

Perfect PLANNING

Designing the perfect sleep space couldn't be easier – read on to find out everything you need to know about planning your bedroom

Words: **Laurie Davidson**

Regardless of whether you're looking to decorate a tiny box room, get creative with a child's bedroom or design the master suite of your dreams, you'll need to put careful thought into the planning. From looking at where to place the bed to factoring in awkward angles, smart storage and, of course, décor that sings to you, there's a lot to consider. No need to fret, though, as we've got you covered with a range of room layouts, from the most compact to downright cavernous. Follow our guide and glean some much-needed inspiration, clever ideas and top tips from the experts.

Kids' rooms can never have too much storage. A bed with extra drawers that can neatly store toys or clothes is very useful.

"Wardrobes are great for hanging clothes, but bespoke carpentry can provide extra storage," says Nicki Bamford-Bowes, @andthentheywentwild. "We designed and built this platform bed, which has lots of storage underneath. Where pull-out shelves, cupboards and drawers used to house toys, they are now ideal for shoes and sports gear. We've even incorporated a hidden drop-leaf desk for homework time."

Child's PLAY

The sky is the limit when it comes to decorating children's rooms and it's an opportunity to be creative and have some fun with the design. Of course, you'll need to factor in a few different zones as this room will no doubt have multiple uses – from sleeping and playing, to doing homework and hanging out with friends. Plus there's all-important storage to think about, too. Invest in sturdy furniture and plan ahead with pieces that can be repainted over time or used in a different way as your child gets older and tastes change. Bespoke cupboards or wardrobes are ideal for giving a bedroom a neater appearance and maximising space, but if it's a compact space, consider taking the bed up higher and building in some extra storage underneath.

"There are multiple ways to maximise floor area in a child's bedroom and avoid it becoming cluttered with belongings," says Alex Tolofson, founder of Nöa & Nani. "We'd recommend opting for a high-sleeper bed that offers a generous amount of space underneath for extra room to play in. You could also use this area to store toys or clothes, allowing the rest of the room to remain neat and tidy. When the child grows older, a desk can be placed there for any homework tasks they may need to do – this means you'll save on space by not having to incorporate a separate desk in the room."



Top tips


- Play often happens on the floor in kids' rooms, so make sure they have somewhere soft to sit, whether it's an easy-clean carpet or a washable rug.
- If you're worried that your child will quickly grow out of a cute décor, create something more graphic instead. Be brave with paint and wallpaper – it's your chance to really flex your creative skills and come up with a unique design for your little one.
- Kids come with a lot of stuff, from toys and games to books and clothes, so plan in lots of places to store away the clutter. Wardrobes, hooks, trunks, and crates are all handy, as are multi-functional pieces such as seats with lift-up lids.
- For sleepovers, consider a bed with a pull-out trundle bed. "It's a great option for small bedrooms, as it can maximise the floor area well," says Nöa & Nani's founder Alex Tolofson.



A bed with space underneath offers flexibility for your child to play and gain additional storage. This Christopher treehouse mid sleeper bed from Nöa & Nani comes with its own slide for added fun.



Inspired by the Princess and the Pea, the stack of faux mattresses actually doubles up as a pull-out bed – a clever solution for sleepovers – with the top panel working with the bed guard. Designed by K&H Design, the room also has a workspace that is separated from the sleeping area with a loft-style glazed screen and hand-blocked wallpaper from Hamilton Weston to zone the area.



This compact bedroom features a statement scheme, created using a rich colour palette and interesting décor, from the sculptural wood shelf to the long light flex. "We created a retreat for our client in this calming space," says Cathy Dean, chief executive officer and founder of Studio Dean. "Our client loves all things vintage, so we wanted to highlight this theme alongside some truly modern pieces. The geometric wall shelves house a 1920s glass vase previously belonging to the client's grandmother, paired with the newly added green glass pendant light; they are jewels in this calm space."

Top tips

- Add drama with intense colours and large-scale patterned wallpaper, which not only draws the eye in but gives a small space a more intimate feel.
- If your box room is really too small for even a bed, consider using it as a walk-in wardrobe, with hanging areas, deep shelves, and drawers.
- A sofa or pull-down bed can give your single room the chance to be used differently, such as a home office or somewhere to hang your clean laundry.
- In a small bedroom, consider going for a bespoke headboard where you can factor in cubbyholes for storage and built-in reading lights, which means no need for bedside tables.

Single STATUS

Even the most humble of bedrooms can be beautiful, so don't be defeated by the size of a single box room – with some clever decorating you can still make a big impact. Whether it's embracing a cosy feel with lots of layers or opting for fitted furniture to squeeze use out of every inch, think about what you need to include and how you can best use the available space. "In a small room, keep the layout clean by opting for a simple colour palette," says Amit Malhotra, co-founder of Aflux Designs. "Complement this with plenty of light, especially in the darker corners, and maximise storage where you can. Ottoman beds, tables with drawers, and shelves above the bed are all things to bear in mind."

Interior designer Lolita Colenso agrees. "A small room with a single bed needs a careful, precise approach," she says. "Use of clever storage, such as folding beds or wall-hung bedside tables will visually maximise the floor area. If the room is long but narrow, you could also position storage behind the headboard. A concealed wardrobe with sliding doors, ceiling-hung bedside lighting, and use of mirrors will create the illusion of height, while bold colours will make your small bedroom feel more inviting and cosy."

This small cottage bedroom has been given a subtle hint of colour for definition and a few carefully chosen accessories to add character. "The client needed a clean palette so the property can be easily maintained in the future, while ensuring a warm and welcoming bedroom space," says Rob Cullen, director at Studio Werc Architects.



If your bedroom has alcoves or awkward spaces, turn them into design features. Here, a double bed fits neatly into the wall recess, with wood panels behind adding interest. Instead of a bedside table, which would jut into the room, a shelf has been hung next to the bed, while pendant lights hang in place of bedside lamps. Luton bedding set, from £70 for a double, Vantona.

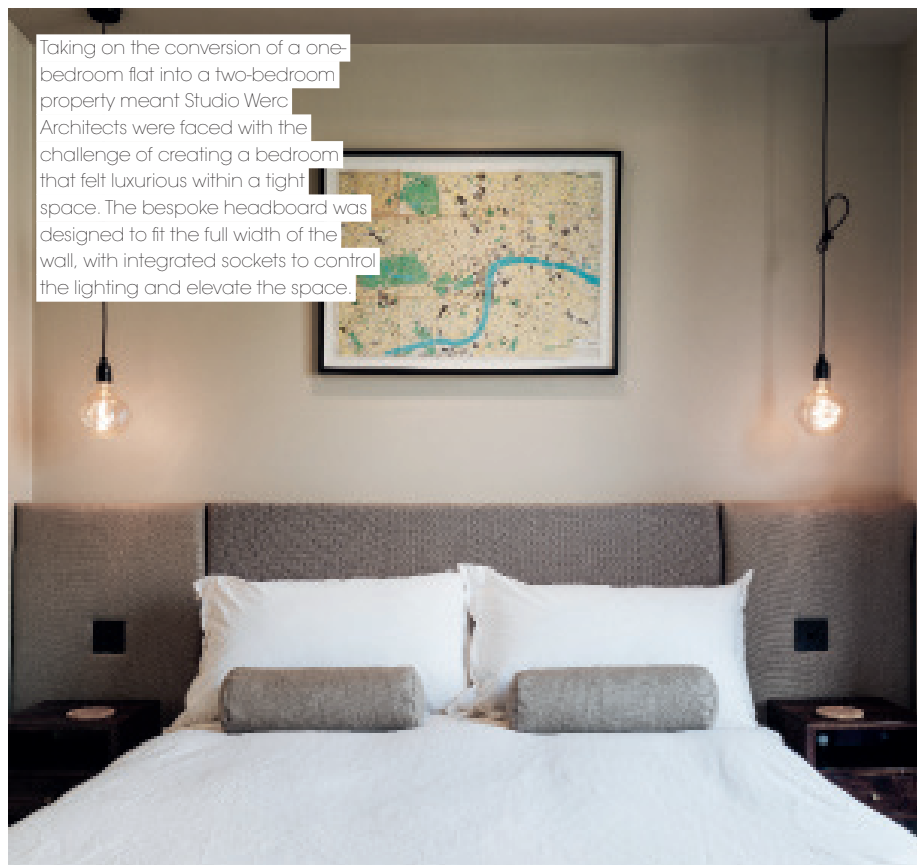
Double UP

If your bedroom is of a standard size, it may be that a double bed will be your best bet if you want it to feel spacious and allow you some floor area around it. Start with assessing the size of your space and look at where best to position your bed – you may not have a lot of choice, as the room's dimensions will often dictate where the bed can go, but try and make the most of any views or natural light. "In a double bedroom, we always like to have the beds facing a window or a wall or storage, but never the door," says Kate Clare, managing director at Loud Architects.

Next, look at organising other furniture around it and utilising the space you have. Going bespoke is usually one of the options with the best results when it comes to storage (although not always the cheapest), as even hard-to-reach corners and sloping roofs can be put to good use. "We always allow for drawers to be pulled out and doors to open comfortably, and plot these on our drawings," says Kate. "This ensures enough room to walk around even when the door is open. We also like to factor bedside tables into each side of the bed, even if the room is for one person. It regulates the space and gives a good continuity and feel to the room. A put together scheme always looks better."

Top tips

- Start by designing your room around the size of your bed and factor in other furniture around it.
- If you're short on space, hang lights on the wall or from the ceiling to free up bedside tables and make the space feel larger.
- Even a double bedroom can boast drama when it comes to décor. "Wallpaper can work magic in a standard-sized bedroom. If you are lucky enough to have high ceilings or eaves, you could cover every piece of the room," says interior designer Lolita Colenso.
- Emphasise height in your design to create the illusion of your room being wider or taller. Vertical headboards are ideal for this, also consider placing artworks above the bed to draw the eye upwards.



Taking on the conversion of a one-bedroom flat into a two-bedroom property meant Studio Werc Architects were faced with the challenge of creating a bedroom that felt luxurious within a tight space. The bespoke headboard was designed to fit the full width of the wall, with integrated sockets to control the lighting and elevate the space.

King RULES

A bedroom that can include a king-size bed isn't always huge, but it will usually allow more space for built-in wardrobes, bedside tables, and sometimes even a seating area at the foot of the bed. "When designing a scheme to fit in a king-size bed, we often look at the size of the windows and the outlook," says Kate Clare, managing director of Loud Architects. "If there is a lovely view, we arrange a pair of chairs, a large rug, or an ottoman at the end of the bed." Storage is equally important and, if you have space, a full wall of wardrobes, drawers and shelves is ideal. "We love designing wardrobes that can fill a whole wall as they are essential for every family home," says Cigal Kaplan at Cigal Kaplan Interior Design. Lighting, too, is important. "I would encourage having a split circuit for the bedside illumination and the main lighting," says Oz Lancaster at OS Designs. "If you have a reading corner, perhaps incorporate a floor lamp or a small table lamp may be enough."

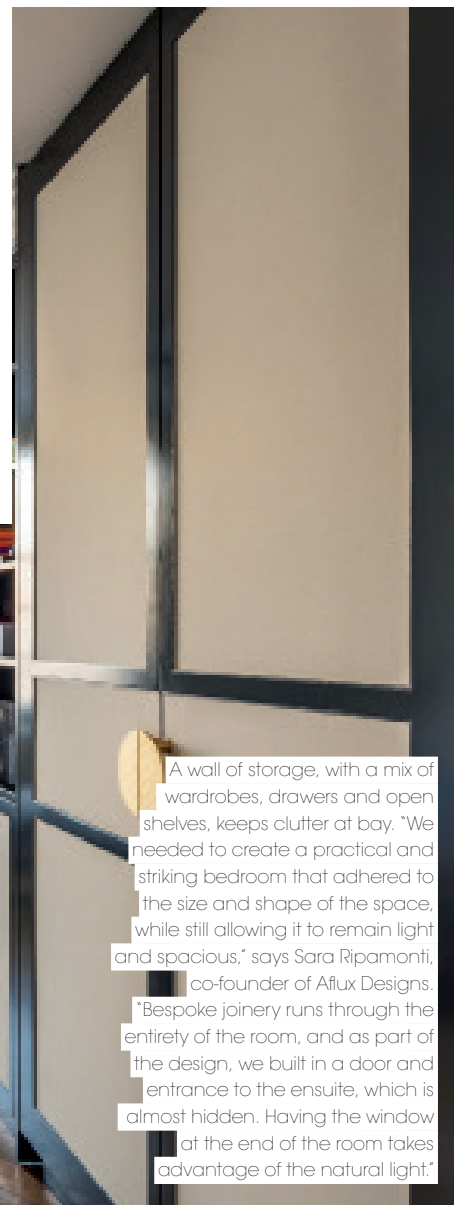
Photography: Philip Vile



In a bedroom that easily fits a king-size bed, you can often be left with spare floor area, which is where a seating area can become the ideal solution. Whether it's a full-size sofa or a cosy armchair, look at the best spot to place it. The end of your bed often works well, while alcoves or smaller corners, as in this room design by Cigal Kaplan Interiors, can easily fit a neat bench or stool.

Top tips

- Make sure your bedroom can comfortably fit a king-size bed, and allow enough free floor area around it to walk comfortably. King beds usually measure around 203 x 193cm, and it's recommended to have around 80-90cm of space around the perimeter.
- Keep a larger room from appearing bland by considering the décor. "Spaces with a king or super king-size bed have to be visually inspiring and inviting," says Lolita Colenso. "Walls painted in soft, often dark and moody hues will create a relaxing place for sleep."
- If space permits, factor in wardrobes to fit corners of the bedroom or an entire wall length. Going for a bespoke design means it will not only fit snugly, but can be tailored to the depth of your room to stop it jutting out or looking cumbersome.



A wall of storage, with a mix of wardrobes, drawers and open shelves, keeps clutter at bay. "We needed to create a practical and striking bedroom that adhered to the size and shape of the space, while still allowing it to remain light and spacious," says Sara Ripamonti, co-founder of Aflux Designs. "Bespoke joinery runs through the entirety of the room, and as part of the design, we built in a door and entrance to the ensuite, which is almost hidden. Having the window at the end of the room takes advantage of the natural light."

Photography: Adam Butler

Ensure your room design doesn't feel cavernous and cold and go grand with painted panelling. Choose an emperor-sized bed to indulge in lasting comfort and take your panelling all the way to the ceiling. Painting the room in a lavish green shade will help ground any super-sized space. Calke Green dead flatt matt emulsion, £75 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball.

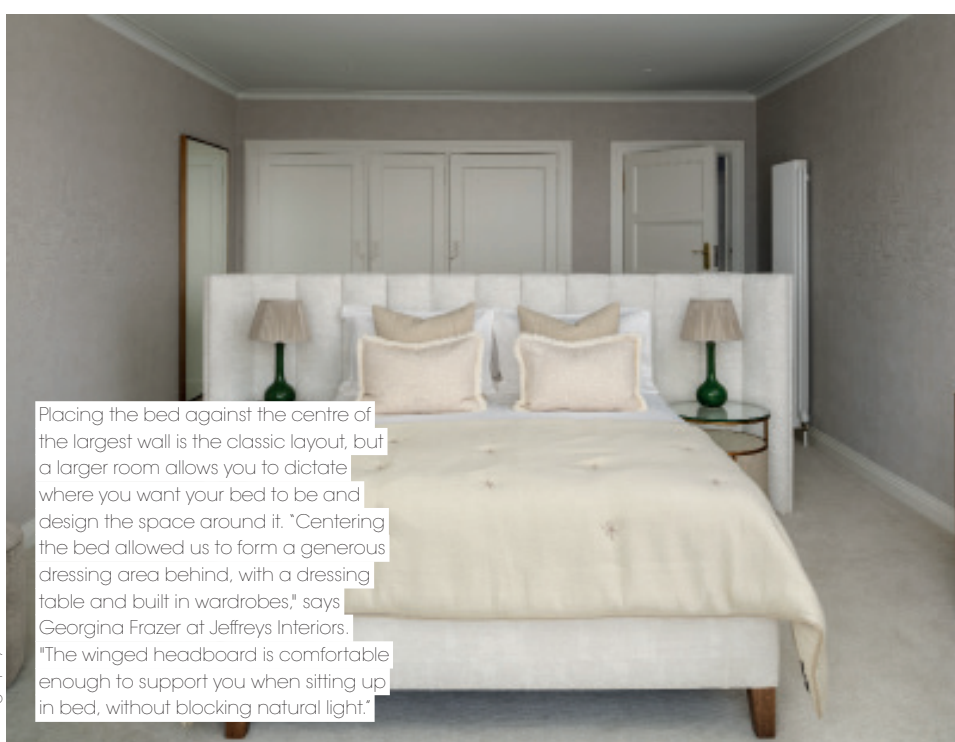
Super SIZE

While a compact bedroom can be tricky to plan, a large space comes with its own set of design challenges. Without planning, these super-sized spaces can appear empty and soulless rather than cosy and inviting. And furniture that feels too small will float in the middle of a big room. So, what can you do to make the most of your space? First, try dividing it into zones by using different colours or flooring, also consider sliding doors or a screen. Use these zones to create mini rooms, indulging in a luxurious seating spot, a vanity area, or a dressing room. The décor here is important, so layer up with plush materials and touchy-feely fabrics to ensure that a large airy design feels comfortable and chilled out, whether you choose a super sleek style or something more timeless and classic such as this stylish bedroom space with decadent deep green painted panelling.





The beauty of a supersized scheme is that you don't have to try and cram one single piece of storage into your design. Instead, you can space it out, ensuring furniture fits in seamlessly, with plenty of space to walk around it. This Shenaya bedroom collection comes with a choice of flexible configurations, including soft-close drawers, hanging rails, open shelving and new slide-out footwear storage. Crown Imperial bedrooms start from around £500.



Placing the bed against the centre of the largest wall is the classic layout, but a larger room allows you to dictate where you want your bed to be and design the space around it. "Centering the bed allowed us to form a generous dressing area behind, with a dressing table and built in wardrobes," says Georgina Frazer at Jeffrey's Interiors. "The winged headboard is comfortable enough to support you when sitting up in bed, without blocking natural light."

Top tips

- Consider the maximum possible mattress size. "Bigger is usually better," says Georgina Frazer at Jeffrey's Interiors. "Opt for a superking size if possible, but weigh this up against the importance of other functions, such as storage, dressing areas, and a place to put on your make-up."
- Divide up your space into individual zones. "Create a tranquil sleeping area for your bed, but then pair it with a small living space which can be zoned with a large rug," says Amit Malhotra at Aflux Designs. "The room will remain open plan and cohesive, but without any large empty spaces."
- Dark colours are ideal for making a large space appear more cosy and intimate and can help to add a cocooning feel in a generous sized bedroom.
- Link your bedroom with a dressing area, add an ensuite or include a home office or vanity space. You could also use it as a place to do yoga if you have the room, or include a chaise longue next to a window.

Photography: Zac & Zac