



Space saving bed by UK brand Noa & Nani, from £159

Storage by Dutch brand Rafa Kids



Side table by Shimu, from £225



Blackboard wardrobe, Rowen & Wren, £898

Star-ling wallpaper, from £60 per roll, Mini Moderns



Trundle bed at Noa & Nani, from £159



Henry bed in a box from £530 at sofa.com

# Decorating Dilemmas

From shared spaces to budget bedrooms, Serena Fokschaner solves your decorating dilemmas.

Peekaboo wardrobe by Kutikai, made from FSC wood, £1,300 at Castles for Rascals.



California Shutters

Hand blocked furnishings from £30 at Dilli Grey

## 'Our little one's bedroom is tiny ...'

If you live in a typical London home, at least one bedroom will be what used to be grandly referred to as a 'box room'. If so, says interior designer Ursula Wesselingh of Room to Bloom, aim for spatial camouflage: 'Paint furniture, shelves and picture frames in similar tones to the walls; it expands the space and makes toys or stickers stand out.' If you have the ceiling height, Ursula suggests a platform bed: the Spanish Asoral range at Nubie or consider Noa and Nani, where beds 'float' (£399). For traditionalists, sofa.com's Box-in-a-Bed is useful; pair it with a small Chinese cabinet as bedside table by Shimu (£365).

'For storage, go for a multi-functional

wardrobe, cupboard, display unit; we like Kutikai's version, made from FSC wood with 'peekaboo' holes that are easy for small hands to use,' says Naomi Callan of e-tailer Castles for Rascals. Another small space specialist, Dutch brand Rafa Kids, has benches and storage racks that will last well beyond the nursery years; as would Rowen & Wren's slimline blackboard wardrobe. Inject a touch of the Raj with tiger-and-deerstrewn bedding by Delhi-based Safomasi. Finally, for small space magic, flaunt the rules and paper the ceiling: Mini Modern's latest Star-ling design will transport sleepy tots from traffic-choked streets to sylvan glades.

## 'How do we pull off a shared room - without it looking a mess?'

Your children might gripe at having to share but, decoratively, shared bedrooms cut a dash. Contrasting colours, asymmetrical accents are relished by designers, bringing even small rooms to life. 'The challenge is to create a shared room where each child feels they have their own space,' says interior designer Niloufar Bakhtiar of NBB Trading. 'I'll often use a screen - Jali make good ones - between beds and paint the walls in blackboard paint so that children can express themselves!' Or aim to position the beds along each wall and use a chest of drawers between as a bedside table. For shared desks, Niloufar recommends painting a long piece of wood (try railway sleepers at salvoo.co.uk) with floor paint for durability and fixing it to the wall to create a floating surface. Tuck matching chairs underneath (try Molly Meg) or turn a storage bench (Loaf's Whatsit bench works well) into seating by adding a long cushion. If you opt for bunks, London brand, Io Kids' futuristic ply design includes concealed shelves. For twins, low-slung beds by Scandi brand Flexa at Cuckooland come in lovely colours. For not-quite matching bedding, Love Frankie's junk-food duvets hit a 1970's note; there's a more

Junk Food Deluxe bedding, from £16 at Love Frankie

Star LED night light, £10, Mini Maison



Sniglar bed, £3999 at Ikea

Cruelty-free stag's head by Diddywear

Chair, £8999 Maison du Monde

## 'We want the look - for less'

Cash starved? Then do as the designers do. 'Adroitly mix and match,' says Joanna Riding, 'and spend where it counts. I like to invest in one statement piece for the room to give it that 'wow' factor.' Start with the basics. Every designer's favourite Ikea's Sniglar bed is just £119. Made from beech, it sings with a coat of colourful paint (try Earthborn or Francesca's Paints for eco-friendly hues). The Europeans have that style-on-a-budget look nailed, so head to French e-tailer, Les Enfants du Design, where streamlined cots by Quax or Combelle start from around £120. For sturdy furniture, Little Helper has simple Scandi mini tables and chairs from £69. At Loaf, their Anglepoise lookalike Gaston lamp (£55) will do duty on desks and bedside tables alike. Create a one-off desk by mixing an Ikea table top with legs from US e-tailer Pretty Pegs (they ship worldwide), where graceful table legs come with copper or chrome detailing. Then go to town with decorative flourishes. Small brand specialist Tea and Kate excels at timeless Scandi mirrors or try a cuddly deer's head by Diddywear. Take a cue from Julie Stott of Rue des Petits: 'Add a little furry chair from Maison du Monde. Try stickers instead of paper to add colour (MimiLou designs allow you to attach photos). And our pretty hook and hangers make your little



Gaston lamp, £55, at Loaf



Elsa pegs

Decorative table legs at Pretty Pegs



A percentage from sales of art prints at Mini Maison will be donated to Children with Cancer

one's coat or bath towel become part of the décor,' (or try Chocolate Creative). For art with a conscience, Mini Maison will be donating a percentage of profits from sales of their graphic art prints to Children with Cancer.

artisanal look at newcomer Dilli Grey, where pom-pom-fringed cushions are hand-blocked in India. Shop accessories at Mini Maison, where owner Joanna Riding has corralled her pick of 'accessible, modern décor': star night lights, cloud rugs and decorative paper storage bags adorned with flamingoes or pineapples. Let your children take their pick.



Flexible storage bench, £275 at Loaf



Eco friendly beds, from £1,850 at UK brand IO Kids



Flexa beds, from £154 at Cuckooland

## 'We don't want to be like everybody else'

It's inevitable that in an age of stylistic homogeneity more of us are craving individuality. At Rue des Petits, Julie Stott works with her clients and designers to customise everything from sleeping bags or light bulbs. For walls, artist Anne Allison, of Allison & Allison puts pen and ink to paper to conjure one-off wallpapers. Another specialist Laura Felicity's commission for a 'safari theme' resulted in an abstract wallpaper 'that will outlast toddlerhood'. Alternatively, unleash your children's creativity with a colour-in-wallpaper (Nubie) and duvet sets (Eat Sleep Doodle). Perk up walls or wardrobes with Molly Mahon's vibrant wallpapers, block-printed in Jaipur so that each one is slightly different. For a vintage look, newbie Wallplayer's wallpapers are as bold as a 1960s' artwork. Bloc will turn your children's artwork into a customised blind; at Lost My Name they add your littlies' names to an alphabet poster. Underfoot, Jennifer Manners rugs can be woven in any colourway. Customise the room with a neon light by Bags & Bones or head to Claraivy for bespoke wall stickers. For retro detailing, 1970s' patches are everywhere; Nikki McWilliams' biscuity versions will iron onto plain cushions or valances for pre-digital uniqueness.



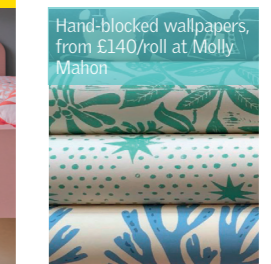
Retro wallpaper, £65 per 10-metre roll, Wallplayer



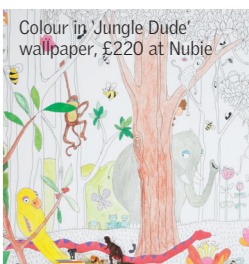
Hand-drawn wallpaper, £145/roll, Allison & Allison



LED lighting, from £59 at Bag & Bones



Hand-blocked wallpaper, from £140/roll at Molly Mahon



Colour in 'Jungle Dude' wallpaper, £220 at Nubie