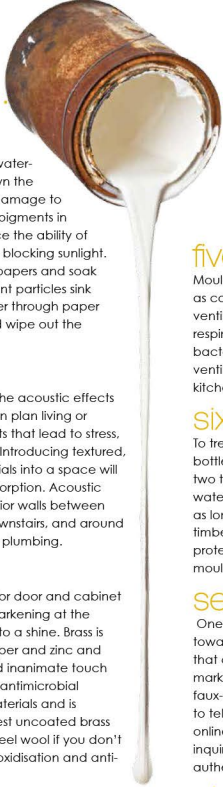


Inside



one

It is often assumed that it is okay to clean water-based paint off equipment by rinsing it down the drain. This practice causes environmental damage to our waterways. Murkiness caused by paint pigments in the water can both clog fish gills and reduce the ability of underwater plant life to photosynthesise by blocking sunlight. Always wipe off excess paint into old newspapers and soak brushes and tools in water until the solid paint particles sink to the bottom. You can then strain the water through paper straight onto a flat piece of soil or grass and wipe out the remaining paint residue at the bottom.

two

For the most part, we give little thought to the acoustic effects of interior surfaces. Hard materials and open plan living or workspaces can create sound environments that lead to stress, difficulty concentrating and disorientation. Introducing textured, open-pored, perforated and woven materials into a space will help to reduce reverberation by sound absorption. Acoustic insulation products can be used inside interior walls between sleeping and living spaces, upstairs and downstairs, and around toilets, appliances, water pumps and other plumbing.

three

Brass is hands-down my favourite material for door and cabinet handles as it responds organically to use, darkening at the edges while the contact points are buffed to a shine. Brass is an alloy made primarily from recycled copper and zinc and has traditionally been used in tap-ware and inanimate touch surfaces because of the copper's inherent antimicrobial properties. Brass is produced from scrap materials and is 100% recyclable at the end of its life. Request uncoated brass products or remove the lacquer with fine steel wool if you don't want a shiny yellow look. This will allow the oxidation and anti-pathogenic action to occur.

four

In Australia, interior design is commonly perceived as interior styling, relating only to decorating, furnishings and finishes; this, however, is just one area of the design discipline. Interior design is an approach that articulates the interaction between inhabitants and the built form, and sits in a space that intersects with architecture and the broader design world, including fashion and product design. Interior designers are able to specifically curate the end-user experience of a home or workplace.

five

Mould can build up inside our homes and workplaces over winter as condensation forms inside well-sealed spaces without adequate ventilation. Interior mould is associated with allergies, asthma and respiratory problems and can cause an increase in dust mites and bacteria. Ensuring weather-tightness to the building and adequate ventilation with self-closing externally vented extraction fans in all kitchens, laundries and bathrooms will help keep indoor mould at bay.

six

To treat existing mould try using straight distilled vinegar in a spray bottle, or if you don't like the smell, you can also use solutions made of two teaspoons of tea tree oil or 20 drops of grape-seed oil in 2 cups of water. Spray one of these generously on the mould and leave on for as long as possible. Keep in mind vinegar is acidic and may damage timber coatings. When dealing with large amounts of mould wear protective gloves and a mask to prevent inhaling or ingesting the mould spores.

seven

One of the ironic yet inevitable side-effects of the growing trend towards using sustainable, renewable and recycled materials, is that a "look" associated with these qualities is replicated in the mass market. As a result there are a number of manufacturers producing faux-vintage and recycled furniture and homewares. It can be hard to tell the difference between old and "distressed" when shopping online, so look out for phrases like "retro style" or "vintage inspired" and inquire directly about the original sources of items if you are looking for authentically recycled materials.

eight

Waxed or oiled timber floors don't need to be mopped often. Regularly sweeping or vacuuming grit from them is the most important cleaning action. When mopping use a minimal amount of water in a fine spray bottle with a washable soft cotton or very old microfibre cloth. Some natural floor sealants have their own cleaning products that are safe to use in small concentrations. Never use too much water on a timber floor as it can cause damage and is an ineffective cleaning method, simply swooshing around dirt rather than removing it. The best way to both protect and buff a waxed or oiled floor back to shine is to have everyone wear their socks around the house.