



**ABOVE** This room perfectly shows how using both bold colour and pattern can be a success in a bedroom. Although densely patterned, this paper from Morris & Co. (*Wood in Grey/Stone*) emphasises the height and scale of the room beautifully. The bed is simple yet dramatic – drapes or a canopy might be too much, combined with the wallpaper.



**LEFT ABOVE** Again, the use of a large-scale pattern on the wall is surprisingly soothing, setting a restful backdrop in this scheme by Alexander James Interiors. A compact sofa at the foot of the bed imparts a sense of luxury and comfort.



**LEFT BELOW** Katharine Pooley chose books that add warmth and colour in this guest room. The bespoke joinery also cleverly incorporates bedside tables, drawers and lighting, so that this snug space feels neat and orderly.



not be afraid to explore bolder use of exciting lines and combinations to allow for a reflection of personal tastes. In guest rooms, too, it can be an opportunity to have a little fun with a theme or a bolder look, as the room will only be used for a short while, and will provide a talking point with visitors. The richly patterned room in paper from Morris & Co (top left) would be an ideal choice for a guest room.

Katharine Pooley was thrilled her clients were happy to explore the use of different themes in their family home, with a favourite design being "the book room" (left). Here, Pooley sought to create "the perfect getaway for tired guests", with bookshelves enclosing the bed and books in rich autumn tones to offer the antique brass details and provide a dose of character and colour. The deep shelves also provide space for accessories and ornaments, whilst the fitted unit incorporates bedside drawers and integral reading lights – a thoroughly considered design.

#### DECORATIVE PIECES

Creating a decorative feature out of other pieces of furniture is also an option. Wardrobes need not be purely functional – fitted options can take up an entire wall, so seeking decorative finishes to make this expanse a thing of beauty is a worthwhile endeavour. Beautiful finishes such as slatgreen, antique mirror or carpentry details such as lattice work and ornate panelling are lovely options. Concealing the wardrobes with a gorgeous paper or fabric can transform them into the main decorative feature of the room, as seen in the example from de Gournay (above). This design is doubly clever as the fitted cabinetry makes full use of the available wall space and conceals a hidden door through to an en-suite bathroom, as well as creating a show-stopping feature with the bespoke chinoiserie covering.

Choice of nightstand can also impact the look and practicality of a room. Often, matching pieces are

used either side, but as Kit Kemp demonstrates in the hotel rooms (on page 91), different pieces can be used to serve different purposes. On one side a handy desk or dressing table doubles up as a bedside table, whilst on the other a compact chest of drawers provides a resting place for a glass of water, as well as essential extra storage. Using chests of drawers (such as Emma Sims-Hilditch's layout on the previous page) rather than small bedside drawers offers substantial storage, and allows for a grander scale of table lamps, which would look oversized on more compact pieces.

If floor space is plentiful, additional furniture, such as somewhere to sit, is not only a lovely luxury, but also a way to further enhance the aesthetics of the room. An ottoman or small sofa at the foot of the bed is a classic choice, but there may be other spaces that could be utilised – perhaps a window recess to house a small bench or occasional chair. ▶

**LEFT** Rather than the wardrobes dominating the room in a negative way, in this design by Tudor Interiors they are the main attraction, owing to spectacular use of a silk covering from de Gournay. The gorgeous chinoiserie transforms the functional furniture into a thing of beauty. The fitted wardrobes use every available inch of space on a wall and incorporate a doorway through to the en-suite bathroom. The recessed sliding door housed within the cabinetry is also covered in the mural. Elsewhere, the walls are kept plain in a complementary shade of olive green, and the bed treatment is kept simple to ensure that the focus is well and truly on the fabulous hand-printed mural.



If conventional furniture appears 'lost' in a cavernous room, it is best to use large sofas, dining tables and other key items of furniture, as well as larger works of art, ornaments and plants. In a large kitchen a huge dresser will be a bonus, whilst a bathroom might feature a roll-top bath as well as a pair of washbasins and a walk-in shower. And in reception rooms, landings and hallways, it is definitely a good idea to check that light fittings will not look too diminutive – it is often important to go larger than seems necessary, because once hung they tend to seem much smaller.

In rooms with very high ceilings, using some taller furniture may help – this is a wonderful opportunity to install a sizeable upholstered headboard in a bedroom, for example. Another way forward may be to bring the ceiling down visually. "It can be a good idea to break the ceiling up, perhaps with plasterwork, or by installing more than one pendant light," says Gillette. "Painting the ceiling a different colour also works very well in these circumstances – the colour will depend on the room itself and how much natural light it receives." Colour can also be used as a means of creating a sense

**ABOVE** The intimate ambience of this beautiful dining room, by Alexander James Interiors, belies its ability to seat 12. The dramatically scaled light and dark wall colour set a coexisting mood and the square table creates a cosy grouping.

**LEFT** What luxury to fit a pair of basins, a bath and a walk-in shower in one bathroom. Colour and pattern on the walls warm up this room, designed by Maxwell & Company, creating a feel that is both sophisticated and inviting.

**ABOVE** With three large windows along the length of the room, the living area had plenty of light which Emma Sims-Hilditch has amplified with a cool, calm palette. Two seating areas have been created, separated by a central round table.

**LEFT** When there is plenty of floor area in a bedroom, it can be a wonderful luxury to create its very own seating area, complete with rug and lamps. The window treatments very prettily reflect the grandeur of the room, which was designed by Mark Gillette.

of warmth and intimacy in a larger space. Deep, warm colours are appropriate, with dark grey and navy being highly fashionable, but even off-whites – which can sometimes seem quite dark on a colour chart – are more inviting than brighter whites. "In a large room, I never paint a single wall a different colour," says Gillette. "I would paint all four walls or perhaps install wood panelling, whilst in a contemporary space it could be something more textural, like slate tiles on the fireplace wall."

More space offers another great opportunity: to use patterns in really exciting ways. From wallpaper to upholstery, window treatments to flooring, this is where large-scale patterns look really fabulous, and can be shown off to their fullest advantage. Mixing pattern is a skill, and Joanna Wood says that there is a choice between big, bold pattern or, for those who are less sure, a simple background with pattern layered within the seating area. "In general, with pattern," she says, "choose one big one and then layer in a mix of others – say a floral or a paisley, then put in a stripe or a couple of miniature prints, change the texture – a floral print and a floral weave, for example, and add blocks of plain." The results can be superb, she says. "In a large room you can be braver than you could possibly imagine." ■

