

The

ENGLISH HOME

Celebrating the essence of English style

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NEW YEAR, FRESH BEGINNINGS

From new-build cottage to remodelled 1950s house

Decorating Resolutions

- Add velvet glamour
- Declutter with chic storage

Elegantly calm or country informal?

Choose your style match & refresh your home

First Impressions

Creating an inviting hall (and a tidy boot room)

Celebratory Mood

Swish party styling and simple, tempting edibles



KNOT GARDENS | LAST-MINUTE GIFTS | KATIE MELUA

REAR VIEWS

Of course, those determining factors that apply to a property's main entrance readily translate to the back of the house along with additional considerations. As busy transitional spaces between house and garden, back entrances need to be visually appealing and exceptionally practical due to the myriad functions, encompassing indoor and outdoor activities, that are carried out here.

A PLEASING OUTLOOK

As an integral part of the landscape, pristine doors and windows are a must, and revitalising tired fixtures with softer eggshell finishes will impart a more natural finish in keeping with garden settings. For added security in what can be a vulnerable area, replacement products accredited to the Secured by Design (SBD) scheme offer enhanced security features. The addition of window film will also obscure tempting interiors.

For those looking to protect against the elements, a timber or metal verandah provides a sheltered link and storage area, but allow for a 10 per cent reduction in daylight to adjoining rooms. Should guttering require adding or replacing, then cast iron or copper will prove more aesthetically pleasing than PVC. Outside structures could also house and hide unsightly waste and recycling bins. They could also be extended to provide room for bicycles and bulkier household

essentials, but do fit adequate locks and motion sensors.

When it comes to landscaping, gravel instantly alerts to visitors. For formal pavers or flags, Louisa Morgan of Mandarin Stone, suggests, "complement interior flooring by continuing with the same externally, so the outside space becomes an extension of your home". Whatever your choice, illuminate paths and steps for safety and consider enhancing planting schemes by highlighting foliage – try handy spiked ground spots that allow for re-positioning.

Soften lines around doors with low-maintenance pots. Evergreens, including hebes, box and bay, retain structure all year round, whilst scented shrubs such as lavender exude an aromatic welcome. Climbers, such as wisteria and clematis, or topiary and standard bays, also work well either side of the door.

INTERNAL STYLE

Whether passageway, lobby or dedicated boot room, rear entrances are vital components of the home and these busy transitional spaces require practical finishes. If this conjures up the stoically functional or impersonal, then think again and look to marry form with function.

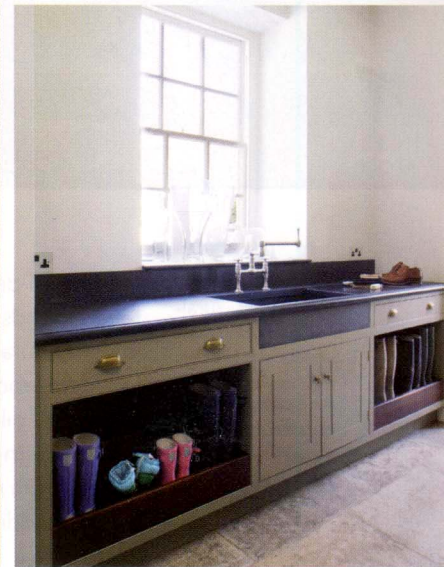
Glass lanterns or pendants will help shed light on these serviceable areas, and wall-mounted designs, such as those by Jim Lawrence, provide a viable option should head height be an issue. ▶





LEFT Designed by Irina Townsend, this corridor between rear and front entrances incorporates useful built-in storage. Bespoke Italian cupboards; textured ceramic tiles with Emperador inserts, £95 a sq m; ceiling-mounted chandeliers, from £400 each; chandelier pendants, from £550 each; sofa, £1200; chest of drawers, £450, all Keir Townsend

RIGHT Even small spaces can be practical. Milton four-drawer console table, £700; shelving units, £375 each; Corby Check wallpaper, £32 a roll; Kubu baskets, from £45; cushions in Peony Garden and Highland Check, all Laura Ashley



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT Tiles are a practical choice. York Terracotta, £39.96 a sq m, Fired Earth

Simple cabinetry with a robust stone worktop provides a service area next to the back door. Bespoke cabinetry, £POA, Artichoke

Tailor boot-room space to those who use it. Rustic Wood Warrior dining table, £1295; Ashbourne wool dining bench, £990; Plain Linen cushion covers, from £25; large Rattan Mattaban dog bed, £295, all Oka