



Linear Designer three-piece bathroom suite, £657, Dewez floor-standing bath-shower mixer tap, £199, Dewez basin mixer, £49, bathrooms.com

BUDGET BUY UP TO £2K

DON'T throw in the towel if your bathroom budget is small. With an array of cost-saving websites, lookalike tiles and a few canny accessories, your bathroom can look as designer-label as any top-notch scheme – without breaking the bank.

● White bathrooms are classic, foolproof and easy to get hold of at the cheaper end of the market. Pair a simple good-quality acrylic tub with a pedestal basin and no-frills WC but treat yourself to beautiful taps and shower mixer to add a touch of luxury.

● Buying a bathroom online can save you a small fortune. By cutting out the middle man, savings can be passed on to you, the customer. 'When buying online, it's important to fully measure up your bathroom and have an understanding of the standard sizes of essentials such as a shower or toilet,' advises Vicky Zarembo of Matalan Direct. 'Do your homework on styles and products to suit your space.' You could also try bathrooms.com or Victoria Plumb.

● Neena Sandhu of bathrooms.com says it's key to make sure you're on top of all the



Essentials L-shape shower bath, £197.99, thermostatic bar shower kit, £132.94, panel radiator, £269.28, mirrored cabinet, £143.09, vanity unit, £221.28, Mercury wall-hung WC, £155.77, matalandirect.com

extras and peripherals – from radiator valves to waste systems and bath panels. 'Often if you're buying from online auctions or market places, you're purchasing just the bath and no screen, plug hole or bath panel,' she says. 'If extra parts are needed, often a plumber would need to fix these and charge a premium.'

● Can any existing parts of your bathroom be restored rather than replaced? Consider re-enamelling a chipped bath, re-grouting tired tiles or freshening up walls with a lick of moisture-resistant bathroom paint.

Splash out

You don't have to pour money down the drain when buying a new bathroom. Here's how to scrub up smart, whatever your budget. By **Lara Sargent**



Madeira cast-iron double-ended bath, £4,500, Victoria basin, £760, Hartlebury basin tap, £380, WC, £617, bath shower mixer, £375, heritagebathrooms.com

MID-RANGE AROUND £5K

IF you've got a heftier budget to play with, you can indulge with a wow-factor vanity unit – either vintage-style on legs or sleek and wall-hung – and still keep within budget with a reasonable shower and toilet.

● Look for neat, ultra-modern back-to-wall toilets and basins where all the pipework is tidily hidden out of sight. Try bathstore.com, where prices start at around £109 for a WC and cistern fittings.

● If you want a free-standing roll-top bath, you can bag a cast-iron beauty at heritagebathrooms.com for around £2,000 or a cheaper (but no less beautiful) acrylic version for £1,260 at Ripples.ltd.uk.

● Be canny with your spending. We all love the renaissance of smooth, luxe marble but cladding your bathroom top-to-toe in it will leave you penniless in seconds. One option is to use expensive materials as accents – say a piece of marble on your windowsill or a strip of glass mosaics around your basin – to create a top-end effect without blowing the budget.

● 'Look for ex-display items from bathroom showrooms rather than buying the cheapest items available. This way, you will still get quality products at highly reduced prices,' says Leigh Price of Real Stone & Tile.



T4 washbasin, £170, unit, £599, basin mixer, £270, mirror cabinet, £680, wall cabinet, £544, WC, £665, bidet, £548, bath, £984, vitra.co.uk



'TILES can generally be purchased more cheaply online as, unlike high street retailers, they don't have the same overheads,' says Phil English, technical advisor at Tile Mountain. 'Our ranges are usually at least 30 per cent cheaper than others. Buy tiles from a company that has a sound knowledge of its products and make sure you can order samples.'

Lime green metro wall tiles, £16 per sq m, tilemountain.co.uk



'A CHROME towel rack, modern light fittings and new drawer handles will create an impact without breaking the bank,' advises Nadia McCowan Hill, resident style expert at wayfair.co.uk. 'Statement accessories are high on impact but low on cost, so mount an ornate mirror over your sink or a new shower curtain for a final flourish.'

Magnum mirror with light by Ultra, £84.99 [was £152], wayfair.co.uk



'PATTERNED tiles are a top trend for bathrooms. Moroccan and encaustic tiles are handcrafted, which means they will be expensive,' says Kevin Taylor-Bottomley of The Baked Tile Company. 'Look for digitally printed patterned tiles that are quick to produce and competitively priced.'
Elle tiles, £39.60 per sq m, bakedtiles.co.uk



'FOR the luxury look of marble or stone at a lower cost, consider waterproof laminate panels for wall surfaces,' says Stuart White of Bushboard. 'Today's designs are very realistic, easy to keep clean and can be installed in just a few hours, which is a big benefit over tiles.'
Nuance panel, £1,079, bushboard.co.uk