HOMES &GARDENS

DELIGHTFULLY DECORATED

NEW WAYS WITH WALL PANELLING

REINVENTING THE TOILE MOTIF

PACK YOUR KITCHEN WITH PATTERN

DISCOVER THE BEST

STYLISH DESKS

BATHROOM HARDWARE

SALVAGE YARDS

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JULY 2023

DECIDING ON THE IDEAL BATHROOM HARDWARE

HOW TO PICK THE BEST STYLE AND FINISH

WHERE TO BEGIN Bathroom hardware plays an important practical role, but many designers see it as a key style element that's used in much the same way as jewellery finishes an outfit. 'A bathroom should always contain a harmonious array of materials, metals, colours, textures and shapes,' says Alberto Lutzu, designer, West One Bathrooms. He recommends selecting the style and finish of the taps, shower fittings and accessories at the same time as you're putting together the sanitaryware, furniture and tile selections.

HOW TO CHOOSE Taps and showers (also known as brassware) are available in many different styles, both traditional and contemporary. The basin tap choice is usually dictated by the water pressure in your home (some taps are suitable for low pressure systems only) and the number of pre-drilled holes in the basin – or by none at all, in which case wall-mounted, vanity-top mounted or even floor-mounted solutions come into the picture. Also consider the height and spout length of the tap to ensure that it is in proportion to the basin size. The bath tap selection involves similar considerations, and there may be extra holes for a hand shower and a valve to switch between tap and shower. For showers, it's a choice between an exposed system with visible pipes to give a more traditional look, which is also easier to retro fit, or a concealed system with pipework hidden, giving a more minimalist and contemporary finish. 'Whenever possible, use products from the same manufacturer for a cohesive look,' suggests interior designer Amy Pearson. 'Manufacturers often produce coordinating accessories, such as robe hooks, toilet roll holders, towel bars and cabinet handles to match their plumbing (tap) collections.'

FINISHES 'Bathroom hardware finishes are a huge trend, with a move away from "standard" chrome to create a more unique and tailored look,' says Yousef Mansuri, director of design, C.P. Hart. While many manufacturers offer their products in a range of finishes, it is not always easy to match across a suite of products, especially if they come from different suppliers. Interior designer Irene Gunter, founder of Gunter & Co, looks for matching finishes or has pieces re-plated to achieve the best result. 'If you're on a budget, matt black is a great option as there are many handles, mirror frames, wall lights and matching hardware items available,' she says.

CONTRAST 'As an alternative, mixing and matching finishes has become increasingly popular,' says Yousef. 'For example, mixing complementary finishes, such as brass and black, can look great and also create an extra layer of depth in a design.'

DURABILITY Some finishes are tougher than others, produced by different processes. 'PVD (physical vapour deposition) is the next level of creating a more environmentally friendly and resistant finish,' explains Sarah Evans, head of product marketing, Hansgrohe UK. 'The process embeds an added layer of metal onto the surface to ensure a lasting finish, so products maintain their colour vibrancy for a longer period of time.' Clean carefully using a soft, moistened cloth (avoid microfibre) and use a mild citric-acid based cleaner to remove limescale. ☉

SOURCEBOOK: FROM TAPS AND SHOWERS TO HOOKS AND SOAP DISHES

AXOR
The sleek Axor One Select 140 basin mixer, from £555, comes in a choice of 17 finishes, from Matt Black to Polished Brass and Redgold. axor-design.com/uk

BALINEUM
Among this company's selection of beautiful bathroom fittings and accessories is the Classic Single robe hook, from £170.16, in 14 different finishes. balineum.co.uk

DRUMMONDS
The luxurious offerings include the Chessleton soap dish holder, from £324, in Antique Bronze, Polished Nickel and seven other options. drummonds-uk.com

MAJESTIC
It can be tricky to match the shower screen frame to other hardware, but Majestic aims to provide the solution with bespoke designs in 19 finishes. majesticshowers.com