

get the look

with Colin & Justin



Second-hand finds and retro pieces are all very well but if you use too many, the look can be more junk shop than funky. Get the balance right, though, and you'll create a room with past, present and future style.

Painted country-style wardrobes are all the rage. If it's something for the home that's both beautiful and practical, we say bring it on.

SCRIMP

Hemnes wardrobe in grey £229 from Ikea www.ikea.com

This painted pine wardrobe has a pared down, utilitarian style with simple lines and a 'T' top and is in this year's coolest colour - grey.

With two drawers and a two-door lockable hanging section, this self-assembly unit is a great buy. Width: 110cm Depth: 61cm Height: 198 cm.



SPEND

Kew painted double wardrobe with drawer £397.64 from The Pine Factory, www.wimbledonpine.co.uk

This soft ivory painted double wardrobe with drawer looks like a quality piece thanks to its classic, timeless style.

It features solid knobs and antique finish. Requires a small amount of self-assembly. Width: 100cm Depth: 52cm Height: 190cm.



SPLURGE

New England double wardrobe £725 from John Lewis, www.johnlewis.com

Clean, fresh lines and a solid tulip wood and tulip veneer construction make this a piece you'll enjoy for years. The parchment hand-painted finish is attractive and would work in any home.

Width: 113cm Depth: 65cm Height: 197cm. Code: 80311634.



Chic reflection of style time travel

UPDATE EXISTING PIECES

Updating existing pieces will keep costs down. If it's not broken, don't fix it... just update it. These retro chairs were a wee bit too dark - the simplest solution was to re-upholster them. Just remove the back and seat pads, unpick the existing covers and use as a template to cut new fabric. Using an upholstery stapler, tack the new fabric into place. If you have to cover the back, glue on a stitched panel of fabric then reattach to the frame.

MIX NEW WITH OLD

Get the balance right between past, present and future by mixing items from different periods. This stops you being slavish to one era and helps to create a room that's truly unique. Here, the old chairs have been teamed with a new chrome Eileen Grey-style side table to create a smart space for two. The table costs £99 from Dwell in Princes Square, Glasgow, or get them online at www.dwell.co.uk.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Avoid the dull effect of dark items by floodlighting your room with a great overhead lamp and by using floor and table lamps to highlight different areas. Again, this is a mix of old and new items - the overhead is a Taraxacum light, £180 from Iconic Lights, www.iconiclights.co.uk - while the anglepoise table lamps are from Ikea. The existing retro floor lamp was rewired by a qualified electrician so that it can be used safely for years to come.

DELIGHTFUL DECALS

If it's instant glamour you're after, then look no further than wall transfers. Yup, stickers, decals or whatever you want to call them are big news in interiors. The range out there is vast so you can find a decal for anything and the best news is that when you fancy a change, you simply peel 'em off and start again. Use them to highlight a key area, as we did one over this bed. Click on www.whatisthik.com for a huge range of graphics.

Tricks of the trade



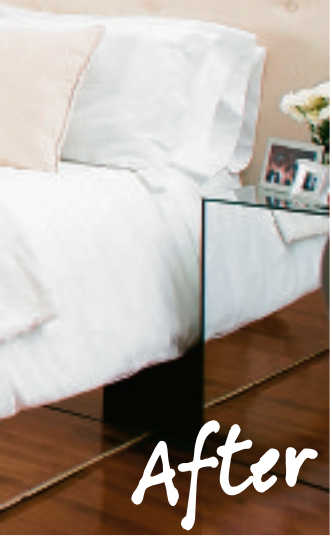
Before



To remove all traces of limescale from taps, wrap a tissue soaked in vinegar around the tap and let it rest for two hours. Rinse with hot water and your tap should be limescale free and gleaming.



ART GALLERY FEEL
Why is it some second-hand stores sell collectibles and some just junk? The answer is merchandising and it's something you can do at home. We created a clean environment with neutral walls and a hardwood floor to proffer an art gallery atmosphere. Walls painted matt white from Crown, www.crownpaint.co.uk, and try McKay Flooring, www.mckay-flooring.co.uk.



After

ALL DONE WITH MIRRORS
To brighten up and create a modern, retro-inspired feel we used mirrors to clad a shop bought divan bed and cube bedside tables. A glazier will be able to cut mirror sections to whatever size you want - we use Forsyth Wilton, www.forsyth-wilton.co.uk - and you'll find ready-made mirror cubes called Sparkle for £119 each from Habitat, www.habitat.co.uk.

Hoover up all the gen on vacuum bag site

If you've not yet gone bagless with your vacuum then you'll like what Glasgow-based Rob Beer does online. Click on www.vacuumcleanerbags.co.uk to reveal a one-stop online shop

for just about every vacuum cleaner replacement bag you'll ever need. You'll also find video tips on how to change bags and filters and advice on all matters suction.

Looking for a bit of homegrown glamour for your house? Look no further than Argyll's best-kept secret, Margaret Boyd Interiors and her fantastic home collection. Lamps, consoles and upholstery items are available in a tasteful palette of dark taupe, French grey, ivory and charcoal and, with many items made in Scotland, you'll be investing in your country as well. www.margaretboydinteriors.co.uk.

If you've noticed your white plastic cooking spoons and spatulas losing their sheen, try this. Simply pop them in a basin filled with a mixture of water and a little lemon juice. Leave overnight and rinse the next day for a bright, white finish.

Keep dirty laundry in check with a range of laundry bags and baskets, from £8 each at www.next.co.uk. This colourful collection will house your



smalls - and not so smalls - tidily out of the way until wash day. Try one for each member of the family. Hoorah - an end to searching high and low for that missing sock.

STYLE BIBLE

what's hot in the shops

Essential Small Spaces by Terence Conran, £12.99, published by Conran Octopus

Daddy of design Conran shows that just because living space might be limited, it doesn't have to be limited in style. Covering the entire home design process from planning to decor and furnishings, the spaces shown are small but the ideas are huge. Smart plans, great storage ideas and a nod to multi-tasking demonstrate how to make small spaces breathe.



If your outdoor bins and rubbish bags are targeted by scavenging cats or foxes, then here's a friendly solution to the problem. Pour a little white vinegar into a mist sprayer and spray your bins and bags when you leave them outside. The vinegar smell will keep pests at bay and won't harm the animals.

