

Below: Matteo Bianchi created an 'east meets west' feel in this bedroom, using a mix of finishes and splashes of bold colour. Character was added with a feature headboard and bedside lights. Mirrors were used to give the illusion of more space. The bedroom and ensuite cost around £32,000.

Right: A walk-in wardrobe is an instant solution for controlling clutter, creating a place for everything. The Hammonds Willesley white walk-in design is effortlessly classic with mirrored doors, LED interior lights and is available in six colours. Expect to pay from £2500.



Choose wisely

For complete customisation, bespoke furniture ensures that your finished bedroom will be one of a kind. You'll pay more for the service, but storage can be tailored to your exact needs so that no space is wasted and existing architectural features are effortlessly incorporated into the design.

Freestanding furniture is preferable if you like the freedom of being able to change the position of furniture regularly, plus you can take any items with you if you decide to move house. Companies such as Marks & Spencer and Habitat are recognising the need for compact furniture and many are now selling items specifically for small spaces such as fold-up desks, slimline shelving and narrow display units.

One of the best ways to use freestanding furniture is to seek out items that are multifunctional. An ottoman upholstered in luxury fabric not only looks ultra-stylish placed at the end of the bed and features generous storage capacity inside, but it can also double up as a footstool or comfy seat. Meanwhile, an elegant dressing table makes an impromptu desk for sorting paperwork or even catching up on work after hours, plus there are some brilliant models available that stow away into the smallest unit.

Don't assume that you have to choose either freestanding or fitted furniture. Enjoy the best of both worlds by introducing a mix of the two. A run of fitted wardrobes can be combined with smaller, freestanding items such as slimline bedside tables and a chic ottoman and will add a sense of balance to your scheme.

Personal recommendation is often the best way to find your dream supplier and you can view the finished results, but if this isn't an option, don't be afraid to ask lots of questions when visiting furniture showrooms. Enquire where the furniture is made and what materials are used, or if you are considering a bespoke company you can even ask to visit the workshop to check out the quality yourself.

A legitimate specialist company will send a designer to your home to assess your storage and lifestyle needs and if you don't strike up a good rapport, don't be hesitant to go elsewhere. Once initial plans have been drawn up and you have approved them, check lead times for the project,

start dates, how payment should be made and what should happen if something goes wrong or you are unhappy with the results.

Finishing touches

Mirrored finishes will work wonders in a small space as they reflect available light around the room, making it instantly feel bigger. Consider mirrored wardrobe doors or even a freestanding floor-length mirror propped against the wall.

"Both light and dark floors can work well in small spaces," explains Danny Walker of Karndean. "Stylish light and pale-toned floors can make a room feel more spacious and brighten up any dark spots. The lighter the floor, the more light will be reflected, creating the illusion of space. Pale wide planks and large stone tiles can also create the illusion of more space. Rooms look noticeably bigger."

If you love the feel of carpet or natural flooring materials such as jute, designs in neutrals are ideal and it's hard to beat the look of wooden floorboards painted white. When it comes to windows, adopt a streamlined ethos. Avoid dark, heavy and fussy patterned curtains that make your bedroom feel closed in; rather think clean lines and fuss-free simple roller blind or elegant shutters will look effortlessly chic.

Moving on up

Bedroom walls are often overlooked when it comes to design and storage. However, a wall bed is one of the most efficient ways to maximise this space and is ideal for studio apartments that need to combine living and sleeping zones. What's more, the latest designs are sleeker than ever before.

"Wall units are invaluable for keeping clutter off the floor and creating storage where previously there was none. They are usually much taller than pieces of furniture, so are a better use of space that way too," says Mahony of Go Modern. "Modular shelving can be arranged in a composition that mix open units for displaying fashionable accessories with closed units to tuck away items you would rather not have on show and make an impact feature on a previously plain wall."