

'A black and white theme makes things so simple'

Chloe and Adam Roberts started with one black brick wall, loved it, and the idea flew...

Stylist's Note

'Chloe's table is made from birch ply sheets and hairpin legs she found on eBay – simple and cool!'

Nicky Phillips,
Decorating Editor

Love
CHLOE'S EXPOSED
BRICK WALL
Turn to page 95
to shop the look

Statement wall

For the extension, the couple chose black bricks for the new wall. 'They were a risk, but there's plenty of light to balance out the darkness of them – they became the foundation for the rest of the decor,' says Chloe.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

He'll Yeah sign, £345; rattan bar stools, £195 each, both Rockett St George. Similar table, from £170, The Hairpin Leg Company

Welcome to my home



Chloe Roberts, a commercial manager, lives here with her husband Adam, who works in marketing and their 11-month-old son, Hector.

THE PROPERTY

An Edwardian four-bed semi in London.

THE VALUE Chloe and Adam purchased the property in 2017 for £745,000. Today, a similar property would cost around £900,000.

“Now we’ve finished renovating, our home is stylish, functional and sociable”

At the head of starting a family, Chloe and Adam wanted to move up the housing ladder. ‘We wanted the next move to be for at least five to 10 years, so it needed to suit our future plans. We weren’t averse to a project, having previously renovated our two-bed flat,’ says Chloe. This house ticked all the boxes: off-street parking, good transport links, two high streets, a quiet location and a garden. ‘We loved the large hallway and view of the garden as soon as you walked in. It had been a family home for 50 years, but didn’t suit how families want to live now, so it took some work to get the layout right.’

Two weeks after moving in, the couple had life-changing news: ‘We found out I was expecting Hector, so we had to get started on making changes,’ says Chloe. They hired an architect to design an extension combining the rear reception room and kitchen, to create a big open-plan space plus a new utility and cloakroom. ‘We wanted the living, dining and cooking space to be sociable as well as functional.’ The other project was in the hallway, where a dated, open-tread staircase was moved from the centre of the house to the party wall. ‘It gave us much more usable space, so we knew it would be worth it in the long term, even though we had to move out for six weeks.’

‘We’ve achieved what we wanted and got this house to work as our family home. Don’t underestimate the power of a good architect! Although our project was relatively simple, their involvement helped make the most of the house. We could extend down into the cellar too, but the house is perfect for us now. We started fairly simple, so we can add to the rooms as we live in them and let the style evolve organically.’



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

Take a quick tour...

Classic cabinets

Proving that Shaker style is truly timeless, Chloe has added touches of brass to make hers modern. ‘The boiling-water tap is my favourite thing. It’s especially brilliant now we have a baby – for sterilising and endless tea-making.’

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Kitchen units, £10,000, Moores.
Hot water combined tap, £946, Perrin & Rowe



IDEAL HOME loves

Composite worktops
They’re templated to fit, with a seamless finish that gives a classic kitchen a modern edge



Traditional with an on-trend twist

The pair have updated classic furniture with new accessories and lighting. 'By reupholstering antique chairs we were given, we now have really high-quality furniture for a fraction of the price,' says Chloe.

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Chairs upholstered in Alvar, £14m, Clarke & Clarke. Shutters, £2,600, Plantation Shutters. Cushions made in Longleat Chartreuse, £19.90m, Prestigious Textiles at House Decor Interiors

Tiled stair risers

'These ended up being a much cheaper way to add colour to the stairway than a carpet runner, and they should be more robust, too.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Baccarat tiles, £49.80sq m, Fired Earth. Electric Love blueprint, £35, Barbican Shop. Frame, £50, Habitat. Hanging plants, from £14 each, Matalan

“The traditional shutters give the house a really polished look from the outside”



All-white makeover

The hallway was painted green below the dado and magnolia above, with a busy floral carpet, so the couple stripped everything out, painted it white and laid parquet. They even swapped dated dimpled glass in the door for a plainer, frosted variety. 'It's a blank canvas for us to build on over time. It also means it doesn't feel too cluttered when covered in shoes and coats!'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Herringbone flooring, £55sq m, Barham and Sons. Torslev rug, £10, Ikea. Radiator, £275, Column Rads



Stylist's Note

'Teal is a clever colour to choose for upholstery, as it goes with any neutral you choose for the walls'

Holly Walsh,
Features Editor



'The shutters give us privacy while letting light in'



Small-space vanity

A metal-frame rather than blocky wood table works best in the main bedroom alcove. 'I'd been looking for a minimal dressing table and this one fit the bill perfectly, even the size – it slotted in just right and ties in with the simplicity of the room.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

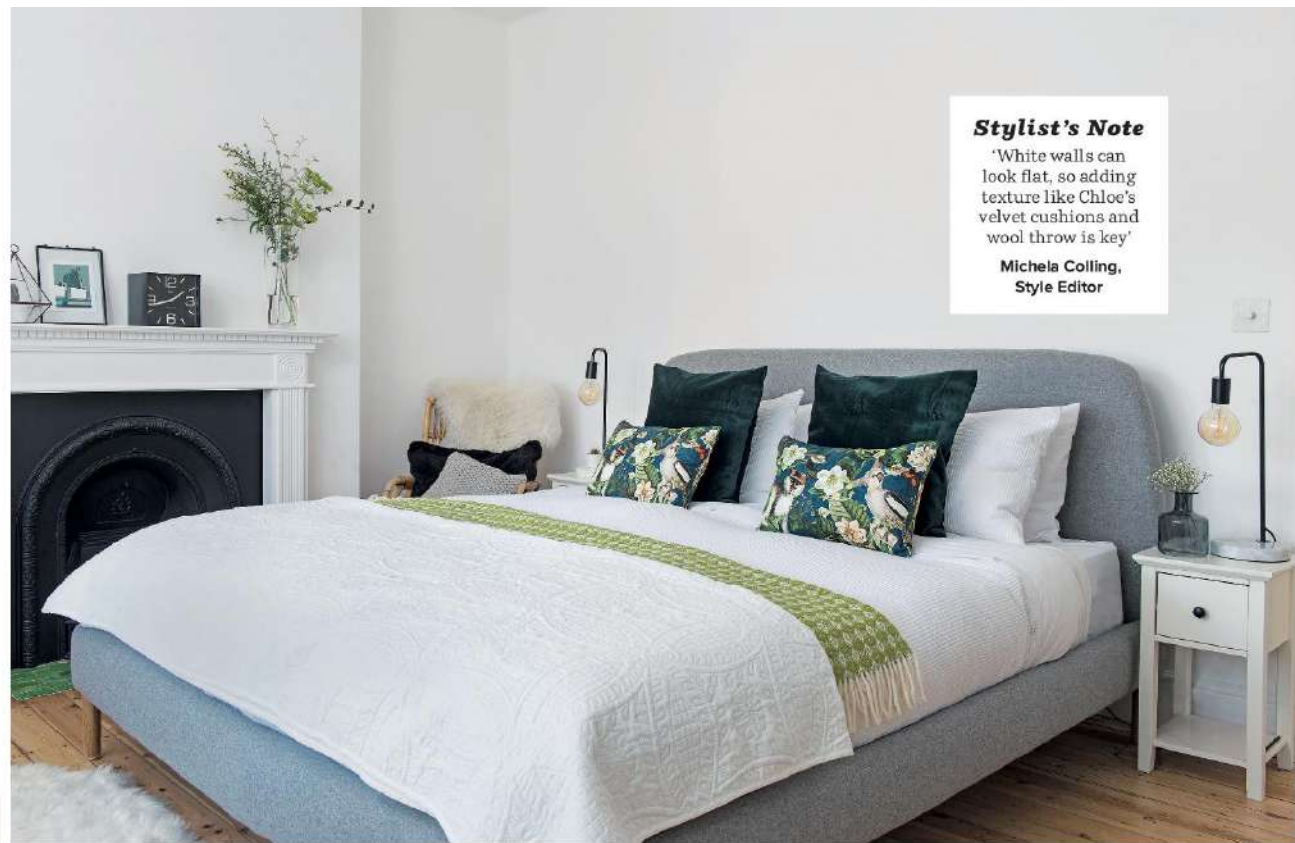
Alana dressing table, £149, Made.com; Bintan metal and wicker stool, £69.65; Maisons du Monde. Saxborga glass and cork jars with tray, £12 for a set of five; Ludde sheepskin rug, £30, both Ikea

High-spec details

'The Hoxton and Ace hotels inspired the bathroom, with their industrial but luxurious look. We kept the tiles simple but spent the budget on gorgeous brassware and a concrete basin,' says Chloe. 'But above all, this room had to be family friendly so there needed to be a balance between style and practicality.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Concrete basin, £1,500, Forma Studios. Taps and shower, £1,800, from a selection at Bespoke Taps. Fladis basket, £13, Ikea



Stylist's Note

'White walls can look flat, so adding texture like Chloe's velvet cushions and wool throw is key'

Michela Colling,
Style Editor

“We started fairly simple, so we can add to the rooms as we live in them, and the style will evolve”

Well-dressed bed

'We wanted the room to feel really simple and peaceful, so we kept it white and accessorised with green and natural wood. The neutral base means we can mix it up, depending on the season, with different textiles.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Simba bed frame, £349, John Lewis & Partners. Rayner industrial table lamps, £25 each, Argos, are a similar style



The couple had ply shelving made to make use of the space under the sloping ceiling



Wall of storage

'This fitted wardrobe helps keep the bedroom feeling calm and clutter-free,' says Chloe. 'We painted the doors a cosy shade of grey to show off the detail on them perfectly, while adding a little extra warmth to the room.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

French Grey intelligent eggshell, £62 for 2.5L, Little Greene. Kilim-style plant basket, £30, La Redoute. Cheval mitred edge freestanding mirror, £97.99, Wayfair, is a good match

**Stylist's Note**

'Black and white can look hard, but wooden surfaces and soft colour accents offset that'

Nicky Phillips,
Decorating Editor

Monochrome colour scheme

Chloe wanted to keep the look simple but interesting in Hector's room. 'We went for a fun wallpaper on one wall and left the other bare brick, which worked really well with the black-and-white accessories we chose. Sticking with monochrome meant that the

furnishings would work with whatever scheme Hector chooses to have in here in the future.'

BUY THE KEY PIECES

Woodland Rave wallpaper panels, H250xW90cm, £69 each, Wild Hearts Wonder. Personalised grey star storage bag, £40, My 1st Years



Exposed brick on one wall of Hector's room makes it feel cosy

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

'We should have made the loo smaller and the utility bigger when we did the extension, as the utility's so useful for keeping mess and supplies out of the living areas'

FEATURE: RICHARD WEBSTER, VANESSA RICHMOND
PHOTOGRAPHS: GILBERTO E PLAINS, ARCHIVE SERVICE

Make it work for you

CHLOE'S CHOICE: EXPOSED BRICKWORK

Impressed by Chloe's fresh take on bare bricks? Here's the lowdown on building brickwork into your space



There's nothing quite like original exposed brickwork to celebrate a home's history. And the good news is, for many lucky homeowners, achieving a brick feature wall costs nothing more than a bit of hard graft...

done, it can't be reversed. However, in moisture-prone kitchens and bathrooms, a coat of PVA or terracotta sealant is recommended. On floors, try Lithofin's MN Stainstop (£22, Amazon).

Q Which wall should I choose?

Exposed brick is a pretty bold statement and will be the room's focus, so it pays to stick to one wall or a section of wall with natural start and finish points, such as a chimney breast or inside alcoves. A wall without doors, windows or radiators will be the easiest to strip.

Q How do I do the work myself?

Drill a test hole in the plaster to check the brickwork. If it's damaged or the colour isn't your bag, accept defeat and refill the hole. If you go ahead, cover every surface and seal doors. Work from left to right, hammering and gently lifting the plaster off with a trowel or putty knife. Remove any loose cement or brickwork with a stiff fibre brush, then vacuum the wall. 'If cavities are left exposed, repoint them to avoid draughts or creepy-crawlies,' says Georgina Burnett of thehomegenie.com.

Q Will they need to be sealed?

Sealing will alter the colour and look of the brickwork and, once

Q What if I don't want the red-brick colour?

Once cleaned and prepped, apply a primer and undercoat that's suitable for masonry, using a roller with a medium to long pile. Once thoroughly dry, paint with a water-based acrylic paint intended for interior use. As brick is porous, you'll need at least two coats.

Q Can I fake it?

You can – and brick slips could be the answer. These veneer bricks faithfully mimic a solid brick wall but are much thinner and will take up less space. Large areas may need to be installed using a panel system, but smaller sections can be glued onto a solid wall, just like regular tiles. Once pointed, they're incredibly realistic.

'Be careful not to lose texture by over-zealous cleaning or repair, and avoid wire brushes or other abrasives'

ROGER HUNT, CO-AUTHOR, NEW DESIGN FOR OLD BUILDINGS (RIBA PUBLISHING)



White bricks add instant loft-living cool to a room

BEST FOR...

BESPOKE BRICK
The Bespoke Brick Company's exclusive range explores different textures, tones and types of brick.

RECLAIMED BRICKS

Cawarden has the largest stock of reclaimed bricks in the country, and also sells seriously realistic reproduction bricks and brick slips.

DIY TOOLS

Jewson is the place to head for labour-saving tools like a Roughneck Brick & Mortar Gun, which makes repointing a breeze. Stock up on a decent trowel, too.

IDEAL HOME LOVES... BRICKWORK WALLPAPER

SOFT APPROACH
Pale grey tones will work with neutral schemes.
Facade, £29.95 a roll, Galerie Walkcoverings



LOW STRESS
Spongeable surfaces are easy to wipe clean.
Fresco Red Brick, £20 a roll, Graham & Brown



ALL ABOARD
A vintage-look subway style.
District Line, £120 for 5.62sq m, Debbie McKeegan



REAL FEEL
A realistic embossed finish.
Dax dry stone wall slate brick effect, £13.99 a roll, I Want Wallpaper

FEATURE: LINDA CLAYTON PHOTOGRAPH: TIM MCDONALD