

# ASK THE EXPERTS

From interiors and gardening to DIY and eco design, our team answers your questions



## INTERIOR DESIGN

### SALLIE CHATER

Founder and director of her own interior design company, Interiors at 58, Sallie is the latest expert to join our panel. She believes in creating luxurious, elegant and original interiors at affordable prices



## FUTUREPROOF YOUR KITCHEN

**Q**I need a new kitchen and want to create a timeless effect that has longevity, but I'm worried about it looking bland. How can I prevent this from happening? *Clare Marchant, Carlisle*

In a timeless, classic kitchen, statement floor tiles add personality

● Email your questions to us at [house.beautiful@hearst.co.uk](mailto:house.beautiful@hearst.co.uk) or post to House Beautiful, Unit 9, Apollo Business Centre, Trundleys Road, London SE8 5JE

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**T**his is a common concern when buying a new kitchen, but there are ways to avoid it looking boring. Start by investing in units in a classic style, such as a simple Shaker or modern flat-panel door design in a neutral tone, and pair it with a good quality worksurface – granite is the best option for a long-lasting finish that will retain its natural beauty. You can then give the room a fresh and current feel with easily interchangeable accessories and additions.

Tiles are a great way to add personality, either on the floor or as a splashback. To be sure your scheme will last, pick a patterned tile in a neutral tone to create an attractive feature without committing to a particular colourway that you may tire of.

If you have a kitchen-diner, you can make a statement with a dining table and chairs. Dining chairs can add colour to the room – try introducing different textures, such as rough linens and soft velvets, or pair matt-painted chairs with a gloss table.

Lighting is an important but often overlooked element in a kitchen. Opting for either one oversized light or several smaller pendants over an island or dining table will give your room instant wow factor. Choose contrasting textures or styles for added interest. If you have a traditional kitchen, pick modern light fittings and vice versa.

Consider incorporating wallpaper, as this will liven up the room in a flexible way. Wallpaper is best used in the dining area, but if you would like to use it in the kitchen, look for vinyl, which has brilliant durability.

Cupboard handles shouldn't be overlooked either. When selecting your kitchen, don't be afraid to source your own handles if the supplier doesn't have what you're looking for – there are infinite choices online that will bring a unique finish to the units.



A few simple changes can make your bathroom more ecofriendly



## ECO DESIGN

### OLIVER HEATH

The UK's leading expert in sustainable architecture and interior design, and a familiar face on TV

## HOW TO STAY GREEN IN THE BATHROOM

**Q**I'm having my bathroom renovated and want to make my new space as ecofriendly as possible. How can I achieve this and get great results? *Laura Ward, Norwich*

**A** When looking to create a sustainable bathroom in your home, there are multiple approaches you can take to help make your fixtures, fittings and use of the space more environmentally friendly.

The first point to consider is water consumption. In the UK, it has been steadily rising since the 1930s, so many companies now design with this in mind. We pay for hot water three times; once to buy it, once to heat it and once to dispose of it, so reducing water use can bring you real savings.

Taps and showers that incorporate aerators will reduce the volume of water you use without compromising on pressure. Low-flow taps and showers are an option if you're installing a new bathroom suite, and water recycling will also help reduce waste and

consumption. Grey water recycling harvests used water from showers, baths and basins and stores it for short periods for re-use in toilet cisterns. It's worth bearing in mind that these units can be costly, bulky to install and payback periods can be lengthy. Simply using a more efficient toilet may be a better approach, so opt for a dual-flush cistern that uses less water.

Incorporating sustainable materials into your design can also have an impact. There are multiple products on the market that use recycled materials such as glass, shell and timber within their resins to create countertops and tiles. Resilica, for example, creates bespoke worktops from 100 per cent recycled glass waste. And when using timber within bathroom fittings, remember to look out for FSC-approved sources. ▶