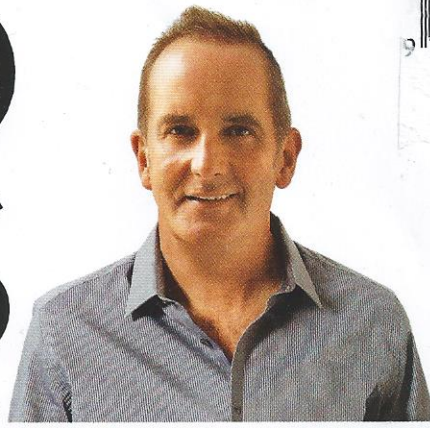


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CLEVER STORAGE

smart spaces

Organisation is key to a serene and uncluttered bathroom, whether it's a family zone, cloakroom or en suite Words Rachel Ogden



S

tylish storage is an essential aspect of bathroom design. Whether you want everything hidden away or a balance of open and closed units, the choice of solutions is vast. Cabinets in eye-catching shades, textured finishes, stone and wood-effect surfaces and architectural shapes are all on hand to turn your storage into an additional focal point. There are also a variety of functional solutions that ease into a design more discreetly, such as seats with built-in storage, shelving behind mirrors and recessed cupboards that sit flush with walls. All of which make it easy to create a sleek space, whether it's a family bathroom or a compact en suite. →

↑ WALL TO WALL

MyPlan Slimline 600 base cabinets in gloss MDF in white (H82xW60xD30.5cm), £159 each; MyPlan Slimline 600 basin unit in gloss MDF in white (H82xW60xD30.5cm), £219; MyPlan Slimline 600 basin in polymarble (H12xW60xD30.5cm), £109; Lagoon freestanding bath in solid Touchstone (H54xW169xD80cm), £1,799; Openwater mono floorstanding bath filler in chrome (H76.6xW9xD22.5cm), £629; MyPlan Slimline 300 cabinets in gloss MDF in white (H82xW30xD30.5cm), £109 each; My Plan WC unit 600 in gloss MDF in white (H82xW60xD30.5cm), £219, all Bathstore (0330 024 0845; bathstore.com)

FAMILY SPACES

Catering for multiple members of a household can lead to the main bathroom being crowded, with everything from toiletries to bath toys to consider. When planning your storage, adapt it to your family's daily routine. Tall units with several shelves are ideal as they make use of the height of the room without impacting greatly on the overall design. Mounting a pair of units side by side can create equal storage for a couple, or provide everyone with their own shelves. Slimline mirrored cabinets can be used to keep items away from curious little fingers while taking up minimal wall space and reflecting daylight.

Combine wall-hung storage with a vanity unit that includes drawers, so you have easy access to essentials while you're at the basin. Surfaces around the sink can often become cluttered, so reserve your top drawer for things you use daily, but don't need to have on show. Modular designs come in a range of sizes or you could invest in fully fitted furniture that can hide larger elements, such as a laundry bin.

'As for colours, there is a definite fashion influence, with strong hues, such as teal and aubergine proving popular', says Sam Ball, marketing manager at Utopia (01902 406 402; utopiagroup.com). 'White and other light shades will always be desirable, particularly mixed with wood finishes.'



DUAL ASPECT

Units from the Solitaire 7020 range in foil-wrapped MDF and melamine with ABS edges in metallic steel grey: 7020-HS 45-03-L tall cabinets (H168xW45xD33cm), £835.65 each; MMWT 59-1710-w double washbasin in mineral marble in white (H11.7xW171xD51cm), £624.36; 7020-WTUSL 06 two-drawer vanity units with LED lighting (H48xW170xD50.5cm), £1,377.33 each, Pelipal at In-House Inspired Room Design (01661 842 304; inhouseuk.net)



↑ CONCEALED SHELVING

Bespoke mirror-fronted shelving unit in oiled European oak (H142xW300xD20cm), £3,240; Vero basin in porcelain in white alpin by Duravit (H16xW60xD47cm), £307; Dornbracht MEM three-hole basin mixer in polished chrome (main spout H27.6xW6xD16.5cm), £557.91; stone vanity top in quartz in white by UK Stone (H2xW173xD55cm), £480; bespoke vanity drawer unit in high-gloss lacquer (H85xW180xD55cm), £2,640, all supplied and designed by TG Studio (020 7636 3838; tg-studio.co.uk). For a similar bath, try Coniston freestanding bath in gloss white (H52.5xW179xD87cm), £3,900, CP Hart (0845 600 1950; cphart.co.uk)

➡ MOBILE MODULE

Units from the Idea Stella collection in gloss lacquer in white: wheeled trolley unit (incl wheels H42xW78xD40cm); tall column unit (H163xW34xD27cm); two-drawer washbasin cabinets (H80xW50xD39cm); worktop in Carrara marble (W155xD39cm); ceramic basins in white (H13xW59xD41.5cm); mirrors with LED lamps (H80xW60xD5cm), as shown £2,900, Welhome (020 7610 9108; welhome.co.uk). For a similar tap, try Provost Modern basin mixer tap in chrome (H17xW5.5xD14.5cm), £39, Bathrooms.com (0845 833 4441; bathrooms.com)





DIVIDE AND CONQUER

1600mm Geo Integra twin washbasin unit in solid surfacing in white (H10xW160xD50cm), £1,295; Geo Store handleless drawers in gloss MDF in white and aubergine (H19.6xW80xD45cm), £295 each; deluxe modular mirror panel (H50xW160xD10.5cm), £599, Utopia (01902 406 402; utopiagroup.com). Twin Entrance panel in 1cm safety glass with brace bars in chrome (H210xW95xD100cm), £720, Matki (01454 322 888; matki.com)

OPEN-PLAN BEDROOM

Inspired by hotels and spas, combining your sleeping area with a bathroom has become increasingly popular, partly because bringing the two rooms together creates the impression of a larger area for both sleeping and bathing. Given all that space, it might seem like an easy room to design but there's a temptation to go overboard with storage. Think about what you actually need to hide away and keep it simple – it may be that a large vanity unit, sideboard or a tall cabinet can swallow up all your bathroom essentials.

Furniture can be a great way to define and link the zones of an open-plan room, so focus on what type you include and select finishes that will look good in both areas. Mixed materials, such as timber and chrome, help to create a spa-like feel, while glossy units can be used to continue an accent colour from a bedroom into the bathing area.

Closed storage is rarely used in hotels, so if you're opting for open shelving to recreate this style, think carefully about what will be displayed. Neatly stacked towels and candles look great on show while practical products and toys are best kept behind closed doors. Finish with softly glowing LED lighting incorporated within furniture to give the room a relaxing spa ambience. →



↑ SCANDI TONES

Karol Vasca bath in travertine with oak back rest (H51xW180xD70cm), £14,522; Karol Urban Chic furniture in waterproof lacquered wood in white gloss (H61xW300xD51cm); Karol Urban Chic wall-hung cabinets in ash (H58xW45xD16cm); Karol Urban Chic shelf in waterproof lacquered wood in white gloss (H14xW180xD28cm), splashback and worktop in travertine, range starts from £6,000. Schneider Splashline mirror cabinet in chrome and glass (H69xW100xD12cm), £1,096.80; Gessi iSpa bath mixer in chrome (H83.2xW14xD34cm), £2,331, all at CP Hart (0845 600 1950; cphart.co.uk)

← STATEMENT WALL

Napoli bath in Quarrycast limestone and resin composite in white (H50.3xW190.9xD85.5cm), £2,825, Victoria + Albert Baths (020 7351 4378; vandabaths.com). For similar bath taps, try IMO single-lever bath mixer in polished chrome (H17xW3.5xD22cm), £1,459, Dornbracht (02476 717 129; dornbracht.com)

THE EN SUITE

If you're creating an en suite from scratch, it's likely that you'll be sacrificing some space from the master bedroom or repurposing an adjoining smaller room. Both will result in an en suite that's compact and may be awkwardly shaped, and yet this space has to fulfil many of the roles of a main bathroom.

Smart storage is a necessity, but it's important to choose carefully. Fitted furniture may provide plenty of space, but in a smaller bathroom, modular units are usually a better choice. Not only can they easily be added to over time and enable the layout of the bathroom to be fully customised, but modular wall-hung furniture is also visually lighter, giving a sleeker design and a feeling of more space. Plan your layout in advance, though, as it can be difficult to make radical changes once sanitaryware and other fittings are in place.

If you need extra storage in a tight space, compact vanity units are a good, versatile option, as is open shelving, if you can be selective about what will be on display. 'Alternatively, using a run of slim-depth fitted furniture paired with a countertop basin can give a small en suite a streamlined look and be incredibly space-efficient,' explains Helen Shaw, marketing manager at Roper Rhodes (01225 303 900; roperrhodes.co.uk).

LUXURY TOUCHES

Bespoke vanity unit and basins in brass, lacquer and polished Arabescato Corchia marble (H75xW104.6xD54.5cm) by City Interiors; Oort freestanding bath in Stonecore by West One Bathrooms (H62xW167xD84cm); bespoke mirrors (H90xW240xD15cm) by City Interiors; Calacatta marble flooring and Acquamarina and Verdi Alpi wall tiles by Via Arkadia; bespoke marble wall feature by Ann Sacks. Bathroom space measures approx 6.5x2.7m; a similar space would cost around £50,000. Designed and supplied by Roselind Wilson Design (020 3371 1779; roselindwilsondesign.com)



MIRROR IMAGE

Units from the Bello Lava collection in gloss lacquered finish in grey: one-door tall units (H126xW30xD24.6cm), from £246 each; two-drawer vanity units (H58.5xW90xD44.6cm), from £286 each; round washbowls in ceramic in white (H15xDiameter41cm), from £160 each; 900mm standard mirrors (H71.6xW90xD3cm), from £139 each, with Asti LED overhead lights, from £50 each, Moods Bathrooms (0800 877 8899; bathroomstolove.co.uk)



↑ OPTICAL ILLUSION

Wall-hung WC in ceramic (H38.5xW38xD48cm), £495; one-door tall unit in MDF in white (H176xW35xD32cm), £336; open shelf in MDF in white (H32xW35xD30cm), £89; mirror with LED light (H60xW65xD2.6cm), £245; washbasin in ceramic (H13xW57xD34cm) with two-drawer unit in MDF in white (H66.5xW63xD49cm), £645, from the Eqio range by Burgbad at Ripples (0800 107 0700; ripples.ltd.uk).



← BRIGHT WHITE

Godmorgon/Odensvik washstand in melamine foil-wrapped fibreboard with stainless-steel legs and ceramic basin in white (H64xW63xD49cm), £190; Molger mirror with stained solid poplar frame (H80xW60xD14cm), £29; Ledsjö LED wall lamps in stainless steel (H60xW6xD11cm), £42 each; Molger step stool in stained solid poplar (H34xW41xD44cm), £15; Molger trolley (H76xW47xD33cm), £40; Molger wall shelf (H54xW68xD18cm), £29; Molger open storage (H182xW68xD18cm), £45, Ikea (020 3645 0000; ikea.co.uk)

↳ GORGEOUSLY GEOMETRIC

L-Cube semi-tall cabinet in high gloss in jade (H132xW40xD24.3cm), around £828; L-Cube mirror in matt-powdered finish in white with aluminium profile and lighting (H65xW65xD6.7cm), around £636; P3 Comforts washbasin with tap platform and pedestal in ceramic in white (H70xW65xD50cm), around £298, Duravit (0845 500 7787; duravit.co.uk)



MODERN CLASSIC

Caversham base units in laminate wood in graphite (H81xW32xD26.5cm), £300 each; Caversham drawer units in laminate wood in graphite (H81xW32xD26.5cm), £360 each; Caversham wall cabinets in laminate wood in oyster (H66xW32xD20cm), £195 each; Caversham mirror wall cabinet in laminate wood in oyster (H66xW64xD20cm), £370, Heritage Bathrooms (0330 026 8501; heritagebathrooms.com)

COMPACT CLOAKROOMS

The smaller the space, the greater the need for clever storage solutions. Fortunately, many manufacturers offer reduced-depth furniture and sized-down sanitaryware that's specifically designed for cloakrooms. Opting for open-box shelves and wall-hung units will make the space seem larger by freeing up the floor area both physically and visually. Be aware that in a cloakroom, other items can easily eat into the storage space you've created. For example, under-mounted basins and plumbing can take up valuable room in the unit below, so go for a small surface-mounted bowl with a mini tap to match.

Mirrored and reflective finishes need frequent cleaning in a family bathroom, but are a good choice for an infrequently used cloakroom where they will stay spotless for longer while giving the impression of space. White is the default colour for a small scheme, but subtle grey or pastel tones can be just as useful for brightening up a compact room. Pale wood finishes, too, will help to bring a sense of warmth and texture that contrasts beautifully with white sanitaryware. **GD**

