

Each issue we round up the best in the business to answer your homemaking woes, so if you've got a query you'd like help with, tell Deputy Editor Phillipa at [phillipa.smith@aceville.co.uk](mailto:phillipa.smith@aceville.co.uk)

ADAM BLACK, CO-FOUNDER OF BUTTON & SPRUNG, [BUTTONANDSPRUNG.COM](http://BUTTONANDSPRUNG.COM), GIVES HIS ADVICE ON SETTING UP A ROOM FOR A SPEEDY RECOVERY.



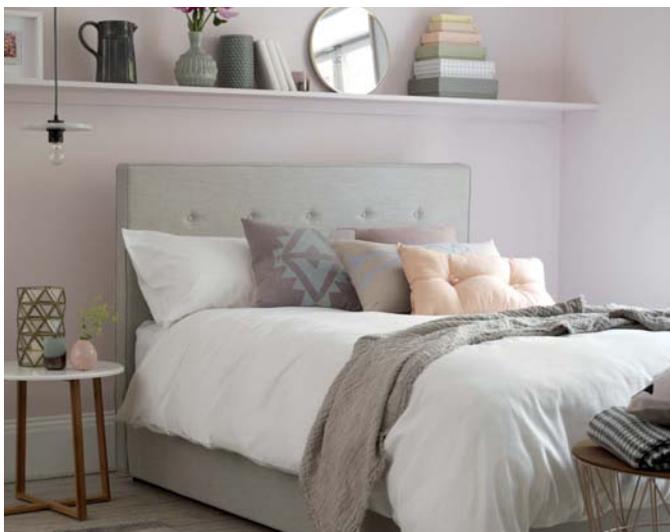
### Q

*I'm preparing our spare room for my mother-in-law to come and recuperate after an operation. I want to make a relaxing space for her and make sure she is comfortable. Any tips?*

**JANE BAKER**

### A

"For someone who is going to be confined to a bedroom, it's important to make their space as homely and comfortable as possible. The bed is the most important purchase so make sure it delivers a great night's sleep; the mattress is the key element so choose the best you can afford. We only recommend pocket sprung mattresses as they offer optimum comfort. We have developed a new type of technology whereby traditional pocket springs are wrapped with layers of low profile mini springs to offer progressive support – meaning the more you push on it, the more it pushes back to support you. It delivers the best night's sleep and is perfect for a poorly patient. In terms of bed frames, our upholstered Poppy divan bed is a great choice as it delivers a clean, contemporary look and also provides hidden storage to tidy away linens and guest towels. Invest in luxury bedding in crisp white cotton to keep the look fresh and your mother-in-law comfortable. Lighting is important so choose a bedside lamp with a dimmer that can easily be adjusted. Finally, introduce well chosen, stylish accessories that will complement rather than overwhelm the décor."



DESIGN CONSULTANT FOR THOMAS SANDERSON, [THOMAS-SANDERSON.CO.UK](http://THOMAS-SANDERSON.CO.UK), PATRICE CHANDLER OUTLINES HER TOP STYLING TIPS FOR CONSERVATORIES.



### Q

*I wish my conservatory had more of a contemporary feel, it's more like an old shed than an extension of my modern home! How can I improve its look and make better use of this space?*

**SALLY JENKINS**

### A

"Updating the interior styling of a conservatory will make it feel like part of your home, and by injecting colour you can transform your conservatory into a comfortable living space you will enjoy all year round. The blinds are a great place to start. There is a wide choice with regards to the type of blind that you can put in a conservatory, ranging from pleated, vertical, Duette® blinds, wood or aluminum Venetians, Romans, roller blinds and shutters. Metallics work really well in a conservatory. Start with a base layer of muted silver and grey tones applied to the walls and window blinds. During the evening the silver grey blinds work as a fantastic backdrop, while the natural light and huge glass expanse allows metallic accessories to shine during the day and take on lots of different looks and effects within a room. Add coordinating floor lights, table lamps and a collection of pendants in copper colours for a room that is both classic and on-trend."

RICHARD PHILLIPS, FOUNDER OF THE SOAP KITCHEN, [THESOAPKITCHEN.CO.UK](http://THESOAPKITCHEN.CO.UK), PROVIDES SOME INSPIRING IDEAS FOR MAKING PRESENTS OUT OF SOAP.



Q

*I've recently started experimenting with soap making and am looking for some new designs to try that are fancy enough to work as gifts. What can you recommend?*

**KELLY HOOD**

A

"More fancy soaps are usually best made using a good melt and pour base and detailed silicone moulds. A more intricate soap can also be made by adding interest with decorative additions or embedments. It is important when working with both clear and opaque soap bases together to use colours that will not bleed into each other. These are techniques which you'll need to master with practice and I'd recommend using the Stephenson's Ultra Clear base alongside their standard white base. You need to choose a colouring system which will maintain transparency in the clear base, but will also be effective in the white base, so for that I'd recommend the Zenicolor 5 branded colouring product specifically made for this purpose. When adding fragrances to the soap be sure to identify if a fragrance choice is likely to discolour. Many vanilla types do but this can be overcome by choosing a non-discolouring version or one with a vanilla stabiliser."



MARLENE DIXON, CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF WILD & WOLF, [WILDANDWOLF.COM](http://WILDANDWOLF.COM), HELPS ONE READER GET COLOURFUL WITH THEIR HOME OFFICE SPACE.



Q

*In a bid to encourage good homework habits I have promised my kids a revamped desk space. I'm looking for some ideas to make this area practical but fun and somewhere they would like to be, rather than forced to be!*

**LUCIA ELLIOTT**

A

"Studying can be a chore whatever your age! But having an organised, bright space can make it all the more enjoyable. Have a stash of pens, pencils, notebooks and other stationery on hand. Start by injecting a pop of colour into the space, such as yellow, which is said to stimulate intellect, logic and creativity. A colourful wall clock is a really easy and inexpensive way to instantly perk up the area. Paint a circle around it in a complementary hue to add a point of focus on the wall and help your child keep track of study time without the distraction of an iPhone. Good lighting is essential so invest in an adjustable task lamp that will direct bright light onto books and laptops and reduce eyestrain. A wooden clipboard makes a fun alternative to a traditional cork noticeboard and can be propped up on the desk or hung on the wall and used for inspiration or for organising work. Finally, a light-up globe adds a fun yet educational touch to the desk."

