

28 Interior design

Your interior style guide continued

Scandi

Scandinavian design has evolved from its Nordic roots and become an industry that spans a building style, a colour palette and an entire way of life. Countless books on 'what makes a real Scandi home' are available, but if you're looking to adopt it, start with the basics: a minimalist room layout, simple whites and pastels combined with wooden surfaces, and a restrained approach to decorations and details. The key is to create an airy, uncluttered and organic space.

Essential buy: Lighting is key, and takes a central role in Scandi houses, not just a functional one. Invest in some pendant ceiling lights, geometric chandelier lights, and smaller downlights to maximise your illumination options.

Farmhouse

If you live in a barn conversion, the farmhouse style is for you: exposed wooden beams, wide plank floors, ample use of green oak and an open-plan Shaker kitchen are the hallmarks of this design. But it's coming to a wider variety of spaces through the modern farmhouse variant, which combines the rustic with the refined: brickwork fireplaces, floor-to-ceiling windows, and tasteful use of salvaged objects as accessories.

Essential buy: Mixed materials have become a core part of the modern farmhouse aesthetic. Pair your granite kitchen tops with a sliding oak door and black-and-gold metallic light fittings.



Minimalist

This contemporary design is based on the philosophy that function is key, and everything in a room should be contributing rather than getting in the way. It doesn't mean you have to keep rooms completely empty – but it means that you should think about the most useful place for every object to be, rather than placing it randomly or 'because I found a spot'. Then, pick one item – such as a striking light fixture or bright orange sofa – to be the centrepiece of the room. With nothing to distract from it, its effect will really be felt.

Essential buy: Minimalism is all about storage. Convert surfaces to storage spaces with floor-to-ceiling cabinets in the 'handleless' style with notched edges.

Traditional

Though modern styles have become more on-trend, there is nothing wrong with the traditional aesthetic,



and millions still like it best. It's inspired by European aristocratic designs, with ornate details, dark woods and stately, patterned furniture. Don't be fooled by the name, though – traditional design still gives you a lot of room for creativity. It's up to you to develop a strong aesthetic theme – a particular colour or floral pattern, perhaps – and develop it through matching pieces across the room.

Essential buy: The trick to making traditional work is to treat windows properly. Full-height, heavy draped curtains are a signature of the style, best paired with intermediate net curtains. This makes the room feel tall, classic and imposing.

Something to think about

Mix and match

Who says you need to respect the rules? Even if you have an established aesthetic in your home, it's perfectly acceptable – even encouraged – to introduce elements from a different era or style. For example, adding one or two traditional accents to a mid-century modern room makes them stand out. Even a full-on eclectic style, mixing icons from just about everything, can produce impressive results. ■

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The UK property market has been on the rise since July, largely fuelled by the government temporarily cutting stamp duty. With the introduction of 95% mortgage schemes in mid-April, the housing market is welcoming a

record number of first-time buyers to the scene. Interior design has become a hot topic. Homeowners are looking for expert advice and there is a brand-new market for accessible, affordable design. My Bespoke Room, the award-winning online interior design service, have experienced an influx of enquiries over the past twelve months. In total, the team have completed over 1,000 home and renovation projects – a 108% increase on the previous year. The team believe demand has

exploded not just because more people are moving, but because people now expect so much more from their homes. Furthermore, with fewer people being able to gather design inspiration from travelling or visiting venues in-person, demand for an online alternative has risen. The new trend for online, affordable design promises to make home renovations easy, accessible, and most importantly, fun! Teams of qualified and experienced designers can help you create your perfect home, in your style and within your budget (from £195 per room).



While hiring an expert may come in at an additional cost, it has been shown to save you money in the long term by preventing expensive mistakes that can happen when people impulse buy or follow fleeting fashion trends. With moving home recognised as one of the most stressful life events people can experience, having support with the interiors journey can really help, both emotionally and financially. Designers are there to listen, and to help you create a home you want to live in.



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