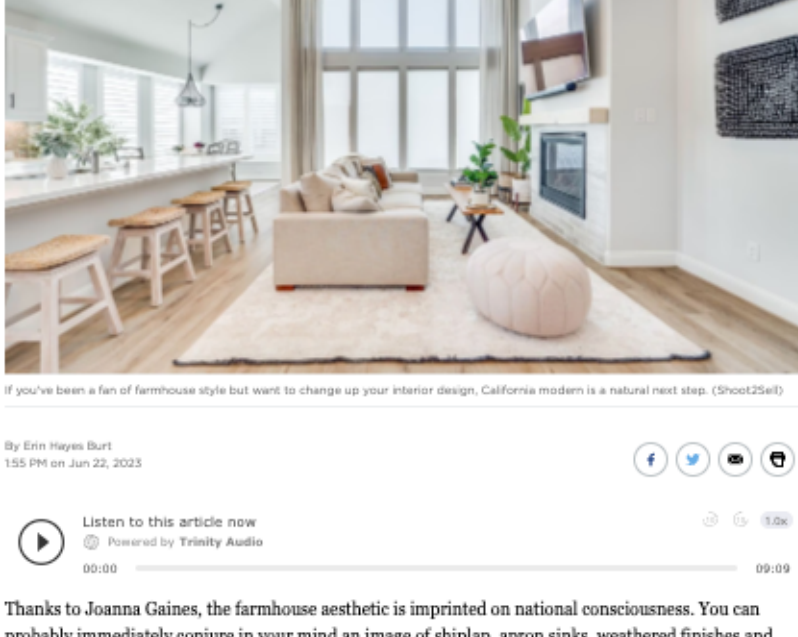


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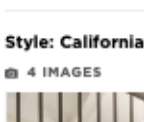
# D-FW designers share 5 popular home decor styles — and how to incorporate them

Here's what to know about California modern, transitional, updated Southern living and other interior looks.



If you've been a fan of farmhouse style but want to change up your interior design, California modern is a natural next step. (ShoetZSeh)

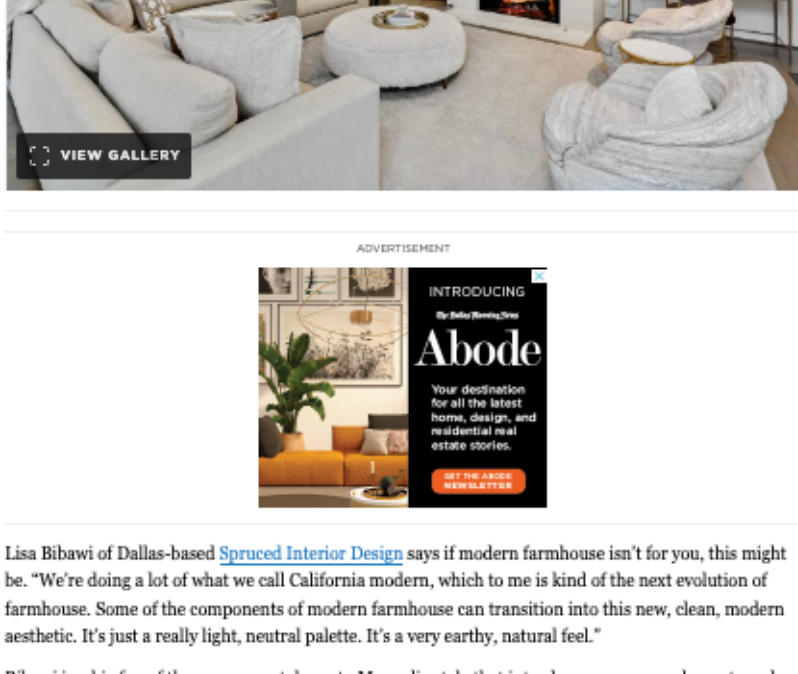
By Erin Hayes Burt  
1:55 PM on Jun 22, 2023



Thanks to Joanna Gaines, the farmhouse aesthetic is imprinted on national consciousness. You can probably immediately conjure in your mind an image of shiplap, apron sinks, weathered finishes and traditional fabrics. Other home design styles, though, may be a little hazy in your mind. Can you picture English cottage? What about transitional? If you're not familiar with the range of styles, it can be hard to know if your home's look is a perfect fit for you. We consulted interior designers across North Texas for a lesson in home design styles — and how to bring them alive in your space.

## Style: California modern

4 IMAGES



Lisa Bibawi of Dallas-based [Spruced Interior Design](#) says if you, this might be. "We're doing a lot of what we call California modern, which to me is kind of the next evolution of farmhouse. Some of the components of modern farmhouse can transition into this new, clean, modern aesthetic. It's just a really light, neutral palette. It's a very earthy, natural feel."

Bibawi is a big fan of the newer coastal-meets-Magnolia style that introduces some new elements and can freshen your look without a floor-to-ceiling makeover. "People who are not wanting to spend a lot of money but want to make some changes can change out pillows, throws, maybe an accent chair, an accent table and incorporate some neutral tones. In my own house, I wanted to take it a little more California, so I changed out my bar stools from a very contemporary leather and wood bar stool and I changed them to cane-back bar stools. So that just completely changed the look in my kitchen."

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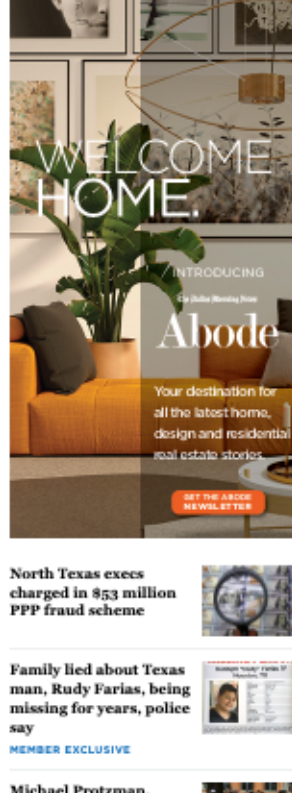
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## Get the California modern look in your home

**Materials:** Terra cotta tile, polished wood, stucco, wrought iron, wicker, cane, jute | **Furniture and accessories:** Minimalist or low-profile sofas, teak wood tables, boho accessories | **Colors and fabrics:** Light to medium wood shades, neutrals, earth tones

## Style: Transitional

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Transitional style is gaining in popularity because it's so flexible, according to Shelby Whitfield, the owner and principal designer for [Modern Menagerie](#). Transitional style is a mix of traditional and modern, so it's fairly timeless and allows the user to pick what elements of each look to incorporate. "I love transitional because it's accessible to everyone," Whitfield explains. "It's not so minimalist that you feel like you can't put anything down."

Jordin LePori and Jennifer Parker, co-owners of [Interior Styling](#) in North Dallas, like this style because you can create an updated look that blends old favorites and new finds. "You might have an antique from your grandmother," explains Parker, "but then you can also mix in a little modern, a little color, a little texture."

If design "rules" don't appeal to you, transitional style is a good choice. "It's all in the mixing of clean, modern lines with more ornate, classic details," explains Tara Lenney of [Tara Lenney Design](#). "You can take a more modern light fixture shape but choose a classic metal finish, like an antique brass or polished nickel."

## Get the transitional look in your home

**Materials:** Large-scale printed textiles, polished woods, layers of metals and glass | **Furniture and accessories:** Grand, plush, focused on comfort with clean lines; mix of styles | **Colors and fabrics:** Neutrals with dramatic colors as accents

## Style: Updated Southern living

4 IMAGES



"The thing that's the worst is you go into these old-world styled homes and people want to try to turn them modern, and you need a lot of money to make that happen," Bibawi shares. "I do think it's important to embrace the way the home is. We have to accept it, and then figure out, how do we incorporate the style and vision we have?" If you have an old-world style home and a modern sensibility, updated Southern style is a natural fit.

The key to this look, say LePori and Parker, is a collected aesthetic. "We don't want to come in and it looks like design fairies just exploded on your house," LePori laughs. Parker agrees. "We don't want someone to walk in and say, 'Oh, they got all this from Pottery Barn.' We want it to look like this client has had good taste for 30 years and has collected all these things, and they've just magically come together."

For an authentic updated Southern look, start with your antiques and use them to anchor your room. Then add modern touches, bold textiles and mid-century lighting. Lenney recommends "a soft color palette, especially blues and whites, but in crisper, less muddy hues. The effect is that feeling of sitting on your grandma's covered porch without a hint of it looking like grandma."

LePori, especially recommends this look for homes that don't have an open floor plan — you can, for example, put floral wallpaper in a dining room and limit it to that space. "For don't plant your greenery on the wallpaper. For true updated Southern style, you need plants. "A lot of organic plants, trees, that kind of stuff. No design is complete without having some plants, even if they're faux plants," Bibawi notes.

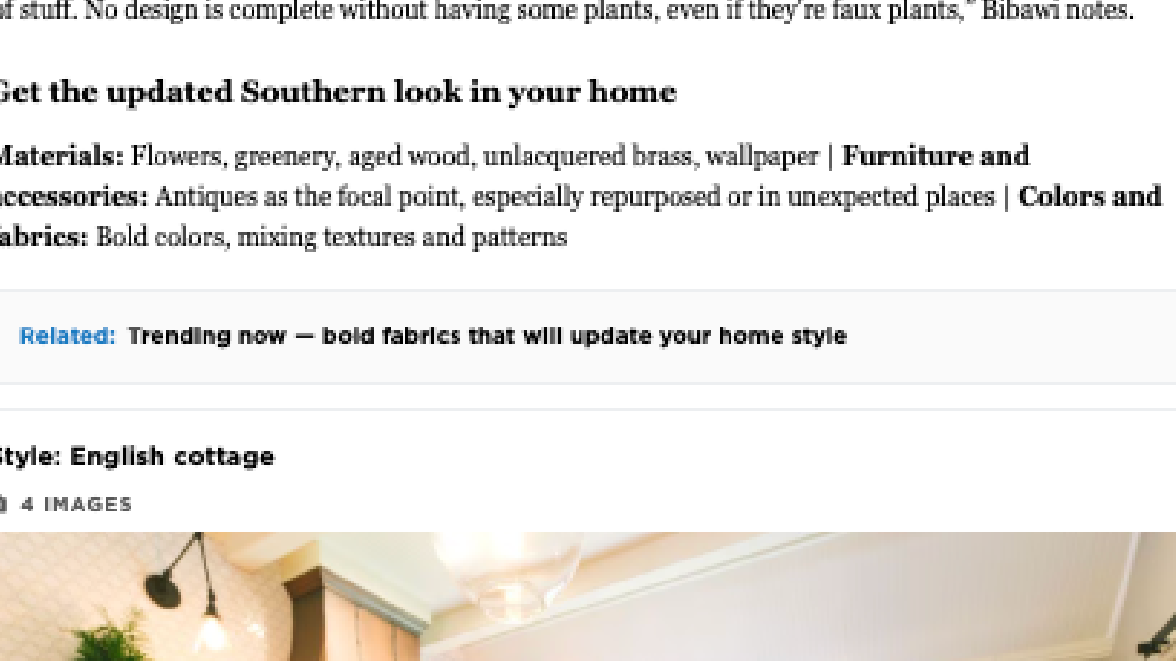
## Get the updated Southern look in your home

**Materials:** Flowers, greenery, aged wood, unlacquered brass, wallpaper | **Furniture and accessories:** Antiques as the focal point, especially repurposed or in unexpected places | **Colors and fabrics:** Bold colors, mixing textures and patterns

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## Style: English cottage

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Lenney describes English cottage as "a warm and lived-in vibe." "If your goal is a quaint and cozy space that will make you never want to leave home, English-cottage style is going to be right up your alley," she shares. You'll want to incorporate unique architectural features, vintage pieces and classic patterns and textiles. To further accent your English cottage space, go for loads of fresh flowers or plants in vintage vessels. "You're creating a space that feels like a hug," Lenney explains, "and a hot cup of tea."

English cottage is a good choice for smaller homes and isn't too demanding a style thematically, says Whitfield. "You don't have to worry about everything working together exactly perfectly. The scale of furniture works well for small houses, too."

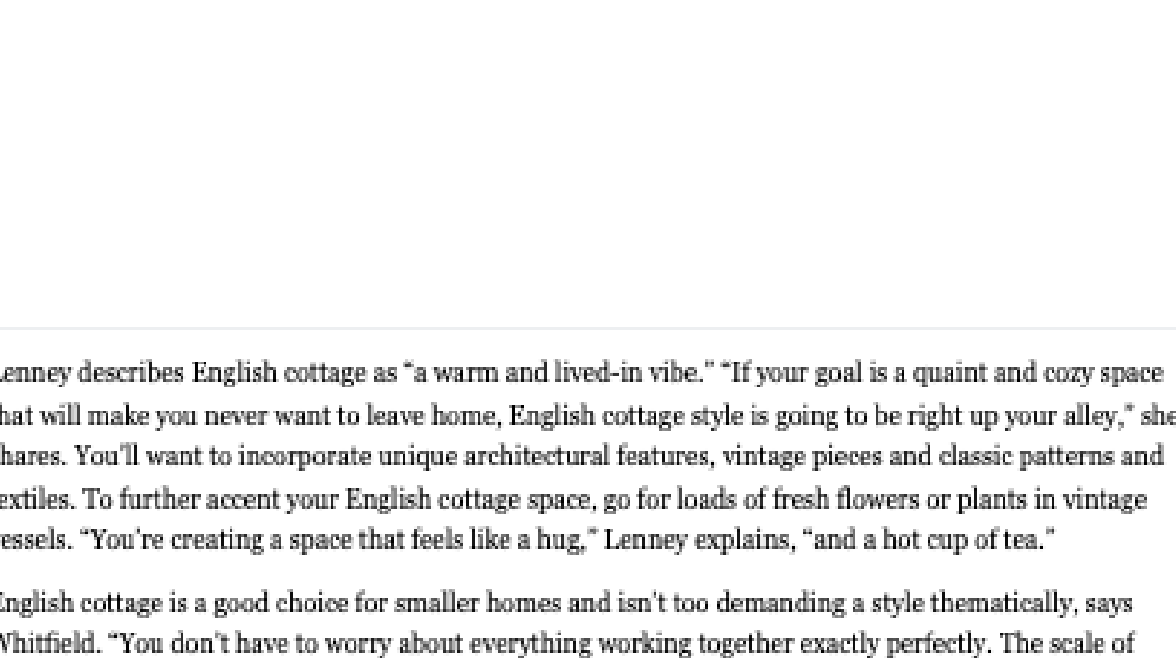
English cottage style is big on details and decor, and for this style, more is more. Think ruffles, chandeliers in unnecessary places, lace and — did we mention ruffles? This look also thrives on color and lots of it. Think of English gardens, which shares basic principles with their wild, overgrown look. If you get overwhelmed, says Shelby, start simple. "Blues and greens are a safe foundation for any style. Add a layer of personality with your own favorite colors on top."

## Get the English cottage look in your home

**Materials:** Florals, worn/antique finishes, wood, cast iron, slate, worn metals, exposed stone and brick | **Furniture and accessories:** Mismatched pieces, antiques | **Colors and fabrics:** Pastels in cool colors with a pop of a warm accent color like red, coral or hot pink; layering similar colors, like many

## Style: Updated traditional

5 IMAGES



Bibawi sees lots of homes in North Texas that are built in a very traditional style, which is always classic and never looks outdated. The last thing you want to do with a traditional home is try to make ultra-modern or go for a farmhouse aesthetic. "We want to make sure that we're being true to the architecture that's there," Bibawi says. "A lot of the projects we work on are north Dallas, Plano, Frisco area. So a lot of those homes have a really traditional feel."

Traditional style is modeled after the homes of Europe in the 1800 and 1900s, but it's incredibly flexible — so bigger furniture pieces will last. "Jordin and I try to steer people toward what we call classic traditional mainstays," says Parker. "I think it's best if your sofa, your kitchen table, maybe your dining room table, those big, huge pieces of furniture that are actually quite an investment, are traditional: classic colors, classic wood stains and then you can go from there." You can make traditional style feel updated with a saturated color palette, bold upholstery and more modern pieces mixed into the room.

## Get the updated traditional look in your home

**Materials:** Silk, damask, velvet, dark wood, ceramics, marble | **Furniture and accessories:** Clean lines, ornate decorations; mix in more modern pieces and styles | **Colors and fabrics:** Saturated colors, bold patterns

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## How to start a home style update

The design team at Spruced starts each consultation with inspiration photos, says Bibawi. "If they haven't pulled inspiration pictures, we sit down and show them tons of pictures and see what they're drawn to. I never walk in and try to just put the Spruced stamp on a space. I want each project to really reflect the client we're serving." You can get inspiration by looking through Pinterest, searching different design styles online or looking through design publications.

When choosing a design for your home, the professionals at Interior Styling encourage homeowners to pay attention to their first instinct rather than paying too much attention to trends. "Don't be afraid! If you like something, then go for it," urges Parker. "We have not had a person yet say they regret stepping out a little bit of their comfort zone. Most of them come to us at the end and say, I am so glad my house doesn't look exactly like these three other people on my block."