



TRY THIS
When bringing light in from above, apply a film (www.adswindowfilms.co.uk) to create opaque glass for privacy and as a UV filter.

The White Way

Colour fashions come and go, but somehow all-white houses manage to appear cool, chic and timeless year upon year. Many people wrongly assume that decorating a house completely in white is an easy option, with no need to worry about co-ordinating colours and patterns.

Choosing the right shade of white and ensuring that the end result doesn't look cold or become grubby actually requires a great deal of care, however, particularly if you have young children to consider. Try and choose high gloss surfaces, washable covers and other low maintenance finishes to ensure your home remains whiter than white!

There are hundreds of shades of white paint available, so try before you buy and consider sticking to a single colour throughout the house for a unified feel. Crown has launched a range of 'structured whites' featuring various different shades and textures (see page 8). Visit the website (www.crownpaint.co.uk) for more advice.

As with paint, if you decide to mix and match white sanitaryware then remember that tones will vary, particularly if you are importing certain items. Any differences will be emphasised once the pieces are side by side in a room, and bright whites can make others appear slightly grey in comparison - so do your research first.

"I hate dark rooms, so the priority was to bring in as much light as possible."

needing a place with a garden and more ground floor living space; which this house certainly offered. From the start it felt like a real family home," Donna recalls.

The well-proportioned, south-facing sitting room opened directly into the dining room and steps from the hallway led down to a long narrow kitchen. "We could immediately see the potential to extend into the side return passageway and create a wider multi-purpose kitchen," says Julian, a banker.

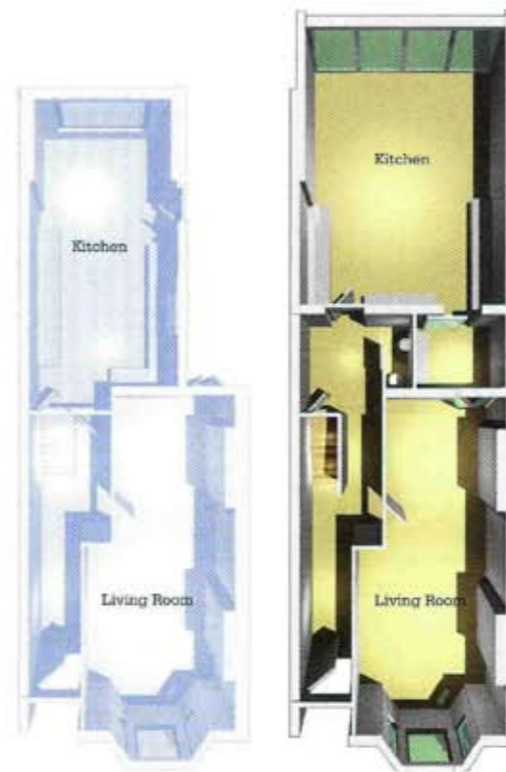
"Unlike many of the other properties we'd viewed, this house was well within our budget, leaving us with enough money to really make our mark on what was effectively a blank canvas. Some close friends were able to recommend an architect, whose work we admired, and this gave us the extra confidence we needed to take on such a major project. Without this I don't actually think we would have bought the house at all."

Richard Dudzicki of RDA Architects agreed that enlarging the kitchen, by extending into the side passageway and out by two metres to the rear, would form a much more usable kitchen/dining/living space. Neighbouring properties had already been extended and planning permission was gained with relative ease.

"I hate dark rooms, so the priority was to bring as much natural light into the building as possible," explains Donna, a lawyer, who is currently expecting the couple's second child.

Floorplans

GROUND FLOOR BEFORE & AFTER



How Donna and Julian transformed their home:

- Side and rear walls of original kitchen removed to make way for the new extensions.
- Addition of roof glazing and full-height patio doors.
- Creation of a home office and downstairs WC.

"We moved into the house and lived here for a year before the building work began. This really gave us the opportunity to get to know the place and how the sun moves from room to room. By the time we'd finished all the building work we could honestly say there was nothing we would change, because so much thought and tweaking had gone into the overall design."

In January 2006, Donna, Julian and Henry packed their bags and moved into a rented cottage for six months while the house was virtually gutted and every room received a long-overdue makeover. Much of their furniture remained in the basement - a storage decision they later came to regret when several items became dirty and damp. In some ways, however, the need to purchase new things for their home proved extremely cathartic, and they have invested in several key pieces which really show off the interiors to their best advantage.



Above: For continuity in rooms with different uses, link the spaces with similar items, like the tables here.

The brown of the dining table, chairs and sofa warms the double reception space, and the inviting vivid blue Ligne Roset sofa makes a real design statement in the new kitchen extension whilst also being eminently practical. The simple blue and white colour scheme manages to create a fresh, almost Nordic feel, with splashes of colour introduced in the furniture and fabric.

"We've always had a love affair with white," says Donna, "and we knew from the start that every room in the house would be painted pure white. We also decided on a white kitchen and actually travelled out to Italy to meet the people who were producing our high-gloss cabinets. It was supposed to be a cheap one day visit, but fog meant that our plane was rerouted and we were out there for an extra day, so it ended up like an enforced mini break."

Spending this time designing the bespoke kitchen proved extremely fruitful, however, and ensured that everything was built to order and fits seamlessly into the new space created in the extension.

Project Costs

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| Preliminaries: | £1,500 |
| Demolition and site clearance: | £6,400 |
| Substructure: | £8,600 |
| Superstructure: | £53,840 |
| Finishes: | £11,300 |
| Fittings and furnishings: | £2,050 |
| Services: | £31,550 |
| External works: | £4,800 |
| Kitchen: | £20,000 |
| Other: | £40,000 |
| TOTAL COST: | £180,040 |