

BATHROOMS: POWDER PLAY

TURN THE TINIEST ROOM
IN YOUR HOME INTO
A GUEST-READY HAVEN
WITH OUR 20 EXPERT TIPS

Words VANESSA KEYS

It may be the smallest room in the home but, as one of the most frequented, your powder room needs to pack a powerful punch, just as this stylish Studio Black Interiors design does. “Your powder room should reflect how you want your guests to feel when they’re in your home: welcome, comfortable and refreshed,” says Paris Dean, sales manager at surface specialists Cosentino. It can also be one of the most enjoyable spaces in the home to decorate – the limited square footage means you can splurge on materials. And without steam or moisture to contend with, you can go wild with the colours, patterns and even artwork. >

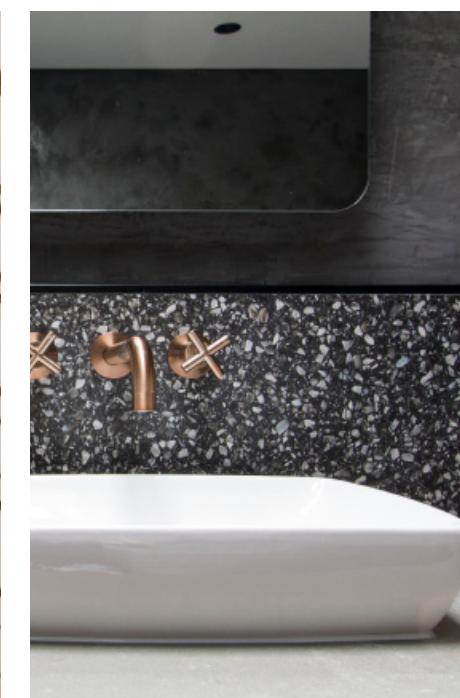


2. STORE AWAY

Consider whether your powder room will be used mainly for lippy touch-ups and easy loo access, or whether you’ll want space to store toothbrushes and razors. “For storing bulky items, go for a vanity with built-in storage,” says Amy Revell, founder of The Art of Decluttering. “Opt for drawers with dividers – things are less likely to languish at the back.”

3. CONCEALED CISTERN

If space is limited, choose a wall-hung toilet (right). “These need less room compared to a toilet suite with a ceramic cistern,” says Franco Parisi, COO of Parisi.



4. HEAVENLY MATCH

Pair this year’s two hottest materials: terrazzo and slab tiles (as in the Zou Build bathroom, above). “The seamless finish of the slab tiles creates the perfect canvas to showcase the intricate details in each terrazzo tile,” says Vanessa Thompson from Beaumont Tiles. “The best thing about this combination is that it can go on either the floor or wall.”



5 *stand-out statement*
Where storage isn’t a priority, consider eschewing the traditional vanity for a hero basin (left). “A stone-formed trough [above], wall-hung basin, or a freestanding cylindrical wash bowl will make a statement,” says Cosentino’s Paris. “Be consistent with silhouettes: if you have an oval basin, replicate the shape with curved fixtures.” >

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) AUBRIE PICK, RACHEL LANE/ZOU BUILD, JOE SCHMELZER, SIMON DEVIT (OPPOSITE) HCREATIONS/STUDIO BLACK INTERIORS

6 up the wall

Given its diminutive size, the powder room is the perfect place to go wild with a vibrant wallpaper pattern, as seen here. Large or small-scale geometrics and florals or novelty patterns are all fair game – some HB favourites are towering trees, oversized botanical prints and the iconic banana-leaf pattern. Worried about splashing? Look for a thick vinyl coating, which is designed to divert any moisture.

7. BASIN BEAUTY In small powder rooms where the sink's main function is hand-washing, go for a hand wall basin, says Luke Di Michiel, industrial designer at Caroma. "These can usually be matched with custom cabinetry for handy storage," he says. For slightly larger spaces, Luke recommends a semi-recessed sink.



8. BALANCING ACT Leaning towards a coastal-inspired or Scandinavian style? Consider pairing small, decorative textured tiles in a neutral tone, with larger-scale patterned tiles in contrasting colours such as blues and greys (above). "The idea is to look for pairings that create dynamic movement throughout the room, as opposed to large patterns that will compete with each other," says Vanessa Thompson from Beaumont.



PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) HCREATIONS/STUDIO BLACK INTERIORS, SIMON WHITBREAD/STYLING MANYANA HOUSE, MALIA ZINJA/MELANIE TURNER INTERIORS, SIMON WHITBREAD (OPPOSITE) STEPHANI BUCHMAN

9 room to move

In small bathrooms, the goal is to expose as much flooring as possible – this will extend sight lines and create the illusion of more space. "A wall-mounted sink or vanity (above) is perfect for this," explains Nick Swan, brand manager at Methven. "Lighting the underside of the vanity will further the illusion."



10

hidden gem

Think of your powder room as an tiny treasure box waiting to be discovered. "Your powder room should feel like a hidden sanctuary," says Vanessa. "And because they don't tend to be part of the main thoroughfare, they offer the opportunity to push the design narrative a little further." In this Alexandra Kidd Design space, moody textures and dark finishes add immediate drama.

"OPT FOR PATTERN ON THE FLOOR. THIS WILL HELP DISGUISE *dust and debris* FROM FOOT TRAFFIC AND DAILY LIFE" ~ VANESSA THOMPSON, BEAUMONT TILES

11. LIGHT AND BRIGHT

A layered lighting design that combines ambient lighting (overhead lights) with task lighting (that illuminates the vanity) means you can customise the light to your liking. Avoid recessed ceiling fixtures above the mirror – these will cast shadows on the face – and opt for vertical fixtures or sconces mounted on either side of the mirror (right).

12. LOCATION, LOCATION

When planning a powder room as part of a larger renovation, choose a central yet discreet location, says Mikayla Rose. "Where possible, locate the door with at least two transition points – entry might be via a small nook or mud area," she suggests. "This greatly increases the sense of privacy." >





13 *guest ready* Avoid awkward conversations by stocking your powder room with extra toilet paper, air freshener, hand wash (ideally without fragrance for sensitive skin) and plenty of soft hand towels.

14. TAP OUT *New tapware is an easy way to instantly change the feel and look of a space. For an on-trend look, swap traditional chrome for warm, burnished tones such as brass, copper and bronze. Or for an industrial edge, go for brushed nickel or sleek gunmetal grey (right).*

15. FANTASTIC FLOW *Mimic existing design elements. "Selecting taps and mixers that match the choices in your kitchen or repeating existing colours are great ways to present the powder room as a natural extension," says Caroma's Luke Di Michiel.*

16. SEA CHANGE *Aqueous hues, such as soft blues and sea greens, are definitely back in style, according to Vanessa from Beaumont Tiles. "Add texture with woven baskets and plenty of greenery," she says.*



17 *go bold* Step out of your comfort zone and think about stand-out features which can help to visually expand the room. "Repetition of materials such as floor-to-ceiling tiles or vertical panelling wrapped around four walls is a good trick - this continuity will be calming on the eye as there are no abrupt changes to visually absorb," says Paris from Cosentino.



18. GROUND CONTROL *The trend towards luxury vinyl and laminate tiles is still going strong, says Vanessa. "State-of-the-art technology means manufacturers can replicate the look of natural materials such as wood and stone." You still get all the benefits associated with tiles - waterproof, scratch resistant, termite and woodworm resistant - but for a fraction of the price.*

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PACK CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) STEPHANI BUCHMAN X 3 (OPPOSITE) TESSA NEUSTADT/AMBER INTERIORS



19

made to measure

The right layout is crucial to your guests' comfort and your home's resale value. "At a minimum, you need 300mm either side of the toilet and 600mm from the front of the toilet to the basin," says director and principal designer Mikayla Rose from Heartly. Where possible, she also recommends using a swinging door over a sliding door, as guests will feel more confident when locking them.

20. MASTER PLAN *"When specifying a wall-hung basin (as seen in this Amber Interiors Design), make sure you know the products you're using before the plumber roughs in the water inlet pipes," says interior designer Mikayla. Stand out plumbing, such as this, deserves to be seen - other styles might need to be concealed. HB*