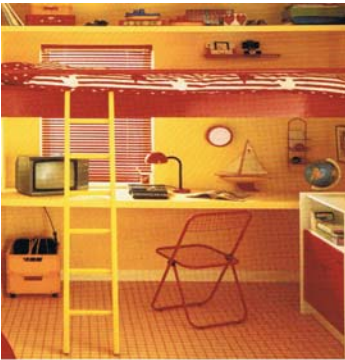


bedrooms for tots to teens



bedroom checklist

- Is the bedroom for one child or is it to be shared?
- Does it have easy access to bathroom and toilet?
- What size bed(s) will be installed?
- Storage - what needs to be stored, what needs to be accessed easily, special requirements?
- Sunlight, natural light, shade, darkness.
- Window treatments + lighting required.
- Other furniture/functions such as desk, television, music, seating, reading etc.
- Privacy, security, noise transmission, electrical outlets, temperature control.
- Furniture - style, size, pieces, finishes.
- Bed linen - style, colour, fabrics, ease of making up the bed, ease of laundering the bed linen.

Good use has been made of the floor space in the bedroom above by having the bed above the desk.



Always specify non-toxic paint.

safety checklist

When planning a bedroom or any environment for children, always put safety first. Toddlers are naturally inquisitive by nature but do not have the knowledge to avoid danger.

Resene

the paint the professionals use

There are safety standards for children's furniture and equipment so when purchasing items always check whether these standards are met (usually a label is attached saying that the product complies with particular safety criteria).

Electricity - fit socket outlets with safety covers, and permanent electrical fittings should have no exposed leads.

Heating/lighting - if installing a heater, ensure it is on a thermostat so it cannot overheat, is clear of bedding or combustible materials, will not cause serious burns if touched, and a smoke detector is installed in the bedroom. Wall-mounted or surface-mounted lights are the best option for overall lighting, and a dimmer or night-light is sometimes useful. Separate task lighting is needed for reading in bed or doing homework.

Surfaces - paint should be lead-free and non-toxic (refer to the Resene brochure on the eco-friendly way to paint your child's bedroom) and avoid sharp edges that could injure a child if they fell against it.



Avoid furniture with sharp edges.

planning + safety

Use safety glass in low-level windows and doors, and fit windows with safety catches so children cannot climb/fall out of the window. Never position a chair or bed under a window, and ensure chairs are stable and sturdy if climbed on.

Free-standing bookcases or shelves should be screwed to the wall so a child cannot pull them over and injure themselves.

A cot should be stable and the spacing between cot bars no more than 35 to 50mm - if drop-sided there should be an automatic locking device when raised.

Fit a safety rail to a small child's bed or tuck in pillows along the outer edge under the mattress so they do not roll out of bed. A top bunk must have a safety rail and a sturdy ladder and is not suitable for children under five.

Bedside cabinets and furniture should not have sharp edges that could injure a child if they fall against it, or fling their arms or head around during sleep.



Nursery furniture replaced with study desk.

planning + transition

As children grow, bedrooms change in their requirements. A nursery can revert to an office/study, guest room or play room. The location of child's bedrooms depends on the layout of the house and the age of the child. Small children are usually located within hearing distance of their parents' bedroom in case they require attention or assistance during the night, while older children and teenagers often enjoy more independence and privacy with bedrooms located on another level or wing of the house, well away from their parents' bedroom.

It is best to avoid permanent fixtures and fittings so that these can be changed as the child outgrows them. Nursery furniture that can be adapted is a good investment, such as toy boxes on wheels can be pushed in under a shelf which later becomes a desk for study and artwork. A large toy box can be wheeled from room to room, and stored under a bed when not in use helps to keep the living room free from clutter.

Pre-school children need plenty of floor space to learn to crawl and walk, and later for building blocks and playing with toys. Bean bags are great for children to snuggle up in and read a book.

Resene KidzColour is a range of paint colours developed for children's rooms following research into their preferences. The brochure also offers guidance and ideas for decorating rooms they will love to be in.



Change table minimises back injuries.

nursery

A new baby doesn't really need a separate bedroom and often one corner of the parents' room is where they sleep when they arrive. However, if you are planning a separate room, ensure it is close by the parents' bedroom so you can hear the baby when it wakes during the night. Install lighting, heating and electrical sockets, then think about the decorating.

The floor should be comfortable, warm, easily cleaned and durable. Carpet or rugs provide warmth and sound absorption, while cork or cushioned vinyl are easier surfaces to wash. Windows need curtains or blinds that can block out light when it is time for baby to sleep - both are available with 'black-out' interlining.

Good lighting is needed for cleaning and changing baby, and low-level lighting is useful when checking on baby without wanting to wake or disturb them from sleeping.

Choose furniture for strength and flexibility - a cot with adjustable levels for mattress allows easy access while the baby is young, and then safety when the baby becomes active.



Pastel and neutral colours work well in a nursery.

The nursery furniture usually consists of a change table and chest of drawers for baby clothes which are usually too small to hang in a wardrobe. Also important is storage for nappies, toiletries, toys and books. And if baby is fed in the nursery, a comfortable and supportive chair is critical.

A specially designed bin for disposing of soiled nappies within plastic wrap so that there is no odour, and a laundry hamper for discarded clothing, are also helpful. These should be emptied regularly to avoid contamination and dampness.

The nursery is sometimes themed in colour if the gender of the baby is known before birth, but a pale and neutral colour serves as the perfect backdrop to bed linen and toys that often are received as gifts when baby arrives and these soon set the tone of the gender or personality of the child/room.

As the nursery is soon outgrown and often converted to a guest room or similar, it might be best to decorate it in colours and materials that will work for its later role.



toddler rooms

Unlike babies, toddlers don't stay where you put them! Once they are crawling and walking they are ready to explore their environment and extend their knowledge and experience.

A house that has been adapted to keep toddlers safe during this stage makes the parenting role easier and more relaxed. For the pre-school child the bedroom can also be a play area which relieves the living areas of toys. However children also like to be near their caregivers so having toys in boxes that can be moved from one room to another is ideal.

If the play area in the bedroom is attractive to the child, they are more likely to play there independently e.g. a warm and sunny room with their favourite songs and music playing, and toys that are easy to access.

Once a child is out of a cot, an adult-sized bed fitted with safety rails is a better option than a child-sized bed which will soon be outgrown. However child sized table and chairs are better for art, puzzles, modelling, etc. and take up less floor space.

Again neutral colours form a backdrop to the toddler's toys, mobiles, books and artworks. Themed duvet covers and cushions add personality as usually children of this age like animals and fairy tale and cartoon characters.



school aged children

Starting school is a big step in a child's life, and it is probably the time they need another bedroom fit out. More storage may be required for their collections such as miniature toys, cards, science experiments, books, desk accessories, table games, etc. Small baskets, tins and boxes are great for compartmentalised storage on open shelves.

This is a time when they will want a noticeboard or pinboard, posters on the wall, clock, music, and of course a desk to do their homework. Remember good task lighting is very important here, and for bedtime reading.

More clothing storage is required for uniforms, sports attire and equipment as well as hanging space for their clothes, jackets, schoolbags, dressing gowns.

Wall surfaces should be durable and able to withstand changes of art and posters. Children at this age like to have some input into decorating - paint colours and duvet covers are easy to change as their taste matures. While children enjoy the stimulation of bright colours, remember that sleep is also critical for their health and development so keep that in mind when selecting paint colours for the walls.

Children sharing a room should have defined areas of their own, such as the bed and perhaps separate desk/storage spaces. Folding screens or bookcases help to define boundaries or provide privacy within the room.



teenagers

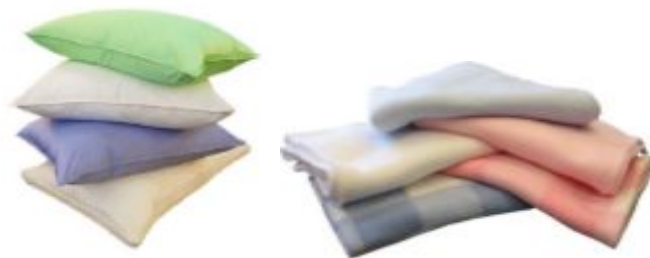
Most teenagers feel they have moved on from childhood and want a more adult-like room where they can express their own style and individuality. They need more independence and privacy, a space where they can sleep, study, relax, entertain friends, get away from the rest of the family and generally 'hang out'.

It is a time when they like to decide how their room looks, often messy and untidy, but if they have lots of good storage it is an incentive to be a little better organised. Desk and computer are usually needed for study, research and entertainment.

Divan beds with drawers underneath and lots of cushions on top provide seating (lounging) during the day and sleeping at nights. Pull-out beds or fold-away models provide well for overnight guests.

To minimise arguments about noise, sound transmission can be managed by thick carpets, double glazing or heavy drapes and specially formulated paperfaced plasterboard wall linings.

Image and clothing becomes an obsession at this age, so additional storage for this is important, also sports gear, music equipment, television and stereo, hair dryers, shavers, etc. And a full length mirror for grooming is a must.



bed linen

The choice of bed linen is often based on ease of maintenance, and nothing beats a fitted sheet and duvet which can be made up in just a few minutes, and managed by children of most ages.

A duvet is light and insulates to keep you warm and is virtually dust-free so ideal for children with allergies.

Sheets, pillow slips and duvet covers are available in linen, cotton or synthetic textiles, or again combinations of the above. Linen and cotton generally need to be ironed, while synthetics are easy to launder and don't need ironing.

Woollen blankets are a popular option for added warmth, and should be large enough to tuck in well. Cotton and synthetic blankets are lighter and easier to wash.

Bedcovers come in a range of colours and designs, and children generally have strong favourites so should be involved in the purchase decision. These alone can set the scene of the room, and are generally inexpensive to change as the child grows into older designs and themes.



storage

The best way to keep a child's bedroom tidy is to supply lots of purpose-designed storage. Colour coded containers work well for toys and collections and makes tidying up more fun.

Free-standing chests of drawers, pull-out baskets and wardrobes are great for clothes and shoes, but there is always more than clothing to store in a child's bedroom.

Toys, games and accessories can be stored in small boxes or baskets on top of a chest, or hidden in purpose-designed pull-out drawers. And there are various types of clear plastic boxes available for easy access to small objects.

The bedroom is often a place to store books - narrow shelving above the bedhead makes great storage for books and is often 'dead' space.

Items that are not being used frequently can be stored in large bins or plastic boxes under the bed if there is the room.

Even the bed can be rolled away during the day to create space! There are beds that fold up against the wall and just look like a cupboard when not in use.



convenience flexibility reach

The bedding configuration is something to consider carefully. The size of the room often dictates the size of the bed, but flexible sleeping arrangements can also be achieved.

It might be better to have the bed up high over a desk if floor space is at a minimum. Two large single beds that can be pushed together to make a king-size bed provide options for a guest room in the future.

A chest or blanket box at the end of the bed is a popular place to put clothing overnight and the inside provides additional storage as well.

As in all bedrooms, one of the most important pieces is the bedside table that may need to accommodate a number of items within easy reach - reading lamp and books, clock, radio and water bottle. And this is often a place children like to have their favourite toys or objects within reach.



There are numerous types of bedroom furniture to choose from - it usually depends on the amount of space you have within the room and the amount of storage that is actually required. As well as traditional timber chests there are also metal industrial lockers that make good storage units for kids clothing and toys.



window treatments

Many parents find their children sleep better in a darkened room so heavy drapes or curtains with black-out lining are a good option, and they also help to keep the room warmer in winter and cooler in summer when pulled. However they don't allow a lot of ventilation via an opened window, and may be more difficult for children to open and close.

Timber blinds and shutters block out light and offer privacy when closed and also allow a breeze to flow into the room. Venetian or vertical blinds are also popular and an easy way to control the amount of light and sunshine required in the bedroom.

Privacy and security are other issues, and children need to feel safe and secure in bed. Easy to operate window treatments are important as often kids are in too much of a hurry to check that curtains and blinds are level and straight.



overall lighting + task lighting

Bedrooms require lighting that is both practical and relaxing. Usually the overall lighting, so that you and the children can move safely around the bedroom, is from ceiling mounted lights - downlights or pendants.

Task lighting, especially for reading or studying, is normally provided by side wall lights or ones on the bedside table or desk. Smaller children sometimes need a 'night light' so they do not feel frightened if they wake in the night.

Spotlights can be used to illuminate art or displays, and remember the importance of additional task-lighting for teenagers to apply make-up or style hair in the bedroom.



ventilation + heating + cooling

Good ventilation is important in any room to combat excessive moisture and condensation which leads to mould and mildew.

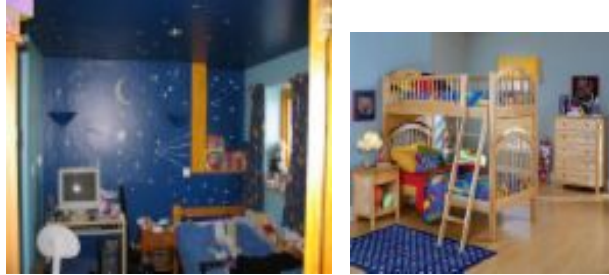
Opening windows and louvers help to reduce moisture retention, and most of us like to breathe in clean fresh air as we sleep.

A ceiling fan over the bed is great in summer to help reduce the heat and there is nothing nicer than a cool, gentle breeze flowing across the room on a hot night.

If the bedroom is particularly cold in winter, a radiator heater on a thermostat is probably one of the most effective and safest ways to increase the temperature. A dehumidifier also helps with any dampness.

Remember all electrical heating equipment should be checked at regular intervals to ensure it is in safe working condition.

Electric blankets are not recommended for small children.



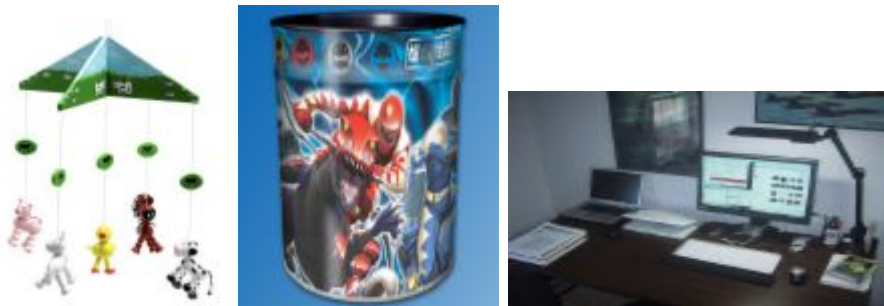
floors + walls + ceilings

As this is one room where the ceiling is looked at a lot, there is an opportunity to make it a feature. For example a high gloss paint finish to reflect light down into the room if doesn't get a lot of natural light, or a soft matt finish if the ceiling feels a little low.

Children may enjoy seeing clouds or the moon and stars painted on the ceiling, or the movement of mobiles swinging in the breeze

The walls of the bedroom/playroom need to withstand some pretty tough treatment, so Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen is ideal teamed with Resene Lustacryl on trim and joinery. To add some decorative drama, stencils can be painted onto the walls. Remember that lead is a health hazard so always avoid lead-based paints in children's rooms and be careful if decorating old homes where lead-based paint may be present.

The bedroom carpet is not subject to as much wear as that in a living room so needn't be of the highest quality, and it can be in a bolder colour or pattern. Polished floor boards or cork tiles are smooth to walk on barefoot, but not as quite as soft or warm as carpet.



bedroom accessories

Photographs, books, art and kids paintings often add to the personality and style or feel of their bedroom.

It is a place they can have collections of things that they really love, articles that are fun and educational.

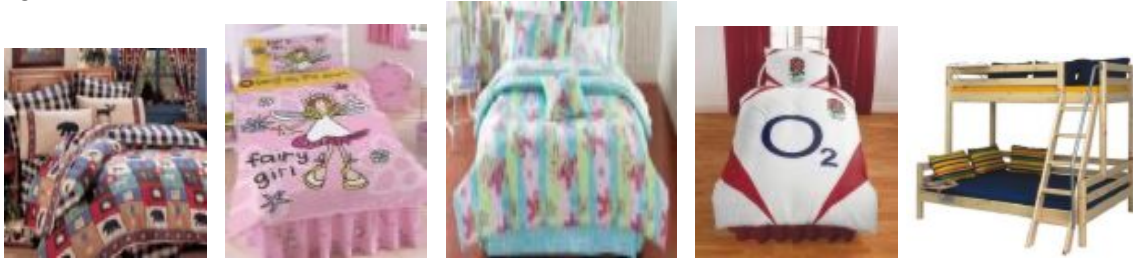
Use Resene Blackboard Paint to create a space for the artists in the family, and remember to provide a waste paper bin for discarded craft materials.

The study area needs to be well organised and ergonomically comfortable to encourage good homework habits. A clock is also helpful to assist in good time-keeping and know when it is time for 'lights out'.



black + white

This all white nursery looks fresh and clean, while black is always a popular colour for teenagers.



pattern + style

The colours and patterns inject style into the bedroom whether a traditional look is desired with quilted bedcover and gingham cushions, or a more modern look with black, red and white bedcovers. The bunk beds below provide a 'sofa' area on the double lower bed and sleeping area on the upper single bed.



accents + shine

As well as gloss levels on painted walls and ceilings, the gloss level of the textiles can change the feel of a room. A teenage girl would love the bright colours of these cushions and Indian sari used as a throw over the bed. The feature wall painted in citrus green looks great with the bright pink and orange silk cushions while the pale lavender quilt below looks quite soft and peaceful.



storage - helps to keep bedrooms tidy

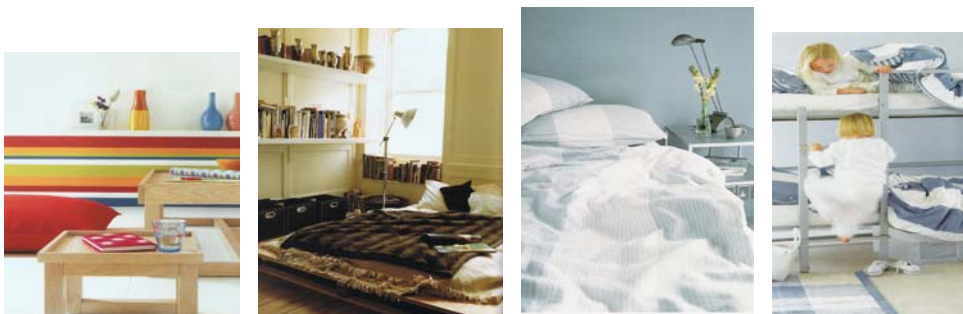


some kids feel happier in chaos and clutter

while others have a place for everything...



remember, it is the child's room...



sleeping soundly...

Pale blue is probably one of the most suitable colours to induce rest and sleep in the bedroom, so worth trying if you have children that have problems with settling down at night.

compiled by

- Colourwaves - Jill Carroll

Resene

the paint the professionals use