

ALL CHANGE

Having children called for a bold rethink of this space, resulting in a relaxing and versatile family scheme that doesn't compromise on style



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Can you describe the project?

This is the living room of an early 19th-century, Grade II-listed house in south London. We originally decorated it in 2006 and, at the time, the clients wanted quite a formal feel. Now that they have a young family, they were keen to create a more relaxed, practical room that could also double as a space for entertaining.

Did the room pose any challenges?

It is quite narrow, so we had to be selective in the choice of furniture. As the clients wanted the room to comfortably seat eight, we opted for a bespoke corner sofa. I'm a big fan of this shape, as it can accommodate a lot of people and is perfect for lounging with children. We chose a version with raised, tapered legs, which looks smart and sits lightly in the space. The gold velvet footstool provides an extra perch and matches a pair of small armchairs on the other side of the room.

How did you devise the colour scheme?

The client loves colour and likes to be brave with it, and wanted this family space to have a sense of fun. It was the sofa fabric that set the ball rolling for this scheme: the turquoise shade is suitably bright and nicely offsets the yellow shades of the eye-catching table lamps, which the client had fallen in love with. Equally important, it is a contract fabric so it's very hard wearing. The second fabric the client went for was the ikat pattern, which inspired the choice of gold for the footstool, armchairs and shade of the floor light. We then added a mix of bespoke and ready-made cushions to tie in with the neutral tones of the rug, which we reused from the previous scheme.

Can you tell us about the fitted storage?

The bookcase, made from weathered oak with a subtle limed finish, was designed when we originally decorated the room, and is one of a pair at either side of the fireplace. The arched top echoes the shape of the windows. It's very practical as it has display shelves as well as cupboards, which conceal the television and sound system. We simply updated the units by adding LED lighting around the edge. This adds a subtle glow at night that nicely complements the ambient lighting provided by the table and floor lamps.

How did you create focal points?

The fireplace, which is original to the property, is the natural focal point of the scheme, and we enhanced it with an overmantel antiqued mirror. It was also important to make a feature of the far wall, as this is what guests first see on entering. We hung pictures in a grid pattern above a console table with a pair of matching lamps – the symmetry adds strength to the arrangement and helps draw the eye into the room.

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM PHOTOGRAPHS NICHOLAS YARLEY



WHERE TO BUY

FURNITURE Bespoke L-shaped Brompton sofa with Tuxedo arms, George Smith, georgesmith.com. Siena coffee table, from £2,440, Tom Faulkner, tomfaulkner.co.uk. Coombe round stool, £324, Claremont Sofa Designs, claremontsofadesigns.co.uk. **FABRICS** Sofa in Aros in Blue Topaz 25, £40m, Wemyss, wemyssfabrics.com. Stool in Vel Infroissable II in Jaune Empire 15102, £151m, Edmond Petit at Turnell & Gigon, turnellandgigon.com. Bolster cushions in Uzbek in Red/Gold/Blue, £193m, Brunswick & Fils, brunswick.com. Patterned red velvet

cushions in Fitzroy in Red, £115m, Andrew Martin, andrewmartin.co.uk. **WALLS** Stone III, Pure Flat Emulsion, £42.50 for 2.5 litres, Paint & Paper Library, paintandpaperlibrary.com. **ACCESSORIES** Jazz table lamps, £1,536 each; Top Hat shades in Honey Satin, £215 each; Twig floor lamp in Burnished Gold, £984; all Porta Romana, portaromana.com. Ikat shade, from £275, Melodi Horne, melodihorne.com. Lightly antiqued Art Deco overmantel mirror with patinated brass studs, from £450sq m, Rupert Bevan, rupertbevan.com.

