

Decorate your home in traditional style



Contents

- 3 Decorate your home in traditional style
- 5 Traditional living room decor
- 6 Traditional dining room decor
- 7 Traditional kitchen decor
- 8 Traditional bedroom decor
- 9 Traditional bathroom decor
- 10 Other elements to keep in mind
- 11 Sources





Decorate your home in traditional style

Do you sometimes wish you were born in an earlier era? If modern, edgy styles aren't your cup of tea and you're drawn to more refined decor, traditional style may be the look your home needs to feel complete.

In a general sense, traditional design focuses on a particular period of history. The most popular traditional styles come from 18th- and 19th- century England, the French countryside and the British Colonial era.

Modern homeowners have begun to develop a definition of traditional decor that involves a mixture of pieces from a combination of these periods.

As for overarching characteristics, traditional design has several focuses, all of which blend to create a sense of casual luxury, balance and understated elegance. Tailored window treatments with luxe accents, rich colors paired with neutral shades, printed fabrics and gilt embellishments all embody traditional design.

If you're ready to take the leap into traditional decor, here's a primer on how to make over every room in your home.





Traditional Living Room Decor

For a stunning traditional living room start with a dramatic set of curtains. Regardless of what type of windows you're working with, focus on adding a sense of height to your walls with long curtains that either end at your baseboards or just barely brush the floor. Panels and scallop details are big traditional hits, not just for decoration, but functionality, allowing you to control the amount of light as needed.

Finish off the space by adding a luxurious looking Oriental style area rug with elaborate details. Solid color or printed sofas with subdued, small patterns will offer comfortable seating. Adorn the walls with classic artwork, like still lifes or landscapes in gilded frames. A focal-point fireplace, detailed molding and trim, and warm light fixtures will complete the look and make the space feel cozy.

Traditional Dining Room Decor

Traditional homes rely heavily on elaborate dining room setups. This is where you can get as dramatic as you want with your decor, nothing looks too overdone! Try window treatments in thick fabrics that have deep pleats. You might even want to allow the curtains to pool on the ground a bit. Darker colors will stand out and draw attention, especially if you stick with neutral walls.

Molding, trim, wainscoting and wallpaper also have their places in a traditional dining room, adding visual appeal and a sense of high-class sophistication. A chandelier with crystal or glass embellishments equipped with a dimmer switch can help set the mood for elaborate dinner parties.





Traditional Kitchen Decor

The hub of most houses, the kitchen was practically made for traditional designs. When it comes to window treatments, tidy valances may be your best bet on the upper portion of the windows, because they'll add color and pattern without overwhelming the space. If you need a bit of privacy, tier curtains can be placed over the bottom portions, and they may look best in white or cream.

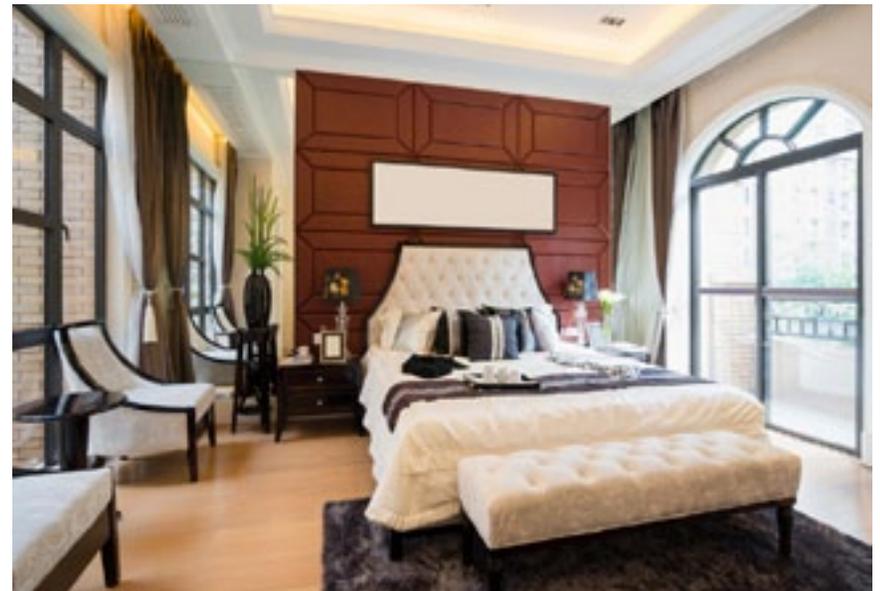


Glass-fronted cabinets can help show off your prized plate ware, while the rest of your cabinets should be either wood or painted a neutral shade. Natural stone counter tops are ideal, since they're timeless and functional. A tiled backsplash can add some texture and color to the space, regardless of which pattern you choose.

Traditional Bedroom Decor

Traditional bedrooms tend to rely on plenty of romantic touches for a relaxing, slightly feminine vibe that still offers plenty of functionality. Go for soft, breezy curtains in light fabrics and colors that will billow when the windows are open, and make sure they reach all the way to the floor.

For the bed, go with a four-poster frame or elaborate headboard to make it the focal point. Opt for a thick comforter and a richly colored, textured throw blanket folded at the end of the bed, and then top it with plenty of fluffy pillows. A bench at the end of the bed is practical, and you may want to add a dressing table, armchairs and even a writing desk if you have the space.





Traditional Bathroom Decor

All bathrooms should offer privacy and a hint of spa-like luxury, and traditional bathrooms are no different. Your bathroom curtains can go in several directions, depending on your preference. Go with long, tailored curtains if you have a spacious bathroom, with crisp folds or elegant drapes. Or, choose short, no-fuss curtains on the bottom portion of the windows and add elaborate toppers.



The main focal points of the room should be the bathtub (a stand-alone one if you can manage it) and vanity. Look for richly glazed woods, brass, bronze, copper or brushed nickel fixtures and natural stone tiles. Finish the luxurious effect with thick white towels hung from racks or rolled in baskets and expensive-looking toiletries displayed on elegant mirrored trays.

Other elements to keep in mind

No matter which room you're decorating, traditional design aims for a polished balance of furniture items, colors and materials. Symmetry is one part of the equation: Always go with pairs when you're buying furniture and accessories. Instead of one armchair, go for two. Rather than one vase, pick up another one, and make sure they're evenly spaced in the room—perhaps on either side of the fireplace.

The color palette is another aspect to consider. Stick with neutral shades or earth tones for larger areas or pieces, like the walls or sofas. Then add rich colors in the form of accent accessories like throw pillows, window treatments and artwork.

Walk from room to room to make sure that there's no glaring difference between any of them—you want the whole house to feel cohesive. If you were to bring something from one room into another, the goal is to make sure it would fit.

A traditional house should be comfortable and timeless. The right curtains, colors, fabrics and furniture will ensure that your guests are impressed with your impeccable style each time they visit, and you'll never have to worry about keeping up with the latest trends.

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