

The ENGLISH HOME

Bathroom
style special
INSIDE

Celebrating the essence of English style

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The right window treatment can make or break a scheme. Casement windows, sash windows and skylights each have their own different dimensional considerations to be taken into account; the overall style and function of the room are other elements to evaluate, as well as the degree to which natural light is desired. For bathrooms and rooms designed to be used during the evening or night, privacy may be a factor, too. For cohesion, it is also crucial to take into account other window treatments and soft furnishings within the room.

In each of the following rooms, key considerations for window dressings of various styles are highlighted. Every window can be functionally and desirably enhanced with the right choice of treatment.

BALANCED VIEW (left)

Gathered curtains would not be a practical choice for these small kitchen windows set directly above a counter top. Not only would they look fussy in such a setting, but they would get wet and dirty quickly as well as taking up precious counter space. Roman blinds offer a smart solution, as these can be tied up out of the way and swiftly lowered when privacy is required. The limited depth of the recess is also a practical factor; it is important to discuss this with the curtain maker when measuring up, to ensure the depth of the folds does not obscure too much of the window. In older properties, where windows might be an uneven size, Roman blinds can help to compensate visually.

Kitchen from £25,000, Middleton Bespoke

LIGHT & DARK (above right)

In a bedroom, thick curtains are a necessity for total darkness at night time, however, during the day maximum light is desirable. Where there is insufficient space between the top of the floor-to-ceiling windows and the ceiling, a smart matching Roman blind has been employed to maximise the view during the day. Tie-backs have been used on the side return to softly sweep the curtains aside when not in use, adding a pretty softness. The triple-pleat heading not only lends a smart mood to the room, it is also practical as it allows a thick curtain to concertina into a small area.

Handmade, designed and built oak houses, from £50,000, seen here with limed timber, Border Oak

SECLUDED SANCTUARY (right)

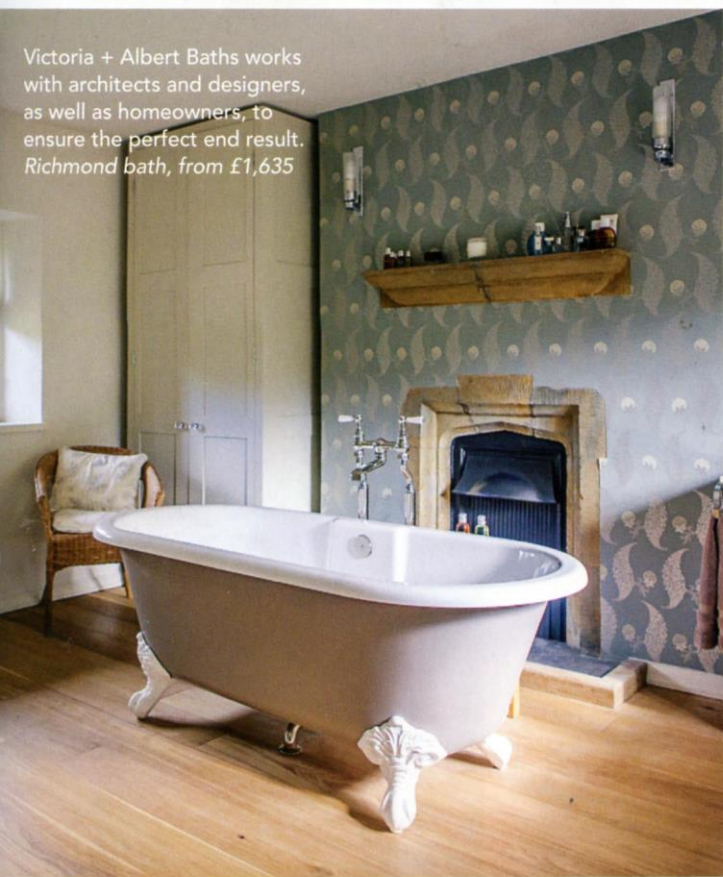
Wooden shutters provide a clever solution to the need for privacy in a bathroom. They may be customised to any size – in this case, shutters only cover the bottom half of the window to let in daylight without compromising privacy. Choose adjustable slats to regulate the desirable amount of light for atmospheric bathing. It is worth noting that the wooden barrier blocks out heat in the summer and keeps warmth in during winter – an advantage in older properties, where shutters may be stylistically more in keeping. ▶

Humber bath with hand-painted exterior, from £3570; bath mixers, £2,448; vanity, basin, and wc also Drummonds





Victoria + Albert Baths works with architects and designers, as well as homeowners, to ensure the perfect end result. Richmond bath, from £1,635



ABOVE LEFT Create a statement with this plunger bath waste by Drummonds.

Plunger overflow and waste unit, from £1,554, Drummonds

ABOVE RIGHT Make the most of the space available with a large walk-in shower. Elite shower enclosure, from £1,414, Crosswater

RIGHT This brass bath adds real boutique hotel glamour.

Brass Bateau bath, from £5,400, Catchpole & Rye



rather select what makes your heart sing. It is your designer's job to interpret that into the design," he adds.

Try to provide a designer with a brief, in order to fully realise the objective. "Tell the designer who the bathroom is for. Is it an en suite, a family bathroom, guest bathroom or cloakroom? Think about how you use the space. For example, do you need two basins? Would you like a large towel-warmer? The more detail provided, the better. Sometimes the architecture or construction of a house will dictate what can be done, but you will be amazed by the huge range of products available and the ingenuity of your designer," says Payne.

Additional things to consider are the budget, timescale and water pressure of the property. The latter is often overlooked and can have a big effect on the performance of the fittings chosen. Designers will often be able to suggest ideas and solutions to clients based on past experience. "We once had a customer with a sloping ceiling," explains Tony O'Donnell, managing director of Catchpole & Rye, "so we specified our concealed Le Thermo shower, which can be tailored to fit the slope, freeing up valuable space elsewhere. When clients have small bathrooms, we always suggest a high-level cistern. Elevating it to a higher position on the wall means that all the sanitaryware is spread across more than one level, reducing clutter. We can also provide offset flush pipes to fit around obstacles such as windows, ▶





as well as our Thunderbox and Throne WC seats, which are designed with concealed storage at the back."

For customers with busy lifestyles, the designers at Catchpole & Rye often recommend a double vanity unit to free-up basin space in the morning, and a shallow, upright tub for those who enjoy a good read in the bath at the end of the day.

INVESTMENT PIECES

When designed correctly, a bathroom can be life-enhancing as well as transformative on a practical level. "Our clients are always amazed at the difference professional planning makes," says Drummond Shaw, founder of Drummonds. "Choosing the right elements and placing them in the best way maximises the look and feel of a bathroom and often allows for large statement pieces, such as a freestanding bath or vanity unit, to be used as central design features."

When it comes to a good investment, choose high-quality fittings with an enduring solidity. "Solid, natural materials such as marble, wood and brass instantly say 'luxury' and create the wow factor," adds Drummond. "Large statement items, such as a freestanding bath or shower, are also part of the trend for evermore luxury in the bathroom. We see this, too, in the increasing popularity of underfloor heating, large heated towel rails and generously sized basins." ■

ABOVE

A freestanding bath is an eye-catching investment piece and a good designer will be able to position it within the room for maximum impact and comfort.

Rimini cast-iron bath on ornate feet, £984, Aston Matthews

LEFT This bespoke vanity unit by Mark Taylor Design is hand-painted in Squid Ink by Paint & Paper Library. Bespoke vanity cabinets from £2,000 and complete bathrooms from £25,000, Mark Taylor Design





ABOVE Three-hole basin set with low-profile spout and crosshead handles in chrome, £456.48, Perrin & Rowe



ABOVE Veneto mirrored glass rectangular mirror, £484, Alexander & Pearl

BELOW Invincible exposed dual-control thermostatic shower mixer, £835.20, Matki

Modern country

Combining country-house style with modern touches need not be as complex as it might first appear. The room shown (opposite and above left), created by interior designer Emma Sims Hilditch, cleverly brings together traditional elements such as polished chrome period fittings and classic turned leg furniture, with the clean lines of wide-bevelled mirrors and elegant wall lights. Considered use of colour with a harmonious palette incorporates the natural hues of the tile-lined walk-in shower, alongside the calm tones of classic floral-design wallpaper. A white base tone draws together key elements, whilst providing accent touches such as porcelain lever handles, and an assortment of pillar candles in glass lanterns shows attention to the smallest details. ▶



ABOVE Norfolk bathroom rectangular wall light, £297.60; Tapered square pale cream card lampshade, £32.40, both from Vaughan Designs



ABOVE Savoy traditional radiator with crosshead valves, £209.94, Victorian Plumbing

LEFT The single Windermere china vanity, £3,420, Drummonds



ABOVE Travertino Medici ceramic wall tile (45 x 120cm); Venezia Topo ceramic wall tile (45 x 120cm), both £70.96 a square metre, Porcelanosa

RIGHT Bellflower old blue wallpaper, £62 a roll, Colefax and Fowler

