extending their home, or even moving. They finally settled on a cost-effective plan to take out the wall between the kitchen and adjoining dining room. This would give them a bright, roomy, family-friendly kitchen with a breakfast bar, extra storage and a seating area overlooking the garden.

Having chatted over their plans with the

builder, and armed with room dimensions, the couple hit the high street. Zara was looking for understated, cream kitchen units. 'I wanted timeless furniture that would reflect light, but I planned to accessorise with splashes of colour to give the room character and a relaxed, homely feel,' she explains.

Once the simple cream units, worktops and warm, wood-look flooring were in place, Zara layered on highlights of vibrant turquoise and soft aqua, with glistening, mosaic tiles and pretty accessories. A comfy sofa and armchair have created a relaxing area to sit and enjoy the garden and the new layout incorporates the fridge-freezer, a dishwasher, handy breakfast bar with stools, and plenty of storage. 'It's made such a difference,' says Zara. 'I'm not shut away, so cooking is more fun, and it's great when friends and family come over, because we've got a bright, practical space, where everyone can be together. It's not just a kitchen any more.'

BE BOLD WITH COLOUR

Zara introduced a burst of bright, fresh turquoise, and some homely accessories to give the breakfast bar and seating zone a relaxing feel that contrasts with the practical kitchen area.



UNIFY THE SPACE

The combined dining room and kitchen is long, with two distinct areas. Zara's vibrant turquoise wall gives the seating area its focus, but the cream units, dark worktops and decorative mosaic tiling pull the whole room together.

make my kitchen stand out

Everard's kitchen still has the 'wow' factor

REFRESH OLD PIECES

Zara salvaged an old pine vegetable rack and revitalised it with leftover paint and tiles, so it blends seamlessly with the new kitchen. It is stored out of the way, under the worktop overhang.

ACCESSORISE TO CREATE PERSONALITY

Zara opted for neutral tones for the walls and cabinets, so she could inject character with accessories that can easily be changed when she wants an update.

ADD A DECORATIVE TOUCH

Mosaic tiles make a practical splashback around the sink and cooker, and add a touch of glamour at the same time. The shimmering finish catches the light, picking up the room's blue and turquoise highlights.

DESIGN A PRACTICAL LAYOUT

The open-plan layout is ideal for a family, with the cooking and washing up area separate from the seating zone. Zara kept her existing cooker, which was quite new, and stuck to the 'U'-shape of her old kitchen, saving money on plumbing and wiring.

MAXIMISE SPACE WITH A BREAKFAST BAR

Zara was worried that adding a dining table would make the kitchen feel cramped, so a neat breakfast bar was the ideal solution. The bold, turquoise wall makes the area stand out, while the smart, cream bar stools echo the colour of the units.

BOOST YOUR STORAGE

Zara's tall kitchen cabinets only have a single internal shelf. These clever folding shelves, from Lakeland, make the most of the height and double her storage space.

LOOK FOR SPACE-SAVING STYLES

Zara's nifty nest-style coffee tables are perfect for a tight space, as the smaller one stows handily beneath the larger one when not needed. Her pretty turquoise accessories soften the clean lines.

SHOPPING LIST

Costa Rica gloss cream kitchen units, £67 per 600mm base unit; Matt Laminate Romantic Walnut worktop, £129 per 3m length; Flush inset medium stainless steel bowl sink, £233; Kumai monobloc chrome mixer tap, £138, all Wickes. Beko free-standing washing machine, £200; Beko free-standing dishwasher, £249, both Appliances Online. Lifestyle Manhattan Ellis warm oak vinyl flooring, £12.60 per m, Hereford Carpets. Cuban cream faux leather bar stools, £26.47 each, Amazon. Walls: Dulux Endurance Mellow Mocha emulsion, £26.87 per 2.5l; B&Q Colours Premium Any Room Chance emulsion, £19.84 per 2.5l; Colours Stone and Glass mosaic tiles, £14.98 per 30cm x 30cm tile; Cirrus nickel-effect four-lamp bow spotlights, £28 each; handy beech-effect floating drawer shelf, £10, all B&Q. Milan two-seater charcoal sofa, £299; Rayleigh tray table set, £46.99, both Tesco. Aqua twist tub chair, £129.99, Dunelm. Handy shelves (inside cabinets), £8.99 each, Lakeland.

TOTAL COST: £3,139.03



Choose the right kitchen & bathroom FLOORING

Take your pick from some of our favourite designs for a floor that will stand the test of time

KITCHEN

◀ Achieve a retro look with a striking red and white vinyl

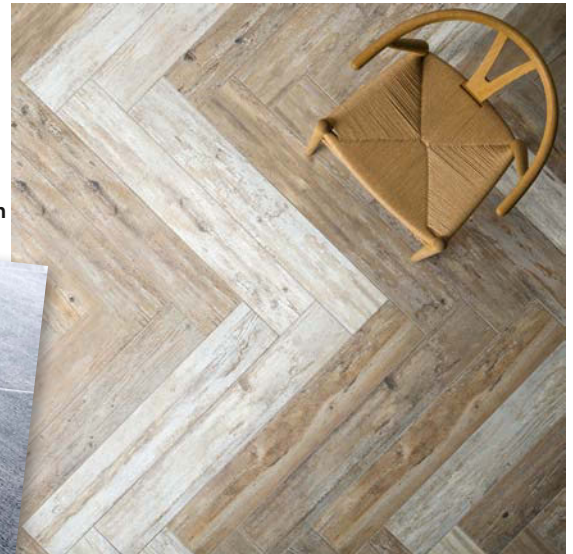
Bubblegum and Liquorice York vinyl, £16 per sq m, Avenue Floors

▼ Transform your kitchen with a stone-effect vinyl, which works especially well teamed with white kitchen cabinets

Prestige 593 quartz tile-effect vinyl, from £16.99 per sq m, Carpetright

▼ These chic porcelain tiles mimic the warmth and charm of aged wood, and are available in five different colour tones

Antique porcelain tiles, from £41.99 per sq m, Absolute collection, Johnson Tiles



KITCHEN IDEAS



▲ Go for geometrics for a floor that's bang-on-trend

Mary and Bertie ceramic tiles, £36 per sq m, both House of British Ceramic Tile

◀ Create a stunning feature on your kitchen floor with these hard-wearing porcelain tiles

London décor tiles, from £54 per sq m, The Baked Tile Company

▼ Create a timeless feel with Amtico's luxury vinyl tiles in a neutral shade

Noche Travertine luxury vinyl, from around £37.50 per sq m, Spacia collection, Amtico



Treverk Home Castagno, from around £65.50 per sq m, Topps Tiles



▲ These matt-finish porcelain tiles capture the beautiful tones and woodgrain of chestnut

▶ Go for grey with this on-trend option

Impressive concrete wood light grey laminate, from £19.99 per sq m, Quick-Step

▼ Choose a vinyl with an authentic wood effect such as this hard-wearing design, which has a 15-year wear guarantee

Harmony Chaparrel vinyl, from £19.99 per sq m, Carpetright



BATHROOM



▲ These show-stopping marble tiles are pretty pricey, so a feature panel within plainer tiles may be more achievable if you're on a budget. Team with a natural material such as travertine tiles for a subtle backdrop

Caspari Antiqued Silver tiles, from around £169.28 per sq m; Stabledoor Travertine tiles, from around £41.15 per sq m, both Topps Tiles



◀ Get a luxury spa feel with a mosaic-effect patterned vinyl floor

Floorgrip 572 Lolita vinyl, from £12.99 per sq m, Carpetright



Add a subtle texture with contemporary rubber tiles

Mink rubber grid tiles, £55 per sq m, Hemingway Design at Harvey Maria



▲ Go for a pretty, floral floor with these gorgeous ceramic tiles

Vintage Rose, £44 per sq m, Feature Floors collection, House of British Ceramic Tile

◀ Wood-effect tiles are proving to be a popular trend. Create a striking contrast with a bold, dark shade

Ebony Block porcelain floor tiles, 15cm x 60cm, £39 per sq m, Utopia



BATHROOM IDEAS



◀ Make a chic style statement with these striking patterned tiles

Bohemian Beiges porcelain floor tiles, 44.5cm x 44.5cm, £46 per sq m, Utopia



▶ Introduce a 'wow' factor with this patterned design

Mardis Gras Sagres 599 vinyl, from £12.99 per sq m, Carpetright

▼ The subtle marble tones of these luxury vinyl tiles make it ideal for an understated bathroom

Bottocino Grey luxury vinyl tiles, from around £37.50 per sq m, Spacia collection, Amtico



Kapok wood cement beige tiles, from around £55 per sq m, Topps Tiles

These glazed porcelain tiles have a muted, concrete-like appearance with a subtle woodgrain, taking inspiration from the Kapok tree, found in the Amazon



Perfect for a contemporary bathroom, this light wood-effect luxury vinyl offers a clean, modern look

Livyn Select Oak Light luxury vinyl, £26.99 per sq m, Quick-Step



We've gone upwards rather

Raising the ceiling height has made all the difference for Victoria Gallimore and her



Insider info

WHO LIVES HERE?

Victoria Gallimore, 32, runs a company sourcing and renovating old furniture, www.cherryvintage.co.uk. She lives with fiancé, Andy, 34, a health economist, and their dog, Spike. They moved into the two-bedroom terraced cottage in June 2013.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE ROOM?

'The amount of light that's now coming in. Before it was dark and depressing, but the roof light makes such a difference.'

ANY TIPS TO PASS ON?

'In a cramped, dark room, think about all the ways in which you can lighten things up. We put in a roof light and changed the original wooden door to one with panels, so we could put in opaque glass.'

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE OLD ROOM?

The low ceiling and the room's dimensions meant this space felt very small and cramped. The floor-to-ceiling tiles were grubby and the grout was falling out. Also a leak behind the plasterboard left this room in a poor state.



Before



ADD A ROOF LIGHT

Changing a roof line is an opportunity to bring in more light, so consider a roof light if you have the space, it's a great solution for a windowless room.

than outwards

cramped bathroom

Buying a cottage that needed tons of work but had great potential wasn't too much of a problem for Victoria Gallimore and her fiancé Andy Garnham. 'We're both pretty handy. We can turn our hand to most things and since we took on the house we've completely renovated both bedrooms and the living room, doing everything from building wardrobes, rebuilding furniture and painting everywhere. But the bathroom and kitchen needed a bit more thinking about, as they are downstairs in a 1980s extension with a flat roof,' Victoria explains. And with both their dads also being knowledgeable about the building trade and property, they had plenty of expert advice.

'The agreement all round was that we needed to raise the ceiling of both the bathroom and the kitchen to make both rooms feel appreciably bigger,' says Victoria. 'We couldn't face doing both rooms at once, so we decided to concentrate on the bathroom first as it was driving us both mad. When we raised the roof we also added a roof light to help bring extra light into the space.'

The cramped bathroom meant that the shower on the wall wasn't really tall enough for Andy, plus the walls were tiled floor-to-ceiling in grubby white tiles with failing grout, and the pipework had been oddly boxed in, so a large piece stuck out.

'The whole process took from September to December last year, as when they took the tiles off, the plasterboard was soaking wet from leaks and had to be replaced, then allowed to dry in between. The whole ceiling and building work took about six weeks, and they left us with a WC until the



THINK STORAGE

A compact vanity unit with built-in basin takes up very little space, but provides plenty of storage for everything from toiletries to towels.

last moment otherwise it would have been a nightmare,' Victoria exclaims.

With the suite in, the walls and floor tiled and all of Victoria's little touches added, it was all ready for Christmas. 'It was lucky, as we had guests staying, but I absolutely love spending time in there,' she smiles.



ATTENTION TO DETAIL

While researching an authentic style of hooks to fasten the shower curtain to the circular rail, Victoria found these old-fashioned metal ones that are ideal.



GO FOR A WOOD EFFECT

Not fancying a wooden floor in the bathroom, Victoria has chosen some ceramic tiles which give the impression of floorboards, and are easier to look after in a wet environment.



MAKE IT PERSONAL

Victoria added that personal finishing touch with these two towel hooks boasting the couple's initials.



SHOPPING LIST

Winchester bath with resin feet, £549; Bensham bath/shower mixer, £209; Savoy low level WC, £339, all Bathstore. Realm ER shower, £493.20, Mira Showers. Lillangen basin, £80; Silveran/Hamnviken wash basin cabinet, £115, both Ikea. Moustache knob on vanity unit, £2, Tiger. Mayfair Tait single basin tap, £83, Bathroom Trends. Colosseum triple radiator HX309, £346, Ultra Finishing. White Gloss Metro brick wall tiles, £19.50 per sq m; Cornish driftwood light floor tiles, £55 per sq m, both Topps Tiles. Tongue and groove, £8 per pack, Wickes. Cladding: Ivory Eggshell, £18 per 750ml, Laura Ashley. Walls: Pearl 100 Intelligent Eggshell, £53 per 2.5l, Little Greene. Shower curtains, £40 each, M&S. Curtain hooks, £9 per pack, John Lewis. Wall cabinet, £60, TK Maxx. Mirror, £50, Next. Towel hooks, £7.50 each, Oliver Bonas. New door, £40; shower rail, £80, both eBay. Frosted glass panels, £15 each, Brume. Metal jug, £16 at antiques fair, for similar try John Lewis.

TOTAL COST: £3,193.20

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‘Bring a burst of colour into your bathroom with these stunning patterned tiles, £3.80 each from The Winchester Tile Company. Inspired by Mediterranean designs, they’re perfect for a stunning basin splashback.’



Make DRYING LAUNDRY INDOORS a breeze

Take your pick from our selection of tumble dryers and indoor airers

There's nothing nicer than drying laundry outside in the fresh air, but once the summer weather starts to fade, it's sometimes necessary to dry indoors. Hanging wet clothes inside isn't ideal, as it increases moisture levels, and, when placed on radiators can reduce their efficiency. By making sure the room is well-ventilated, however, and with the right equipment you can make this task much easier. If you don't have a tumble dryer, consider investing in a substantial ailer for clothes to hang freely. A dehumidifier could also speed up the drying process, and help to prevent damp occurring in your home.

Feature Lisa Hibberd



The perfect solution when floor space is at a premium, this versatile dryer fixes to the wall and extends outwards, so that it can be easily folded away when not in use

Extending clothes dryer, £125, Garden Trading



This foldaway heated design is ideal for when space is tight. It costs just pennies per hour to run, and is a lifesaver for getting daily essentials dry

DRY:SOON wall-mounted heated ailer, £69.99, Lakeland



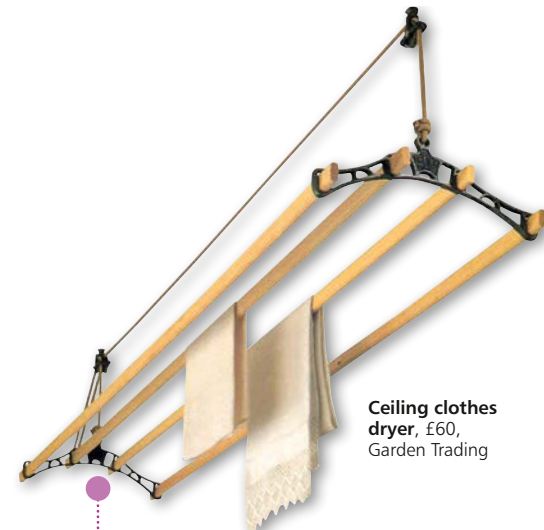
This tumble dryer features a clever AutoSense function which uses humidity sensors to detect the moisture in your laundry, and then only uses the amount of heat needed to dry it, making it really efficient. It's rated 'A+' for energy efficiency, and has a large capacity of 8kg

ZDH8333W tumble dryer, £549, Zanussi

This machine's Silent System is engineered to make it super-quiet while running, and also offers an anti-crease function to make ironing easier. It has an 8kg capacity and an energy rating of 'B'

AEG T76280AC tumble dryer, £399, John Lewis





Ceiling clothes dryer, £60, Garden Trading

Indulge in a touch of traditional style with this classic design. Simply attach to the ceiling in any room and use the pulley system to raise and lower it



A dehumidifier can help to dry laundry more quickly, as well as keeping moisture levels low in your home. This model comes in three options which are suitable for different room sizes – the largest can provide up to 20 litres of extraction per day. Features include easy-glide castors and a continuous drain option

Dimplex Forté 5L dehumidifier, from around £134.99, Argos



With a choice of eight different programmes, this great-value dryer has an extra-large door for easy loading, and features sensor drying which detects when the laundry is dry and automatically turns itself off. It has a 7kg capacity and is rated 'B' for energy efficiency

Zanussi ZDP7203 condenser tumble dryer, £299, John Lewis



With a beech frame, this stylish ailer folds flat when not in use, so it can be easily stored behind a door or even under a bed. The top is ideal for anything that needs to be dried flat, such as woollens

X Clothes dryer, £35, Garden Trading



If you often have large amounts of laundry to dry, this design offers enough space for up to four wash loads. It can be folded flat for easy storage, and is also useful for flat drying

Minky 40m tower indoor clothes airer, £29.99, Argos



Utilise space in the bathroom when it's not in use – this rack can be used over a bath or in a shower, and offers 10 metres of drying space

Over-bath ailer, £19.99, Lakeland



16-peg laundry ailer, £8.99, Lakeland

Clipping easily to a washing line or indoor ailer, Lakeland's handy peg ailer is ideal for underwear, socks and baby clothes. It folds away neatly when not in use



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Make it easy!



We're all about keeping our homes bright and breezy this month – with colourful project ideas for your kitchen, living room, bedroom and more. From a dressing table crafted from an old wooden door to a stylish fabric lampshade and vibrant kitchen ideas, these makes will add colour to any room.



Advice
from the
experts



Stitch a luxurious fabric lampshade



Display your crockery with custom-built storage



Repair damaged tiles with our DIY guide

MAKE, DO & CRAFT

FURNITURE FACELIFT

SEW SIMPLE

GIRLS' GUIDE TO DIY

ASK THE EXPERTS

YOUR CHECKLIST

✂ Make, do & craft ✂

Jazz up your kitchen with these decorative ideas

Colourful plate rack

Show off your favourite crockery with this bright wooden shelving

SHOPPING LIST

- one 60cm x 93cm piece MDF ● white paint
- paint brush ● 63mm wide/15mm thick wooden planks cut to the following lengths: two 60cm, two 90cm, two 57cm, all from B&Q ● tape measure ● pencil ● timber saw
- sand paper ● Valspar paint and primer in one, we used Sandy Peppers and Beet Beat, £12.83 per can, B&Q ● drill ● screws ● screwdriver ● three Richard Burbidge Edwardian pine spindles 900mm x 32mm, £3 each, B&Q ● three 60cm lengths of Richard Burbidge pine profile moulding, 28mm x 4mm, £3.50 per 2.4m, B&Q ● hot glue gun

1 Paint the MDF with two coats of white paint to make the back board. Cut all of the 15mm thick wooden planks to size, then sand the cut edges. Spray paint the 92cm and 60cm planks orange (these will form the outer frame), and the two 57cm lengths purple (these will be the inner shelves). Paint the three lengths of decorative moulding purple. Cut each of the spindles down to 57cm, making sure to cut equal amounts from both ends.

2 Construct the outer frame of the unit. Position the two 90cm planks of wood on top of the MDF back board, aligning them along the two long edges for a flush finish. Drill pilot holes, then screw into position. Repeat to screw the two 60cm planks at the top and bottom of the MDF to complete the frame. Measure and divide the inside

of the frame into three 30cm sections – fit a 57cm shelf along each of these lines, inserting two screws into each side of each shelf.

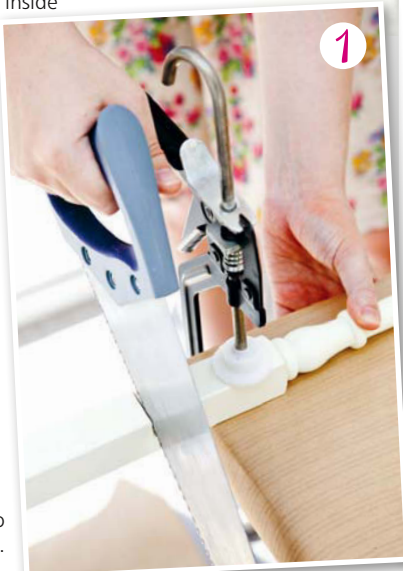
3 Position the spindles 10cm up from each shelf, aligning the front edge of the spindle with the front edge of the unit. Screw these into position, once again working from each side. Finally, use hot glue to stick each of the 57cm mouldings along the front of each shelf, to serve as a lip to keep the plates in place.

Top tip

Add extra screws to the front mouldings of each shelf to make them extra secure.



Melamine Tropical Floral dinner plate, £3.50; bowls, £3 each; side plate, £3; Antique Floral dinner plate, £4; Floral drink dispenser, £17.50, all M&S. Mimosa melamine side plate, £3 each, Habitat. Butterfly plates, from £12 each, RE



Painted fruit bowl

Craft this plaster bowl from scratch and add an eye-catching paint design

SHOPPING LIST

- glass or plastic bowl ● cooking oil spray
- three rolls of modrock plaster of Paris bandages, £3.76 per set of three, Amazon
- water ● PVA glue ● pink rose Decopatch paper, 87p per sheet, The Decopatch Place
- emulsion paint ● paint brush



1 Lay the glass or plastic bowl upside down, and spray with cooking oil. This will ensure the plaster doesn't stick too much. Cut the bandages into short strips and, one by one, dunk them into a bowl of water to wet them, wring them out a little, then place onto the bowl. Smooth them over every so often, building up the layers until you're happy with the result. Leave to dry thoroughly overnight.

2 Once it is completely dry, gently ease the plaster bowl away from the glass one. Sit it right side up. Cut the Decopatch paper into squares and, using a 50/50 mix of water and PVA glue, cover the inside of the bowl. Once covered, paint a layer of the glue mix over the paper. Once again, leave to dry thoroughly.

3 Turn the bowl upside down. Dunk a brush into your chosen colour of paint, and drip it onto the centre of the up-turned bowl, allowing it to drip down the sides.

It may need a little encouragement at first. Once you're happy with the design, leave to dry thoroughly.

Top tip

The more layers of plaster bandage you use, the stronger your bowl will be – we recommend using at least three or four for a sturdy finish.

Glitter letter lights

Make a statement with this bright typographic sign

SHOPPING LIST

- wooden letters, £3 each Hobbycraft ● pencil ● drill and large drill bit ● sand paper ● PVA glue ● paint brush ● 250g silver glitter shaker, £7.50, Hobbycraft ● Valspar paint and primer in one, in Beet Beat, £12.83 per can, B&Q ● LED tea lights, £8 for eight, Ikea

1 Begin by positioning the holes for the lights to show through. Decide where you'd like each light to be and mark with a pencil. At each point, drill a hole, making sure that the drill bit you use is wide enough for your LED bulb to poke through. Once all the holes are drilled, sand to create a smooth finish.

2 Coat the inside of each letter with PVA glue, ensuring the side edges are covered as well as the back. Sprinkle silver glitter inside each letter, making sure to completely cover the glue layer – it's better to use too much glitter at this stage than not enough. Wait until the glue has dried, then turn the letters over (preferably over a bowl or bin) and shake off the excess.

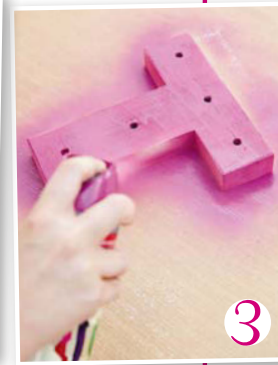
3 Turn the letters over, so that the glittered side is facing down. Coat the back and sides of each letter with purple spray paint, and leave to dry thoroughly. Once dry, push each of your LED lights through the holes, and glue into position.

Top tip

Wall-mount these letters by attaching Command strips to the back and using a string of fairy lights instead of LED tea lights.



Mimosa melamine side plate £3, Habitat



Furniture facelift

Create a quirky dressing table from an old wooden door

Doors are often discarded during house renovations, and frequently seen lining skips, so can be easy to find. For this transformation, we used a bold wallpaper to highlight the door's panels, painted the wood with a pretty lilac shade and added a covered shelf to create a dressing table. Finally, we attached a large coat hook to hang a vintage mirror, plus decorative doorknobs to hang necklaces and scarves.

You will need

- ✓ wooden door ✓ filler ✓ sand paper
- ✓ sponge and soapy water ✓ Annabelle wallpaper, £9.99 per roll, Homebase
- ✓ scissors ✓ pencil ✓ tape measure
- ✓ drill and drill bit ✓ screw-in hook
- ✓ pink ceramic Padstow flower knobs, £3.90 each, Trinca-Ferro ✓ white shelf board, £6.49, Homebase
- ✓ 15cm shelf brackets, £2.99 each, Homebase
- ✓ screws ✓ screwdriver ✓ fabric
- ✓ PVA glue ✓ bowl of water ✓ paint brush ✓ Amethyst quick-dry satin paint, £11.99 per 750ml tin, Homebase
- ✓ vintage mirror



Before



2



3



5



7

1 Remove any door furniture such as handles, hooks and hinges from the door. Cover any holes with filler, leave to dry. Sand the filler and door all over with sand paper – this will remove any loose paint and provide a base or key for the paint and wallpaper. Wipe the door clean with a sponge and soapy water to remove any dust, then leave to dry.

2 Position the wallpaper roughly in place on the door panels, using your fingertips to pinch and mark the shape of each panel into the paper. Cut to size with scissors. It's a good idea to lightly mark each panel with a number on the reverse to identify them later. Place them to one side.

3 Position the knobs on the door then mark and drill a hole for each, we added three on each side of our door. Drill one extra hole for a central hook, to hang a mirror. Do not add any of the items yet as the door needs to be painted first.

4 Plot the position of the shelf. We turned our door upside down so the small top panels were at the bottom, this allowed the shelf to fit neatly across the door without crossing any vertical panels – we also wanted to keep our shelf quite high, to fit a tall stool

underneath. Mark and screw the brackets for your shelf in place.

5 Cut a piece of fabric to cover the shelf. The fabric should be the same width as your shelf (plus 20cm), and twice the depth (plus 20cm – this extra allowance will cover the sides). Place the shelf on a work surface, then mix equal parts PVA glue and water in a bowl and apply to the surface of the shelf. Position the fabric right-side-up on top of the glued surface, then smooth flat. Turn the shelf over, then apply glue onto one side edge and the bottom of the shelf, gently pull the fabric over and smooth in place. Leave to dry.

6 Fold and glue the remaining shelf edge and both sides. Fold the fabric neatly at each corner; any excess can be cut away for a neater finish. Paint the fabric shelf with a layer of the PVA mix and leave to dry.

7 Paint the door with a coat of lilac paint, leave to dry. Repeat if necessary.

8 Attach the shelf brackets and screw the shelf to them. Add the knobs at each side of the door. Finally, screw the central hook in place and hang the mirror.



Top tip

Check that the knobs fit after drilling the holes as some doors are quite deep and the screws provided may not be long enough. This is easily solved by buying longer screws.

Sew simple

Make a statement with this luxurious floral lampshade

You will need

fat quarters of fabric in navy, purple and green • pencil • scissors • sewing machine • iron • needle and thread • jumbo ric rac, £8 per 3m card, The Button Company • plain circular lampshade • patterned silk dupion, from a selection at MacCulloch & Wallis • tape measure • spray adhesive • 1m narrow ostrich feather fringe, £15.85 per m, MacCulloch & Wallis • hot glue gun

Jazz up a plain white lampshade and add a touch of quirky style to your living room by covering it in patterned silk and creating a selection of fabric blooms to make your own design.

1 Begin by cutting strips of fabric to form the fabric roses. For each rose, cut two strips – we cut ours across the full width of the fat quarter (46cm) x 5cm each. Pin the two strips together, with right sides facing, and along one of the long sides, cut a wavy edge.

2 With the strips still pinned together, stitch along the curved edge of each, leaving a 5mm seam allowance. Unpin and turn out. Press, then begin to roll the strip up from one end, wrapping it around itself. Once all of the fabric has been rolled, hand stitch the end in place to hold the shape together.

3 Next, create roses from strips of jumbo ric rac. Cut two 50cm strips and weave them around each other – the curves of each should lock together to hold them well. Pin, then stitch a single line down the centre of the strips, to secure. As in step 2, roll the ric rac up around itself and secure with hand stitches.

4 Working on one rose at a time, begin to tease the rolled curved edges of the fabric outwards and fold them over, until they resemble rose petals. You may need to pull some out more than others to create a natural look. Repeat with the ric rac roses, folding the edge of each curve outwards to make petals.



5 From a scrap of green fabric, cut a series of leaf shapes in various sizes. For a neat, finished look you can cut these in pairs and stitch right sides together, then turn out, to seam the edges. We chose to leave our leaf edges raw for a natural, slightly frayed edge.

6 Cover the lampshade. Measure the circumference and height of your shade, and add 8cm to both amounts. Cut a piece of silk dupion to this size, and lay it flat, with right side facing downwards. Spray the lampshade with adhesive and place it down on top of the fabric, then gently ease the fabric around it and press into position, folding the raw edges over to the wrong side by 3cm each and overlapping slightly. Fold the top and bottom raw edges over to the inside of the lampshade and glue into place.

7 Decide the arrangement you'd like the flowers and leaves to take on the lampshade. Once happy with their positioning, attach them securely – for this we first glued them into place with a hot glue gun, then added a few hand stitches around the base of each to make sure they were held fast.

8 Finally, add the feathered trim around the base of the shade. We chose to glue this into position, then work a few hand stitches all the way around to hold securely.



Top tip

This design is totally customisable – add as many or as few roses as you like, and vary their size by cutting the strips wider, longer or smaller to suit your design.

SEW SIMPLE

Girls' Guide to



Get your kitchen or bathroom looking as good as new with our guide to replacing damaged tiles





1

1 First, cover your worktop, sink or bath area using sheeting to protect it from any falling pieces of tile. You should also wear safety goggles. Next, use a grout scraper to remove as much grout as possible from around the damaged tile.



2

2 Using a suitable drill bit – a ceramic tile drill bit is best – drill random holes into the tile to help loosen it. You'll need to push quite hard against the tile but make sure the holes don't go through the wall behind.



3

3 Use a bolster or chisel to loosen and remove sections of the tile, being careful not to damage any surrounding tiles in the process. Make sure you're wearing gloves when removing the pieces of tile.



4

4 Once you've completely got rid of the cracked tile, use a scraper to remove as much of the old adhesive from the wall as possible. If you don't do this, the new tile will sit proud of the old tiles.



5

5 Now you're ready to fit the new tile. Apply adhesive to the back of the tile and use tile spacers to make sure it's perfectly aligned with the existing tiles. Once the adhesive is dry, remove the spacers, re-grout and clean around the tile.



Top tip

If the new grout around the replaced tile looks noticeably newer or whiter compared to the rest of the wall, use a grout pen to colour over the existing grout to make it match and refresh the look of your tiles.

Trick of the trade

You'll need to use a grout remover to make removing the cracked tile as easy as possible. When using it, lean the tool into the broken tile so that if you slip you'll only chip the tile you're going to remove.



Heavy duty grout remover, £3.95, B&Q

ASK THE EXPERTS

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

Q I have a shower over the bath in my bathroom, but unfortunately it's right next to the window. I don't want to reconfigure the layout, but have trouble with water splashing onto the window sill. Do you have any ideas of how to get around this problem?

Mrs Leach, London

A *Your Home says...*

The Ocean range of 100% waterproof roller blinds from www.blinds-2go.co.uk could be the ideal solution for you. Designed for use in areas where the blind is likely to get wet, it can even be used right next to the shower. It's made from highly water-resistant PVC fabric rolled onto a rust-free aluminium tube, so it's able to withstand this challenging environment and is easy to wipe clean. There are 27 different designs available, including plain, stone-effect and wood-look patterns.

Prices start from just £27.95 for an Ocean roller blind measuring W40cm x D40cm, made-to-measure. For more information visit www.blinds-2go.co.uk.



Q A few slabs in my patio have worked loose over the summer – how can I fix them back in place?

Mrs V Nicholson, Kent



A *Claire Arnold, Product Manager at Tarmac Building Products, tells us how...*

A wobbly slab is not only annoying but it can be a dangerous trip hazard. Grab a bag of U-CAN mix in the bag mortar, which will cover an area of 0.4m², and follow these simple steps.

YOU WILL NEED: ● trowel ● chisel ● hammer

● spade ● brush ● rubber mallet

- 1. REMOVE OLD GROUTING** – Prepare the area by using your hammer and chisel to chip away the existing grout. Then use your spade to lift the slab out of place.
- 2. CHIP AWAY OLD MORTAR** – When you lift the slab, you may find that it has been laid on a sand/cement base or on a mortar bed. If it's the latter you might discover left over mortar on the slab or the ground. Use a hammer and chisel to remove this and even out the surface. Remove some sand to the depth of about 30mm (depending on the size of your slab) if there is an existing sand base.
- 3. MIX THE MORTAR** – You'll need 2.5 litres of clean water to mix the U-CAN mortar in its bag. Just unscrew the spout and pour the water into the bag. Squeeze out any excess air, screw the cap back on, and lie the bag down flat. Knead it to ensure the water is evenly distributed. Flip the bag over a couple of times to make sure the mortar is fully mixed. When that's done cut off the top of the bag.
- 4. LAY THE MORTAR** – Now that all the preparation is done, it's time to re-lay the slab. Add five blobs of mortar onto the ground – one to cover each corner of the slab and one in the middle.
- 5. LAY THE SLAB** – Carefully set your slab back in place and tap it with a rubber mallet. If the slab still sits higher than the surface around it, you might have a bit too much mortar. Just lift the slab and take some away before replacing it.
- 6. REPOINT THE GAPS** – Finish off the job by using a pointing trowel (the back of a trowel handle will work well if you don't have one of these) to fill the gaps between the slabs with any excess mortar. The mortar will be fully dry within a few hours, leaving you with an attractive and safe path or patio.

● For more information on the U-CAN range and to find inspiration through its new blog, please visit www.u-can.tv/blog. U-CAN is available at B&Q stores nationwide and at www.diy.com.



Q My shower is in desperate need of replacement, but I don't know where to begin – do you have any advice?

Mrs M Davies, London



A *Michael Gray, GROHE UK Training Manager, has this helpful advice...*

● **KNOW YOUR HOME'S WATER PRESSURE**

This is paramount before purchasing a shower. Choose a shower that is suitable for a low flow system if your home's pressure is under one bar to guarantee an invigorating shower. An electric shower is a great option for flexibility, as they are suitable for all installations, being mains-fed. Electric showers are also kind to the pocket as they work to a cold water system, only heating water when actually needed. We would recommend always checking with the manufacturer before making any purchase.

● **CHOOSE BETWEEN EXPOSED OR CONCEALED INSTALLATIONS**

Exposed installations can easily be



upgraded and altered as trends change, and provide both showering and bathing opportunities. Concealed installations are useful if space in the bathroom is at a premium, and mean that you can have a fixed head and hand-held shower system. Concealed shower valve installations can

allow you to choose between three showering options, including wall/ceiling-mounted shower heads, hand-held showers, side sprays and bath filling options, creating a clean and minimalist look.

● **LOOK OUT FOR THE SIZE OF THE SHOWER HEAD**

If you're looking for a more powerful spray pattern then consider the size of the shower head. Large shower heads tend to deliver a high flow rate but the pressure of the water is less than that of a smaller shower head.

● **CO-ORDINATE YOUR BATHROOM**

If buying an electric shower, look for a manufacturer that offers a variety of colour options so you can match your bathroom décor perfectly. A personalised showering experience is also growing in popularity, so you

might opt for a shower with multiple spray patterns which you can alternate to suit your requirements.

● For more information visit www.grohe.com/uk.

Q I live in an area that is off the mains gas grid, and so rely on oil for fuelling my heating and hot water. The noisy boiler and rusty oil tank that came with the house are old and at the end of their lifespan, so we are thinking about getting them replaced, though it's looking like it will cost us a fortune. Are there any alternative options out there?

Isabel Marshall, by email



A *Alastair Lovell, National Sales Manager at Calor, offers this advice...*

Don't worry; you're not the only person living off-grid that thinks they have to settle for an oil system – we receive lots of calls each day asking us the same question.

The good news is that there are some great alternatives out there, such as LPG from Calor, which is really convenient and versatile and gives you far less to worry about. Just like mains gas, you can use LPG to heat your home, for hot water and gas fires and it's also great for cooking because the heat produced is instant and controllable.

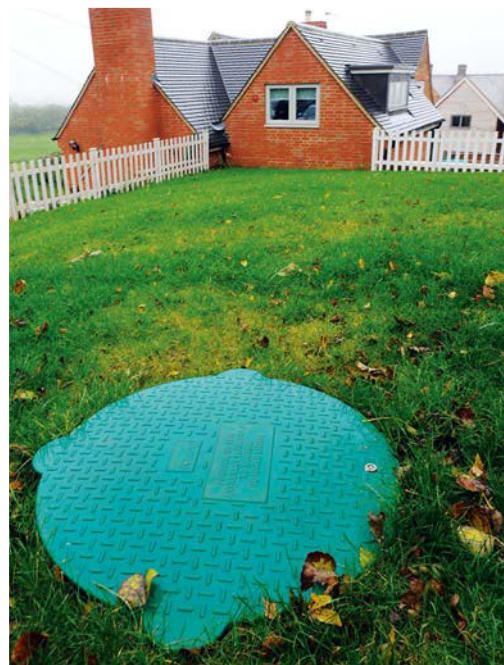
It's a clean option too. It's the greenest of all the fossil fuels available to off-grid users, plus there's no risk of spillages and it's highly unlikely to be stolen from a tank – something you can't say for oil with all the fuel thefts reported in rural areas.

Cost-wise, there is a fantastic range of 'A'-rated, high-efficiency LPG boilers on the market. These will certainly reduce the amount of energy you use for your heating and hot water, and you'll usually find that they are cheaper to buy than a new oil boiler.

And, did you know that replacing your oil tank can cost as much as £2,000 plus the added expense of installation, maintenance and insurance? With Calor, there's no tank to buy and for a small monthly charge, we'll maintain the tank for you as well. We also fit a clever telemetry system free of charge that alerts us when you need a top up of gas, so you needn't worry about having to remember to call for a gas delivery when you're running low.

Plus, you can hide the gas tank underground – so there's nothing to spoil your view and you can really make the most of your outside space. If you live in a smaller property, are short of outside space or simply don't need to use that much gas, cylinders are available too.

Switching couldn't be easier, it's simple and hassle-free, and if you sign up with Calor now, we'll install an above ground tank and connect you to gas for free.



If you have a DIY or maintenance question, write to Ask the Experts, Your Home, Hubert Burda Media UK, The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester, Essex CO4 9HU or email asktheexperts@yhmag.co.uk

Your September checklist

Discover seasonal tasks for your home and garden

✓ IF YOU DO ONE THING THIS MONTH...

September marks the end of summer and the annual back to school, and even back to work panic. Make sure you're fully prepared with our handy tips for getting your house and your family organised.

- No doubt you'll have a pile of shirts and school uniforms to wash over the next few weeks, so make sure your washing comes out smelling as fresh as possible by giving your machine a clean first. You can do this by running a service wash – that's a high temperature wash with detergent but without any clothes in the drum. Your machine might even have a special setting for this so it's worth checking your manual. If your drum really smells unpleasant, you can use white vinegar in the service cycle too – just make sure you leave the door open for the drum to dry fully once it's finished. Leaving the door open after every use will also help to stop bacteria growing and nasty smells developing.
- Packed lunches are a popular choice for busy families up and down the country, but leftovers can leave unsightly stains on plastic lunch boxes. To help clean off staining, make a paste with baking soda and warm water and lightly scrub the inside of the container, leaving the paste on overnight if possible and rinsing with warm soapy water. Swilling your boxes with vinegar before rinsing will also help remove any lingering odours. It's actually more hygienic to store your lunch in glass containers as they can be washed at higher temperatures, and although this isn't necessarily a practical option for kids, layering your salad in a glass jar is a fun, healthy way of taking your lunch to work.
- Throw out any uniforms that the kids have grown out of along with any of your work clothes that have seen better days. Take them to a charity shop or make the most of the last weekends of summer and spend the morning with the kids selling them at a car boot sale.
- Lastly, spend the night before you go back to work or school making sure everyone's bags are packed and lunches are made. It will make the following morning much less manic so you can make the first day back run as smoothly as possible.



✓ Essential buy for September

Make that pile of ironing less of a chore with this funky ironing board cover from Anorak. It's made from 100% cotton, is machine washable and the cute duck design will leave you smiling shirt after shirt.



Waddling Ducks ironing board cover, £18, Anorak

✓ A neat idea

A dirty iron equals dirty clothes, so give yours a thorough clean with this clever cream. Just squeeze some of the cleaner onto an old cotton towel and rub a hot iron over it until all of the residue from the iron has transferred onto the towel. Once the iron is sparkling, make sure you wipe away any leftover cleaner from around the steam vents before using the iron on your laundry. Easy!

Faultless hot iron cleaner, £5.25, Lakeland



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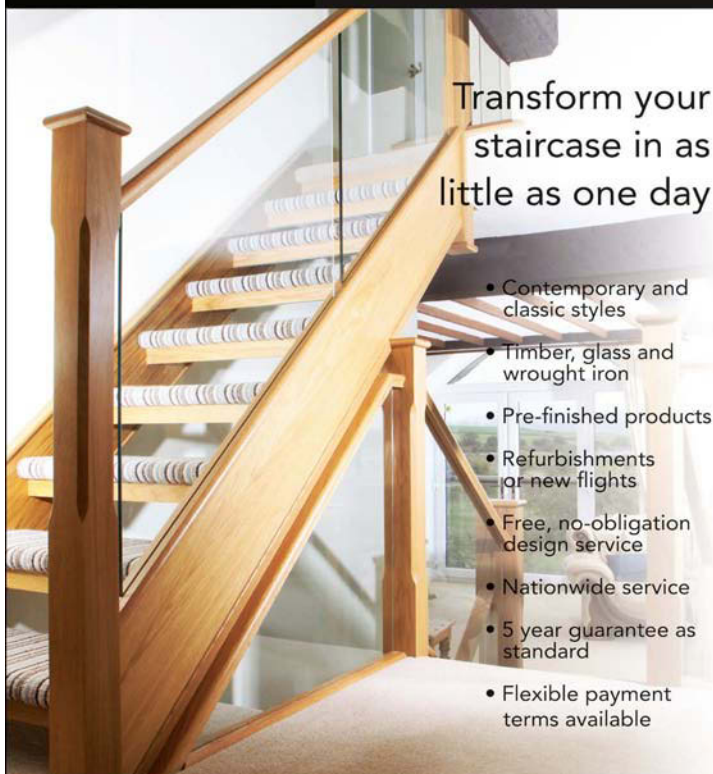
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Reader homes

Find great ideas for your home with four fabulous houses to inspire you



88

Joy used her compact space effectively to create a stylish, city centre apartment



Show off your hard work in *Your Home*

Have you just finished decorating your home? If so we'd love to see your photos and, who knows, your home may be featured in a future issue. Please send photos to Laura Higgins, Your Home, Hubert Burda Media UK, The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester, CO4 9HU



92 Cassie and Calvin filled their cottage with bargain buys and creative ideas



74

Jayne created a modern home using a mix of old and new



80

Bea and Phil gave their home an injection of colour and personality



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I mixed the old in with some new

Jayne Hazelton gave her traditional furniture a fresh, modern look

Looking for a fresh start after her divorce, Jayne Hazelton quickly put an offer on the Victorian semi-detached house she viewed in 2012. Not only was it in the same town that she was looking to stay in but, laid out over three

floors, it was ideal for herself and for her two children, both in their early twenties who were going to live with her. 'I wanted to find a house that was big enough for the three of us not to be living on top of each other, but wouldn't be too big for me when





'My style is traditional but adaptable; I like to buy timeless pieces but use them in a contemporary way. That way you can mix different styles and the look won't date too quickly,' says Jayne

Good idea!

Group a few interesting mirrors together as an alternative to a large picture. They will reflect the light and add interest to a plain wall.

they move out in the next few years,' Jayne explains. 'Having a bedroom up in the loft makes the house feel spacious and we're not all under each other's feet.'

The house still had some of its original features, such as sash windows and beautiful fireplaces, which were also part of its appeal as Jayne's furniture from her old property was mainly traditional in style and she didn't have the budget to replace it all and start again. Almost immediately after moving in the house was redecorated from top to bottom; while it meant roughing it a little and sleeping on floors they all agreed it was best to get it all done in one go. 'The house wasn't in a bad condition at all, it just wasn't decorated to my taste,' says Jayne. 'Apart from having a couple of sash windows replaced we didn't have to do any costly structural work.'

However, she did decide to look at the layout of the middle floor. Natasha had already claimed the loft bedroom as her own, which suited Alex as he was starting to look for a place of his own, but Jayne was concerned that the house only had one bathroom. 'One bathroom and three adults was never going to work and I felt the best solution was to turn the fourth bedroom, which was basically being used as a junk room, into a family bathroom and the original bathroom into a swanky, new shower room.' ▸

COME ON IN...



THE HOME

A three-bedroom Victorian semi in Reigate, Surrey.

WHO LIVES HERE?

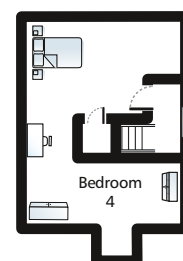
Jayne Hazelton, with her grown-up children, Natasha and Alex, and Rosie the dog. Jayne works part-time in two local independent interiors and fashion shops.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST PIECE OF ADVICE?

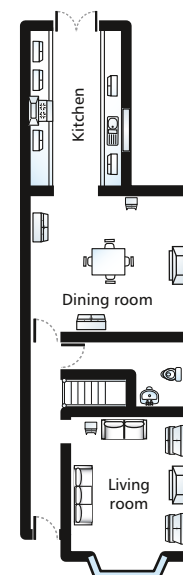
'Keep walls and floors in a small house neutral so that the rooms flow naturally into each other. Also, remove doors if you don't need them to make rooms feel more spacious. There wasn't a door on our living room and we have decided to keep it that way as it frees up the wall space. If privacy is needed we can close the dining room door.'

WHAT'S YOUR TOP TIP?

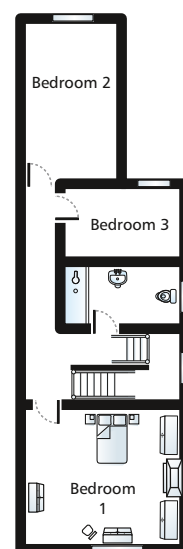
'Check that new furniture will fit in doorways and up stairs. Our sofa had to go in through the window and the original double bed I bought had to be returned as we couldn't get it up the stairs.'



SECOND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

For stockists see page 120

REAL HOME



Good idea!

A simple bar stool, tucked in to a corner creates an informal space to sit with a coffee if you don't have space for a breakfast bar or table and chairs.



Jayne painted the kitchen to complement the cabinetry, in Crown's, aptly-named, Lady Jayne flat matt emulsion from its Period range



‘I used a palette of pale, muted shades on all of the walls for a fresh, modern look that would create a neutral backdrop for my eclectic collection of period-style furniture.’

◁ As the two spaces were back-to-back a lot of the plumbing work was already in place and was a relatively straightforward job for Jamie Goodman, a local interior designer and fitter. The old bath was replaced with a modern walk-in shower and a wet room-style floor. ‘I was limited to a degree on what I could do with the rest of the house as I brought a lot of my furniture with me but felt I could really go to town with the shower room,’ explains Jayne. ‘I spotted the gold mosaics in a local shop and these dictated the rest of the scheme. I wanted something really contemporary, like a boutique hotel and am so pleased with the results. Plus, there is never a queue for the bathroom in the mornings.’

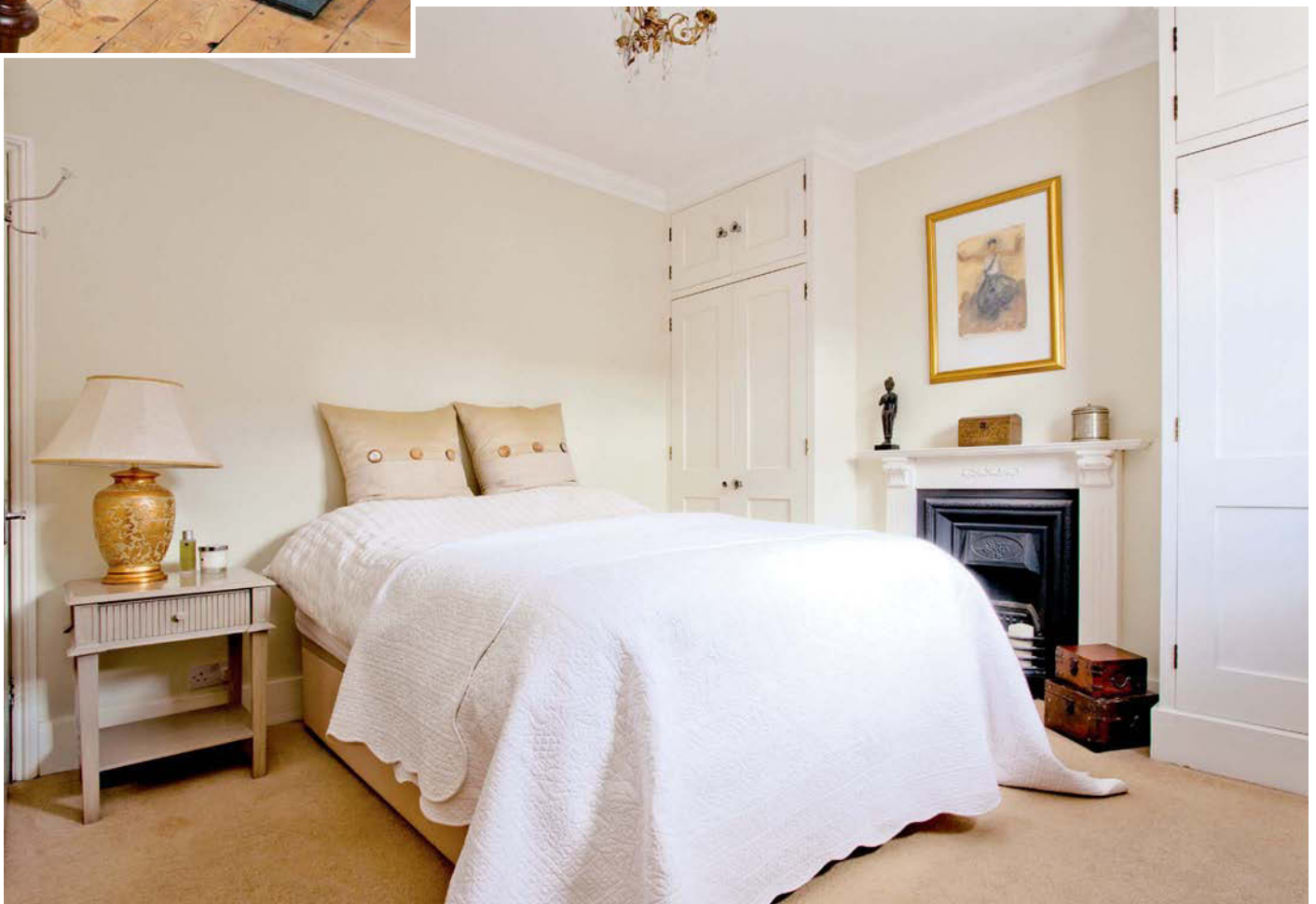
Before moving in, Jayne took stock of the furniture she had and looked at where she could reuse it in the new house. Unfortunately some of it, like her old bed, was just too big for the period cottage

but she wanted to keep the pieces she could and give them a new contemporary setting. ‘We were lucky that the floors on the ground floor and in the loft bedroom were already stripped and stained, saving us a messy job,’ she says. ‘I decided to use a palette of pale, muted shades on all of the walls for a fresh, modern look that would create a neutral backdrop for my eclectic collection of period-style furniture.’

The kitchen had been fitted by the previous owners and was in such good condition that Jayne didn’t feel that she had to change it. The pale cabinetry made the room feel light and bright and the galley layout was the best solution for the long room. The only change she made was to repaint the walls that had been a dark shade of green; a colour that, while popular in period houses, made the room feel a little gloomy. ‘I chose a lighter shade to match the units and it made a real difference,’ she says. ▷

◀ Jayne complemented her traditional dining furniture with clusters of big silver candles, vases and twinkling glass. The stunning ceiling light creates sparkling reflections on to the walls at night with a dazzling effect

▼ The large fitted wardrobes either side of the fireplace provide plenty of storage; Jayne changed the knobs when she moved in to give them a quick makeover. ‘I’d like some new carpet next, I like the comfort and feel of carpet in a bedroom.’



LOVE

Jayne chose a pale colour scheme to keep the room light and bright, painting a feature wall behind the bed in Crown's Feature Wall Sophistication emulsion. The Coco upholstered double bed was from Loaf. 'Natasha and I adore the light up 'Love' letters in her bedroom. They cost £125 from Taylor Jayne, one of the shops I work in, and are battery operated so there are no wires on show. They look fabulous in the evening.'

Good idea!

Shimmering glass and silver accessories will give a contemporary edge to traditional-style furniture.



► Ripping out an old bath has created enough space for a contemporary walk-in shower with eye-catching gold mosaic tiles. Jayne chose a square shower head to echo the graphic lines in the room. A white gloss handleless vanity unit hides all the bathroom clutter for a sleek, minimalist look

Good idea!

Jayne gave her shower room a wetroom feel with a walk-in shower, and oversized floor tiles which make the space appear larger.



'I wanted something really contemporary, like a boutique hotel bathroom, and am so pleased with the results.'

Apart from the bathroom and shower rooms, the biggest part of Jayne's budget was spent on redesigning the garden and the addition of a new garden room at the end. This has created an additional living room that they can all use, whatever the weather, and is ideal if they are entertaining their own friends. 'The outdoor space was as important to me as the inside and I wanted

a new terrace where we can eat outdoors on warm, sunny days,' she explains.

Jayne's old furniture, refreshed in a new understated setting, has been given an updated look. 'I really enjoy the challenge of turning a house into a home,' says Jayne. 'It's like planning an outfit; start with something you love and the rest will come together.' **YH**

The loft bedroom also includes space for a walk-in dressing area. For similar mirrored furniture see the range at Very



5 IDEAS TO STEAL

Satin white striped double bed cover set, £29, B&Q



KEEP IT SIMPLE

Simple white bedding instantly makes a bedroom feel chic and classy.



KEY PIECES

Choose sofas in neutral tones for relaxed, laid-back living.

Florence Blush Pink linen-effect large sofa, £699, Tesco Direct

ON THE BALL

A twinkling contemporary ceiling light will bring a classic scheme to life.

Ornate ball easyfit ceiling light, £55, Bhs



Venetian heart mirror, £85, Nicholas John Interiors

BOOST NATURAL LIGHT

Use mirrors in smaller properties or rooms with limited natural light such as lofts, to make spaces feel lighter and brighter.

HOTEL CHIC

Add a panel of shimmering gold mosaic tiles for contemporary bathroom style.

Inca gold EW-INGMOS15 glass mosaic tiles, £224.95 per sq m, Original Style





Tartan wallpaper on the chimney breast breaks up the grey walls. The false chimney breast was built to create a focal point, and Bea stuck lead strips onto the plain windows to liven them up and enhance the room's snug appeal

A tight budget did not stop us from updating our home

Bea Roach's bright ideas and husband Phil's DIY expertise are a perfect combination



Bea and Phil Roach like a challenge. So when they moved into their new home and were confronted by a sink full of dirty crockery left behind by the previous owner, they took it calmly in their stride.

'The house was in such a terrible condition, it didn't seem to matter,' explains Bea. 'All of the walls were yellow with cigarette smoke, it was dirty and dated. We had asked the owner to remove all of the carpets before we moved in because they

stank so badly, so we had bare chipboard on the floors. We stayed up all night that first night, scrubbing the kitchen and bathroom to make them useable, especially as Holly and Lewis were only small. In fact, we scrubbed the house from top to bottom for days.'

The couple had seen that the house needed updating when they first viewed it, but were confident that they could transform it into their first, proper family home. 'We liked the location because it's



➤ An old cassette player has been turned into a wall clock, from Bea and Phil's company, WhenTheMusicsOver



on the edge of the town yet surrounded by fields and woods for walks,' says Bea. 'It was just run-down, structurally it was sound. We didn't mind that it needed a lot of work because it meant we could put our own stamp on it and we could afford to buy it.' When they moved in, in November 2007, the second, urgent task after cleaning the house was to paint the children's bedrooms. 'We made Holly and Lewis' rooms presentable for them, so with their toys all in place they felt happy.'

Next on the list was the kitchen. 'It had dark wood units, beige wall tiles, and a patterned, vinyl floor,' recalls Bea. 'Dark and dated and really not very nice at all.' On a limited budget, at that stage the couple could not afford to completely replace the kitchen. They reused the unit carcasses and fitted new, white Shaker- ➤

Good idea!

Using dark colours in a north-facing room can make it feel cosier.



➤ Painting walls in darker colours makes a north-facing room feel warmer. The walls are in Dulux dark greys mixed to create the shades Bea wanted, with the wall behind the grey sofa in a darker shade than the other three. The pink sofa was bought at Ikea

COME ON IN...



THE HOME

A four-bedroom, 20-year-old detached house in Worksop, Nottinghamshire

WHO LIVES HERE?

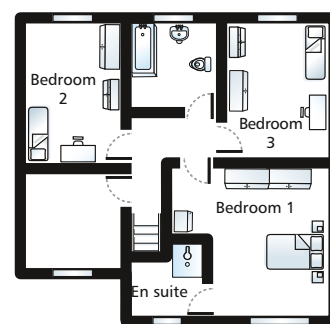
Bea Roach, her husband Phil, and their children Holly, 13, and Lewis, 12. Bea is a teaching assistant and Phil works in the steel industry. They are the founders of WhenTheMusicsOver, a company that recycles vinyl records into accessories.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ROOM?

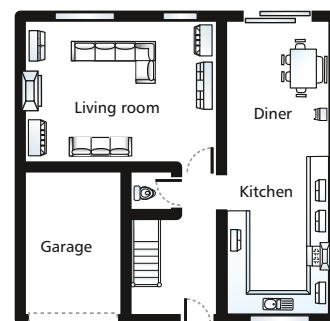
'My favourite room is always the room I last decorated. I am constantly changing the décor in the house because I love decorating and styling and to experiment with new ideas and colours.'

DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE:

'My style is definitely eclectic. I like a bit of everything, I find it far more interesting than matching things up. I buy something if I like it, then find a space for it in the house. Sometimes I have to get rid of another object to make room for my new acquisition.'



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

For stockists see page 120



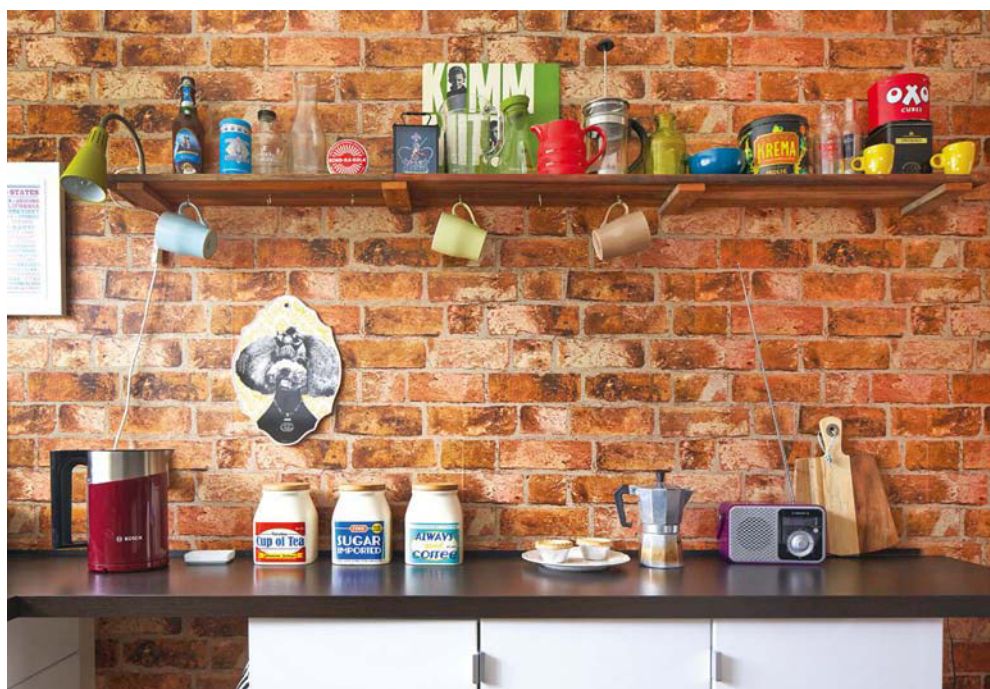
▲ Three tiny rooms were knocked into one big kitchen-diner that is now the focal point of the house. Bea and Phil made the dining table by painting MDF in red for the top and placing it on a wooden frame. The bench was salvaged from a pub. 'We just put it in the back of the car and brought it home,' says Bea. The chairs are from second-hand shops. Bea made the coasters from old vinyl records. 'Phil and I love our music and didn't want to throw away all of our old vinyl records, so we found a new use for them.'

► The white, high-gloss kitchen units teamed up with a black worktop are all from Ikea. The grey wall tiles are textured to create extra interest

◁ style doors to them, teaming them up with a new wooden worktop. They then laid laminate wood flooring throughout the downstairs and a neutral coloured carpet upstairs. They also replaced the family and en suite bathrooms. 'Both of the bathrooms are small, so we couldn't alter the layout in either. We just replaced the dated, beige suites and tiles,' says Bea.



♥ Bea especially likes the brick-effect wallpaper on one wall of the kitchen. 'It gives an industrial feel. I have always wanted to live in a converted warehouse apartment,' she says. Punchy, primary-coloured, retro-style accessories bring the scheme to life



'I pull my ideas from everywhere: my imagination, travel, magazines, showrooms, other people's houses.'

Bea admits that the two bathrooms are the only rooms that have stayed the same since the family moved in. 'The other rooms have undergone several transformations in those eight years,' laughs Bea. 'I love using colour and styling, and I am constantly changing the décor because I enjoy creating a new look and improving a room.'

The living room is on its fourth transformation. 'It's been a problem room because it's north-facing so was always dark and felt cold. I tried lighter colours but they didn't work. Finally, I painted one wall in dark grey and the other three in a lighter shade of grey and it's wonderful. The room feels much warmer and cosier now.'

It has helped that Bea and Phil make such a good team. 'I come up with the ideas and Phil turns them into reality because he is practical and very good at DIY. I say, oh I do like this, and out come the hammer and drill,' says Bea.

The laminate floor downstairs has now been replaced with reclaimed oak throughout, and two years ago the kitchen underwent a total transformation. 'The utility room was oddly positioned ▷

Phil made Lewis' 'high sleeper' bed taller by creating stilts from fence poles, creating more floor space for storage. Lewis has installed multi-coloured LED lights under the bed which he operates by remote control



Good idea!

Colour-change LED lighting is a quick and easy way to transform rooms to match your moods.

REAL HOME

➤ Bea and Phil have a selection of family photos and treasured finds hung on the wall in a mini gallery-style display

➤ The star light was bought in Germany. Bea turned the wardrobe door into a chalkboard to help Holly keep track of her busy days



➤ The green and grey décor is a compromise. 'Phil wanted bottle green walls but it would have been too dark so one wall is dark green, and the rest are light grey,' says Bea. Bea and Phil made the reading lights. 'I glued paper maps of Sheffield onto old shades and Phil used an old bow and arrow set of Lewis' for the wall fixtures.' Phil made the headboard from a 150-year-old door bought from a salvage yard. Bea made the cushions from old T-shirts



Good idea!

Phil has turned his hand to turning old junk into stylish new furniture, to get a unique and personalised look.

'We make a good team. I have the ideas and Phil turns them into reality.'



➤ Holly's glamorous and colourful bedroom has just been redecorated for the third time to reflect her changing tastes. One wall is in her favourite dark pink, with the other walls painted in light taupe. The Hollywood-effect wall letters are made from card, and the white paper pompoms are former Christmas decorations made by Bea. The white bed has a roll-out bed underneath for when Holly's friends stay over



➤ The en suite is still on its first incarnation. The wallpaper is **Frames** by Graham and Brown. Bea water-proofed the tongue and groove panelling by painting it in dark grey gloss varnish

between the kitchen and dining room, so we had three tiny rooms. It was a really stupid layout but we couldn't afford to change it straight away so had to live with it until we had saved up the funds to knock the walls down to create one big room,' explains Bea. 'We're so glad that we did, the kitchen-diner is at the centre of family life and has turned it into a far more sociable house for us all,' says Bea. 'Holly and Lewis sit in there doing their homework or chatting while I am cooking. We can now have big family parties at Christmas, and hold dinner parties for friends, which we never had the space for before.'

Bea says the house is a good, colourful, family home but admits that it will



continue to evolve over time. 'We're going to wallpaper the hall in a geometric print,' she says. 'I'm also planning to change our dining table top,' she adds, 'It's about time.' **YH**

5 IDEAS TO STEAL



VINTAGE SIGNS

Add colour and character to your kitchen with fun, retro designs.

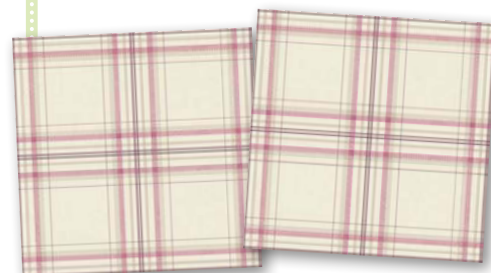
Cold Drinks Here vintage metal sign, £8.95, Dotcomgiftshop

ON THE DARK SIDE

For north-facing rooms, try darker shades, and with one wall in a deeper colour than the other three.



City Life matt emulsion, £24.99 per 2.5l, Crown



TRADITIONAL TARTAN

Break up solid colours on walls with a patterned wallpaper on the chimney breast.

Tartan red wallpaper from Festival collection, £18 per roll, Albany at Wallpaperdirect.com

GIVE NEW LIFE

Turn your favourite vinyl singles into something practical.

Vinyl record three-tier cake stand, £14, WhenTheMusicsOver, Etsy



OLD FAVOURITES

Bea has added quirky touches all over her home.

Gillian Kyle Tunnock's Teacake round cushion, £36.50, Notonthehighstreet

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My new-look flat is full of space-saving ideas

Joy Plaskitt used her long-standing passion for interior design to turn a modest city centre apartment into a stylish pied à terre



Joy painted the walls cream to match the B&Q units, so the kitchen blended seamlessly into the rest of the room. The worktop is from Peter Thompson of York. Joy liked the compact Ikea corner sofa and added a footstool covered in Zoffany fabric from Plaskitt and Plaskitt



There is a map of the world in the hall of Joy's city centre apartment which is covered with red dots. Each one represents a place she has visited – but there are still plenty of spaces to fill. 'I love travelling and it's the reason I decided to move into a flat, so I could just lock up and go whenever I felt like it,' Joy explains.

But there was no walking away from the amount of work which needed doing to the top floor pied à terre in order to bring it up to scratch. 'It had been tenanted for 20 years and poorly maintained, so it was very

tired and shabby,' says Joy. 'The kitchen was installed in the Eighties and the units were all over the place. I was going to have to take it back-to-basics to get it as I wanted.'

Joy continued to live in her last house in a nearby village while the work was carried out. She wanted the flat to be light and open, with the rooms made to feel as spacious as possible. She started by clearing out 23 bin bags of rubbish left by the previous tenant, carrying them down four flights of stairs and taking them all to the tip.



However, the disheartening start soon turned into excitement when the floorboards came up for rewiring. 'I found two shoes hidden away under the boards,' says Joy. 'One was a buttoned Victorian bootie and the other was a woman's shoe from the 1920s. I thought it was such a lovely idea that I wrapped them both in bags, wrote a note on one of my business cards and, along with a photograph of myself, put them back under the floorboards. I hope that someone else will find them in the future and continue the link.'

In the sitting room the fireplace had been boarded over so Joy opened it all up again – only to discover the skeletons of dead crows that had fallen down the chimney. She had a new fire fitted from Old Flames in Easingwold, then turned her attention to the general layout of the apartment.

'There was a narrow corridor leading from the main living area to the large bedroom and a bathroom,' says Joy. 'It was wasted space, so I took out a flimsy stud wall and made the two rooms bigger.'

Joy also put in secondary double glazing at the windows to reduce traffic noise without damaging the original windows. The old kitchen units and melamine worktops were taken

► **The stunning silk panels inspired the rest of the apartment with their vibrant colours and stunning design. The chair came from Orior by Design**

► **Joy opened up the fireplace and fitted a new grate from Old Flames. The elegant table is one Joy couldn't bear to part with. The trio of women ceramic on the top shelf from Pyramid Gallery, York, is also on the list of things Joy would never get rid of. The mirror used to have a gold frame but Joy painted it silver to create a modern edge**

Good idea!

If you like to ring the changes but don't want to go the hassle of regularly stripping wallpaper, hang mounted panels of your favourite design instead.



COME ON IN...



Feature Heather Dixon Photos Colin Poole

THE HOME

A two-bedroom apartment in a Grade II listed Georgian house in York.

WHO LIVES HERE?

Joy Plaskitt, a property manager.

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR HOUSE?

'The fact that I can lock up and leave it when I go travelling, knowing that nothing is spoiling while I'm away.'

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

'Making the best use of limited space.'

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ROOM?

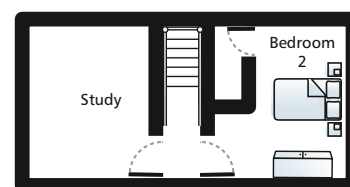
'My bedroom is an oasis – very peaceful.'

WHAT WAS YOUR BEST BARGAIN?

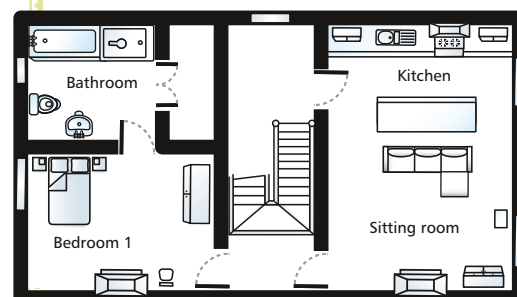
'The Paoletti cushions which cost £10 each in a sale.'

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ITEM?

'The wall panels because they turn the main living area into something really special.'



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

For stockists see page 120



✦ Joy reinstated the original fireplace and added a grate from Old Flames. The painting was commissioned from local artist Linda Wormald. A HomeSense cushion softens the classic lines of the Ghost chair

◁ out and everything carried downstairs. The new kitchen features a run of storage units along the back wall of the open-plan living room. A breakfast bar, more units and a worktop face into the room, creating a natural divide between the kitchen and sitting areas, and an obvious place for the sofa. Joy painted the walls the same colour as the units so that the kitchen blended in to the rest of the room without taking over or looking utilitarian.

‘I had always lived in quite large houses before so it was cathartic to sort everything out and cherry pick the things I really needed or which had sentimental value,’ says Joy. ‘I had been hanging onto things for no reason.’

Among the items she kept were a travelling dressing table, a nest of three side tables – chosen for their elegant, timeless design – and the hand painted silk wallpaper panels. ‘I ran an interior design business for many years and they



‘Smaller spaces are brilliant if you are organised and use them efficiently.’



Good idea!

Create more space in a small apartment by removing unnecessary stud walls. It will create a larger space and leave you with a more versatile open-plan living area.

✦ The stud wall of a corridor was taken out to make the main bedroom and en suite much bigger. Joy painted the walls in Paint Library’s Glass and continued the theme with furniture from Blossom and Walker. Joy bought the throw at a Turkish market and teamed it with a Nina Campbell fabric headboard made by Plaskitt and Plaskitt, who also supplied the Romo silk blind

✦ The little attic en suite bedroom is perfect for guests. The Bhs bedspread creates the theme for the accessories which include a HomeSense cushion and a garland bought in Madrid



were a gift from the then managing director of Zoffany,' says Joy. 'They had been rolled up in a tube and stored for 15 years, moving them from house-to-house. Eventually they were fixed to MDF panels and hung with gravity brackets. When I moved here I couldn't believe it when they fitted perfectly along the main wall.'

Joy used the key colours in the panels to develop the rest of the room, including grey in the sofa and reds and pinks in the soft furnishings. 'I felt everything needed softening to make the flat cosy and comfortable, but without losing the sense of light and openness,' says Joy. 'I also wanted it to be easy to maintain so that I could go away whenever I liked and come back to find it just the same. Smaller spaces are brilliant if you are organised and use them efficiently. One of the biggest learning curves was discovering that you can't just buy things on a whim. In a small apartment everything has to count.' **YH**



✦ All the fittings came from Bathstore.com and the porcelain tiles from Direct Tile Importers. Joy then picked out the orange in the Romo fabric blind to bring splashes of bold colour into the en suite bathroom, finding most of her accessories in Bhs

5 IDEAS TO STEAL

LOOKING ROSY

Joy has chosen rose designs on cushions and bed linen for a feminine touch.

Rose Garden cushion, £30, Debenhams



COSY TOUCHES

Add injections of colour to a neutral scheme with vibrant accessories.

Welsh blanket, £49.95, Decorator's Notebook



REFLECTIVE SURFACES

Joy has given her bedroom a luxurious look with glamorous mirrored furniture.

Venetian plain glass three-drawer bedside table, £215, Sweetpea & Willow



PANELLED PATTERN

Instead of hanging wallpaper on the walls, decorate some panels which can easily be changed.

Marina wallpaper panel, £40 per 62.5cm x 300cm panel, Digetex Home



ZESTY HUES

Add colour to a white bathroom scheme with citrus-coloured accessories and towels.

by Sainsbury's Egyptian cotton hand towel in pumpkin, £5, Sainsbury's





This is the house I was meant to live in!



Cassie and Calvin Hill have extended and filled their lucky find cottage with bargain buys, upcycled furniture and creative imaginative ideas

When Cassie Hill first spotted a pretty Victorian cottage next door to the very same house her parents had lived in, she knew she had to live there.

'As soon as I walked in to this house I had a really lovely feeling of coming home as my parents lived in the cottage next door while I was living away at university,' she

says. 'It was like a blank canvas, which was great as we had a vision of what it could be. The overgrown garden had a rockery and a wild secret garden with foxes living at the back.'

Even though Cassie and Calvin lost their buyers twice during the moving process, Cassie was determined to buy the cottage. 'I bought a postcard with a black cat on it



◀ The Tewkesbury Stone kitchen units with pewter cup handles and solid oak block worktops, are from Howdens, as well as the appliances, butler sink and tap. The walls have been painted in Fired Earth's Bone White matt emulsion. The Spanish black slate floor tiles are from Fired Earth, while the ceramic wall brick tiles were bought at Laura Ashley. The made-to-measure blinds are Elston Smoke Roman blinds, from Web Blinds. The vintage glassware was found at Molly's Den and the shaped pink plates in the rack were a wedding gift from Cassie's mother. The white painted breakfast bar stools are also from Molly's Den and the pendant light over the breakfast bar was sourced from Thomas and Lucia

as I knew the previous owner had a black cat, and wrote a letter to her telling her all about my history on the road, with my parents living next door and that this was the house that I had to have and it worked! The lady came back to us when her new buyers fell through so it was meant to be.'

The couple moved in when their son Louis was small. Their first task was to freshen up the interior with a coat of paint and move their furniture in. 'We had a small galley kitchen with a dark lobby area with our washing machine and tumble dryer, a back door leading to the garden and a very small downstairs bathroom, which was mouldy, damp and didn't even have a radiator when we first moved in,' admits Cassie. 'I was used to having a ▶



▶ 'The milk bottle cluster pendant lights were ex-display from Bhs, I only paid £40,' says Cassie. The wicker chairs used to belong to Calvin's grandad. Cassie's mother discovered the side table from a boot sale for just £3 and buffed it up with beeswax and the chest was another piece she inherited from her mother. 'I love to sit on grandad's chairs and enjoy a cup of tea and look out to the garden while the children eat their breakfast at the bar,' says Cassie



COME ON IN...

THE HOME

A three-bedroom cottage built around 1890, in Bushey, Hertfordshire.

WHO LIVES HERE?

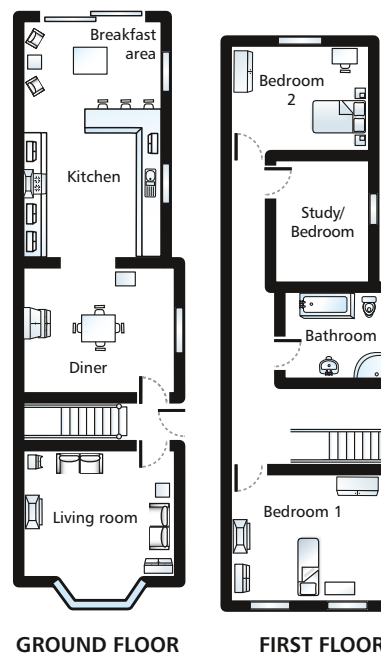
Cassie Hill, a freelance visual merchandiser at Country Life Interiors and her husband Calvin, Head Chef of the Production Kitchen at The Grove. They live here with their two children Louis, nine, and Violet, six, and their miniature poodle, Button.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?

'To keep calm and keep the end vision in sight, we had to make sudden choices and snap decisions on very little notice. I spent the majority of my week shopping and grabbing things whereas I'd have liked to have more time to plan and source items.'

BEST PIECE OF ADVICE?

'We approached our neighbours as we knew we might run into difficulties in terms of blocking out light and party wall problems. They decided to extend at the same time, so we applied for planning and building regulations together. It all worked out really well and luckily we didn't fall out!'



For stockists see page 120



Good idea!

Upcycle furniture and give it a new lease of life, like Cassie's dresser in the dining room. She painted it in Annie Sloan's Cocoa and finished it with a coat of wax.

▲ 'I love my twig mirror and the dresser is from Home & Colonial that I painted in Annie Sloan's Cocoa paint then waxed,' says Cassie. 'The dining chairs were great finds from a local pub that was closing down, they were just £6 each and my parents painted them up for me in Paris Grey Annie Sloan paint.' The walls are painted in Fired Earth's Smoke Blue matt emulsion. The whitewashed engineered oak flooring is from Finest Flooring

◁ downstairs bathroom as our previous home had the same layout. Upstairs, Louis had a tiny box room at the back with a flat roof that we knew we could pull down, replace and extend at some point.'

Cassie and Calvin lived with the layout as it was for five years before making changes in 2013, when they hired an architect to plan a double storey extension at the rear. Their aim was to create a loft-style bedroom for Louis accessed via a staircase off the landing and to create an elongated master bedroom over the extended kitchen with a new downstairs cloakroom using existing space from the under-stairs cupboard.

In December of that year building work commenced on both sides of the party wall as the Hill family remained living onsite through the cold winter months ahead. 'When it was absolutely freezing



and we were without water or a WC, we moved to my sister's house for five weeks,' says Cassie.

A sticking point arose when the bi-fold door installation came in more expensive than planned, so the couple negotiated with their builder and exchanged all their previous appliances, in excellent condition, for labour costs.

With a degree in textile design specialising in knitwear, Cassie is naturally inventive, has an eye for detail and has created a distinctive look without spending a fortune. She began upcycling furniture a few years ago and has reinvented various pieces including the dresser and dining chairs, that were bargain finds from a pub.

'My parents have always lived in character houses and my mum has a great eye for detail. I've picked up tips from her over the years, as she loves to mix different styles of furniture. We spend most of the school holidays visiting my parents in Dorset where there are some fabulous interior shops. We love Sandbanks and going across the water to Studland Beach where you can walk for miles on natural sandy beaches, where we love collecting pebbles and Violet and I are always on the lookout for shells with holes in to make coral necklaces,' says Cassie. 'I love eclectic items and traditional pieces with character and I'm drawn to rustic wood.'



Good idea!

Paint vintage glass bottles like Cassie has done – they make a pretty display in her living room.

'I've picked up tips from my mum over the years, as she loves to mix different styles of furniture.'

I also love the clean lines and simplicity of Scandinavian design with calm grey and white shades. I have tried to use a mixture of those styles to create a relaxed, homely house that isn't too precious.'

For the kitchen design, Calvin's father lent a hand, as he owns established family business, HE Hill & Son, started by his great-grandfather Horris, some eighty years ago. The spacious kitchen features country elements including a butler sink, range cooker and oak worktops with contrasting black slate floor and brick-style ceramic wall tiles.

'Before we didn't have much worktop or cupboard space so you would open up a cupboard and everything would fall out! I love the larder cupboard and the kitchen is heaven to work in now,' admits Cassie. 'When I saw my sister's kitchen floor I knew I wanted slate. The Fired Earth slate floor tiles are brilliant and luckily, ▷

✦ The wood-burning gas stove gives instant heat at the touch of a remote control button. The whitewashed engineered oak flooring is from Finest Flooring. The walls have been painted in Dulux Chic Shadow matt emulsion. The comfy leather sofas are from Country Life Interiors and scatter cushions were bought at Zara Home





Good idea!

Allow plenty of natural light to come through in a room with low ceilings, with a sheer curtain at the window.

➤ Cassie found a vintage Jones sewing machine base table from a local antique shop that she uses as a dressing table, for similar try eBay, or preloved.co.uk. The mirror is from TK Maxx

✦ The family bathroom features a walk-in shower and a roll-top bath, against a relaxing tone of green. A vintage medicine cupboard and wooden ladder personalise the space. The floor tiles are from MP Moran with all bathroom fixtures and fittings found at Wickes. The vintage ladder is from Molly's Den and the walls have been painted in Fired Earth's Ultramarine Ashes eggshell



◁ don't show up Button's wet, muddy paw prints!

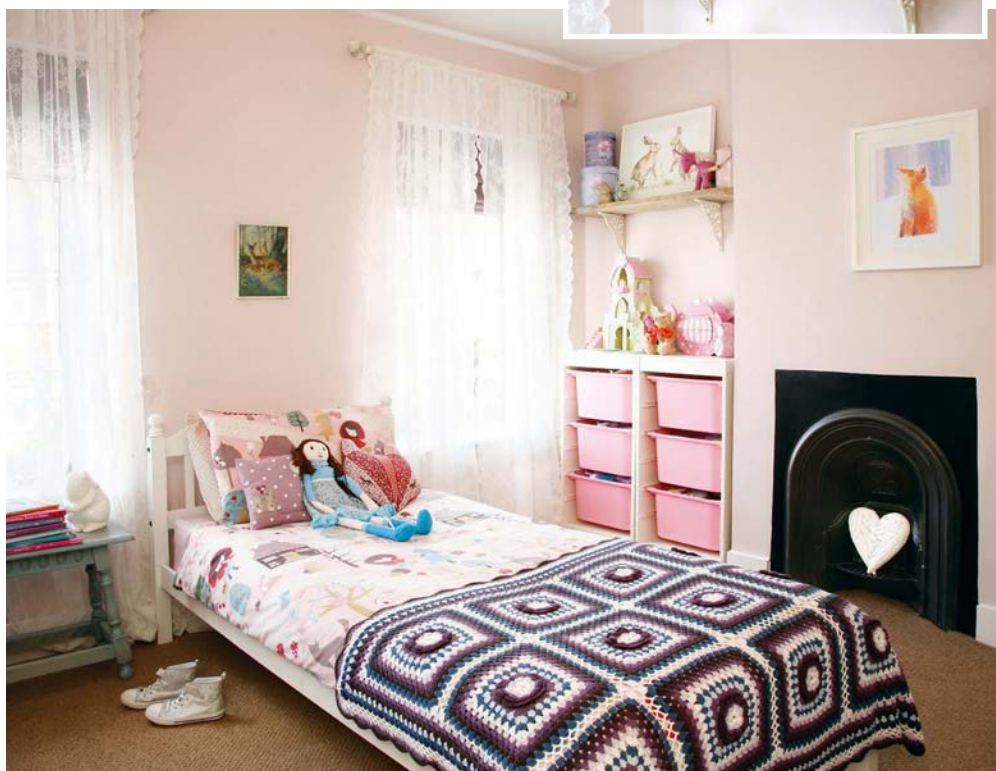
Upstairs there are quaint touches with upcycled furniture, colourful accessories and prints dotted in every room inspired by Cassie's passion for arts and crafts. 'My sister Helen Wills and brother-in-law Adrian are both textile designers and I love their prints.'

'One of my favourite features in the whole house is the wooden rafters in the loft that the builders accidentally plaster boarded over,' Cassie adds. 'I also wish we had kept the exposed brick wall but Calvin wanted it all boarded over so I lost



✦ The master bedroom features a subtle grey-toned background offset with vintage furniture and decorative furnishings. The white wrought-iron bed, wardrobe and carpets are from Calvin's father's shop HE Hill & Son, while the Matthew Williamson bird design duvet set was found at Debenhams, covered with a bedspread from The White Company. The cream painted bedside drawers and wooden chair are from Country Life Interiors. The window is dressed with an Elston Smoke Roman blind from Web Blinds and a black voile curtain from The Range. The walls have been painted in Neutral Smoky Mist matt emulsion from Crown

✦ The wooden shelves, another of Cassie's favourite buys, came with the decorative brackets and cost just £10 from a local car boot sale. The rabbit print is by Cassie's sister, textile designer Helen Wills of Wills Textiles Ltd, and the pretty lace voile curtains were bought at Ikea



✦ The wall paint in Violet's bedroom is Farrow & Ball's Calamine Estate emulsion. Tweedy mauve made-to-measure Roman blinds, from Web Blinds hang at the window, and a pink storage unit from Ikea and crochet bedspread from Zara Home provide a girly feel. The Fox print above the original fireplace is from Fox in the Forest

'Living onsite during the build, I learnt how to keep my sanity through some toughest of times.'

that argument!

Enduring a gruelling six months of chaotic building, the Hill family are now enjoying their new home and Cassie is so proud of what they have all achieved. 'Living onsite during the build, I learnt how to keep my sanity through some tough times. For two winter months we were open to the elements with nothing but plywood holding the back of the house up. I'd fill up the kettle 10 times or more to do the washing up in a bucket in the dark! We cooked basic meals on a camping

stove and survived on microwavable meals and lots of beans on toast. I've promised myself I'll never do it again! It feels like we're living in a new house now that we have so much more space and we use the house in a totally different way. Before with the previous layout we had no garden view from the kitchen. Now, with the bi-fold doors open in the summer it's so nice to see the children playing out in the garden. Next on the list is to spend time planting up the garden and to simply enjoy being here.' **YH**

5 IDEAS TO STEAL



VINTAGE SHELVEING

Vintage crates make fantastic shelving, whether stacked on shelves, or attached to the wall as Cassie has done.

Wooden storage crates, £85 for three, Vincent and Barn

BIRD PRINTS

Cassie has given her living room a natural feel with a selection of cute bird prints.

Blue Wren cushion cover, from £18.61, www.thistleandfox.etsy.com



WONDERFUL WICKER

Wicker chairs can add a relaxed country feel to any space.

Finntorp white armchair, £55, Ikea

BLACK LACE

Add a touch of drama to your bedroom like Cassie has with black voile.

Holly single voile curtain in black, from £6.99, The Range



RUSTIC BATHING

Instead of a traditional towel rail, Cassie displays her towels on a rustic ladder.

Bamboo towel ladder, £74, The Orchard



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Food & Drink

Make more of your packed lunch with our tasty ideas...



△ 3 ways with... aubergine

- Cut an aubergine into 4cm cubes. Then cut some **halloumi cheese** into cubes the same size. Mix **1 tbsp of harissa paste** with a **splash of red wine vinegar** to loosen it a little, and season with **salt and pepper**. Coat the aubergine in the harissa. Thread the aubergine onto kebab skewers, alternating with the halloumi. Cook under the grill or on a griddle pan until browned and cooked through.
- For a quick dinner, halve an aubergine lengthways. Brush with **oil** and bake in the oven for 30 minutes at 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6. Top with a thin layer of **pesto**, **slices of tomato** and torn **mozzarella**, and bake for another 5 minutes until the cheese has melted.
- To make baba ganoush, a smoky aubergine dip, prick **3 aubergines** with a fork and grill until the skin is blackened and the flesh is really soft, this should take 15-20 minutes. Crush **3 garlic cloves** and mix with the **juice of 1 lemon**, **3 tbsp olive oil**, **2 tbsp tahini** and a pinch of **salt and pepper**. Remove the skin from the aubergine and discard. Combine the flesh with the other ingredients. Drizzle with **olive oil** and sprinkle with **cumin** before serving with **flat breads**.

Feature Laura Higgins

If you do one thing this month...

Cake Décor's Choco Writers are brilliant for decorating cakes, biscuits and making chocolate designs, without the faff of tempering or bain-maries. Simply pop the solid tube in a jug of hot water, allow it to melt, then squeeze away. When you're finished just replace the lid ready for next time. Available in dark, milk and white, priced at £1.55, available from Asda, Sainsbury's and Lakeland.



This month we love...

Staying hydrated with Innocent coconut water, from £2.49 for 500ml. Made from 100% pure coconut water, Innocent's refreshing drink is chilled right from when the coconuts are cracked, making it full of flavour. Low in calories and fat-free, each glass contains 26% of your recommended daily potassium intake.



Try me...

Thanks to healthy food bloggers, such as Deliciously Ella, the humble date has become increasingly popular. Packed with minerals and phytochemicals, as well as fibre, they naturally sweeten while promoting good health. Use date nectar in place of your usual sweetener, or add it to cakes and bakes to reduce your refined sugar intake. Beloved date nectar is available from Asda, priced at £3.99.



Eat me...

Labneh is a key accompaniment to Middle-Eastern food, with the thick and savoury Lebanese yogurt making the perfect partner to meze-style dishes. Nomadic Labneh is made in a traditional way, bringing authenticity to your plate, via Tesco, priced at £1.89 for 350g.



Buy me...

Following his journey from Italy to Turkey, Rick Stein shares his favourite Eastern Mediterranean dishes in his new title, From Venice to Istanbul, £25, BBC Books. Inspired by his travels, the book includes exotic flavours from Italy and Greece through to Croatia and Turkey, in over 100 recipes, including Albanian baked lamb with rice, and split belly-stuffed aubergines.



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

Love your lunch

Make your break more exciting with one of these tasty lunchbox ideas...

Sweet chilli infused beetroot and chicken wraps

YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ 150g cooked chicken
- ✓ 180g Sweet Chilli Infused Beetroot, available from Tesco, M&S, Waitrose and Sainsbury's
- ✓ ½ avocado
- ✓ ¼ red onion
- ✓ 4 wholemeal wraps
- ✓ handful Fresh & Naked lambs lettuce
- ✓ small bunch coriander leaves
- ✓ sweet chilli sauce, to taste

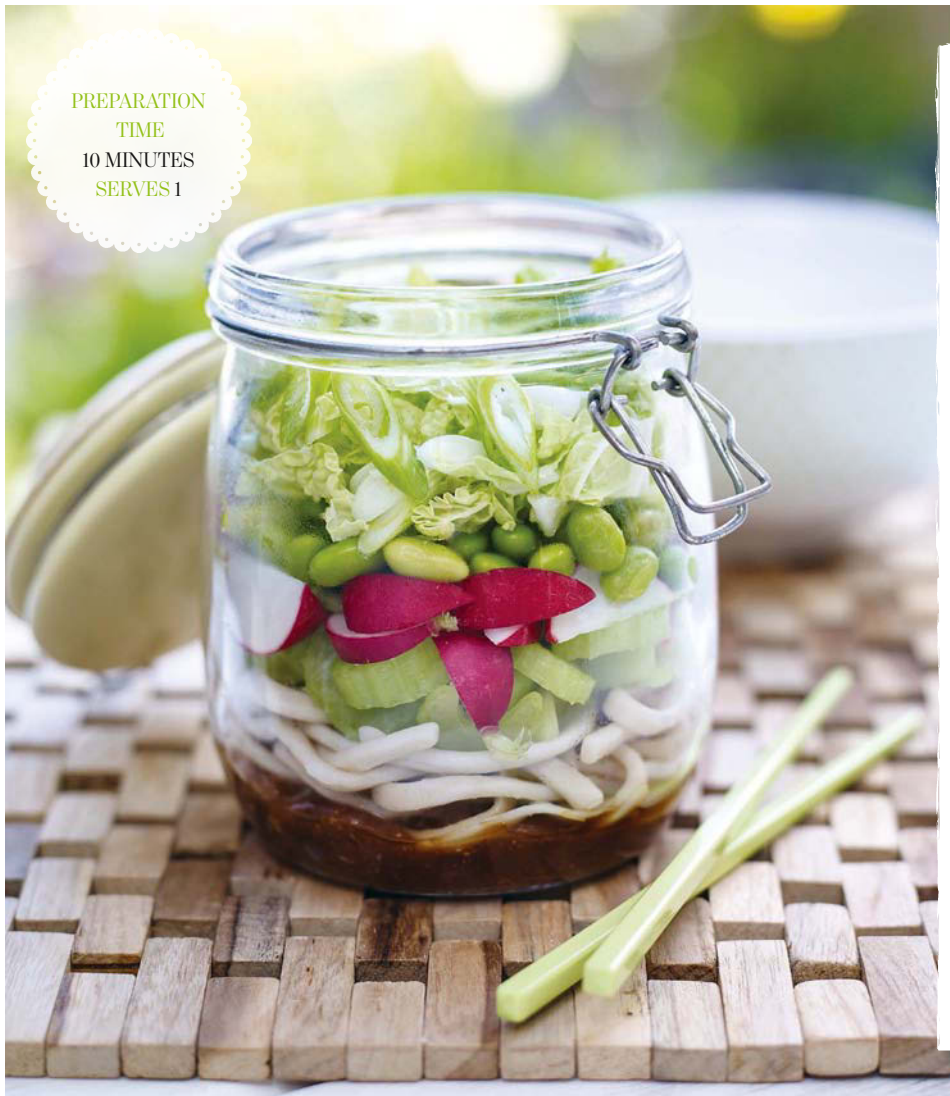
DIRECTIONS

- Tear the chicken into pieces, and slice the beetroot, avocado and red onion. Warm the wraps as per the pack instructions.
- Layer the ingredients inside the wraps. To roll, fold the top and bottom in, then roll up from one side. With the seam downwards, slice diagonally across the middle. This way the filling will stay in the wrap as you eat.

Recipe courtesy of www.lovebeetroot.co.uk

PREPARATION
TIME
10 MINUTES
MAKES 4

PREPARATION
TIME
10 MINUTES
SERVES 1



Noodle jar salad

YOU WILL NEED

For the dressing ✓1 tbsp peanut butter
✓2 tsp soy sauce ✓2 tsp sesame oil
✓½ tsp chilli flakes ✓1 tsp rice wine
vinegar *For the salad* ✓large handful of
frozen soya beans ✓100g fresh egg or
udon noodles ✓1 stick of celery, sliced
✓4 radishes, sliced into wedges ✓1 spring
onion, sliced ✓3 slices of Chinese leaf
lettuce, finely shredded

DIRECTIONS

■ In a bowl whisk all the dressing ingredients with a splash of water until smooth. Pour into the bottom of the jar. Defrost the soya beans in boiling water then drain.

■ Layer the noodles on top of the dressing, then the celery and radish, then soya beans and top with the crunchy spring onions and Chinese leaf lettuce. To serve, tip everything into a bowl and give a good stir.

Recipe courtesy of Love the Crunch

TOP TIP

The key to jar salads is the order they are put into the jar. Put the dressing in the bottom and then layer firmer vegetables at the bottom, the protein in the middle and the leafy greens at the top so they don't get wet.

Tomato and pomegranate with feta

YOU WILL NEED

✓200g cherry tomatoes, quartered ✓2 spring onions, chopped ✓2 tsp garlic infused olive oil ✓1 tsp apple cider vinegar ✓4 tbsp pomegranate seeds ✓2 tbsp chopped coriander leaves ✓2 tbsp crumbed feta, plus extra to finish ✓4 Kallø Organic Unsalted Rice Cakes

DIRECTIONS

■ Place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix together. Top the Kallø Organic Unsalted Rice Cakes with the mixture.

Recipe courtesy of
www.kallo.com

PREPARATION
TIME
5 MINUTES
SERVES 4



Spring onion and feta frittata

YOU WILL NEED

✓ 200g new potatoes ✓ 6 spring onions, trimmed ✓ 1 slice thick carved ham, torn ✓ 1 tbsp oil ✓ 4 eggs, beaten ✓ 60g feta cheese, crumbled ✓ 6 mint leaves, chopped

DIRECTIONS

■ Cube the potatoes into bite-sized chunks and parboil in boiling water for 5-7 minutes. Add the spring onions to the water for the last minute of cooking then drain.

■ Heat the oil in a medium-sized frying pan, add the potatoes, spring onions and ham and toss in the oil.

■ Tip in the beaten egg and stir a couple of times to coat and incorporate everything. Sprinkle over the feta and mint and allow to cook gently for 8-10 minutes until cooked half way through. Meanwhile, heat the grill to hot.

■ Move the pan to under the grill to cook from the top for 5-8 minutes until the frittata is golden and cooked through. Slice into wedges and chill in the fridge.

Recipe courtesy of Love the Crunch



PREPARATION
TIME 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
20 MINUTES
SERVES 2-4

Rainbow salad

YOU WILL NEED

✓2 tbsp pumpkin seeds ✓juice of 1 lime ✓juice of 1 tangerine
✓1 tbsp olive oil ✓½ shallot, finely sliced ✓1 tsp pink peppercorns, roughly crushed ✓1 slice rye bread, sliced into cubes ✓6 Pomegranate & Cumin Infused Beetroot, cut into wedges, available from Waitrose
✓1 yellow pepper, sliced ✓1 carrot, grated ✓100g mange tout, sliced
✓10 Fresh & Naked radishes, quartered ✓large handful of Fresh & Naked rocket ✓small bunch of parsley

DIRECTIONS

■ In a small frying pan toast the pumpkin seeds until they start to pop, tip into a small bowl and add the lime and tangerine juice, oil, peppercorns, shallots and a pinch of salt. In the same pan dry fry the rye bread until toasted on all sides.

■ Toss the rocket in a little dressing and lay on the plate. Put the rest of the ingredients on top of the rocket, drizzle over the pumpkin seed dressing and finish with the rye croutons.

Recipe courtesy of
www.lovebeetroot.co.uk



PREPARATION
TIME
15 MINUTES
SERVES 2



PREPARATION
TIME 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME
20 MINUTES
MAKES 12

Date and cherry slice

YOU WILL NEED

✓100g dried pitted dates, chopped
✓100g glacé cherries, chopped ✓100g self-raising flour ✓100g brown sugar
✓1 egg, beaten ✓125g Kerrygold spreadable butter, melted

DIRECTIONS

■ Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/ Gas Mark 4. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.
■ Mix together the dates and cherries with the flour and brown sugar.
■ Add the beaten egg to the dry ingredients. Once combined add the melted Kerrygold butter and mix again.
■ Press the mixture into the prepared tray. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, or until golden brown.
■ Remove from oven and while still hot cut into slices and place on a wire rack to cool. Store in an airtight container for up to a week.

Recipe courtesy of Kerrygold

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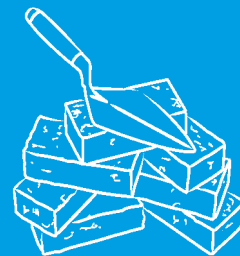
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Home IMPROVEMENT

Are you thinking of downsizing? Turn the page to read our expert advice

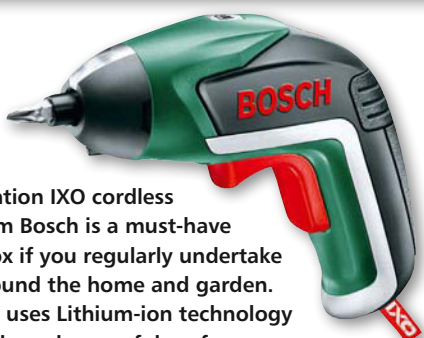


Add style with decorative glass

If you're thinking of investing in new windows, doors or a conservatory, you may be interested to know about a recent collaboration between longstanding British brands Laura Ashley and Anglian Home Improvements. The new decorative glass collection comprises 12 of Laura Ashley's best-selling designs, which are etched onto the glass in Anglian's double-glazed windows, doors and conservatories, offering both privacy and style. It's especially suitable for use in front doors, porches, bathrooms and other overlooked rooms, obstructing the view without losing any light. The collection features some of Laura Ashley's most popular patterns, including the delicate damask, Josette, and the woodland-themed Cottonwood, so that you can easily co-ordinate them with wallpaper or soft furnishings.

Get a helping hand

The next generation IXO cordless screwdriver from Bosch is a must-have for your tool box if you regularly undertake DIY projects around the home and garden. This new model uses Lithium-ion technology to deliver reliable and powerful performance, while improved ergonomics make it really compact and lightweight, even though it boasts a battery that now has 15% more power. It's really easy to use, with a simple switch to select forward or reverse rotation, and a handy LED light which can be used as a spotlight or a spread light, ensuring great visibility for any task. The IXO is priced from around £39.99.



Feature Lisa Hibberd

DIY icons

If you're a keen decorator, you'll know that good quality tools are the key to a great finish. Decorating brand Harris' latest range, Icon, includes paint brushes, rollers and paint pads, all designed to make painting effortless. The brushes are easy to use and have high quality bristles to ensure that they hold their shape and give a smooth finish, while the rollers are lightweight and give a professional look with less paint splatter. You'll find the range in B&Q stores, priced from £4.77.

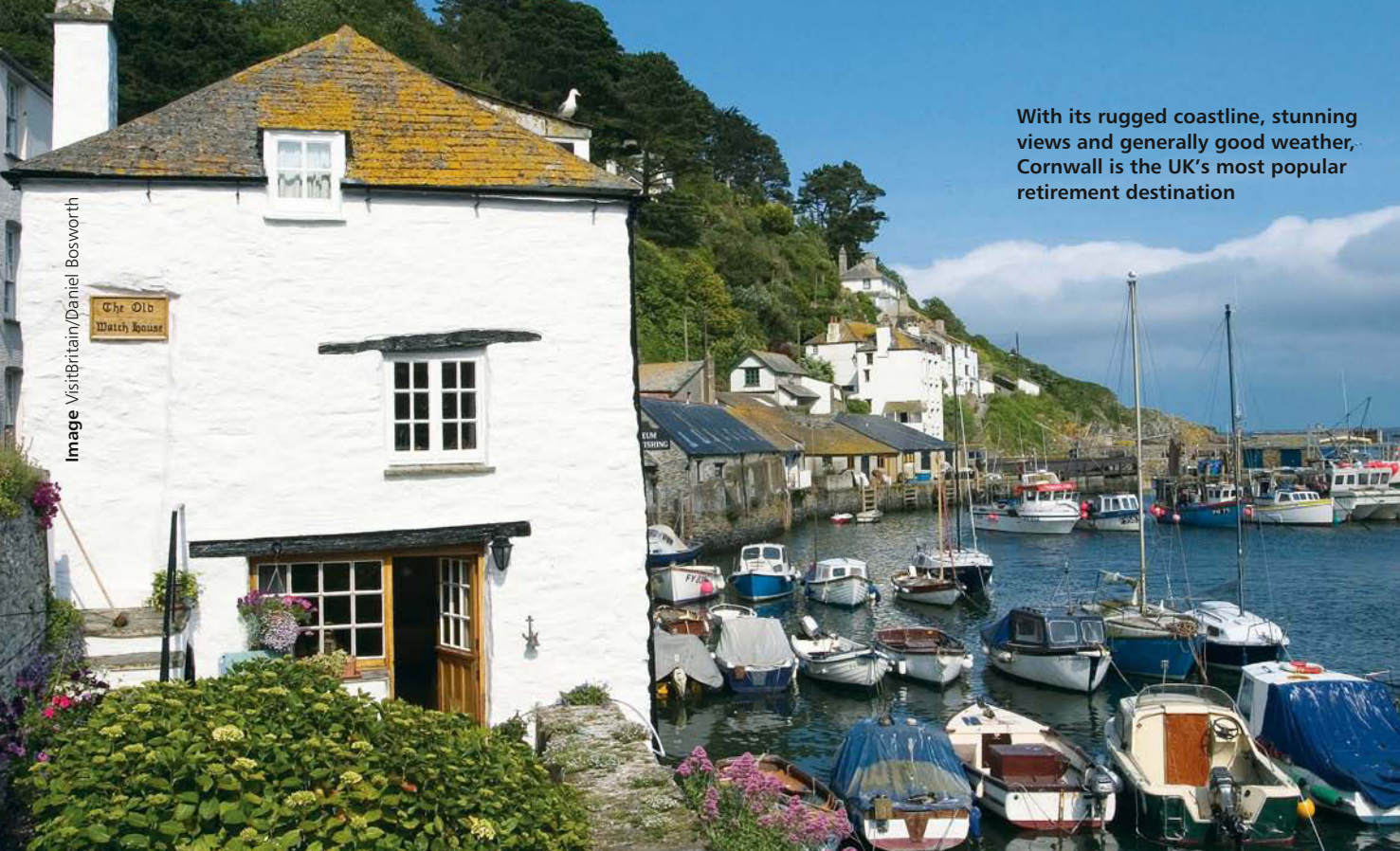


Unfinished business

A new survey from Halifax Home Insurance has revealed that 38% of homeowners have embarked on a project without completing it, while one in 10 have bought the necessary tools and materials but never even started the job. This may be due to lack of confidence after a bad experience, as more than a quarter of those surveyed admitted to a previous botched DIY job. Last year Halifax Home Insurance recorded over 16,500 accidental claims, which included DIY-related incidents such as spilling paint and drilling through pipes.



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



With its rugged coastline, stunning views and generally good weather, Cornwall is the UK's most popular retirement destination



Downsize your home for a low-maintenance lifestyle

Downsizing can be very liberating. You'll be able to get rid of clutter and have a fresh start in a home that's far more manageable. You may be able to release enough equity to remain debt and mortgage-free, with extra funds for your retirement and perhaps to help children through university or on to the housing ladder. According to Prudential's latest downsizing index, 41% of over-55s plan to sell their current home, with three quarters of these hoping to downsize.

Trade down to a smaller property and reap the rewards

1 FINANCIAL PLANNING

Do your sums to ensure that once you've sold and bought a smaller home, you have enough money to see you through retirement after paying off debts and giving children a helping hand. Get your home valued, study property prices in the area you're planning to move to, calculate what you can afford and budget for hidden costs such as estate agency fees. Work out how much you need to make from the sale, but be realistic. 'Exercise caution and be careful not to overestimate the level of funds you expect to receive. Seek professional financial advice on the best retirement income options for your needs,' advises Vince Smith-Hughes, Prudential's retirement income expert.



City centre homes are popular with downsizers who want galleries, cinemas and theatres nearby

Set in the Essex countryside just outside Saffron Walden, Bellway's Cottingham Park development includes roomy two-bedroom bungalows which are ideal for downsizers



Interiors in homes at Cliveden Village, designed exclusively for the over-55s, wouldn't look out of place in a boutique hotel, visit www.clivedenvillage.net



Complete with floor-to-ceiling windows and a balcony or terrace to make the most of the views, the Courtyard Apartments at Wadswick Green, a new retirement village in Wiltshire, are light, bright and modern, www.wadswickgreen.co.uk



2 CHOOSING A LOCATION

Although many downsizers move to be closer to their families, over a third fancy a complete change and relocate to a new area within the UK. Seaside resorts are the traditional choice, and many are geared up for an older population, offering social clubs and full programmes of events. Cornwall, the West Sussex coast and north Somerset top the list of retirement destinations, but some downsizers dream of getting away from it all in a rural retreat or prefer to swap their family house for a pad in a town or city centre, where arts and culture are on tap and they don't need to use the car.

3 TYPES OF HOME

Lloyds Bank has found that trading down to a bungalow is the most common option. Or you may dream of living in a country cottage, full of period features – though these homes can be pricey to maintain and quirks such as steep staircases can lose their charm. If you don't want the hassle of a garden, and are looking forward to travelling more, a new, lock-up-and-leave flat could be the perfect solution. New-builds are secure, energy-efficient and low-maintenance, and the service charge will take care of the upkeep of common parts. Always bear future needs in mind and consider whether a property will be practical if you become less mobile.

4 OVER-55s DEVELOPMENTS

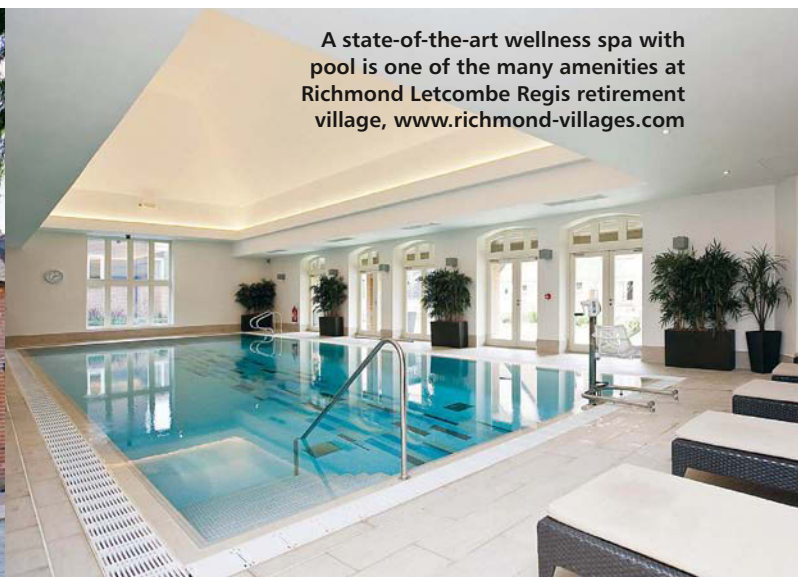
There are no prizes for guessing who these are aimed at. Many are exclusive in design as well as age group, providing contemporary apartments and houses in leafy, landscaped settings, with sports and other facilities on hand. For example, Countryside's Cliveden Village is set within the Cliveden Estate in Berkshire, and all residents have a year's free membership of The Cliveden Club, a prestigious social and country club. Such is the demand for this type of housing that Barratt, the country's largest house builder, is now designing schemes for mature, fit and active buyers. And McCarthy & Stone has launched Ortus Homes, which will provide a wide range of homes for discerning downsizers.

▼ If you're after a fuss-free home that's full of character, this new-build cottage could fit the bill. It nestles in the North Downs and is one stop from Ashford for fast trains to London and the Eurostar to Paris, through www.struttandparker.com

TURN OVER FOR MORE ADVICE ►



A state-of-the-art wellness spa with pool is one of the many amenities at Richmond Letcombe Regis retirement village, www.richmond-villages.com





▲ Residents of Paxton Court in Tenby, an elegant development of retirement apartments, enjoy stunning coastal views, www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk

5 RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Research by estate agency Knight Frank reveals that over a quarter of people aged 55+ would consider moving to a retirement village. These offer independent living in self-contained apartments in a community setting. Most are for sale, but long-term rentals may be available. Extra assistance can be provided, and some communities have on-site care homes so people don't have to be uprooted if they later require help and nursing care on an ongoing basis. Another advantage is the impressive range of facilities, which may include restaurants, spas, gyms, clubs, classes, shops and extensive grounds. Look carefully into all costs, including service charges and fees payable on selling.

Top five reasons why people downsize (according to Saga Legal Services)

1. To live somewhere more manageable.
2. The family house is too big now that the children have flown the nest.
3. To free up money for something else.
4. Long term illness, so want to move somewhere more accessible.
5. To be closer to family.

Useful contacts

- www.findahood.com enables you to find the perfect neighbourhood based on your preferences.
- www.ortushomes.co.uk specialises in beautifully-designed homes for the over-55s.
- www.retiremove.co.uk is full of advice on downsizing and other aspects of retiring.
- www.richmond-villages.com has won many awards for retirement villages across the UK.
- www.saga.co.uk/legal publishes downloadable guides to househunting and conveyancing.

6 PREPARING TO MOVE

Getting ready to move somewhere smaller means decluttering ruthlessly, as there simply won't be space for everything in your new home. Start well in advance, working from room to room, and don't underestimate how long it takes to go through paperwork and photos. The kitchen is a great place to begin, as you're unlikely to have much sentimental attachment to mixing bowls and jugs. In every room, write down a list of items you can't live without, what you're happy to get rid of, and ask an objective friend to help you decide on the rest.

Retirement village Richmond Aston-on-Trent in Derbyshire is due to open next year and will include apartments offering an independent lifestyle, suites which come with a hotel-style package to help with the daily chores and a care home, www.richmond-villages.com



Stewart Terrace in Edinburgh's upmarket Morningside is aimed at buyers aged 60+, offering independence combined with the peace of mind of additional security, www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk



CASE STUDY

'Downsizing meant swapping our country home for a town house'



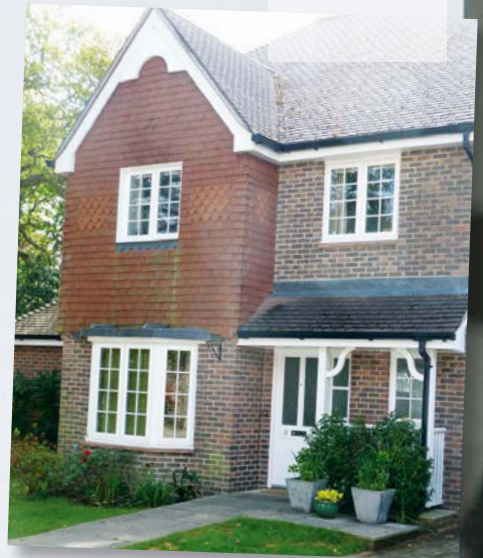
▲ Denise is now busy running up soft furnishings for her new home

Denise and Dick Allen's move to rural Devon from south London back in the 90s was all about giving space and freedom to their sons, then aged four and six. Fast forward 20 years and with both boys having flown the nest, the ancient mill house with its two and a half acre garden was now far too big for the couple. With Dick's retirement imminent, it was also placing too much of drain on their resources. 'We thought long and hard about downsizing and realised we wanted to make a fresh start in a completely different style of house and in a new area, so that we wouldn't constantly be making comparisons,' says Denise. With no ties and more free

time for travel, they also wanted a more manageable, easy-to-maintain home they could lock up and leave.

Location was key, and the Allens spent many weekends driving around the south east in search of their ideal home – near the sea, with good local transport, easy access to the cinema or theatre and within reasonable distance of an airport. They also spent hours house-hunting online, where they came across the six-year-old semi in Hampshire that they eventually bought. 'At first sight we thought it might be too modern, but once inside we were impressed by a real feeling of light and space,' continues Denise. 'And with the garden backing on to a common and surrounded by trees, it was like being in the countryside although close to the town; the fact we already had friends living nearby clinched it for us.'

Downsizing possessions was a tough job – there were eight sofas in the old house – but one thing Denise was reluctant to leave behind was the plant



▲ The Allens downsized to a modern property at the end of a quiet suburban cul-de-sac – a far cry from the rural mill house they left behind

collection she had established over the years. A keen gardener, she removed

enough shrubs, cuttings and containers to fill an entire removal van. She has great plans for the new garden but they're on hold for the moment while she and Dick concentrate on making their new home their own and enjoy getting to know their surroundings.

◀ The Allens had planned to install a new window in the cosy living room but instead hung a large mirror from Ikea, to help reflect light



Next month in...

YourHome



Take a peek inside this month's real reader homes, makeovers and problem rooms



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Property know-how with George

This month property developer, architect and presenter of Channel 4's *The Restoration Man*, **George Clarke**, discusses the pros and cons of leasehold versus freehold

Freehold and leasehold are the most common forms of property ownership in the UK. I often feel that the difference between them can be skimmed over by estate agents as they assume that everyone knows the complexities of the ownership market, but the reality is quite different. Very few people understand the legal complexities and the costs and restrictions that can be imposed on you, particularly with regard to leasehold properties. The decision as to whether you are buying a freehold or leasehold home really shouldn't be taken lightly at all.

So what is the difference? Freehold is the simplest and most straightforward form of home ownership. With freehold you are regarded as the 'freeholder' and you in effect own the building or the land outright with no other owner or landlord involved in the ownership of the property at all. The house is yours forever (in perpetuity) and the land registry will state that you own the 'title absolute'. You are free to do whatever you'd like to do with the property under the usual planning laws and building regulations that apply to everyone. It is more common for whole houses to be sold as freehold properties, unless it is part of a large historic estate where the estate prefers to remain as freeholder. For example, the Duke of Westminster's 'Grosvenor Estate' owns a substantial amount of land and buildings in Mayfair and Belgravia. The estate retains as much ownership of the properties as possible (they are the freeholder) but they grant leases on entire homes, apartments, retail and commercial property to generate huge amounts of income. The 500 acres of land his ancestors inherited north of the Thames in 1677 and then developed have made the current Duke the 9th richest person in England! Remaining a freeholder for many years certainly pays.

As you can gather from the Duke's property

portfolio, leasehold means that you simply have a lease with the freeholder or landlord and you are buying a lease to live in the property for a certain period of time. In a residential scenario leases are more common with apartments and flats because the freeholder retains overall control of the building and grants long leases to each individual apartment. Long leases are often 90 to 125 years, but some developers offer 999-year leases, which can sometimes be referred to as 'virtual freehold'. Don't get confused by this phrase because you are definitely not the freeholder in any sense of the word. A leaseholder of a home has many restrictions upon them and can be liable to many different costs, so you need to be 100% clear what these restrictions and costs are before buying a leasehold property. Under a lease you will be required to obtain 'Freeholder's consent' for any building works or alterations you wish to carry out to a building. Gaining these consents can take long periods of time and you may even need to pay a fee to the freeholder for the work to be carried out. With any long lease you will also be required to pay a 'ground rent' to the freeholder every year. This is a small rent that can range from as little as £50 to a few hundred pounds a year. It may not sound like much, but it's still a cost. You may also be required to pay an annual service charge for the maintenance and upkeep of the common parts of the building, such as lobbies and stairwells, but also for the upkeep of the building's exterior and possibly even the roof. These service charges can be substantial payments, particularly if your flat is in a large apartment block with large areas of external landscaping and maintenance requirements. I paid a service charge on an apartment a few years ago and it was nearly £3,000 per year. In my experience the annual

service charge is always the main item of dispute between leaseholders and freeholders as a leaseholder rightly wants to know what their money is being spent on and that they are being given value for money. I think it's fair to say that disputes between freeholders and leaseholders are common.

The other major concern is the length of your lease. Leases of less than 90 years can very soon start to be problematic and I tend to avoid them unless an extension of the lease can be negotiated fairly. Any lease of less than 80 years can start to significantly affect the value of the house. As a short lease period reduces then the value of the house will reduce too. Just this week I spotted an apartment for sale that seemed to be incredibly cheap, nearly 50% less than you'd normally expect to pay for a dissimilar property in that area. When I requested the details from the agent I soon found out that the property was leasehold and there was only 40 years left on the lease with no option to extend. Fewer people will want to buy this property and the banks will be reluctant to lend against it. When the term of the leasehold goes down to zero years, then the property is worthless and reverts back to the freeholder.

There is nothing wrong with buying a leasehold property, but make sure your lawyer checks any leasehold purchase thoroughly and makes you aware of all restrictions, potential costs and annual charges. You need to know exactly what you are signing up to otherwise you could be making an expensive mistake.

■ For more tips and advice from George, check out his website at www.georgeclarke.com



Photo: Lizzie Orme

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Gardening

Great buys and advice to help your garden bloom



Gardening therapy for everyone

Many of us find gardening a relaxing and therapeutic pastime, but it can be especially beneficial for those living with disabilities or ill health. Thrive is the leading charity in the UK using gardening to bring about positive changes in the lives of people who are isolated, disadvantaged or vulnerable. This type of therapy is known as social and therapeutic horticulture – the process of working with plants to improve physical and psychological health. It also uses the garden as a safe and secure environment in which to develop an individual's ability to socialise, make friends, and gain practical skills. Using specific gardening tasks and the garden environment, Thrive horticultural therapists build a set of activities for each gardener aimed at improving their health and wellbeing and achieving particular goals. There are many ways in which you can get involved and help Thrive's work – from volunteering to holding a fundraising event in your local area. For more information visit www.thrive.org.uk.

Image Simon Kemp



Jobs to do this month

- Harvest apples, plums and berries
- Be watchful for signs of disease on plants and treat straight away
- Use collected leaves for leaf mould
- Treat lawns to an organic slow-release feed for autumn

Be inspired at Harrogate Flower Show

If you love nothing more than enjoying beautiful blooms, amazing produce and fabulous show gardens, then a day out at the Harrogate Flower Show could be right up your street. Taking place from 18th-20th September at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate, this year it's celebrating its 40th autumn show. Highlights include a new-look layout, the stunning new Plant Pavilion and a range of new harvest activities. Also new for 2015 is Harvest and Hedgerow, celebrating nature's bounty. Tickets cost from £13 when bought in advance, visit www.flowershow.org.uk for full information.



Events

18th-20th September

Harrogate Autumn Flower Show
www.flowershow.org.uk

26th-27th September

RHS Malvern Autumn Show
www.rhs.org.uk

8th-13th September

RHS Garden Wisley Flower Show
www.rhs.org.uk

3 OF THE BEST... bird feeders

We love this terracotta acorn design, which is frost-resistant and has three feeding holes

Acorn feeder,
£13.50, RSPB



This ceramic feeder will provide hours of fun for the birds

Swing Time bird feeder,
£14.99, Find me a Gift



Your back garden will be the talk of the bird world with this five-star feeder

Umbra Bird Cafe feeder,
£29, Red Candy



Feature Lisa Hibberd



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

The only way is up

Think upwards as well as outwards to create a garden to be proud of



Compact cascade planter, £79.99, Forest Garden

▲ Achieve a cascade of colour with this tiered wooden planter design

There has been somewhat of a vertical revolution taking place in cities around the country over the past few years, with walls of buildings, indoors and out, sporting lush green walls to rival a tropical rainforest. Although many of these installations would be impossible to recreate at home, there are plenty of ways in which you can jump on the bandwagon and introduce vertical planting into your outside space, whether you have a large garden or just a small balcony. Green walls are becoming an increasingly popular feature in gardens, and the benefits of larger systems still apply – they can be fed by stored rainwater, provide habitats for insects and even help to insulate the building to which they are attached. Popular plants include ferns, grasses, ivy and succulents, but herbs, vegetables and smaller fruit such as strawberries can also thrive.

On a smaller scale, or if you don't have the budget to spend on a whole wall system, there are plenty of options which are the perfect way to make the most of limited space. Consider hanging panels or planters with pockets, which can be attached to plain walls to add colour and interest, or grow climbers up trellis or a structure such as a pergola. Pillar roses,



Image: Lizzie Orme

▲ Succulents are ideal for vertical planting as they retain water, so are suited to arid climates or dry soil conditions. We spotted this stunning display at a previous RHS Chelsea Flower Show

which have flexible stems, will happily spiral around posts at the back of a border, or create a stunning display over a pergola. Alternatively, pots and planters with different levels are an easy way to brighten up a patio or balcony.

► If you can't grow outwards, why not grow upwards? Create a stunning display on a patio or balcony with this cluster of pots which offers up to one metre of growing height



Vertical garden planter, £9.95, Harrod Horticultural

Bringing walls to life

We asked award-winning garden designer Kate Gould for her top tips...

● Traditionally greening up a wall meant using wires or trellis to provide a framework for climbing plants. We still use this to create naturalistic schemes festooned in scented clematis, honeysuckle, roses and jasmine but over the past few years a new technique has taken hold; the vertical green wall. This is where perennials and shrubs are planted in pockets in what could be described as a vertical hanging basket to create a living wall hanging. By not using climbing plants that naturally want to climb and ramble in a very freeform manner, a much more defined and designed scheme can be created. With careful selection of plants a green wall is something that will look good all through the year.

● Vertical green walls are being used in many different situations, both residential and commercial nowadays. They have been used to provide huge green backdrops to retail areas, such as the wall at the Westfield shopping centre in west London, hotels or even the much visited Olympic site.

● On a smaller residential scale the walls work equally well and can bring a breath of fresh air into a town garden where space is at a premium. They can also be used internally (with a palette of houseplants) which can then be extended outside with exterior plants. This works very well with modern glass extensions or large bi-fold doors.

● Shade-tolerant walls often provide the best coverage and texture: Epimedium, Ajuga, Bergenia, Tiarella, Ferns and Hosta are a good mix to start with in a green wall. They are predominantly green in colour but such wildly different shades of green and create a tonal scheme very pleasing all on its own. If colour is your thing then Heuchera, Viola and Cyclamen can be added to the basic scheme for patches of impact, be it in the form of leaves or flowers. If maintenance is not an issue then the wild and bold colours of Begonia rex varieties can be added seasonally for a really punchy colour scheme.

● All plants require water and green walls are no exception. As a designer I will always specify

If you're thinking of investing in a green wall, don't forget to consider the costs of installation and of course irrigation, which will keep it looking its best

Image www.kategouldgardens.com



the plants I require as well as the layout of the wall but this scheme is then passed over to a specialist to grow on, install, irrigate and maintain.

● A green wall is truly a thing of beauty and can extend the season of interest in a small town garden right the way through the year as well as into the hours of darkness when the walls can be lit or designed to be combined with moving water to create a beautiful space.

Kate Gould is an award-winning garden designer with more than a decade's hands-on experience transforming gardens of all sizes and a regular exhibitor at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show where she has been awarded three gold medals. Visit www.kategouldgardens.com for information.

▼ Brighten up a fence or wall with this set of two planters, which feature three pull-down pockets with separate compartments



Burgon & Ball verti planter in aubergine, £9.95, John Lewis

► This sturdy wrought-iron corner stand is ideal for brightening up the corner of a patio. The three tiers provide plenty of space for potted plants, or even a cascading waterfall of strawberries



Tier corner plant stand, £32.99, Lakeland



◀ If you're worried about keeping a green wall watered, why not fake it? Create the effect of a lush green wall with this artificial plant panel, which measures one metre square and is UV stable, meaning that it will resist fading or discolouration in sunlight. More than one panel can be clipped together to cover any area

Artificial Forest Fern green wall foliage by Artificial Landscapes, from £87.95 per sq m, Notonthehighstreet

GARDENING

EXPERT ADVICE



Julie Kendall, the Eden Project's lead outdoor horticulturalist, offers her top tips on successful vertical gardening...

Vertical garden displays can range from training a clematis up your garden fence, to an extravagant green wall bristling with ferns, herbs and grasses. To create a vertical garden display, you can use annuals or perennial plants. Traditionally gardeners have trained flowering plants up trellising, walls or free-standing frames. However, fruit and vegetable plants can be used very successfully to create an attractive vertical display. I'd suggest the following plants:

Perennials

Vegetables – caucasian spinach
Fruit – grape vines, blackberries
Flowers – wisteria, clematis

Annuals

Vegetables – runner beans, gourds
Fruit – tomatoes
Flowers – nasturtiums, ipomea

► **This large, fragrant climbing rose has deep pink blooms borne in clusters, and is ideal for covering a pergola or arch**

Sir Paul Smith climbing rose, £19.95, Peter Beales



This planter offers an attached trellis to support climbing plants

Cambridge planter, £109.99, Haynes Garden World



For more experienced and adventurous gardeners, creating a green wall can be a great way to take vertical gardening to the next level. A green wall is an entire wall covered in plants. We have had several green walls at the Eden Project over the years, and for a while one of our ice-cream kiosks was covered by plants. Points to consider when planning a green wall include the following:

- Preparation of the surface to be covered is really important. A waterproof membrane should be used to stop damp permeating into the supporting structure.
- Ensure whatever system you are fixing to the wall is secure and won't fall down. We use plastic gridding when creating our green walls, with pockets of soil.
- A grow zone needs to be created either using small pockets of growing material or a fibrous surface for the roots to adhere to.
- An irrigation system is instrumental to keeping a vertical garden alive as the pockets of growing medium are so small and can very quickly dry out. This can either be done with drip lines or misters on a timer.
- Think of how plants naturally grow – don't think of a plant with a tap root, think about plants that like to grow in walls, crevices or grow epiphytically.

◀ **Perfect for a balcony, this simple plant stand lets you display an array of plants or flowers without taking up too much space**

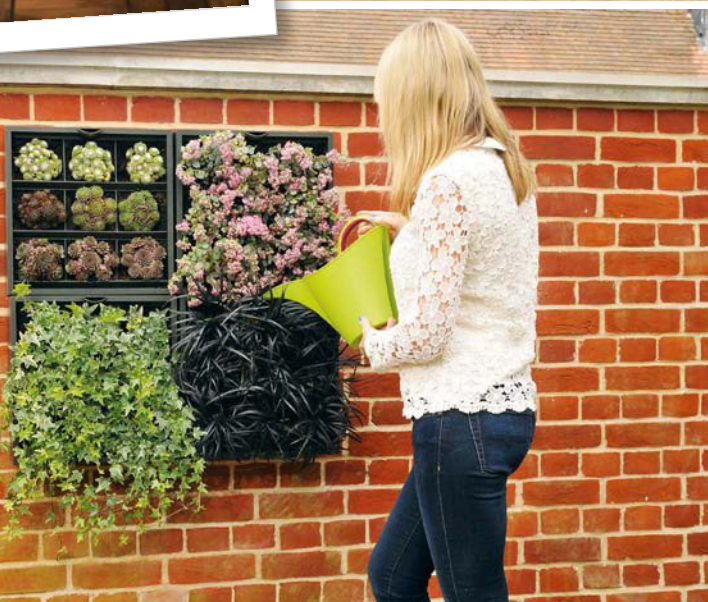
Socker plant stand, £20, Ikea

◀ **Create your own living wall with these clever recycled plastic planters which can be joined together to make a larger area. They have easy-to-water pockets and come complete with screws and wall plugs**

USEFUL CONTACTS

- **www.woollypocket.co.uk** has various options for DIY living wall planters, as well as drip irrigation kits.
- **www.treebox.co.uk** offers design and installation for indoor and outdoor living walls of any size.
- **www.vertigarden.co.uk** sells simple and affordable modular growing systems for professionals as well as home gardeners.

Vertical wall planters, £44.95 each, Harrod Horticultural



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We have £6,163 worth of fab prizes up for grabs!

Win a trip to Harrogate

1 great prize

The ultimate English day out can be all yours thanks to Harrogate-based master confectioner, Ultimate English. One lucky reader will win a trip for two to the historic spa town of Harrogate and spend a night in a boutique hotel, with travel and breakfast included. You'll also win a year's supply of hand-crafted Ultimate English products, made using only the best ingredients and time-honoured recipes and techniques.

Visit www.ultimateenglish.co.uk to find out more. Please note: Break cannot be taken on a bank holiday.

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Win Ulster Weavers accessories



5 fab prizes

Your Home has teamed up with Ulster Weavers to offer five lucky readers the chance to win a gift set worth £150. For over 125 years, Ulster Weavers has been designing quality home linens, home textiles and

quirky accessories. Whatever your personality, there is a collection to add real style to your home. Winners will receive a range of products including tea towels, aprons, oven gloves and

beautifully designed ceramics. Visit www.ulsterweavers.com to find out more. Please note: Gift sets may vary.

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Win a two-night stay in Cornwall

1 lucky reader

When it comes to white sandy beaches, wild surf and wide-open skies, nowhere in Britain can compare to Cornwall. The St Moritz Hotel in Rock is offering a two-night stay for two in a suite with a sea view, including breakfast on both days, and an indulgent lunch and dinner at the hotel's restaurants. You'll also get to experience two treatments at the award-winning Cowshed spa, have full access to the indoor and outdoor pool, sauna, steam room and Jacuzzi and take part in a surf lesson with Wavehunters Surf School on Polzeath Beach. With the expansive seas behind you and the rambling cliffs ahead, it's little wonder that surfers flock to Cornwall's coast in search of idyllic scenery and a relaxed atmosphere. Visit www.stmoritzhotel.co.uk for more information.



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Leading UK boiler manufacturer, Baxi, has teamed up with Nest to offer five lucky readers a Nest Learning Thermostat™, worth £179. This clever little device learns from your behaviour to create a personal heating programme based on your typical daily routine, preferred temperatures and time of year. The thermostat can be controlled via a smartphone or tablet, even when you're away on holiday, and its Auto-Away function kicks in when no one is home, helping to save you even more energy and money. For more information visit www.baxi.co.uk.

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5
great
prizes

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Win a Nude Food Movers Back to School kit

Smash and Nude Food Movers are giving away 15 prize packs to lucky readers which include everything your child needs to start the new school year. Each prize pack is valued at over £50 and contains everything from a Mini Rubbish Free lunchbox to a specially designed Yoghurt Mover. Smash and Nude Food Movers products are available at Sainsbury's, Asda, Waitrose, Toys R Us and Dunelm.

For more information visit www.nudefoodmovers.com.au.

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Win Alcro outdoor wood stain

12
fab
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New Fasad from Alcro, the leading Swedish paint brand, is a top quality, opaque wood stain that's perfect for painting exterior woodwork. Available in

hundreds of colours, Fasad will help to revive, colour and protect garden sheds, furniture and more. 12 winners will each receive a 3L tub of Alcro Fasad, worth £64. Fasad contains a special binder, combined with linseed oil, ensuring good penetration and a rich colour. Visit www.alcropaints.co.uk for more information.

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Win Style Studio blinds

Transform your windows with a beautiful set of made-to-measure pleated blinds from Style Studio. Style Studio is a new brand of window blinds, curtains and cushions available from retailers across the UK. It has launched an exciting new collection of over 190 plain and patterned pleated blinds, including the new Hive® Cellular energy-saving fabric range. One winner will win £750 to spend on the Style Studio pleated range. Approved

retailers can be found at www.stylestudio.co.uk.

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To enter: Phone or text your name and address for the prize you would like to win or enter online at www.yourhomemagazine.co.uk. Phone and text entries must reach us by midnight on 30th September 2015, and three working days later for online entries. *Calls cost 30p per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge and last approx. 2 minutes. **Texts cost 50p plus your standard network charge. This is not a subscription service. Lines close at midnight on 30th September 2015 and three working days later for online entries. Winners will be selected at random from all correct entries received after the closing date. If you call to enter after the advertised closing date you will not be entered into the competition, but you may still be charged.

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Treat your kitchen

You can never have enough serving bowls, and this one from Decorator's Notebook is as ethical as it is stylish. Made from fine stoneware clay, the raindrop design is painted by hand, making each piece unique. Use it to serve salads and side dishes or give it pride of place on your worktop as a fruit bowl. We also love this stylish mug that's the perfect size for your morning cuppa. They're both part of the Indigo Drop collection that's made in Vietnam by disadvantaged, talented artisans, who thanks to you, will be able to earn a fair and stable living.



Indigo Drop mug, £9.95; Indigo Drop serving bowl, £29.95, both Decorator's Notebook



Get the family around the table

Whether you're a lover of all things industrial or are dreaming of a quintessential country kitchen, a wooden table and benches will no doubt be at the top of your wish list. We've found this new dining set from Myakka that not only looks great, but is eco-friendly to boot. Handmade in Vietnam, the Stonemill dining set is made from reclaimed pine that would have otherwise been discarded as waste. Luckily for us the wood has instead been beautifully restored by artisans into this lust-worthy dining set.

Stonemill dining set, £697, Myakka

Bags of style

Eco-friendly, reusable bags are great news for the environment and UK-based brand Talented is making sure they're a fashionable choice too. Set up in 2012, the company collaborates with different designers to produce unique and quirky designs that are printed onto upcycled and natural fabrics. Its latest collection, Best of British Masterpieces, features illustrations of well-known British paintings, including John Constable's 'The Hay Wain'. The bags are made from recycled Yorkshire wool, formerly used for suits, and would make the perfect green addition to your autumn wardrobe.

Best of British Masterpieces tote bag, £35, www.madebytalented.com



Eco expert

We spoke to Jared Sneath, Raynes Park Centre Manager at Green Square, about eco-friendly options for smaller houses



'Many rural households have lots of space to install different types of renewable energy technology, but it can be harder in urban households where space is often limited. However, for those living in semi-detached or terraced properties, things such as biomass stoves, solar thermal panels and a thermal store can be practical, affordable options. A thermal store will save up the renewable heat your home generates until it's needed, meaning you can save money and get the most out of your green technologies.'

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If you're searching for unique homewares with impressive eco credentials then Blossom & Sage could be just what you're looking for. They make and sell home accessories such as cushions, bunting and fabric initials, many of which are made using vintage fabrics. What's not to love?



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