

bathrooms



bathing grooming cleansing toning nourishing styling

The bathroom is often a challenging space to design so that all functions can be accommodated within the area. Its location is crucial, so it can be money well spent to position it so that it can be easily accessed from the bedrooms it services, and a guest toilet and hand basin is needed to service living areas within the home.

When planning to renovate a bathroom, in consultation with your designer or plumber who knows local building and water regulations, you must consider the layout of existing water pipes, sewage outlets and air exhaust ducts.

While the bathroom needs to be functional and efficient do not overlook the importance of the therapeutic and pleasurable aspects of bathing when planning this room.



clean purify refresh revive pamper indulge

The bathroom is a space where you can unwind after a busy day - it should be a place where you pamper yourself, a place where you can escape for solitude and privacy. It is the one room of the home where you can lock yourself away and shed your anxieties.

Think of the visual pleasure when fitting out the bathroom. This room has become a sensually neutral space where we can restore the balance between mind and body. Just the sound of flowing water makes people feel happy and relaxed, and as water becomes scarcer we will value it more - cherish this precious commodity and use it carefully.



Checklist

- How many bathrooms, showers, toilets do you need?
- Do you want the toilets in separate rooms from showers and baths?
- How much hot water do you need to service them?
- Do you prefer showers or baths, do you need both?
- What type of taps and faucets do you prefer?
- What type of shower fittings would work best?
- What storage do you require in these rooms?
- What type of ventilation and heating is needed?
- What sort of general and task lighting s required?
- Do you need shaver/hairdryer power points?
- Where should you position the mirrors?
- Do you need to integrate the laundry in a bathroom?
- What other functions will take place in the space such as applying make-up, hairstyling, dressing etc.
- Consider the cleaning and maintenance issues, and the surfaces on the floor, walls, vanities.
- What bathroom accessories will be required?



space planning and safety tips

Include sufficient space for everything including the doors, windows, sloping ceilings. Ensure basins and toilets have enough elbow and kneed room and towels and tissue are within reach. Allow space for standing and sitting, getting in and out of the bath or shower. Fit grab-rails to walls and select fixtures that will make the bathroom safe to move in. Select non-slip flooring and non-protruding cabinet and door handles to minimise injury.

Store medicines and cleaning materials out of reach of young children, also electrical sockets. Mirrors and glass should be shatterproof, especially screens around shower and bath. Ensure electrical, plumbing and ventilation services comply with local building and safety standards.

showers

When you have decided how many fixtures are required and which ones will be in which spaces, it is time to look at the various models and styles.

Showers are more economical to use than baths, and if possible install a separate shower rather than one over a bath. Ready-made shower cubicles are available in acrylic and glass and some have integrated seats and shampoo/soap shelves.

Another option is a custom-built tiled shower alcove that can be a “wet area” which means they do not require shower doors. Easy to access and maintain.

Shower heads can be hand-held units, adjustable to suit the height of each user or fixed on the wall or ceiling. There are adjustable shower heads that deliver water in various pressures and water jets. It is a good idea to install the water and temperature controls outside the shower so you can set them before you enter the shower cubicle.

Ready-made shower cubicles are quite sophisticated and can incorporate massaging shower heads, steam saunas and ventilation within their design.



bath tubs

The ritual of bathing was historically for the delight of mind and body, as well as hygiene, in many cultures. In the Zen tradition physical and spiritual cleansing are one – the washing is a separate process from soaking and meditation. Scandinavian saunas and outdoor hot tubs are about stimulation and purification, and connecting to nature. Put together a kit of essential oils, massage brushes, cloths and candles and take time to enjoy your bathing experience.

Traditional cast-iron and pressed steel baths with vitreous enamel finishes are stable and long lasting, as are timber, concrete and tiled bath tubs. Increasingly popular are less expensive options made from acrylic and plastic which are chip resistant and warm to touch.

Sunken baths are not always easy to get in and out of, and more difficult to clean. Setting the bath into a low platform may be more practical.

Baths were made of tin, timber or concrete but now vitreous china and other man-made products are the preferred materials.



spa baths

Soaking in a bubble bath with jets of water massaging your body is considered by some to be an essential luxury in many bathrooms today, from hotel suites to master ensuites.

There is a wide selection of styles and materials from timber tubs to acrylic baths with integrated filters, heater and pumps to drive the water jets.

Spa baths are also seen outdoors or positioned within the bathroom so they have a view outdoors.

basins

Choose a basin that is as large as the space permits, deep enough from front to back to enable you to bend over easily when washing your face, and wide enough to accommodate dripping hands and elbows. The height should be appropriate to those using it (usually 1 metre from floor level), and tap is easy to reach and operate.

Do you want a pedestal basin (free standing) or one incorporated within a vanity unit - is it to be mounted into the top of the vanity or under the vanity surface material?

There are also vessel basins which sit on top, and wall hung basins which are fixed to the wall and generally have exposed pipes. There are all shapes and sizes, round or square, semi-recessed or integrated. Some bathrooms have two basins, such as in the master ensuite or family bathroom, so two people can use them simultaneously.



Large semi-recessed basin above with storage underneath; square basin and vessel basin, which sits on top of a vanity unit.

toilets + bidets + urinals

Most toilets are made from glazed vitreous china and are available in a range of styles and designs. The toilet waste is taken away by a pipe into the wall or through the floor. Wall-hung toilets are fixed to the wall and makes cleaning the floor easy.

Urinals, normally only seen in men's public toilets, are being installed in family homes more frequently today.

Cisterns that hold the water to flush away toilet waste can be hidden behind the wall or fixed to the wall above the toilet.

Bidets can be either tap filled or supplied from under the brim. Separate hot and cold water supply pipes and a vented soil pipe are legal requirements.



taps + faucets

Taps can be mounted on the hand basin, vanity or bath, or fixed to the wall over the basin or bath. The hot and cold taps can operate separately, but more often today they are mixed and to the desired temperature and flow from a spout or faucet.

Some taps can have a thermostatic control to prevent burns, and others can be sensor operated so that the flow of water is triggered by the movement of hands under the faucet, and they automatically turn off once there is no movement in front of the sensor.

Make sure taps are easy to operate, especially with soapy hands, and that they direct the water accurately into the hand basin or bath. Some have swivel spouts and bath mixers may have pull-out hose attachments similar to those seen in kitchens.



lighting

Bathrooms often sacrifice natural sunlight to provide privacy with small windows, or living rooms and kitchens are positioned to take advantage of the sunshine and light. Good lighting is important for overall safety when moving about the bathroom, especially if floors are wet and slippery, or glass screens are misty with steam.

Overall lighting can be achieved by a single ceiling dome or downlights, while task lighting for make-up application or shaving is best achieved by wall lights or tube lights around the mirrors. Hollywood lights or fluorescent tubes give an excellent accurate light for task lighting.

Halogen lights play with reflections on shiny surfaces such as chrome, glass, tiles or marble but are rather harsh on skin-tones so not ideal for make-up application. However white light tends to make the room appear larger, and this may be more important.

Larger windows with translucent glass allow more natural light into the space, as well as provide better ventilation. Floor to ceiling glass bricks allow light into the space and provide privacy. Glass, metal or timber louvers provide good air flow and ventilation.

ventilation + heating

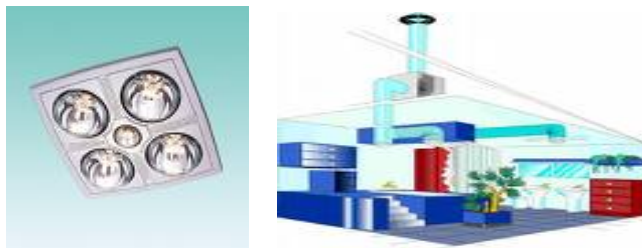
Good ventilation is vital in the bathroom to combat steam and condensation. Keeping the room warm helps, and some lights double up as a heated lamps.

A ventilation or extractor unit is needed for internal rooms, they are ideally automatically activated when the light is turned on or the door is opened.

Heated towel rails help to dry out towels. Wall-mounted fan heaters, well out of reach of children, are also helpful to warm the space and move the steam towards vents or extractor unit.

Mist-free mirrors, which are popular, resist steam build up and reduce maintenance.

Steam and condensation leads to mould and mildew and moisture retention can result in rotting timber and other substrates. Opening windows and louvres helps to reduce moisture. Consider using Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen Kitchen & Bathroom with anti-bacterial silver protection and MoulDefender to protect against mould.



Integrated lighting, heating and ventilation unit above, and ventilation plan below to extract moisture and odours.

floors + walls + ceilings

All surfaces in the bathroom need to be water resistant and easy to clean.

Flooring materials most often used include well sealed timber or cork, vinyl and non-slip ceramic tiles which are best with underfloor heating pads as they can be very cold to stand on. Non slip natural stone or industrial rubber flooring are other options.

The walls are often tiled; sometimes part way up and sometimes to the ceiling depending on budget and taste. Ceramic and glass mosaic tiles are popular.

Paint especially formulated for kitchens and bathrooms is available from Resene and is the easiest and most cost effective way to decorate the walls and ceilings. A high gloss level tends to aggravate condensation and should be avoided.



Smooth stones or timber slats feel sensual underfoot. The tiled stairs up to bath have lights inset into them for safety. Colourful tiled walls to the left recreate a sense of water.



bathroom accessories

The accessories often unify the style or feel of the bathroom or powder room. Whether they be stainless steel or chrome for a slick contemporary look, or pebbles and timber for a more cosy and tactile feel.

The essentials are towel rails, soap dishes, toothbrush holders, soap dispensers, waste bins, toilet brush holders and often bathroom scales, hairdryers, make-up mirrors, etc.

Choose towels and colours that suit the rest of the room, and if you have space add a chair or seat, or pot plants that enjoy humid conditions.

Scented candles, shells, perfume bottles and other collectibles add character.



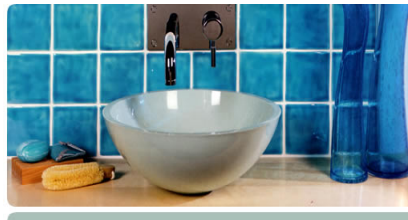
bathroom styles + colours

White and pale aquamarine are popular colours because they depict hygiene and cleanliness. These colours also keep the space light and airy, open and clean. Large expanses of glass also add the feeling of space and light to a bathroom. Thick, white fluffy towels and robes give the feeling of luxury.



white + black

The tiled bathroom on the left is streamlined and linear. The bathroom pod above is a stand-alone round bath-tub with massaging shower unit above and an integrated steam sauna.



bathing in colour

Colour can be injected with painted feature walls, coloured glass or ceramic tile splashback, feature drawers in vanity or a pile of bright towels.



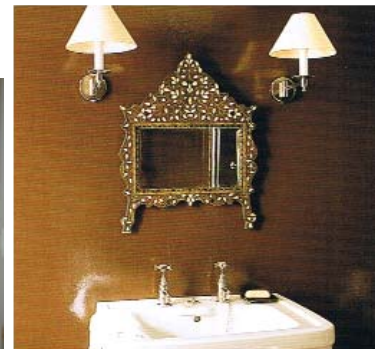
bathing spaces for children

Kids will enjoy their bath time in these decorated rooms.



vanities + materials

Natural materials, such as marble, granite and timber, give a bathroom space strength and character. The timber vanity also provides good storage.



guest toilet + hand basin

This space usually stands alone and is one where you can add a little drama or glitz and glamour. Moisture and steam is not an issue so you can use decorative wallpaper, metallic paint or tiles, gilded mirrors, glossy ceiling paint and strong colours. This is also a great place to display collections on the walls, such as postcards from your travels or old family photos. The wall behind the toilet can be treated as a feature wall, similar to the wall behind the bed in the bedroom, and given a strong colour or metallic sheen.



natural materials + industrial materials

The warmth of timber and play of light through louvers makes the bathroom to the left feel intimate and inviting, and the rubber flooring is tactile to walk on. Stainless steel basins and toilets were originally reserved for public institutions but are now featured in homes and apartments where an industrial theme is desired.



bathing + country theme

A 'country' theme can be achieved by the selection of more traditional fittings, a free-standing bath on timber floorboards and the additional of a chair in the corner for towels.



texture + smooth

Travertine and timber with concrete vanity top or frosted glass and stainless steel with marble floor.



other tasks

With compact apartments and townhouses often other functions take place in the bathroom. One of these is an integrated laundry hidden in a cupboard. If space is an issue a condenser washer-dryer maybe the answer as it washes and dries the clothes in the one unit, and the moisture is collected rather than dispersed into the air.

Internal clotheslines in the shower or over the bath are also popular in high-rise dwellings in particular.

Some people also keep their fitness equipment in a larger bathroom space, an exercise-cycle or treadmill. Others may install a sun bed or walk-in sauna.



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And remember to conserve water - the average 5 minute shower uses 30 litres of water, and an average bath uses 80 to 90 litres - one dripping tap wastes 5,000 litres of water over a year!

compiled by

- Colourwaves - Jill Carroll

Resene

the paint the professionals use