



I believe I can ply

Caroline Nicholls and Deborah Moor on great plywood kitchens and styling up old sofas

I would love a plywood kitchen - what should I do?

Plywood is a popular choice and kitchens are a great use of the material. It is hard-wearing and, due to the construction, it is less susceptible to warping and more regular in texture than other woods, which gives it a nice finish. Plywood is reminiscent of the mid-century and Scandinavian styles but also very on trend, so although it has a slight retro vibe, it also feels very fresh and modern. There are some kitchen companies (try mattantrobis.co.uk) that work solely in ply and would produce bespoke units to your specification. Mdf would be cheaper but this needs to be finished with a laminate or sprayed. An alternative would be to buy separate carcasses and then add your own plywood doors, drawer fronts and worktops - plykea.xyz is a good place to go for this.



How can we make an old sofa which isn't really our style work in our home?

Old pieces are often made very well, so it's a shame to let them go to waste. The best way to bring an old sofa to life would be to have it recovered in a vibrant fabric. Velvet is very popular and a mixture of fabrics and textures look great together - velvet and linen work really well. We love vibrant jewel colours (try romo.com). A short pile

velvet tends to mark less easily than a longer pile, although this will have more depth and feel more luxurious. We'd advise having the fabric Scotchgarded too for extra protection against marks and spills.

I fancy wallpapering my bathroom - is this a no-no?

This is possible if the bathroom is well ventilated. If you want to use a normal wallpaper, keep it away from especially wet and steamy areas. Finish using a decorator's varnish, which will make it less susceptible to lifting. Alternatively, wallanddeco.com produce waterproof wallpaper - it isn't the cheapest but it can be used in wet areas and is waterproof and watertight.

We want dark walls in our Victorian terrace - do we need expensive heritage paints?

They are not essential but worth the extra money; the cheapest can often end up being the most expensive if you need to apply many coats. Navy is still popular as are deep reds, scarlet and burgundy. We like Florentine Red by Dulux Heritage, £37.18 for 2.5L of red flat matt (dulux.co.uk), Damson, £32.98 for 2.5L of chalky emulsion by craigandrose.com and Hicks Blue, £42 per 2.5L of Absolute Matt emulsion at littlegreene.com.

■ *Deborah Moor and Caroline Nicholls are the interior design duo behind slightlyquirky.com*

INTERVIEW BY **LARA SARGENT**

RADIANT SOLUTIONS

How can I disguise a dining room radiator that stretches the length of the wall?

One of the most obvious choices is to use carpentry to create a simple box covering with a grille at the front. However, this doesn't have to be done in a traditional way. It could be a modern interpretation with simple horizontal slats painted in the same colour as the wall or in a complementary

colour. This could even incorporate some sort of storage solution, for example, shelves or cupboards above, always remembering to keep the radiator well ventilated to ensure the heat can be released. Alternatively, you could paint the wall and the radiator in a feature colour (use metal paint for the radiator), making the wall stand out and the radiator blend in.



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