

How to DESIGN YOUR KIDS' BEDROOM

From the newborn days through to secondary school and beyond, to make your child's room work, it's best to think multi-functional. To avoid redecorating as much as you need to update their wardrobes, follow a few key design tips and tricks to see them through the years >

Words: Yvette Filer



Nursery



"Although it is tempting to opt for a bold flooring your little one loves when young, choosing a more understated design will ensure it lasts for years to come," says Jemma Dayman, carpets and rugs buyer at Carpetright. Blue Stargazer patterned carpet from the Nursery collection, £25.99 per sq m, Carpetright.



Focusing on a theme can help you design the first space for your baby – like this stylish safari-inspired nursery with a neutral palette by Ventura Interior Design. A sofa is an ideal spot for feeding and soothing.



Photography: Brett Charles

While natural light is great in most rooms, having blackout blinds and curtains allows you to transform a nursery into a dark and cosy zone for nap times, such as in this project by Emma Green Design.



Design a nursery like a pro

You'll likely spend a lot of time in the room playing, changing and nursing your baby, so it's important to create a comfortable space that works for you, not only your little one.

"Lighting is crucial," says Steph Briggs, interior designer and co-founder at La Di Da Interiors. "Be sure to incorporate low-level illumination for night time changes and cuddles."

Start neutral and opt for adaptable décor, such as rugs, pictures and curtains that you can easily update over time as your baby grows and their personality develops.

Avoid clutter in the early days of your little one's life by including plenty of functional storage space so you don't trip up on anything while holding your baby. >

Above A cot and a changing unit are essentials for a nursery. But you should also ensure you have plenty of moveable storage for clothing and nappy changing so you can transport these throughout the day – saving you plenty of trips up and down the stairs. The Harlequin furniture range starts from £590 at Cam Cam Copenhagen.

Toddlers



Left Accessories can make a world of difference in bringing your toddler's room to life and making it an engaging space to be in. The cushions, artwork, accessories, teepee all shown are available at Scandibørn and start from £18.95.



This white toy sorter storage unit can help encourage tidy habits in toddlers. It comes with different-coloured boxes within easy reach so they can sort their toys by type and keep the space clutter free. Priced £99 from JoJo Maman Bébé.



Not only do shutters hold on to less dust than curtains, they also don't have any strangulation hazards of cords on blinds either – an ideal option for a child's bedroom. White solid shutters with polka dots, from £299 per sq m, Shutterly Fabulous.

Allow your toddler's room to be a space for both sleep and play. The Lottie mid sleeper cabin bed with straight ladder in classic white, £329, is shown here with the playful Arye, £49, both Nöa & Nani.



How to get a toddler's room right

Now's the time to get adventurous. "Think about designating an area of the bedroom for expressing creativity with chalk – chalkboard paint, for example, lets the little ones create a unique accent wall," suggests Helen Shaw, UK director at Benjamin Moore.

If you're moving your toddler to a different room because a new sibling is on the way, get them involved in picking out colours for the wall or their new bed for the space – this will make

the transition much easier and be a positive experience for you both.

Creating a reading nook in a teepee-style tent or corner of the room can be a great place for children to start exploring their imagination.

As your child is now on the move, safety is paramount. Ensure furniture is fixed to the walls with brackets, and keep anything little ones could climb up away from unlocked windows. >

Primary schoolers



When painting your child's bedroom, ensure you use a low-VOC paint low to avoid unnecessary exposure to harsh chemicals. Shown is Benjamin Moore's Deep Rose 2004-10 paint, from \$24.50 for 0.94 litres.



"As adults, we would naturally fit shelving at our own height – but installing it so your child can easily reach items inside is much more effective," says Peter Erlandsson, co-owner at String Furniture. The String system in white with white floor panels is priced from \$72.

As your child gets older, tailor a room around their interests if you can – then they are more likely to enjoy spending time in the space. Hide and Seek fabric, \$22.80 per sq m, and Peek A Boo Jungle wallpaper, \$140 per roll, both Prestigious Textiles.



Design a space for study and play

"Invest in a furniture set that will last until the teenage years," suggests Grace Tindall, founder of Scandibørn. "Look for conversions from junior beds to adult singles and changing tables that can be a regular chest of drawers to avoid the need for frequent replacing."

Updating soft furnishings such as bedding and curtains is a great way to change up the space without completely redecorating.

"Bunk beds are great space-savers for siblings sharing a room as they maximise vertical room," says Nicole Gray, style consultant at Furniture Village. "They also help encourage communication and connection between children."

As they start school, you might want to introduce a desk or table area into the room. Keep the design light and fun to encourage creativity.



Right Fun and practical, these animal-themed blackout blinds do not feature any potentially hazardous hanging cords. Zoo Time black out blinds, from \$57, Keylite Blinds.

Tweens

Ideas for those in-between years

"As tweens develop, their styles and identities take shape too, meaning their bedroom could need several restyles over the next few years," says Debbie Leigh, design manager at Iliv. "Keep it simple by painting the walls a neutral tone and experiment using a selection of colourful wall art."

Studying is important at this age, so a desk is key, but make sure it doesn't dominate the space – the bedroom needs to be relaxing too.

"From a practical and aesthetic perspective, fitted wardrobes offer the most effective and efficient way to make use of the space within your bedroom," says Rachal Hutcheson, national retail manager at Sharps.

When designing a tween's bedroom, bear in mind they will want to use the space to socialise with friends or accommodate sleepovers – consider a pull-out sofa bed to cover all bases.

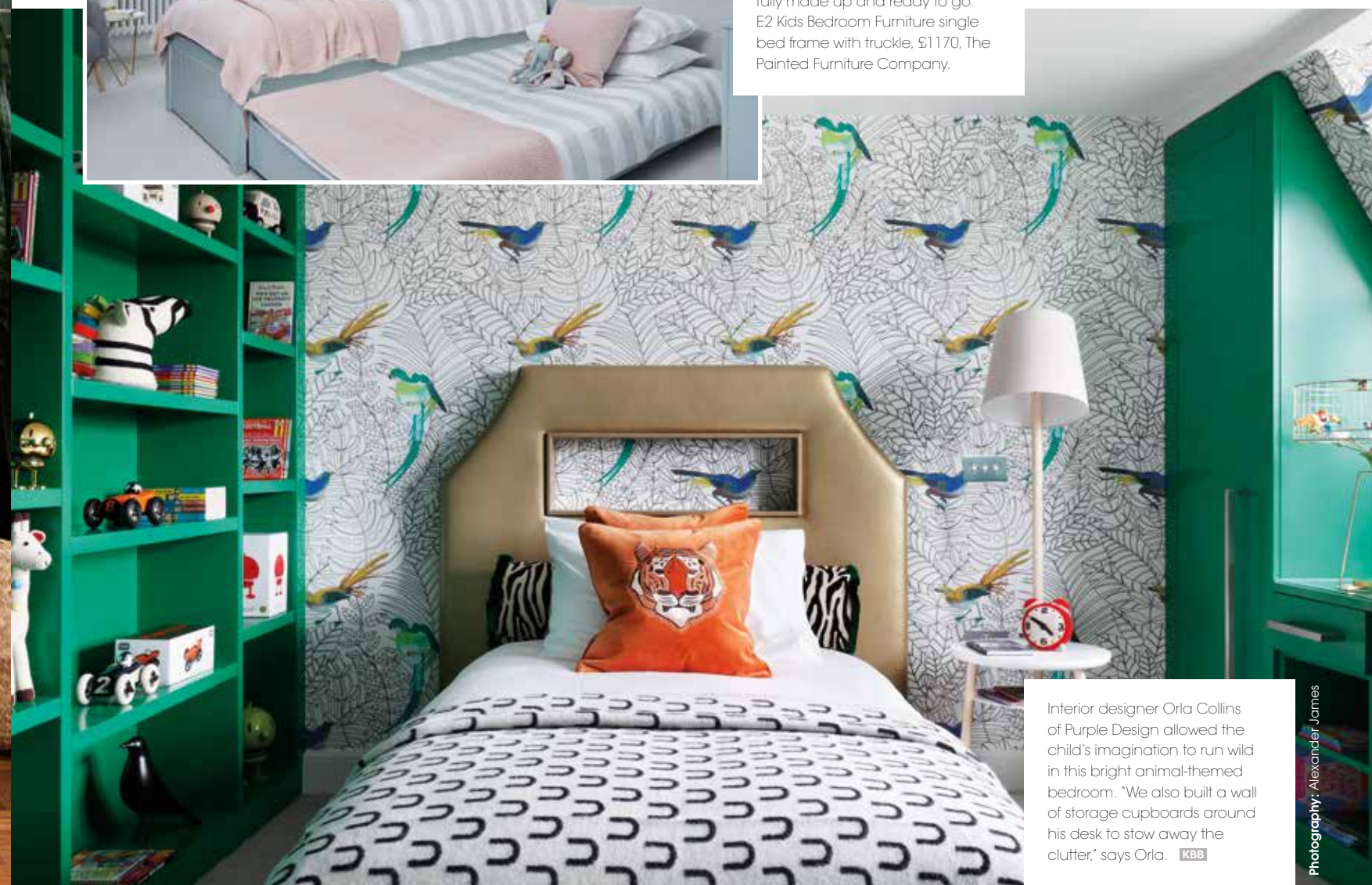
A study zone simply needs a desk and chair, plus it should be positioned in a place filled with plenty of natural light if possible. This vintage-style design rests against a funky backdrop. Muscat Lovat wallpaper, £81 per 10m roll, Missprint.

Right In this project by Caitlin Miller Interiors, the walls are painted in Mylands' Boathouse Blue and paired with highly durable Unnatural Flooring carpet as well as an accent rug from Zara Home. The daybed is from Ikea, with bespoke cushions made with Pierre Frey fabric.

Photography: Tom St Aubyn



Left An ideal solution for sleepovers, this single bed frame has a pull-out truckle which can be tucked away fully made up and ready to go. E2 Kids Bedroom Furniture single bed frame with truckle, £1170, The Painted Furniture Company.



Interior designer Orla Collins of Purple Design allowed the child's imagination to run wild in this bright animal-themed bedroom. "We also built a wall of storage cupboards around his desk to stow away the clutter," says Orla. **KBB**

Photography: Alexander James