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pattern and colour

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CAUGHT IN THE

This calm and cosy sitting room by Georgina Cave Interiors has richness and warmth through considered layering of pattern in cushions against a plain, muted backdrop.

MIDDLE

Striking the perfect balance between the refined curation of a minimalist approach and the character of eclectic maximalism, being a 'midimalist' creates both clarity and charm

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

Are you a midimalist? This emerging term encapsulates an approach to decorating that sits neatly between the simplicity and considered attitude of minimalist interiors and the mix-and-match exuberance of those that are unabashedly maximalist.

Judiciously balancing statement patterns and colours within the constraints of a limited palette or style, the midimalist also displays carefully chosen pieces that allow their warmth, character and personality to shine through without overwhelming a space.

Here we explore how to achieve this balancing act with advice from interior designers who have mastered the art of midimalism.

What is a midimalist?

'Midimalism is, quite simply, about restraint with soul,' explains Laura Hammet, creative director of her eponymous studio. 'It sits comfortably between the extremes of minimalism and maximalism, borrowing the discipline of one and the warmth of the other.'

This is a sentiment echoed by Hattie Hansard, interior designer at Joanna Wood: 'Midimalism is about curation really - it's not about stripping a space back to nothing, but about editing carefully so that ▶



LEFT A refined blue-and-white palette is a classic choice, enlivened by a statement armchair in block colour in this room designed by Sims Hilditch.



what remains really matters. It's about using pattern and colour, and collecting things that make your house a home, but it's also about remaining acutely aware that when a space feels cluttered, the viewer does not get to enjoy the individual pieces in it.'

Hammet explains how the move to this balanced approach has evolved: 'Minimalism dominated for a long time because it offered clarity in an increasingly noisy world. But as our lives became more complex – particularly post-pandemic – there was a natural desire for comfort, individuality and expression to return to our interiors. Maximalism emerged as a reaction – an embracing of colour, pattern and personal storytelling. As with all extremes, this can feel unsustainable long-term. What we're seeing now is a maturation of that shift – clients wanting warmth and character, but delivered with elegance and restraint. Hence, the rise of the middle ground.'

Rooms that work

While midimalism can be carried throughout a house, Marcelina Janiszewska, head of interior design at Project London, explains it works best in living areas: 'Spaces like living rooms, kitchens and dining rooms tend to be multifunctional, so they need to be balanced, calm and practical, while still having enough personality to support everyday life and entertaining.'

This balance is the epitome of midimalism, so these spaces benefit from blending the functional and the considered with a dash of playful character. 'Bedrooms also lend themselves to this approach,' Janiszewska adds. 'They benefit from a softer, more restrained palette, but midimalism allows for warmth and character through texture and some expressive details without disrupting the sense of calm.'

Refinement and intention

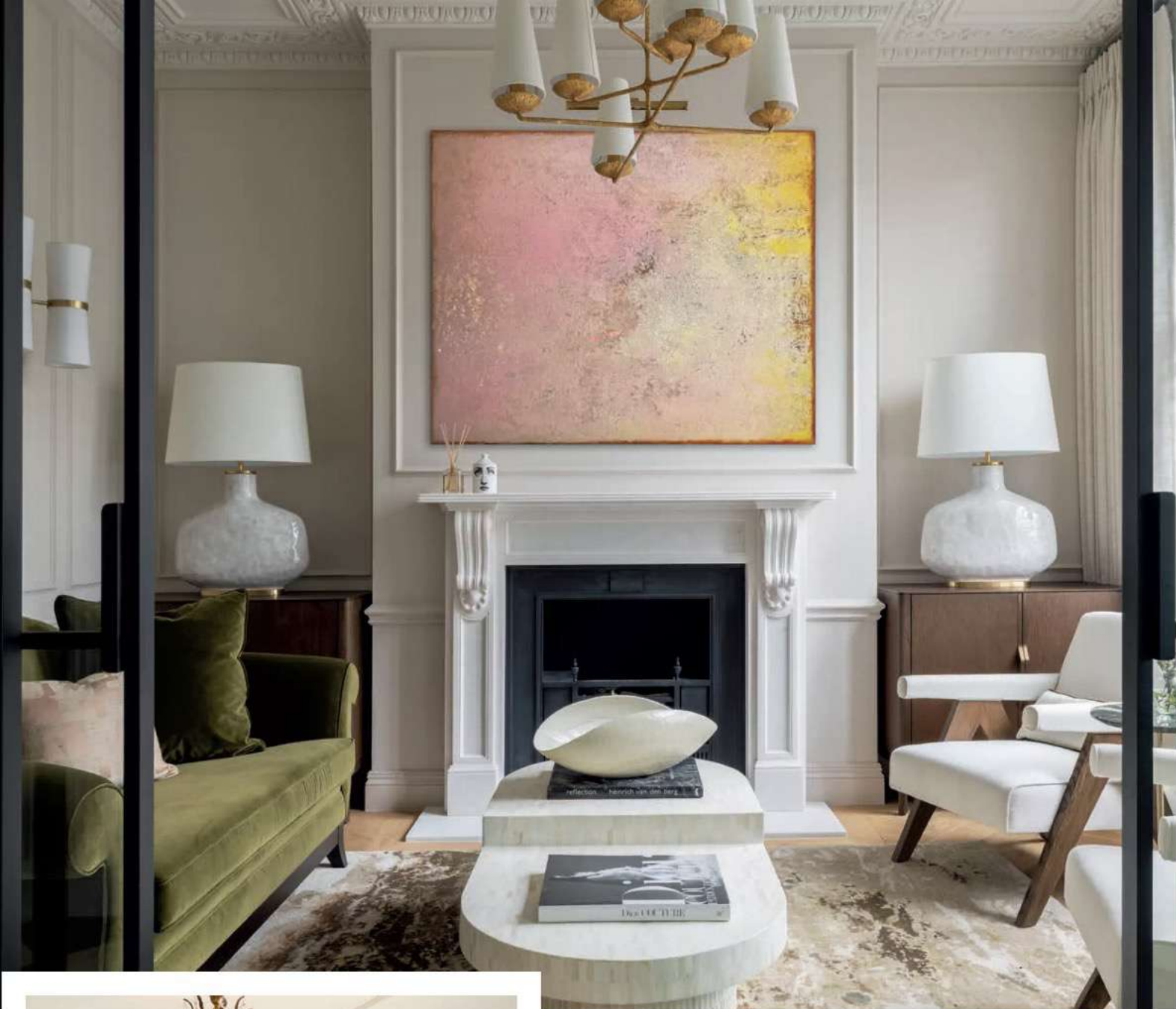
Perhaps the key to successfully creating a midimalist interior is the setting of boundaries; creating restraint with a defined palette of colours, and displaying conviction and intention by adding statement pieces or being bold with colour and pattern.

'Midimalists don't shy away from decorating with colour, pattern, art, decorative objects and collectables, but do it in a more considered way than maximalists to ensure a sense of calm remains,' says Georgina Cave of Cave Interiors. ▶



TOP Jessica Buckley has balanced plains, colour and pattern in this sitting room.

ABOVE A playful approach by Studio Peake has plenty of character without being overwhelming.



ABOVE A more contemporary approach by Project London offers greater richness and colour than a typical minimalist style.

LEFT Laura Hammet imbues classic elegance with some grander flourishes while maintaining a curated, refined finish in this drawing room.

Henriette von Stockhausen of VSP Interiors expands on this theory: 'Midimalism is about editing, not erasing. It allows meaningful things to breathe – art, antiques, objects with soul. It isn't about filling a room to the brim, but about choosing what truly deserves to be there. Spaces should reflect presence, personality, and history without shouting. I think of it as thoughtful layering.'

Setting the right level of difference and cohesion is key, and comes down to careful editing, as Hansard explains: 'When everything is competing for attention, the eye doesn't know where to rest. Too many colours, patterns or focal points can dilute the impact of each. Editing – and being brave enough to remove things – is usually the answer. There's that great Coco Chanel quote about always taking something off before you leave the house, and I think that can also be very pertinent in interior design. If something isn't quite working, often removing, rather than adding, is the key.'