



Welcome to my home

A bit about me

I'm Ben Rogers and I own a town planning consultancy.

Where I live

My home is a two-bedroom Edwardian flat in Hornsey, north London. I have lived here for 14 years.

What I wanted to change

I wanted to individualise the flat with cosy bedrooms and a smart, open-plan living space.

How I made it my own

My wallpaper is fun and quirky and my accessories remind me of my friends, family and my travels.

My favourite part

I'm really pleased with it all now, but I especially love the bathroom, it is such a smart space. I also like my living room for its spaciousness and bright light during the day and its cosiness at night once the blinds are down in the evenings.



My flat

'I like to support independent shops whenever I can, so I bought the kitchen units locally. The bar stools are from Heal's'



I'm glad I dared to

By the time he had the funds and time to renovate his dated



Kitchen

'The kitchen layout has stayed the same because it is a small space but I removed the wall between the kitchen and the living room to open it up. It has also increased my worktop space. I chose streamlined, light grey units and a grey sparkle granite worktop for a timeless and smart look. In the old kitchen the only place for my fridge freezer was by the window so it blocked out half of the light. Now I have an integrated appliance. I chose textured grey wall tiles to contrast with the smooth units and worktop.'

GOOD IDEA

Giant plants are an exotic solution to filling any awkward spaces

'Removing a wall between the kitchen and living room has made all the difference in here'

try **an individual look**

flat **Ben Rogers** knew exactly what he wanted and he's so pleased with the results!

August 2018 15

'I installed a bench seat by the window so that in the morning before work I can sip my coffee and watch the world go by,' says Ben



A smart chrome tap suits the new style of the kitchen. The wall and floor tiles are from Checkalow. Potted cacti and succulents create a modern and industrial feel.

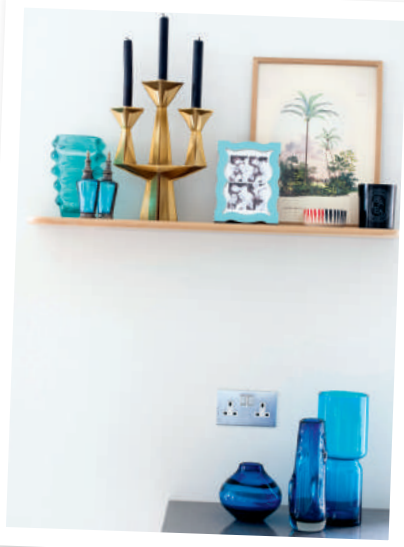
Making
Make your
own **cement**
planters on
page 25

Ben found the vintage coloured glassware in a friend's collection.

'Technically they're on loan, but I won't be giving them back!'

A statement candelabra by Tom Dixon adds a metallic aspect to this shelf set-up.

Running similar colours throughout the living-dining area blends the spaces nicely.



'My sitting room is spacious and flooded with light during the day'



GOOD IDEA

Decorate your walls with pieces and prints that you really love; try the Affordable Art Fair



Mid-Century furniture is a recurring theme throughout Ben's home

My story...

I bought this flat with my sister. I didn't know this part of London but it was what we could afford and a good spot for our social lives and work. The floorboards were original but knackered with wide gaps and it had a tiny galley kitchen separated from the sitting room by a wall. It was all dated and tired but we lived here as it was for 10 years because I was busy setting up my business. Then my sister moved out so I did the work bit by bit as I could afford the time and money. I wanted an open-plan kitchen and living room with neutral décor that I could liven up with accessories. A designer friend of mine called Bhavin Taylor advised on the design and I employed a builder contact to do most of the work. I started the project four years ago, tackling my bedroom first because it was the area which most needed upgrading. I did the bathroom next which took about six weeks. Luckily, my sister lived close by so I stayed there. Before doing the bathroom, my washing machine was in the kitchen which I hated because when it was in use I couldn't hear the television. So I have hidden it and the boiler in a cupboard in there. The space works so well now and is such a contrast to the old one. Two years ago I tackled the rest of the flat, the country-style kitchen units were held together with duct tape by that stage! It took three months during which I lived in my bedroom with a microwave, kettle and television. I got rid of my furniture, it was very old and I wanted to start afresh. It's the perfect space now, there's literally nothing I would change.

'I chose what I thought was an orange fabric for the armchair but it turned out to be peach. Luckily it still works with the blue sofa and rug!'



GOOD IDEA

A vertical radiator is a good solution to limited wall space and makes a statement in a room

'Splashes of bold colour add personality to my home'

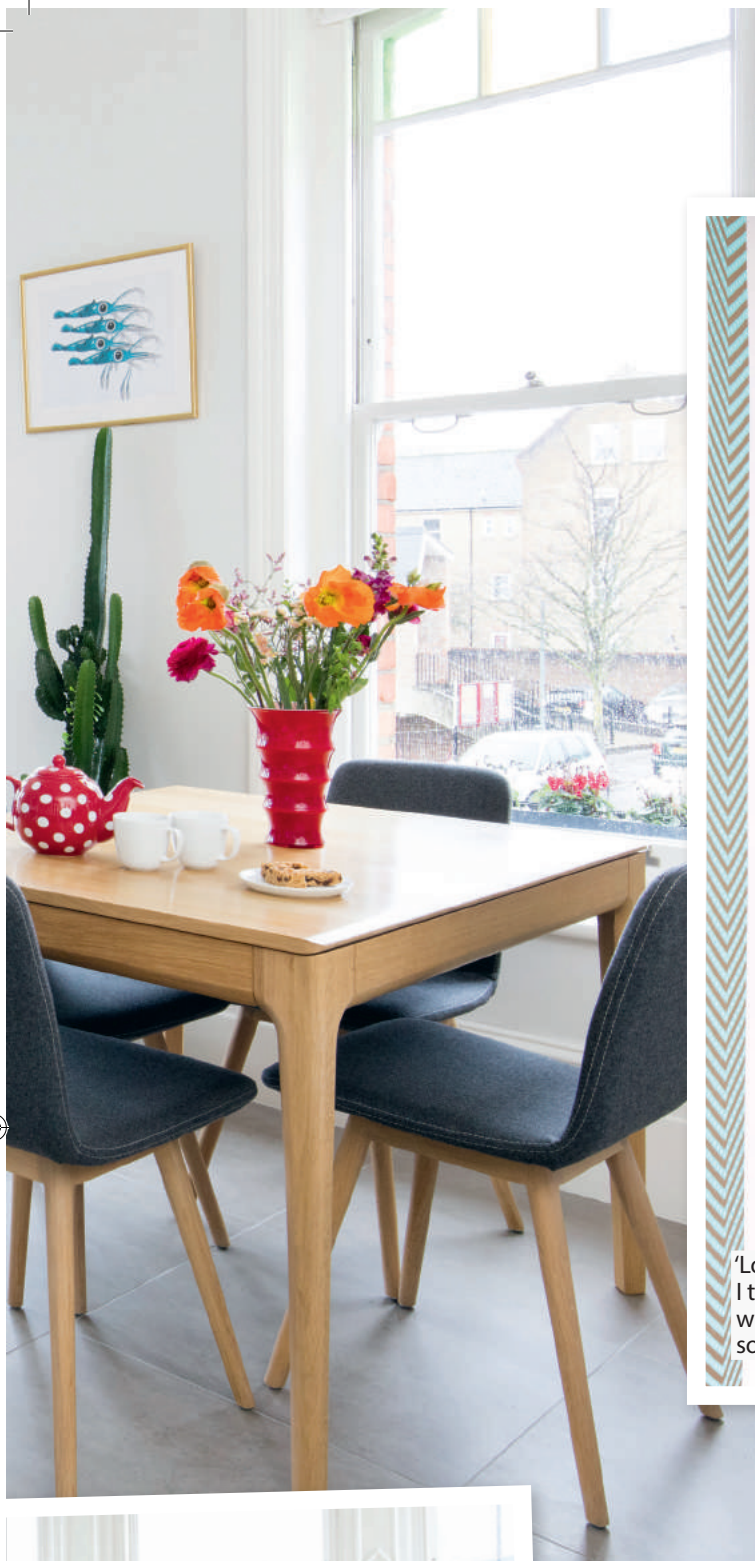


After waiting many years to carry out his renovations, when it came to decorating and dressing the rooms, Ben likes to mix pieces he really loves with more affordable buys. The sofa cushions are from Bhavin Taylor Home, Heal's and Missoni. Paired with high street pieces, it makes for an eclectic home style.

Living room

'The flat is on a corner so it has several big windows and this room is always filled with light. I kept the walls neutral and used accessories and artwork to bring in colour. I wanted this space to be comfortable but quite formal and stylish with bright accessories. I chose a vertical radiator because the windows mean there's limited space for a conventional one, but it also makes a statement. The scheme was going to be grey, yellow and copper but in the end I decided to be a bit more adventurous with colour.'





'Long hallways can be boring spaces but I thought I'd give mine a circus tent feel with this Nevis by Osborne & Little wallpaper so that when you walk into the flat it feels light-hearted'



'I like Ercol's stylish, Mid-Century look so have a few pieces in here, including my coffee table and dining table, which I picked up at Furniture Village,' says Ben. The open-plan layout creates a feeling of space in here, which is zoned by a rug for added comfort.

Expert advice

Redesigning your home

- You should feel proud and confident in your home and happy with what you have accomplished. If you don't straight away, allow yourself some time to live in your space, to see what does and doesn't work for you.
- Dare to mix patterns and colours. There are no strict rules on how you can combine patterns so if you think that it works in the space, that's fine. That way you will be surrounded by what you really like.
- The golden rule is that your home must reflect your own personality. Everything in it must have a connection to you and reflect your experiences. Don't be a slave to current trends and fads.
- If you are going to ask a professional to help you, be prepared to listen to new ideas. They will ascertain your personality and a good designer may encourage you to go a little bolder.

Ben has introduced bold splashes of colour with two red lips prints by Sara Pope, which are from Jealous Gallery



'I wanted to create a cosy feel in the bedrooms with bold wallpaper'

Master bedroom

'I went for busy wallpaper in the bedrooms which they can easily take as they enjoy plenty of light. I have carpet in both because it's nice to get out of bed in the morning and put your feet on something warm. The Palm wallpaper is by Cole & Son. It reminds me of being abroad, as do my exotic plants. I just wanted it to be somewhere I could come and relax at any time of the day.'

'I completely gutted the bathroom. John Lewis sanitary ware and grey wall and floor tiles give it a spa-like feel'



Steal my style

Get some of Ben's luxe home style with these glamorous buys

£22

£79.99

£80

True blue

Broste blue Bobby vase, Debenhams

Bee happy

Empire Bee cushion, Rume

Basket case

Tropical plant, HomeSense

In the master bedroom, the furnishings and accessories reflect Ben's love of Mid-Century style. The walnut furniture contributes to the warm feeling he set out to create

GOOD IDEA

Be daring and go for striking soft furnishings to stamp your style on your space



'I was a bit nervous about hanging such a dark wallpaper but I needn't have worried, it's bold without being claustrophobic'

Shopping
Shop just like designer pieces on page 22

Guest bedroom

'I wanted the guest bedroom to be cosy and fun but in a different way to the master bedroom. The wallpaper is Ingot by Cole & Son. I went for a monochrome scheme but chose yellow accessories for my splash of colour.'

What I learned...

- Plan ahead but be flexible. My kitchen took much longer than anticipated due to the bench seat being the wrong size, things not turning up on time and a delay to it being fitted.
- Don't be afraid to be bold and to embrace colours and textures. I was apprehensive about it at first, then I just went for it and I'm glad I did.
- In open-plan spaces, consider concealing washing machines and other less attractive appliances such as a boiler in a cupboard.

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