

Interiors

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Beautility rooms

From the Kardashians to the Kemps, stars are now giving the utility a scrub-up. Here's how you can add some luxe to your laundry room



Utility from Martin Moore, featuring furniture from the studio's New Classic collection, painted in Pale Ochre, with matching tongue-and-groove panelling and sink skirt. Martin Moore bespoke utility rooms start from £15,000, martinmoore.com

Celebs are offering up their utility rooms for our online approval, and we are riveted. We've seen Khloe Kardashian's pullout shelves, with custom labels by The Home Edit for each category of cleaning product. We followed the progress of Stacey Solomon's pretty mint utility on Instagram stories. [Martin and Shirlie Kemp's](#) utility, by Howdens, recently created a stir, with its handsome Belfast sink and woven basket storage. And Jools Oliver's laundry room has provoked utility envy. The two-room affair, designed by Style Sisters, features green painted cabinets, and Cole & Son Floral Kingdom wallpaper, plus a laundry maid for natural drying. The heartening point about these posts is, though the rooms are supremely covetable, and their owners seem entirely delighted with them, they are perfectly attainable to civilians. We may not be able to stretch to the Olivers' £6 million Essex mansion, but we can copy many of the features of their laundry. In other words, our utility rooms are the way we can all keep up with the Kardashians.

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HOW TO CREATE AN A-LIST LAUNDRY (AND WAYS TO LUXE UP YOUR UTILITY ON A HIGH STREET BUDGET)

Weave in baskets

Baskets are the attractive solution to cluttered utility room shelves. An [Architectural Digest video tour](#) of Jessica Alba's Los Angeles home reveals how she has created the "dope laundry room" of her dreams. Three large woven baskets, each tagged with a child's name, keep chaos at bay.

Beautility

Consider a decorative wallpaper. At Herringbone Kitchens, clients are using their utility rooms as an opportunity to experiment with bold colour and pattern. Vivid, big print wallpapers are top of customers' lust lists — creating effects similar to what we see in Jools Oliver's Cole & Son floral-wrapped room, posted by [@stylesisters](#).

Instaworthy rails and racks

As bills rise, this spring it's all about embracing concertina airers and clothes rails, such as the one in Martin and Shirlie Kemp's utility. It could even be time to revisit the laundry maid — the retro drying rack that descends from the ceiling on a creaky pulley — as seen in Jools Oliver's laundry. A posh laundry maid from deVOL costs £265, [devolkitchens.co.uk](#) For a little less, Garden Trading offers a space-saving model that concertinas out from the wall, £150, [gardentrading.co.uk](#)

Lustworthy hardware

Don't scrimp on handles, pulls and light switches — all the touch points of the room that will give you pleasure every time you do the laundry. Check out the gorgeous brass ironmongery from British Standard, which starts at £14 for a small brass knob, [britishstandardcupboards.co.uk](#)

Tongue and groove it

While tiles are a practical choice, for a room with high humidity levels, panelling is an attractive alternative that's bang on trend for back rooms. A painted tongue-and-groove wall looks functional and fresh, Shaker peg rails and joinery such as built-in benches with under-seat storage complete the look. Decorate with a specialist moisture-resistant paint, such as Dulux Easycare bathroom, £22 for 2.5 litres, [homebase.co.uk](#)

Add a skirtain

Utility room paraphernalia — washing pods, bin bags, ironing

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Utility room paraphernalia — washing pods, bin bags, ironing water — is not as pretty as the tins and bottles kept in the pantry. Laundry room open shelving tends to look less like an artfully curated delicatessen and more like a dumping ground. One solution for the under-sink space and open cupboards is to add a short skirt-like curtain in a favourite fabric.

An invisible utility

Space-starved homes need clever design. If you are designing your utility from scratch, remember the laundry room doesn't have to be an actual room. Laundry and cleaning kit can be arranged along a corridor, stowed in a dedicated closet under the stairs, or allocated a corner of the kitchen. Designers at Husk, who specialise in fronts for Ikea kitchens, are creating invisible utility rooms using PAX wardrobe units to hold cleaning appliances and products, stacked washing machine and dryer, as well as coats and shoes.

Find no-compromise budget options

A splendid tap can be a kitchen showpiece — but clients often tend to have less budget for their utilities than their kitchens, according to Millie Teden, Husk's marketing manager. Husk kitchen designers suggest lower cost options that don't compromise on style. Teden says: "For exposed appliances like the taps and sinks, matt black works really well to offer a luxe look without breaking the bank. For example, the Franke Anthracite sinks and Adobe Pico Quad Monobloc taps are incredibly popular for utilities — as opposed to Quooker and Shaws of Darwen sinks, which are the more popular choices for kitchens."

Colour drench it

Match your skirtain to your cabinets, shelves and wall colour for a colour-drench effect. Uniformity of hue creates a feeling of calm in a high traffic, steamy interior. Drenching the room in soft shades such as pink and mint works well; white is a firm favourite for a laundry room.

Fusion is your friend

A utility is often combined with another of the popular ancillary rooms, making the most efficient use of space with a functional mash-up. Helen Parker, the creative director at deVOL Kitchens, says: "The utility/laundry room nowadays generally has more than one purpose. It has hooks for coats and cubby holes for boots. Then it may have a wine fridge and a sink. Then it may

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Add a statement sink

Belfast sinks (rather than butler sinks, their shallower but wider siblings) are popular in utility rooms, for several reasons beyond their good looks. Lizzie Beesley, the head of design at Magnet, says: “The deep, rectangular sink is practical for everyday jobs such as soaking stains in the laundry, cleaning shoes and boots, or even giving the dog a bath.” She recommends adding a tap with an extendable nozzle, such as Magnet’s Nero, £324, magnet.co.uk “The swivel spout can target water flow which is practical for washing muddy wellies or pets.”

Clear the floor

Treat the utility like the bathroom and try to wall-hang as much furniture and storage as possible. Cupboard space can be supplemented with an Elfa storage rack on the back of a door, £95, aplaceforeverything.co.uk

If you see clutter, ask yourself WWKKD.



The statement laundry room is here. Clients of Herringbone Kitchens are requesting bold, bright colours and decorative wallcoverings in their utilities. From £15,000, herringbonekitchens.com