

itself – so a wall-mounted light with a shade that reflects the bulb back onto the wall will create the right effect.

Picking the right sheen

I just love mixing sheens a lot, and while the classic example seems to be a matt on the walls and a gloss on the woodwork, there are so many more things you can do. A high sheen will make a space seem more dramatic, so if you go for a low LRV and a high sheen you'll have a really impactful scheme – this approach works well in a cloakroom, for example. That said, for a British home, I would never recommend anything higher than a 30% sheen for your walls. Most of the housing stock in the UK is imperfect, and a really gloss paint will make the light bounce off every bump, lump and imperfection.

The effect of the direction a room faces

If you have a large south-facing room then the natural light will be a little more yellow and sunny – this means you can afford to go higher on the LRV scale as the colours will get knocked back by that sunshine. North-facing rooms get a bad rep but actually they're the most stable and the colours in them change the least, which can make them easier to decorate. Here, go for warmer colours with lower LRVs that will balance that cool light, and then go for a low sheen, which will make it seem cosier even despite its cool natural light.

What materials – apart from paint – affect the LRV of a room?

Every colour has an LRV value, whether it's a paint or not. But for design, the focus should be on surface interplay. Tiles, either in materials like a matt terracotta or a shiny ceramic, can vastly change not just how much light there is in a room but how it behaves, as can the choice of flooring and even mixing metals. Chrome is back in a big way at the moment, and of course it's great for sheen, reflecting the light around the space. Pair metallic fixtures, fittings and furniture with colours that have a high LRV and the space will feel light and bright.

Get the right sheen

Mix matt and shiny surfaces to create a balanced, modern interior

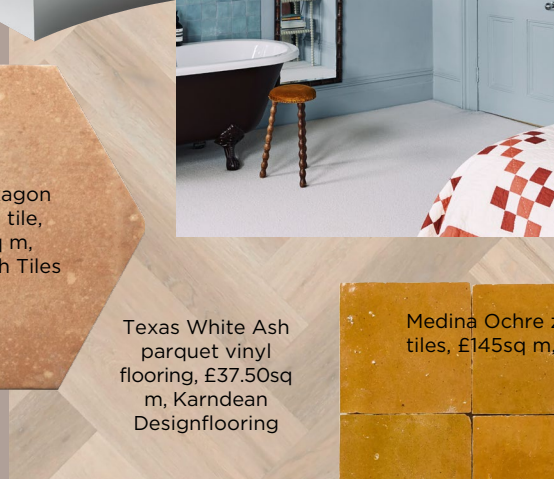


Walls in Lie-in flat matt 2% sheen; skirting and door in Lie-in eggshell 10% sheen, COAT Paints

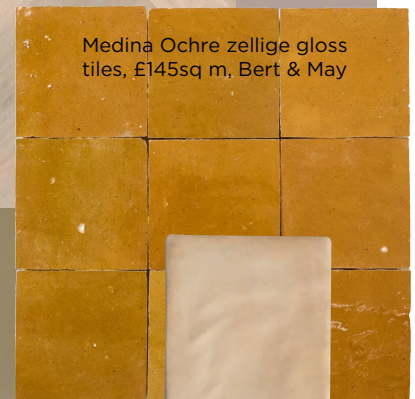
Arch tables, price on request, Gallotti&Radice



Seville Hexagon terracotta tile, £67.02sq m, Marlborough Tiles



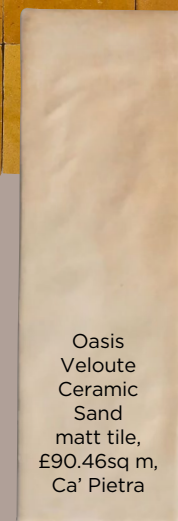
Texas White Ash parquet vinyl flooring, £37.50sq m, Karndean Designflooring



Medina Ochre zellige gloss tiles, £145sq m, Bert & May



Wall in Cake Mix soft sheen 20% sheen, COAT Paints



Oasis Veloute Ceramic Sand matt tile, £90.46sq m, Ca' Pietra