



COLOUR BLOCKING

With just a few tubs of paint and a large dose of imagination, Jessica Preston has transformed her bungalow into a creative haven

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Line open shelves with colourful spice jars, dainty egg cups and your favourite mugs for an easy décor update

A lick of paint brings Jessica's kitchen to life with minimal effort and budget. 'The pipes would have been expensive to box in, so I decided to embrace them and make a feature,' she says. The wall unit is a 1960s kitchen cabinet that Jessica uncovered in a house clearance and updated with splashes of colour.

Kitchen units, B&Q. **Drawer handles**, Hafele. **Worktop**, Top Worktops. **Sink**, Smeg. **Tap**, B&Q. **Wall tiles**, Fired Earth. Cupboard painted in Auburn Falls 3, Delhi Bazaar 3 and Pure Brilliant White satinwood, Dulux. For similar porcelain **floor tiles**, try Tile Mountain



There are traces of Jessica's past scattered throughout her home, from the artwork above her bed – an origami fabric sculpture from her days as a textile designer – to the plot of land on which her bungalow sits. The area was once farmland owned by Jessica's great grandparents, much of which was eventually sold off, but she grew up in the bungalow next door and spent her childhood in the area.

Moving back to the area was a strange experience for Jessica, who spent much of her 20s in St Albans. Returning to her roots with her daughter, Polly, she couldn't help but be reminded of her childhood – and was keen for Polly to experience a similarly happy environment. Jessica's parents, who own her bungalow and rented it out before she moved in, did a basic job of modernising it, but it was still 'rental bland', as Jessica describes it. 'I wanted it to be a colourful and positive place for Polly to grow up in,' she says.

Jessica's intentions shine through in every aspect of her design. As soon as you walk through the front door – painted in Polly's favourite colour, green – you're met with a bright blue hallway. 'I always wanted a blue room in my house, and the hallway is a good place to experiment. It's a space where you're generally passing through, but one that makes an instant impression as you enter a house,' Jessica says.

The room doubles up as Jessica's workspace, from which she launched her interior design company colour + shape. Although she's hoping to convert her garage into an office in the future, her current set-up has served her well so far. 'Sometimes hallways are seen as an area you need to fill, but in a house this size you have to use all available space,' she laughs. 'I would quite like a dedicated studio, though.'

Jessica brought certain elements of her old property – a Victorian townhouse flat – with her when she moved back to Foxton, and the living room was built around her old scheme. 'The monochrome sitting room came from specific items – vases, glassware and my textile wall panel,' she explains. She used clashing patterns to prevent the scheme

TOP TIP

Don't want to commit to a feature wall? Make the most of smaller surfaces like cupboard doors to try out your bold designs

Below Polly's influence on the bungalow's scheme starts as soon as you walk through the front door, which is painted in her favourite colour. The plywood pegboard was made by Jessica and her dad.

For similar **paint**, try Phthalo Green, Little Greene. For a **pegboard**, try Kreis Design



Above If you can't find your dream wall colour, why not mix it yourself? Jessica created her perfect blue by combining two paints – and she has an extra tub of the customised colour tucked away for any bumps and scratches.

Azure Sky 1 and Pure Brilliant White matt emulsion **paint**, Dulux. 1960s Maclamp **desk lamp**, Ebay. **Wall plates**, People Will Always Need Plates. **Desk legs**, Habitat. **Glass top**, Go Glass. **Chair**, Habitat. **Drawer unit**, Ikea



**CLEVER
IDEA**

Profile

THE OWNER

Jessica Preston, who runs an interior design consultancy (colourandshape.co.uk) lives here with daughter Polly, seven

THE PROPERTY

A two-bedroom detached 1960s bungalow in Foxton, Cambridgeshire

PROJECT COST

£19,250



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Don't limit yourself to cushion covers when experimenting with pattern; bespoke lampshades are a great way to introduce fun prints

Among the pots and vases Jessica uses to accessorise her home is a collection of ceramics, sourced through Ebay, that were made in 1964 – the same year the bungalow was built.

Remix **wallpaper**, Ferm Living. **Floor lamp**, Habitat, covered with Colourdrome **fabric**, St Jude's. Says Who **dining table**, John Lewis. **Dining chairs**, Habitat. **Pendant light**, John Lewis. Sanctuary Soft Feather wall **paint**, Homebase. **Floor**, Topps Tiles. Scion **curtains**, John Lewis. **Sofa**, Marks & Spencer. **Cushions**, Margo Selby

Below The open shelving in Jessica's home is a chance for her to display her most treasured items. 'People don't have as many CDs, DVDs and books any more, and that makes it easier to have nice objects on display rather than having to build in masses of storage,' she says.

Shelving unit, Habitat. **Listrado flatweave rug**, John Lewis. **Jersey floor cushion**, Kumeko. Engineered wooden **floor**, Topps Tiles. Matador **armchair** upholstered in wool felt, Kirkby Design. **Floor cushion**, Kumeko



UNDER FOOT

Perk up your space with our pick of the most stylish monochrome rugs. Your living room floor has never looked so good...



- 1** Catamaran graphite and ivory stripe rug, from £48, Dash & Albert Europe
- 2** Lombard black and white wool rug, £229, Swoon Editions
- 3** OYOY circle rug, £57.80, Diddle Tinkers
- 4** Benni rug, from £329, Modern Rugs



from becoming too plain. 'Monochrome can be boring if it's just block colour,' she says. 'The pared-down palette means that bolder, more daring patterns can work really well.'

Jessica cites her upbringing as the main inspiration for many of the rooms – including Polly's bedroom. 'I thought a lot about my own bedroom as a child, especially the primary colours of the 1980s,' she says. The springboard for the design was a duvet set by 1970s German designer Graziela Preiser. 'Her work is quite collectable now, and her daughter relaunched her designs from that era, which reminds me of my childhood,' Jessica explains. 'I used the four main colours from that duvet set and blocked them around the room.' She even managed to find a wardrobe similar to the style she had as a child.

Working on a tight budget meant that Jessica made every effort to save money – especially in the kitchen and bathroom. 'One of my tips for cutting down costs is to keep the layout as it is,' she says. 'If it works well, keep the basics in place and you'll save the cost of replumbing and rewiring.' Jessica retained the sanitaryware in the bathroom and refurbished the kitchen with B&Q units, updated with oak handles.

Jessica's artistic skill comes into play throughout the bungalow, not least in the form of the pegboards hung up in the kitchen and hallway, which she and her dad made from plywood. For Jessica, it's a great way to show off the colourful kitchen utensils that would otherwise be relegated to the back of a drawer. 'It's a cost-effective way of using wall space,' she says. 'If artwork isn't within your budget, you can use your own objects to create a display instead.'

Making the most of everyday objects is central to Jessica's design, as the open shelving around her house shows. The living room is filled with vases and pots she has collected over the years, including several Hornsea plant pots that were created in the same year as the bungalow was built. 'I like to look at the nice things I have and edit down my collection,' she says. The same can't be said for Polly's toys. 'I'm facing a battle as she gets older,' Jessica laughs. 'All her nice wooden toys are being replaced with Lego.'

The bungalow is a playful take on Jessica's childhood memories, and Polly played a big part in the design, too. 'Having a young child was definitely an influence while I was decorating,' she says. 'As a family of two, I was focused on making it a happy space for her after moving home.' It seems that Jessica's love of colour might have rubbed off on Polly, too. 'She talks about colour a lot,' Jessica laughs. 'When school seems to be so focused on maths and science, I'm just glad that she has a colourful, creative environment to grow up in.'

Below The bathroom might not be as brightly coloured as the rest of the bungalow, but it's just as striking with its bold monochrome theme.

Sanitaryware, Bathstore. Custom **blinds**, Vision Photo Blinds. Off-Black wall **paint**, Farrow & Ball. White **tiles**, Tons of Tiles. **Towel holder**, Nest. **Towel**, Cox & Cox. **Mirror**, House by John Lewis



Right Jessica's own artwork takes pride of place on her bedroom wall and harks back to her days as a textile designer. 'It's an old origami technique that I applied to fabric and made into a 3D sculpture,' she explains. 'It's nice to have a few bits around the house that remind me of what I used to do.'

Bed, bedside tables, table lamps and **yellow throw**, Habitat. **Cushions**, St Jude's and Marimekko. **Pendant light**, Geoffrey Drayton. **Green throw**, The British Blanket Company. Designers Guild **curtains**, John Lewis. Wall **paint** in Bleached Lichen 3, Woodland Fern 3, Indian Ivy 3, Willow Creek 1, and Spring Breeze 1, Dulux

HAVING A YOUNG CHILD
WAS DEFINITELY
AN INFLUENCE WHILE I WAS
DECORATING

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Jessica's geometric wall is easy to recreate on a budget. Use masking tape to map out shapes and fill them in with pops of colour





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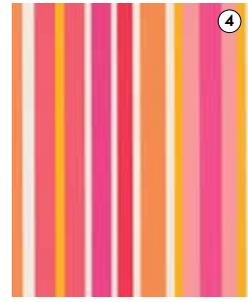
Create a feature wall your child will love by propping up their favourite books on colour-co-ordinated floating shelves

Painted floating shelves display Polly's favourite books. 'For a child, it's much more enticing to see the front cover of a book, and it encourages them to pick one off the shelf,' Jessica says.

Woodland Fern 3 and Pure Brilliant White wall **paint**, Dulux. **Book ledges**, Ikea. **Bureau**, Ebay. **Rug**, Etsy. **Chair**, Pintoy. **Flooring**, Topps Tiles

PATTERN PLAY

Fire up your child's imagination with these bright and beautiful patterned wallpapers



- 1 Harlequin Kaleidoscope wallpaper, £38 per roll, John Lewis
- 2 Retro Brights wallpaper, £50 per roll, Graham & Brown
- 3 Superfresco Easy wallpaper Oiti Juane, £15 per roll, Wilko
- 4 Scion Jelly Tot Stripe wallpaper, £30 per roll, Wallpaper Direct

ON TREND



Above Jessica says the room she had as a child influenced the way she thinks about colour now, and she's keen for Polly to share her creative mindset. 'Polly loves her bedroom,' Jessica says. 'Whenever I try to switch it up, she's always hesitant to change it.'

Pienet Kivet **wallpaper**, Marimekko.
Bed, Ikea. **Bedding**, byGraziela.
Shelving unit, Habitat

Contacts

Kitchen units B&Q,
 0333 014 3098, diy.com
Kitchen worktop
 Top Worktops,
 0800 028 4454,
 topworktops.co.uk
Custom fabric St Jude's,
 01603 662951,
 stjudesfabrics.co.uk

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