

Furniture  
& Design  
Trends





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# Mid-Century Modern Makeover

**T**he best of the past is making an impression on modern design.

Mid-century style thrived on clean lines, mixing different materials and jaunty colors. If you are looking to refresh the look of your home, consider layering in mid-century features with contemporary details to create a truly unique and inviting space.

## NATURAL LIGHT

Mid-century design prioritizes architecture and layouts that enhance natu-

ral lighting. If you are game for a larger remodel, look into fitting larger windows and skylights into your main living areas.

If your home is older, you could be eligible for a tax break if you replace windows that are green certified.

Not looking to take on a project so big? Changing your drapery for linens in lighter colors, raising your curtain rods, and giving existing windows a good scrub will make a dramatic difference in a room's lighting.

## KEEP IT WARM

Many people think of modern as

being "cold," but in its mid-century conception, it was anything but.

This period utilized different types of wood for depth and warmth and paid close attention to the shape of furniture. When you pair these pieces with a comfy modern sofa and soft drapery, your space will be ultra-inviting.

## BUILT-INS

If your home doesn't have any built-ins, consider adding them to your space.

Mid-century architecture often designed spaces so many useful features were built in to a room, which is

very useful when you're after more cohesive storage solutions.

## MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Adopting a mid-century design successfully is all about making it your own. You don't need to arrange a complete replica. It is important to add your own flair to a design for it to feel authentic rather than staged.

Insert color to create focal points and added warmth. Don't automatically dismiss Grandma's shaker china hutch; see how you can incorporate it into your design or repurpose it for better use.



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# Trends in Bathroom Design

**T**aking on a bathroom remodel is a significant financial commitment, but it doesn't have to be difficult. The key is to do your research, make smart decisions and understand where your money will create the biggest impact.

The key to a pleasing bathroom is for each feature to be functional and beautiful. Consider the following trends before beginning your bathroom remodel.

## **BRIGHT AND AIRY WALLS**

Bathrooms are often small rooms and can very easily look dark. Dark bathrooms cast shadows on anything else that is worn or tired. For an

instant refresh, put a new coat of light-colored paint on the walls.

A brighter bathroom will immediately make other aspects of the room feel new and shiny. If you are planning a more extensive remodel, remember that subway tile is a classic and recent trend that is going nowhere fast.

Bonus: Tile will brighten the room, and it's easy to clean.

## **BOLD FLOORING**

A great place for you to add a bold splash of color or design is actually your bathroom floor.

Flooring doesn't "scream" at us the same way walls do, because it is not at eye level. Why not go bold?

Don't pass up what you love because of the square-foot price. Bathrooms are some of the smaller rooms in

our homes, which means it takes less flooring to complete the job. That means the swoon-worthy slate you've been eyeing might be in your price range simply because you won't need to purchase as much of it.

## **LUXURIOUS ADD-ONS**

In bathrooms, choosing the right fixtures can go a long way toward making a space

feel more modern than perhaps it really is.

Think easy-close doors on cabinets, steam shower systems and touch-on faucets. Don't overlook the small touches, such as soft-smelling candles and rolled towels. Wrapping up in a plush, soft towel does a lot for your mood. Displaying them on a shelf or bar will help create a "spa-like" feeling.



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# Creating a Gallery Wall

Arranging a gallery wall is not only a pleasant way to display family photos and artwork but also creates a focal point and dramatic element to any room.

They also are one of those design elements that seem simple enough to complete — until you begin.

Not sure where to start or what to hang? Take a deep breath and relax. These tried-and-tested tips will turn your design makeover into a super easy weekend project.

## LAY IT OUT

It is important to “discover” your layout before you even pick up a ham-

mer. There are two ways to go about this. Your first option is to lay out all your frames on the floor. You may not have the floor space to do this, however.

The second option is to tape a paper version of your frames to your chosen wall. Pro tip: Use the placeholder photos inside the frames as outlines and use tape to secure them as you arrange and rearrange.

Experiment with both symmetrical

and asymmetrical designs.

## DON'T SHY AWAY FROM COLOR

Try a colorful frame or bold matting. You want the eye to be drawn throughout your display, so pick a few colors to stick with and balance them on all sides of your display.

As you work with color, remember that whitespace is your friend. You want to place neutral matting in a bold frame to make the color pop,

and not hang frames too closely together.

## HANG MORE THAN PHOTOS

Think outside the box. Not everything you hang needs to be in a frame. Consider more architectural pieces of artwork, such as arrows or large wooden lettering — perhaps the monogram letter of your family name.

Spend a lot of time on the lake? A painted wooden oar mounted on the wall will not only add dimension to the framed art and photos but will serve as its own form of scrapbooking family history.

# Baby on Board: The Nursery

There is nothing quite like a new baby entering the family. There is much planning to do, and one of the top priorities is creating a space for your little one.

This is a large task, and planning and proper budgeting is a must to keep stress at a minimum. It is so easy to go overboard and bust the budget when it comes to designing a nursery.

Choose where and how to spend your money wisely. The right choices will make all the difference in the years to follow.

## SPLURGE HERE

**Crib:** A good crib will grow with your baby. If possible, purchase a three-in-one or four-in-one crib that will adapt to your child's changing needs. It will be worth it when you think of how that sticker price is amortized over time.

**Rug:** A good rug will completely transform a room and is a key element to achieving a cozy feeling. Rugs with all-natural fibers (think wool and cotton) last longer than “blends” because they handle daily wear and tear like a champ.

This will be essential as your little one grows and



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becomes more and more active. While size and material also affect price, a large natural-fibered rug is an investment piece that will bring you years of comfort.

**Rocker:** You are going to spend a lot of time in this rocker, so make sure it's comfortable and in a print, style and design you aren't going to hate after many long hours.

This is also a piece of furniture that can be repurposed in another room of your home after your child no longer needs to be rocked.

## SAVE HERE

**Shelving:** This is DIY territory. Go online and search “nursery shelving” and hundreds of options and variations will populate. Check

your local hardware store or baby supply shop for options. Pick the one that suits your needs and aesthetic and hop to it.

**Changing station:** There is no need to purchase a specific “changing station.” A changing pad on top of a dresser will work just as well, provide more storage and enable you to choose a piece that will

match the rest of your decor. Alternatively, repurpose a dresser you already own.

**Accessories:** Baby things are adorable, so let those items work double-time as nursery decor. Display books with covers you love or stack printed, folded swaddle blankets on open shelving. The only limitation here is your own imagination.

# Closet Ideas

**W**hen it comes to interior design, closets always get the short end of the stick. This is likely because they are often viewed as utilitarian tools rather than unique spaces.

Do not ignore your closets. A little TLC in your closets can take your house from drab to show-ready. Bonus: When you treat them as spaces, you are much more likely to keep them neat and tidy — which in turn makes them function better.

## MAKE A BOLD STATEMENT

Closets are a fantastic space to use a bright paint color or bold wallpaper pattern. Remember, these are spaces with no windows and often bad lighting.

It is important to bring a little color and cheer into their depths. Colorful walls also highlight what is in front of them — making it easier for you to grab what you need off a shelf or hanger in a hurry.

## GET RID OF CLUTTER

Yes, cleaning is an essential aspect of design. The result is worth it. Getting rid of the clutter will help bring cohesion to the space (and allow closet doors to shut smoothly).

For utility closets, trash any supplies or cleaners that have expired or are no longer relevant to your needs. For clothes, trash items with rips or stains, donate things you no longer wear, and pack up out-of-season clothing in canvas bins that you can label.

Clothes should be able to hang nicely with room between hangers.

## BINS ARE YOUR FRIEND

One of the easiest ways to make a closet feel organized is uniformity. Purchase hangers in the same size and color, and hang clothing facing the same direction.

For utility closets, purchase plastic bins in different sizes, and group like items together. Choose bins in a bold color for an instant pop of color in your design.





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# Not Your Grandmother's Wallpaper

**W**allpaper is making one of the most noticeable comebacks in design trends this decade — but it has left the small, feminine patterns of the 80s in the past. Instead, wallpaper is introducing itself to the scene in bold florals, geometric designs and playful patterns.

If you're considering introducing wallpaper into your space, there is no need to overcommit. With modern wallpaper, less is definitely more.

## ACCENT WALL

Forget about covering an entire room in wall-to-wall paper. For an instant upgrade, choose one wall to wallpaper, and then paint the remaining three walls a complimentary and less dramatic color.

This modern take makes wallpaper the focal point — not something you

need to hide.

## STAIRCASE ART

If you are feeling adventurous, consider covering a staircase with your favorite print. It will need to be sealed since it will receive foot traffic, but the experience of stepping on it rather than moving past it will change how you perceive a pattern.

## FAUX HEADBOARD

Wallpaper can be an inexpensive way to frame a bed over purchasing a

pricey headboard.

You can frame your wall with molding in the size and shape you prefer, and lay your wallpaper of choice directly inside.

## FIREPLACE WRAP

This is a great design solution for homes with fireplace inserts, which tend to look plain all by themselves. Fireplaces are usually a focal point in the room where they reside.

This eye-catching design element will bring attention back to your

room's star.

## BOOKCASE BACKING

Lining the backing of a bookcase will add interest to a more utilitarian piece in your home, as well as highlight the items sitting in it. And bookcases are only the beginning.

This trick also works to brighten kitchen cabinets, closets and other covered spaces. These are spaces to go bold with color or pattern, as a majority of the wall behind will be covered by items sitting on shelves.



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# Couch Q&A

**D**o you know what questions to ask when purchasing a sofa? A couch might be beautiful and fit into your overall aesthetic, but will it suit your needs?

Furniture purchases are expensive and should be viewed as making an investment — especially if you are hoping to hang onto the piece for several years. There are many aspects concerning the construction of a couch that will impact how it looks over time.

This is what you need to know before handing over your credit card.

## **Are the cushions made of high-density foam?**

Density is measured when the manufacturer compresses the air out of foam. This helps to create a stronger base.

The higher the density, the stronger the base — which means you will

avoid sagging for much longer. You also want to hear that the cushions are made of solid foam, and not stuffed with foam pieces. This is what leads a couch to look lumpy.

## **How should a sofa be cleaned?**

This is especially important if you are looking at an upholstered sofa. Will you be able to spot clean with soap and water? Or will it need to be dry cleaned?

The answers to these questions will affect long-term cost and durability. Also check to see if the cushions are upholstered on all sides. Some manufacturers will face the backside of a cushion with a thinner muslin cloth.

This helps to save money, but it also means you can never flip your couch cushions.

## **Is the leather bonded?**

If you are looking to purchase a leather sofa, you will need to ask this question. If leather is bonded, it means that only about 20 percent of the fabric is actually leather, and the rest is a mix of plastics.

Brand new, a bonded leather couch will look no different than a true leather couch and will be much cheaper.

The difference will be seen over time, as bonded leather is more likely to split and crack rather than become supple with age.