

# HOW TO PLAN YOUR BEDROOM LAYOUT

You needn't have mastered the art of feng shui in order to plan a well-arranged space, but there are some rules we recommend you follow. Whether it's small and narrow, vast in size, or just a bit of an awkward shape, we've rounded up the best expert tips to help you create a design that will work for you

Words: Yvette Murrell

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## MEASURE UP

First things first, take the bedroom's dimensions – that includes any nooks and crannies, alcoves, windows, and doors. When browsing for furniture, this will not only help you, but also any shop assistants or designers coming on board to help with your project, to understand exactly what there is to work with. Habitat's Phoebe bedroom collection, designed by Matthew Long, features a range of freestanding pieces in varying sizes, including this chest of drawers, £450; tallboy, £450; and matching side table, £130. Also pictured is the Dascia grey ceramic table lamp base, £45; French velvet grey lampshade, £20; Heather ceramic table lamp base, £50; Drum silk white shade, £30; Regency pink velvet bedspread, £250; Penelope throw, £70; and Lane flat weave rug, £170, all Habitat.

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## GET IN THE ZONE

"Consider how you want to use the space – for sleeping, dressing, and seating, for instance – and then think about how you define it," advises interior designer Lisa Bradburn. "If you have a large bedroom, use rugs to divide areas and help anchor each

space. Furniture can then be placed and break up the room." West Elm's Lana upholstered bed, from £1099 for a double, is shown here with the Miltzi nightstand, £159, Tencel Abstract Landscape duvet cover, from £84 for a double, and pillowcases, £24; Belgian flax linen Linework bedspread, £159; and washed cotton velvet cushion cover, £29.

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## WORK WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT

"While sloping eaves are very charming, they are not the most convenient," Tamsin Allen of Fawn Interior Studio observes. "Keep full-height areas for your bed and wardrobe and use the eaves for extra storage." Banlight blackout made-to-measure roller blinds in Coral, from £78 for a 61 x 61cm design, Style Studio. ►



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**FREE UP THE FLOOR**

Room to walk can come at a real premium, especially if you have a narrow layout. “To make a long, thin bedroom work best, keep a clear pathway that flows from the door to the end of the space,” says Manuela Barbosa Bovill of Manu Interiors. “The biggest object in the room, usually the bed, should be placed away from the door. Try and group other furniture, such as a desk and wardrobe, together on one side, keeping the other free to move.” The Symphony carpet collection from Elements London – shown here in Montreal, priced £71.99 per sq m – has a soft 1.6 tog rating pile, which is ideal for a bedroom, and is available in 11 shades.



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**BIGGER IS BETTER**

“When you start planning your new space, start with the largest items – your bed and mattress,” recommends Amelia Whitaker, creative stylist at Harrison Spinks. “To get the best night’s sleep, purchase the biggest bed and mattress you can fit in your bedroom – without compromising on other furniture or floor area for you to move around – to make the most of your space. Take your time choosing your furniture. It is an investment that will last you more than a decade and something you will use every day.” The Harrison Spinks Woburn divan set and Bedford headboard from the Somnus Legacy collection are shown in Flax Pumice, priced from £2778.



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**THINK MULTI-FUNCTIONAL**

If you don’t have much room to play with, you’ll need to be clever with the furniture you put in it. Items with dual purposes are great – for example, an ottoman bed can house extra bedding, towels, or out-of-season clothing, freeing up space elsewhere in the room. This Tempur Grafton Ottoman is priced from £1575, available from And So To Bed.

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**GO FOR BUILT IN**

Bespoke wardrobes can be made to measure, covering problematic areas in your room while adding storage and making the space look smarter. Pictured is Shaker-style storage, starting from £3000, by John Lewis of Hungerford.



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**SIT BACK AND RELAX**

No, we’re not quite done planning yet – but a seating area under a large or bay window creates another zone that may otherwise be dead space. In this master bedroom by Clare Pascoe of Pascoe Interiors, a desk has also been placed under the slanted eaves, making practical use of a tricky corner.



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**BE SMART ABOUT STORAGE**

Open rails, such as this industrial storage rack, £565, from Vincent and Barn, are really useful to have in small spaces or guest bedrooms, as they can be moved around as and when required – or, when space is extra tight, removed without much hassle.



**10 GO TALL**  
“The advantage of bespoke furniture is that it can be built within and around any idiosyncrasies of your room. It’s incredible how much storage you gain by going high up the wall – and so long as you make it no deeper than it needs to be, your room can still feel spacious,” says Simon Tcherniak, senior designer at Neville Johnson. “If you need to access your higher-level storage on a regular basis, a built-in ladder can be useful. Pull-out shelves and pull-down rails are handy too.” Neville Johnson fitted furniture starts at £3600.



**11 LOWER YOUR LIGHTING**  
It is just as important to plan in your ambience as it is your furniture in a bedroom. Consider where you will need task illumination, such as by a dressing table, as well as dimmable lights to set the right mood. Low-hung fittings by the bedside are useful for reading and can also create a cosy corner if the brightness is subtle enough. If you are changing the electrics, don’t forget to add switches by your bed – you’ll be thankful later. The Ligne Roset Desdemone bed, from £2883 for a double, is pictured with the Cylinder pendant light, £103; Everywhere chest, from £2572; and Postmoderne cabinet, from £1749. Runa pendant in Gold, Nickel and Copper, £118.80 each, Dår Lighting.



**13 BE BOLD**  
We are often guilty of playing it safe and trying to make a room appear bigger by painting it white – but this isn’t always the best method, as it can often make the space look stark and cold. Instead, embrace awkward areas or dark rooms by painting the wall a deep shade of your favourite colour or using patterned wallpaper to create an inviting atmosphere. Galerie Wallcoverings’ Marimekko wallpaper by Sirpi costs £179.95 per 10m roll.

**12 KEEP THINGS COSY**  
It’s worth thinking about what type of heating you will incorporate when planning your bedroom’s layout. There are plenty of radiator sizes and designs to choose from, such as the shown Bisque Classic styles in Anthracite, from £770.40 each. Aim to keep them from being covered with furniture for better efficiency.



### PROJECT INSPIRATION

**Designer:** Elle Kirkwood of Guthrie & Kirkwood  
**The clients:** A professional couple  
**Location:** Chislehurst, Kent  
**The brief:** The master bedroom needed to be transformed from a bland, stark space into an inviting sanctuary to which they could escape to from their hectic lives  
**Cost:** £10,000

**Elle says:** “Because the room faces north, it does not get much natural light shining in – which makes it more difficult to create a scheme with a bright, airy feel. Rather than fighting nature, I suggested we embrace it by painting the walls in a complementary blue-grey shade. The fitted wardrobes, skirting boards, and window frames were painted in the same colour to create a more contemporary, clean look. This in turn makes the bedroom appear larger, as there is no white or other contrasting shade to draw the eye. I also introduced a layered illumination scheme using a mix of concealed ceiling downlights, wall lights, and drop pendants which I hung on either side of the bed. This combination of light sources provides more flexibility and at the same time helps compensate for the lack of sun shining into the space.”

Photograph: helenmulvaneyphotography.com

**14** “Bay windows are the perfect spot for a reading nook or, in a kid’s bedroom, a play corner. They get plenty of natural light and provide a nice vantage point, so it only makes sense to furnish them with an armchair or a built-in bench,” says Sonia Pash, co-founder of Temza Interior Design Studio. Anderson upholstered Snuggler armchair in Bright Teal, £429, Cult Furniture.



**15 GET CREATIVE**  
When bedrooms form a part of a large open-plan home, usually on a mezzanine level, it can be difficult to maintain privacy without shutting off the room completely. Here, a galleried bedroom with a glass balustrade, designed by TG Studio, features a curtain used as a divider.

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