

# HOMESTYLE

## *Family Style*

'Design Mom' Gabrielle Stanley Blair  
reveals her secrets to kid-friendly  
kitchens and baths



**3 Tips to Organize a Kitchen   Unleash the Animal Print   The No-Remodel Remodel**

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Meet the Designer

# Avoid the Parent Clutter Trap

**‘Design Mom’ Gabrielle Stanley Blair knows that living with kids can be chaotic and messy. Here’s how to get your kitchen and bathroom in tip-top kid shape**

By **LISA IANNUCCI**  
CTW Features

Having kids and wanting a high style, clean home doesn't always go together. After all, moms always seem to be too busy picking up after their offspring, trying to organize their many toys and keeping crayon markings and little fingerprints off the walls to worry about the latest in plush pillows and wallpaper patterns.

However, in her new book, “Design Mom, How to Live with Kids: A Room-by-Room Guide” (Artisan, 2015) author and designer Gabrielle Stanley Blair proves that streamlining, organizing and decorating your home can be done while keeping the kids in mind, and the results can be both functional and beautiful.

No matter what room you are looking to change, Blair says that the first step should be to assess the situation. “When you’re not entertaining the kids, study the kitchen or bathroom and take a really good look at what you might want to change,” Blair says. “Then read books and find beautiful pictures that inspire you.”

Don’t expect that your home’s design process will be over in a week though. “The trial and error process can take years,” she says. “You’ll bring in stools and know they aren’t quite right, so you repaint or reupholster them, or just bring them back to the store. You make a mistake, but it’s OK to change it and try again.”

Designing isn’t a job that needs to be done solo either. If the kids are old enough, it’s a good idea to let them help with the design process. When Blair was a five-year-

old girl, her mother let her pick out her bedroom wallpaper. “She presented me with two options that she liked, but as a five-year-old I felt like I had ownership of that room,” she explains.

In the kitchen, Blair says that the focal point should be the table. It’s where the family gathers, meals are shared and homework is done, so a surface that looks better with age and can survive the dings, gouges and stains is perfect for families. But it’s OK to step away from traditional materials and appliances. For example, Blair writes that her kitchen table is made of fence posts and covered with a sheet of metal, and she knows parents without microwaves and big refrigerators.

“You can step out of the box with the cabinets, too – remove the front doors and put in your prettiest dishes, ceramics or the wedding china you always wanted to display,” she says. “Line the back with wallpaper or wrapping paper for a pop of color,” Blair says. “It creates a pretty visual and it’s

totally free.”

In addition, chairs and dishes

should be tough and able to grow with your family. She also suggests

**"When you're not entertaining the kids, study the kitchen or bathroom and take a really good look at what you might want to change."**

- Gabrielle Stanley Blair,  
'Design Mom'



Image courtesy Kristen Loken

investing in some quality items that will stand up to frequent use, including sturdy silverware. “You don’t want an ice cream scoop that’s going to bend,” she says. “Also, make your kitchen feel fresh by putting things out that you use all the time.”

Don’t, however, invest in trends. “Trends are good for dishtowels, tablecloths or one big food bowl,” she says. “If, after six months, you get sick of it, you know that wasn’t a big investment.”

Redesigning a room also doesn’t have to pummel your budget either. “For example, the best thing is that you can refresh the bathroom by adding new towels, bathmat and hooks for \$30,” Blair says. “As the kids age, you can do this over and over, and even if you just change the shower curtain the bathroom is going to look new.”

Most importantly, any design that you do should work for the



Image courtesy Meta Coleman

**Don't over-invest in trends, especially when it comes to kid style. Go modern with towels, bedding, curtains and other accessories that are easy to change as kids outgrow a room's aesthetic.**

family. For example, Blair says that you can cut morning gridlock by assigning towel colors and hooks, moving the grooming area to the bedrooms and teaching kids about a daily two-minute tidy.

For more information on Gabrielle Stanley Blair and her book “Design Mom: How to Live with Kids: A Room-by-Room Guide” visit [designmom.com](http://designmom.com). © CTW Features



Image courtesy Kristen Loken

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# 3 Steps to an Organized Kitchen

**By Yuhee Woo**  
CTW Features

The kitchen is the hub of the home, the place where family and friends congregate more than anywhere else. But because of the heavy traffic in the kitchen, it easily gets cluttered and becomes disorganized.

Think about how we often enter the kitchen: from the garage, at the end of the day. So, it's easy to dump briefcases and grocery bags and mail

on the island or counter ... or floor. The kitchen as point-of-entry is one of the biggest contributors to disorganization, according to professional organizer Regina Leeds, author of "Rightsize ... Right Now!: The 8-Week Plan to Organize, Declutter, and Make Any Move Stress-Free" (Da Capo, 2015)

An organized kitchen offers many benefits, efficiency being one of the biggest-impact ones, Leeds says. Think



having your cooking tools in the appropriate accessible spot, or just having your ingredients stored in the right spot. How many times have you

not been able to find an herb and then re-bought it? More importantly, though, kitchen organization will improve kitchen

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safety, says Molly McCabe, a kitchen designer and owner of A Kitchen That Works in Bainbridge Island, Washington. A disorganized kitchen can lead to an unsafe kitchen. For example, if the countertop near the oven is cluttered and has no space that you need to walk several steps to put down hot items, which is not safe. Follow these three simple steps to make your kitchen organized, efficient and safe:

1. PINPOINT HIGH-USE AREAS

The first step to organized kitchen is to get to do a personal assessment. What kind of person are you, and how do you use your kitchen? Are you a baker? Do you use microwave much more than stove? Do you need a huge pantry to feed large family? Kitchen organization starts from examining your kitchen style and tweaking the layout and arrangement based on that. For example, in a coffee lover's house, a coffee machine is a daily-use item that is reasonable to



If children are helping out with kitchen chores, it is easier for them to put away the dishes if they are kept on a lower shelf that they do not have to stretch to reach.

have accessible on the countertop. But if you don't drink coffee, or use your toaster daily, there's no need to have those appliances out, Leeds says.

2. DISCARD NO-USE ITEMS

The next step is to say goodbye to all the items you don't use, whether

they're old, broken or you just don't have a use for them. Because people don't want to be wasteful, they keep broken items with a promise that one day they'll fix it, Leeds says. In reality, though broken and old items end their life in the corner of kitchen drawer wasting pre-

cious space, which is how homeowners come to find two nonworking food processors in their drawer. The key is to think like space as important as time and money. Don't let the old and broken items take up prime real estate in your kitchen storage. To decide what to discard, check these advices. If you use them, they're worth keeping and if you have multiples, keep only the one that works best, says Leeds. For items still in good condition that you simply do not need anymore, Leeds suggests donating to your favorite charity, trying to give away or sell online.

3. RE-ARRANGE FOR A MORE EFFICIENT KITCHEN

Before diving into rearranging the kitchen, also get rid of the items that do not belong in a kitchen: mail, school papers and bills are among the items that should be appropriately filed away in a home office – not the

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**Seldom-used dishes and appliances should be stored in cupboards that are out of the way – not prime storage real estate**

kitchen.

A simple way to do kitchen reorganization is by categorization, according to Leeds. She suggests thinking of your kitchens in terms of zones such as prep, cooking/baking and storage. Keep related items close to save time and steps. For example, mixing bowls and measuring spoons for your homemade cake should be placed together in baking zone, not mingling with unrelated utensils in a drawer.

Another rule is to sort items according to how often you use them. If you use a turkey roaster only once on Thanksgiving Day, keep it in the garage or in the dead space above the refrigerator, not in main kitchen storage space.

In addition, think more about ergonomic arrangement. For example, McCabe suggests putting dishes in lower drawers, not the upper cupboards, so that they're more easily accessible for children who maybe be helping out in the kitchen as part of their chores. This also helps them get involved in the organization process.

Here are some more go-to storage solutions for clutter-prone items:

**DISHES**

Keep holiday china in storage, not

in the kitchen cupboards. The corner shelf is good for storing everyday dishes, Leeds suggests.

**TUPPERWARE**

The key is to match lids and bottoms periodically, Leeds says. Keep the lids and bottoms as close as possible, the best is to keep them together if you have the space, but if not, stack the bottoms and put the lids on top of that.

**SPICES**

Do not buy your herbs and spices in bulk size unless you plan to use it within six months. Use a spice rack in the drawer or hang under the cabinet so it's accessible when you prep. Keep spices away from the range, however, because heat can reduce their efficacy.

**POTS AND PANS**

The best is to keep lids on the pots and pans. If you don't have enough space, try hanging them or keeping lids corralled using lid organizer or lid holder, suggests Leeds.

**COOKBOOKS/RECIPES**

Keep only your favorite, most-used cookbooks on the countertop, Leeds says. Or you can take advantage of digital device such as tablet PC or smartphone by scanning loose recipes.

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# Put a Flower On It

**Layered floral patterns, often referred to as chintz, are back in vogue. Here's how to make it bloom in your home**



**By MARLA R. MILLER**

CTW Features

Well-done chintz can add a cozy or classy quality to a room – it's a style that says, "sit and have a cup of tea, don't take things so seriously."

But designers agree a little can go a long way when it comes to bringing in bright blooms and bold floral prints.

In the traditional sense, chintz typically refers to a type of shiny, cotton floral fabric used in upholstery, drapery and even applied on walls.

The term originated from glazed calico fabrics specifically imported from India, featuring flowers and other patterns typically on a light, plain background.

As a design style, chintz typically refers to the layering upon layering of floral patterns, says Arianne Bellizaire, an interior designer and blogger from Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Envision your grandma's living room, a Victorian bed-and-breakfast or French country style, overdone with floral patterns on furniture, curtains, canopies, bed linens

and walls.

"Chintz can come off as tacky to some, but for those who do it really well, their clients love that look. They appreciate the boldness of it," she says.

Bellizaire, a 2015 High Point Market Authority Style Spotter, says florals, and some chintz, were back in a big way at the Spring Market. Designers are using flower designs in new fabric introductions, upholstery and furniture.

Modern chintz is more tactful, sophisticated and carefully placed to blend with a room's overall

décor.

"It's a very traditional style that has never really gone away, but there's a resurgence of people who are appreciating it," she says. "It may not be chintz, but it will have reference to that bold, colorful floral look that is very much a part of the chintz look."

Done right, chintz is a way to have some fun and create a feeling of airy lightness, adding color, texture and classic comfort to a room.

"If you want to incorporate the chintz design element into your





space, choose a print in a style and color that is timeless to you,” Bellizaire says. “Mix it with solid and stripe prints and keep walls and floor choices neutral so that the floral print becomes the star.”

Trends in interior design follow fashion, and florals started creeping into home décor after showing up on runways the last few years, says Faith Phillips, design and trends expert for La-Z-Boy.

Chintz pops up most often in Shabby Chic-inspired designs, but a touch of floral in a kitchen, bedroom or bath can

**Use bold flower prints on accent pillows instead of investing in a sofa covered in flowers to avoid overpowering a space.**

be done in a refreshingly updated way. Chintz can be feminine and flirty, contemporary or country. It’s quite versatile and even works with stripes, Oriental, antique and eclectic boho styles.

Maybe it’s dainty, pastel flowers on a sofa cushion or accent chairs, a bold flower on a rug, or bright floral artwork, throw pillows or a floral pattern on one wall. Wallpaper, as opposed to fabrics, with large-scale floral print looks more modern.

“There’s been a resurgence of bigger prints, very bold colorful prints that to me come across as a watercolor when you think of the look,” Phillips says. “There are ways to bring it in and be very sophisticated with your look.”

Unless you really love the floral look, rather than investing in a sofa with a floral print, Phillips recommends buying furniture in a neutral color and style. Go with

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something that's timeless, comfortable and functional.

Then, it's easy to dress it up with chintz accent pillows, a rug or curtains. It's a way to bring in floral patterns without going overboard or spending a lot of money. Another trick is to mix patterns in the same color family, say navy and white florals and stripes.

"You don't want to take two patterns with totally different colors that don't work," Phillips says. "Keeping it within the color family, even different shades of blue, will really help it blend together. It comes across as 'I intended to do this.' The more you are layering in, it really becomes a more beautiful look."

Floral designs are being applied in new ways, especially on case goods and upholstered pieces. One way to add a bit of chintz is with an accent chair, ottoman, dining room chairs or a headboard.

"It's not just accessories,"

Phillips says. "Some of it is upholstery, but it's more your accents. It's about bringing in bits and pieces that mix with what you've already got."

Mario Buatta, known as the Prince of Chintz, is well known for his masterful use of this design element. Eric Ross from Nashville, Tennessee, is a current designer who uses florals and traditional prints really well, Bellizaire says.

"The designers who do it really well know how to balance the busyness of the floral prints with the colors," she says. "It can be a little over the top, so I would definitely study current and past designers who do it really well. Start off small with floral prints that inspire you, whether it's the print itself or the color of the print."

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**Start small with floral. Mix prints with other patterns, such as stripes, in similar colors.**



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# Walk on the Wild Side



**Add a distinct touch to your home with décor items that bring out the animal in your style**

**By ERIN CHAN DING**

CTW Features

If you were one of the tens of millions of fans who clicked on Fox’s hit first-season drama, “Empire,” this year, you’ll have noticed that Cookie Lyon brimmed over with it.

Sass? Yes. Determination? Yes. Balanced with a moral core? Well, yes, as much as an ex-felon can have one.

But there was something else abundant about Cookie Lyon: animal prints.

Cookie Lyon, acted deftly by Taraji P. Henson, wore chinchilla and mink and beaver with confidence. The wildlife patterns also decorated her apartment, her office and just about every space she graced.

And because just about everyone loves the character of Cookie, they notice what she loves, too.

Does that mean animal-inspired décor is experiencing a bit of a crest in fashion?

Kathy Rezny, co-owner of the 84-year-old York Furrier in the Chicago suburbs of Elmhurst and Deer Park with her husband, provided “Empire” with several of its decorative and wearable animal-inspired

pieces, including Tibetan lamb pillows, which are known for their willowy, curly softness.

“For us, it has never gone out of style,” she says of fur and animal prints. But, she adds, “Even the young gals now are deciding that

this is a product they want to have.”

When choosing animal-inspired products for home décor, however, it’s important to think with the entire design concept or room in mind.

“It’s kind of like

when you’re getting dressed for stylists, they always say, ‘Do one great accessory,’” Rezny says. “You can do a great color, and you don’t want to be matchy-matchy with the animal print. It’s an accent. It’s an extracurricular focal point. You wouldn’t do your whole living room in leopard print.”

Edyta Czajkowska, an interior designer based in suburban Chicago and founder of Edyta & Co., suggests showcasing an animal-inspired piece.

“You have to give it room to breathe and shine,” she says. “Don’t clutter up a room with tons of patterns and objects but rather make the animal motif be the focal point of the room that the eye can fully



Hayneedle





enjoy.” She adds that lately, she’s been seeing animal-patterned wallpaper adorning homes. She points specifically to a design by Lee Jofa that features black and silver sketched rabbits on pink wallpaper that looks quite classy and modern.

“I love animal motifs for their whimsy element that they add, and I think others love that part, as well,” Czajkowska says. “They could also be very classic and add organic, vibrant and intricate detailing to a room.”

Jillian McClenahan, a marketing specialist at hayneedle.com, pointed out two large

ceramic vases decorated with blue and gold zebra print that the home décor and furniture company sells on its site called the Imax Elixer Animal Print Vase. Rezny adds that pink and black zebra motifs are “huge” among teens.

Hayneedle.com also features an 18-inch leather pouf ottoman with black and white Holstein Friesian patterns and a throw pillow featuring a turtle design that comes in bluish gray, light blue, sand and warm gray.

Busts of animals have also inspired decorators. Czajkowska said she loves a resin cast of a white bunny by Oly, a design company, adding bird sculptures can often give a room an eye-catching decorative element, too.

Use animal-themed items as accent pieces to add whimsy to a formal space.



Target

McClenahan, meanwhile, pointed to a pair of black-and-tan wooden zebra heads on hayneedle.com that also serve as bookends.

Wildlife-inspired home décor has gone mainstream, too, with items like the Nate Berkus Decorative Tortoise Shell Box (just \$19.99) and a pair of golden snail placeholders from the Nate Berkus Snail Placecard Holder Set (\$7.99 for both).

What you might already have hang-

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ing in your closet can also be used for animal-inspired décor. Rezney and her team at York Furrier, for instance, have shortened mink coats and used the excess fabric to make throw pillows. They can also stencil silver fox or beaver fur to put patterns and colors into throw pillows.

Snakeskin (or fabric inspired by it), known for its leathery feel, she says, can be used for chair covers or ottomans. Lampshades, too, could look sassy with leopard or zebra print.

Leopard prints, Rezny says, have consistently held onto their popularity.

“It is one of those definitely wild



looks, but wild in that there's the warmth of those rich colors," she says. "So it's wild but not crazy wild. So you put it out there, you get that pop and attention-grabber, but the colors blend so well with everything else you have in your home."

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Mix standard items, such as classic books and understated pillows, with attention-grabbing pieces to achieve a wild, yet cohesive look.



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# The No-Remodel Remodel

**Not every kitchen and bath makeover needs to break the bank. Here's how to make big changes without a big budget**

**By Kelly Lee-Creel**  
CTW Features

When even quote-unquote “mid-range” remodeling projects are out of the budget, homeowners are turning to lower-cost, high-impact updates for kitchens and

bathrooms.

The National Kitchen and Bath Association found that the average bathroom remodel costs \$16,000. A modest kitchen makeover easily tops \$20,000. These figures may give homeowners pause, but the

good news is that a few strategic updates can freshen up a space without calling for a top-to-bottom gut job. A new appliance, an upgraded sink or a cabinet refresh can give new life to a tired kitchen or bathroom. Even better, there

are many improvements homeowners can make themselves.

Tiffany Pociecha, owner and designer at Kitchens Unlimited, Walnut Creek, California, says, “I love all of my projects, but I love the ones that most impact my cli-

ents – making their lives easier, better or more functional in some way. The big impacts don’t even have to be a major wall-tearing-down kind of project, although those can be fun, too!”

Pociecha recently self-published a book, “Kitchen Design for the Busy Mom.” “I have a lot of clients that are do-it-yourselfers,” Pociecha says. She was inspired to help her clients tackle common design problems.

“I am a do-it-yourselfer myself,” Pociecha says. “My husband and I recently installed about 1,200 square feet of flooring in our front room and kitchen area. I love the feeling of accomplishment when a project is done, but I also know how easy it is to get in over your head. Sometimes a little guidance and direction can save you.”

For bathroom remodelers on a tight budget, Pociecha suggests starting with smaller updates such

as cabinet hardware or paint.

In the kitchen, Pociecha says, “A back splash can help, too. Is your budget really tight? Do what I did in my own kitchen: paint on a tile backsplash design. I used blue tape to grid out the pattern, painted over it and then pulled off the tape. Voila! New tile splash. A can of paint fits anyone’s budget and can be done in a weekend.”

Jackie Jordan, director of color marketing at Sherwin-Williams, says “Splashing a color in a kitchen or bathroom can make a huge impact, especially if you’re updating it with a current color trend.”

Jordan recommends that homeowners do some research first. “Most rooms are easi-



Four Generations One Roof

**Clean and relaxing is the goal in any bathroom upgrade. Adding a strong pop of color to the wall, painting a bathroom cabinet white and adding clean white accessories can turn an out-dated space into a fresh, modern oasis.**

ly tackled by a do-it-yourselfer although there are some instances

where you want to hire a professional. Painting older, tired-looking

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**Painting old cabinets provides an easy, cost-effective alternative to buying new. For high-quality cabinets in good shape, hire a contractor to professionally spray them so they look even and new.**

The City Sage



cabinets takes a little more work, because you do need to really prep and prime. Depending on the scope of the project, if they are really high-quality cabinets in relatively good shape, then you can hire a contractor who will bring in professional spray equipment and really do it properly, so it's almost like a new finish."

Once the color palette is updated, new lighting fixtures, faucets and coordinating hardware can round

out the look. "Accessories are such a great way to bring color into a kitchen and bath," Jordan says. She encourages people to play with color when selecting towels and "accessories on the countertop – mixing bowls, containers, anything like that."

As far as color palettes, Jordan has enjoyed seeing a trend of bolder, more confident color choices.

"For kitchen cabinets, people will often choose whites and off-whites or maybe venture into a gray," Jordan says. "I love a really deep navy kitchen." Pairing a painted lower cabinet with a more neutral upper is one way for people to experiment with color. "This way you have a weight down below, and a lighter color that floats on top."

"Placement of color is another thing to think about," Jordan says. "Ceilings are a really fun way to add drama to a space. In small powder rooms, you can do something super dramatic, especially when it's not your main bathroom. You're not putting on your makeup in there, and you can afford to be a little more creative and inventive with your color choices."

For the bravest of homeowners, Jordan says painting the floor is another option. "If you have a wooden floor that's maybe a little older or in not-so-great shape, you can try painting a design on it. There are paint products specific for floors. It's all about the preparation prior to that – using the right primers and paints."

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# 7 Tips for Wonder Walls

By Dawn Klingensmith  
CTW Features

Certain works of art stand alone. An Old Master painting deserves a wall of its own or an exalted space above the mantel. But other works of art increase their impact as part of a crowd. That’s why floor-to-ceiling artwork installations called salon walls are popular among collectors. Because salon walls consist of all sizes and styles of art crammed closely together, they can be tricky to arrange. Here are seven pro tips on creating a salon wall without a constellation of misjudged nail holes.

## 1. NO ROOM FOR SPACE FILLERS

Don’t go out and buy everything all at once or make impulse purchases to fill up more space. An engaging salon wall “either takes a lot of money” for a shopping spree or “a lot of time scouring and collecting,” writes celebrity designer and blogger Emily Henderson, based in Los Angeles.

Salon wall art needn’t have anything in common except for one thing – every piece should be special.

## 2. MOTLEY VIEW

Gather the artwork you wish to

display. “It can be an eclectic collection, from Art with a capital A to family photographs to dorm posters and even objects” like gilt mirrors or vintage clocks, says David Kassel, owner of ILevel, a picture hanging and art installation firm in New York.

While salon walls typically bring together disparate pieces, they sometimes have a unifying element such as subject matter (a grouping of botanicals, for example), artistic medium (all pen-and-ink drawings), similar coloring or matching frames.

## 3. THE ANCHOR’S THE WAY

Measure your soon-to-be salon

wall and use painter’s tape to mark those dimensions on the floor. Lay out all your pieces in this space and start arranging and rearranging. Start from the center with a larger piece that will anchor the arrangement, and work your way out. “Starting with a horizontal midline at eye level is a good, safe place to begin,” says Santa Monica, California-based interior designer Sarah Barnard.

Line the tops and bottoms of the frames above and below this axis. You can carry the line through the collage or extend it only so far before intersecting it with other wall hangings.

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4. ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL

The composition should look balanced – not just its overall configuration but also its colors and finishes. You don’t want all the antique wooden frames on one side and the shiny contemporary frames on the other. If the same coloring appears in several of the paintings, make sure those pieces aren’t all clumped together.

“One way to keep a balanced feeling is to keep consistent space between images even though the images are different sizes,” says Barnard, adding that 2 to 3 inches typically works.

“There’s no science to it. You just move things around until you get a sparkly feeling,” Barnard says. “The images should relate together in a pleasing way, with none of the images overpowering the others. Each of them should have its unique value and voice preserved even though it’s



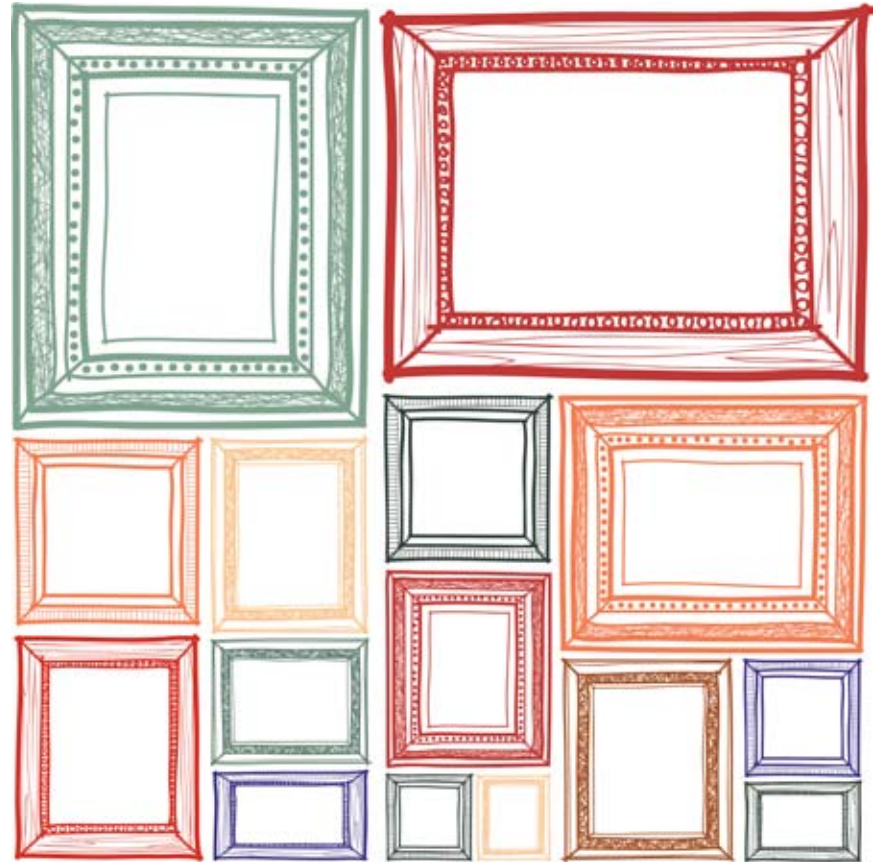
Use an eclectic blend of art, from professional pieces to family photos to kid-produced work, to craft a personal yet polished salon wall.

Sarah Barnard Design & Photographer Chas Mettler

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**Keep the wall balanced by maintaining consistent spacing between frames – even for pictures of different sizes and shape.**

part of a collaboration”

### 5. NO TRACE OF DOUBT

It’s difficult to get high enough above the floor to take in your entire arrangement and to snap a photo for reference as you hang. Another method is to trace all the pieces onto paper, cut them out and arrange them right on the wall with painters tape. Or, you can measure the wall, create an elevation sketch and “shuffle little cut-out images around” until the layout looks right, Barnard says.

### 6. GETTING THE HANG OF THINGS

When it comes time to hang your artwork, remember, “It’s a two-person job,” Kassel says. You’ll need two sets of hands for the tools and ladder safety and “two sets of eyes so you can step back and see the relation of things as you go along” and adjust as necessary, he adds.

Don’t make the common mistake of hanging the artwork too high. The

middle of the composition as a whole, or the middle of its focal point should be about eye level — roughly 58 inches above the floor.

“Use weight-rated picture hooks,” Kassel advises, “and always use two hooks instead of one to keep everything straight and stable.”

### 7. GET OVER YOUR HANG-UPS

“People get so nervous about putting holes in the wall, but any hole put in with picture hooks can be spackled and touched up easily,” says Kassel, adding that salon walls, by design, tend to look as though they’d been “eyeballed” and that’s part of their charm.

However, if you want to play it safe and have the ability to easily rearrange or add to your salon wall, there are hanging systems available with a track and suspended cables or rods from which your pieces can be hung nail-free.

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# Let the Soft Light In

Finding the right window treatment can be a challenge. Here's how to give your windows a stylish, functional upgrade



By **KELLY LEE-CREEL**

CTW Features

**D**ressing up your home with new window treatments is a great way to update a space and put the finishing touch on a room's décor. Today, homeowners can choose from a dizzying array of options – everything from luxurious fabrics to motorized shades.

Ian Gibbs, creative director of The Shade Store, Seattle, says,

“When you enter a room, windows are one of the first things you notice. They can take up a large part of the wall. In selecting a new window treatment, you can add drama to a room, you can make a design statement, and you can create the illusion of architectural elements that aren't present – like adding height to a space.”

However, homeowners tend to save these decisions for the end of the decorating process. “People sometimes go the safe route, because they aren't aware of how

many options are truly available,” Gibbs says. His store offers more than 900 different material choices.

Many of those choices are informed by the latest trends in fashion. “Currently, it's a couture look inspired by tailored clothing including textural prints of heringbones, hounds tooth, plaids and stripes,” Gibbs says. “We are also seeing popularity in bold, graphic floral prints.” While the fabrics are bold and interesting, “the window treatment style is

simple – a tailored or ripple-fold drapery paired with a roman shade and layered with a printed or solid roller shade.”

“What we're seeing is a desire for more beautiful fabrics across the board,” says Kim Kiner, vice president of Hunter Douglas, a worldwide manufacturer of window coverings. Whether shopping for energy-efficient honeycomb shades or gliding panels, homeowners are getting choosier about the materials. “For instance, roller shades, which normally would be

considered a very basic window covering, complement a more contemporary, modern design,” Kiner says.

When navigating the many options, Kiner recommends starting with a basic question. “What is your most pressing need?” Answers might include energy-efficiency, privacy, or light control.

Child safety is a concern as well. “Unfortunately, there are



The Shade Store

“People want a connected home filled with products that will make life easier for them. When they are making an investment, they want to buy the most updated technology that will last.”

—Kim Kiner, vice president of Hunter Douglas, a worldwide manufacturer of window coverings



Hunter Douglas

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children every year who get entangled in window coverings,” Kiner says. She recommends that homeowners look for window coverings that don’t have cords and can be raised or lowered with your hand.

Convenience and functionality also are keys. More consumers than ever are turning to motorized options. “In the past, to have motorized window treatments, you needed your home to be hard-wired,” Kiner says. Today, many motorized options are battery-driven.

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Motorization not only appeals to younger homeowners who want the latest in technology, but also older consumers who enjoy the convenience of operating mul-

tiple window coverings with the touch of a button.

“Homes today are built differently,” Kiner says. “There are more windows, more out of reach windows, and urban living where windows are very large. It’s not as convenient to open and close window coverings.”

With all of those windows, energy efficiency is also a priority. “Layering window treatments . . . can certainly make an impact on the overall energy efficiency of your home by helping to manage the light and heat that enters and escapes your space,” Gibbs says.

Not only does energy efficiency cut down on heating and cooling costs, but it also appeals to consumers looking to make a greener choice. Gibbs says to look for products made from natural materials along with products that are recyclable, biodegradable, and certified eco-friendly.

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