

Sweet young things

Combine practical pieces with delightful décor to create the perfect space for your children

Words: Yvette Murrell



There are lots of things to consider when designing your child's bedroom. You want to ensure it is calm and comfortable to sleep in, but by day it should also be fun and creative. Kids are bound to spend a lot of time there, so it is worth making sure the room is tailored to their personal likes and needs and can be adapted as they grow up – without the need to completely redecorate over and over again.

From toddler to teen

When investing in pieces such as furniture and the bed, think about their longevity and how you can make sure they will last. Opt for durable,

easy-to-clean items you can update with soft furnishings, such as a new duvet set or rug, as your kids get older and their tastes change. When they reach school age, your child will probably need a desk for homework. If space is limited, look for multifunctional furniture pieces that combine work, play and sleep areas.

Safe and sound

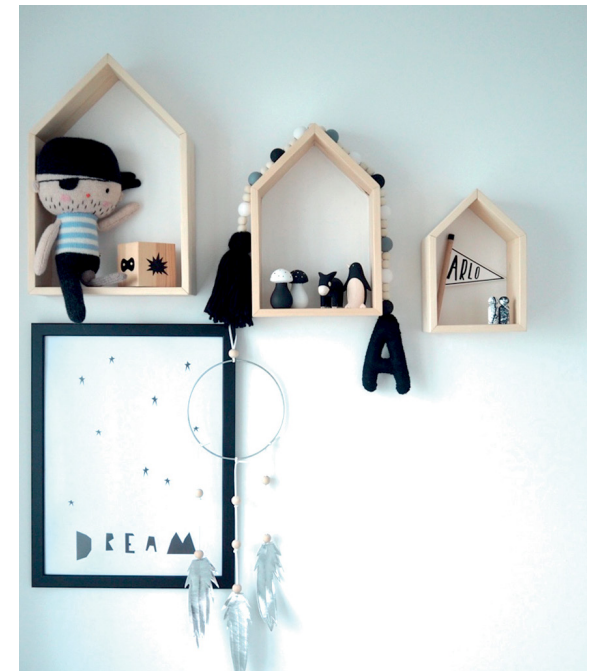
Safety is paramount in a child's bedroom, and there are several elements to be aware of. Keep in mind where plug sockets are located and see if they can be covered. If they are in use, make sure any wires are concealed and



Editor's Pick

Left: Create a peaceful look with Hibou Home's Starry Sky wallpaper, shown here in metallic silver and white. Priced £59.95 per 52cm x 10m roll, it is also available in a pale rose-gold colourway.

Below: House treasured items in these wooden shelves from The Nursery Edit, priced from £72 for the set of three.



Left: Let imaginations run free with this adorable Woodland Rave wallpaper. Each design is hand painted in fine detail and then digitally printed. Priced £69 per 250 x 90cm panel from Wild Hearts Wonder.

Opposite page: The Mazeballs bed has plenty of storage space within easy reach, so little hands can help tidy up after themselves. Recommended for ages four and up, it is priced £695 from Loaf.

out of reach. Sharp edges on furniture should also be cushioned, although (fortunately) many children's desks and wardrobes are designed with soft, smooth corners to prevent any accidental bumps. It is also worth bearing in mind the potential dangers of blind pulls. Looped cords especially pose a choking hazard, not just to very young children; to eliminate the risk, opt for cordless window dressings instead.

Keeping tidy

Consider what needs to be stored in your child's room, and any items that can go elsewhere. Is there a separate playroom, or will their toys also

go in the bedroom? Are they sharing with another sibling? Low-height wardrobes and under-bed storage boxes are easily accessible to children and will allow them to tidy away things themselves.

Night and day

Blackout blinds are a good option for little ones, as they provide the darkness needed for sleep – but think carefully about the lighting in the rest of the room. You'll want lots of natural light coming in, so they can enjoy playing during the day. A night light may be necessary to provide some comfort, alongside a task lamp for a reading and working area. **[KBB]**



Available in a choice of 24 colourways and 13 sizes, the Holly bookshelf by Nidi is ideal for storing clothes, books, and prized possessions. Pictured in Camomilla 68 with a backing board in Natura 84, it costs £795 from Nubie.



Shutters are a great window dressing for a child's bedroom. Safe to use and easy to wipe clean, they are available in a range of bright colours. These tier-on-tier shutters from Shutterly Fabulous are priced from £299 per sq m, home consultation and installation included.

3 of the best... night lights



A Little Lovely Company Mini cloud light, £11, Mini Maison.

Balloon table lamp, £19.99, The Glow Company.

Orange Dinosaur lamp, £29, Bobby Rabbit.



How to buy a mattress

Dave Gibson, sleep expert and consultant for Warren Evans bed makers, has the following advice for choosing a mattress that is just right for your child...

“When buying a mattress for a child, it's good to involve them as much as you can. Getting children to bed can be difficult at the best of times, but if a child has the opportunity to be part of the buying process they will love their bed! Bring your child along to a showroom and get them to lie in the position they sleep in for as long as it takes them to feel comfortable – ideally around five minutes. Take their shoes and coat off and put a pillow under their head, if they use one. There are different ways to make sure the support is correct, depending on positioning. If they sleep on their back, make sure you can just slip a hand under the bottom part of their spine. If you can't get it in the mattress is too soft, and if goes under too easily it is too hard. If they are lying on their side, make sure their head is in alignment with the whole of their spine by standing back from the bed and looking across the torso.

I also advise buying a mattress with a guarantee – it gives you assurance that the retailer is backing the components – and try to purchase from an established bedroom brand. As a general rule of thumb, it's probably safe to assume that the longer a genuine guarantee is, the better the mattress is in terms of the quality of the fillers, springs and foam.”



Above: This set of beds from Warren Evans works two ways – side by side or as bunk beds, with a safety rail included. Made from oak with a satin finish, it is priced £598.

3 of the best... bunk beds



Nidi children's loft bed,
from £2250, Nubie.



Kids Treehouse bunk bed, £1700,
Babatude Boutique.



Dominique bunk bed with tree bookcase,
£1990, Cuckooland.



Above: A low-height bed frame is a wise choice to prevent any mishaps when children are transitioning from a cot to a bed. Incy Interiors's metal-framed bed, shown here in rose gold, £525, has a timeless design. Its low-height setting can be adjusted to a standard height once your child is old enough. It is shown here with the Sybilla sofa, priced £790. Both available from Cottage Toys.

Below: Quickly tidy toys away, into this white storage box from Noa & Nani priced £69. We love the natural pine leg detailing.

Opposite page: Ferm Living's Rabbit mirror, priced £79 from Skandium, is every bit as sweet as it is practical.



Expert design advice



Interior designer Rebecca Hughes shares her top tips for successfully decorating your child's space...

Do...

- ☒ Use wipeable emulsion paints and surfaces – but don't be afraid of light colours, as these can be easily touched up.
- ☒ Make sure there is lots of storage, including shelving to display books, treasured toys, and awards.
- ☒ Tie back and conceal wires everywhere and use wireless devices where possible.
- ☒ Ensure there is a place for everything. It helps children tidy away after themselves and feel ownership of their space.
- ☒ Have as much fun as possible and be creative. Think about different ways to display things and fun ways to incorporate play into the furniture.

Don't...

- ☒ Go too crazy with a lot of colour. Remember how much colour toys and books will add.
- ☒ Forget about styling. Bookcases can look great when arranged with a mix of toys and books.
- ☒ Overlook lighting. Have different lights to denote different times of the day.
- ☒ Think it can't be a beautiful room. It can still flow with the rest of your home's décor and style.



Left: Rebecca Hughes designed a stylish play den area in this girl's bedroom, with lots of soft cushions and throws, muted tones, and a bespoke blind from Victoria Smee Interiors.



Right: Crown Imperial offers a choice of two low-level wardrobe heights and an array of different configurations you can select to suit the space – including tiered shelving, chests of drawers, wardrobes, and bedside tables. Prices start from £500.



Left: Christy's Junior Galaxy bedding is available in three sizes – cot, single and double – with prices starting from £40. Also shown are the Christy Cosmo cushion, £25, and matching throw, £110.

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NEXT MONTH...

How to make sure your bedroom floors are cosy and beautiful.