



I'm a maximalist and love rooms that make an impact

Emma and Lee Solomon-Moore embraced a bold colour scheme in their chapel home, furnished with Emma's eclectic craft projects and vintage finds



Emma Solomon-Moore and her husband Lee never imagined their next home would be a converted chapel, but when they both found jobs in Bath and began looking at houses in the surrounding area, the property proved to be perfect. 'We wanted a house with character that we could move into and live in straight away because we knew we'd be too busy with our jobs to make improvements,' Emma explains. 'The chapel had been converted some years before so everything was new; plus, it had

beautiful original stained-glass windows.'

The couple loved the quirky rooms – the living room and bedroom are half hexagon shapes formed by the bay windows – but the previous occupants had been unimaginative with the layout. 'Our bedroom has an amazing five windows but when we came to see the house, the furniture placement didn't make the best of the rooms,' Emma explains. 'All the walls were magnolia and Lee and I couldn't wait to make the chapel look more exciting.'

Emma is a lecturer at the University

✦ Emma embraced the lack of light in the living room with cosy brown walls inspired by Abigail Ahern. She added a feature gold velvet sofa from Harveys Furniture; pattern and texture via cushions and rugs from IKEA, La Redoute and Etsy, and a beaded chandelier from M&S

✦ Emma covered the ram's head in faux moss and upcycled a B&Q floor lamp with the Yellow Pages. The face cushion, from TK Maxx, picks out the gold in the sofa. The red leather chair is from eBay. 'I like the patina of old leather furniture,' Emma says



of Bath, but had studied art graphics at A Level so she couldn't wait to flex her creative muscle. Soon after the couple moved into the chapel in November 2017, they got stuck in. The top priority was replacing the beige dining room and hall carpet with oak-effect laminate, which they laid themselves. They also decided to add a faux chimney breast and fireplace to the dining room. 'It seemed bizarre to live in an old house without a fireplace,' says Emma. 'Unfortunately, the builder didn't get the measurements right so we had to shift the furniture around to fit everything in, but the end result looks good.'

Rearranging belongings became a key turning point in the living room, too. 'The TV blocked one of the windows, which really annoyed me,' says Emma. 'Then, we bought a longer sofa which didn't fit >

✦ 'The wood-effect cupboards weren't to our taste, but we couldn't justify ripping them out,' says Emma. 'The pinky-red paint colour complements the sandy-cream tiles and blends the scheme together.' The paint is Mulberry Red by Abigail Ahern. The original American wood Coca-Cola bottle tray is from Etsy. The bulldog tea towel is from Winston James Woolf

Good idea!
Painting the cupboards, walls and ceiling in one colour makes the space look bigger than it really is – and means less cutting in!



REAL HOME

COME ON IN...



OUR HOME is a four-bedroom converted chapel in Holcombe, Somerset, which was built in the 1890s

WE ARE Emma Solomon-Moore, a lecturer in public health at the University of Bath, and my husband, Lee, a lecturer in sports psychology. We live here with our French bulldog, Didier

I'M MOST PROUD OF The dining room wood panelling as it looks really effective and was cheap and easy to make

SHOPS I LOVE HomeSense sells homeware you don't see anywhere else and Abigail Ahern faux plants are amazing quality

MY TOP TIPS Are learn a new craft to give an individual spin to your interiors. I reupholstered a stool and a pyrography course encouraged me to etch a design on my dining table. Online tutorials taught me decorating techniques and macramé

OUR BIGGEST MISTAKE Was not considering the depth of the paint colour in the dining room. It took five coats to achieve a dense shade – and it's the biggest room in the house!



For stockists see page 120

Feature Jane Critchford Photos Colin Poole

REAL HOME



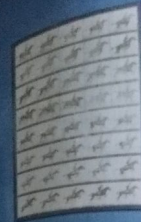
✦ The newly-painted kitchen is decorated with animal plates from I Want One of Those and a rug which was given to them by Emma's parents

◀ on the same wall, so we played around with the layout and now the room feels so much more spacious.'

When it came to decorating the couple didn't hold back, opting for a rich, dark colour scheme and layers of texture and pattern. They began one room at a time, starting with the downstairs cloakroom, which was given a space-themed wallpaper, dramatic black walls and fun green joinery. A warm, mulberry red shade features in the kitchen, regal blue in the dining room, and earthy brown on the living room walls. 'Everyone thought I was crazy to choose brown but I'd been to an Abigail Ahern interiors workshop and looked around her dark decorated bedroom – I knew it would make a great backdrop.'

Emma's confidence carries through to her creative projects where she fearlessly – and successfully – experimented with a cloud paint effect for her vaulted bedroom ceiling. She also made the macramé hanging above the bed which didn't go to plan straight away. 'I made the mistake of hanging the macramé on beach driftwood attached to the ceiling with jewellery wire but the whole thing fell down,' Emma says. 'Fishing line works much better as it's strong and has a bit of stretch to it.'

There are plenty of purchases bought ▶



Good idea!

Instagram is a great source of inspiration for art and means you can buy prints direct from the artists.

'I never spend a lot of money on projects, then it doesn't matter if something doesn't work and I need to try a different approach.'

✦ The mango wood letter drawers were a lucky find on Gumtree



REAL HOME

✦ Emma improved the layout of the long room with a faux chimney breast and defined areas for eating and relaxing. A craft course taught her how to upholster the charity shop footstool with gold and green velvet and a long fringe. The leather chair is from eBay's Recycled Retro 1 and the faux plants are from Abigail Ahern

✦ Emma glued MDF strips to the wall to make the panelling and painted it in Valspar Royal Concerto. 'Before, the big room looked empty, now the panelling adds texture and interest,' says Emma. The table was from Emma's friend and the gold palm lamp is from Olive and Sage

✦ Inspired by the octopus candlestick, Emma used her new pyrography pen skills to burn a tentacles etching onto the wooden table





Good idea!
The handmade MDF headboard hides the electrics for the bedside lights which are controlled by an app on Emma and Lee's phones.



Contrasting yellow and blue bed linen injects instant colour to the bedroom. The duvet cover is from HomeSense and the yellow throw was bought at BHS

'I made the mistake of hanging the driftwood with jewellery wire – fishing line works much better as it's strong and has stretch in it.'

◀ on a whim – often turning out to be some of Emma's best buys. A transparent vintage suitcase has become a wall display in the kitchen, and cow horns from eBay are wardrobe handles. A mannequin hand, which had caught Emma's eye in a second-hand shop, has had a base added to it and been sprayed gold to make a bathroom towel-holder. The Yellow Pages floor lamp in the living room is another happy accident. 'I loved the shape of the lamp but not the lurid green,' she explains. 'Paint wouldn't stick to the metal so I stuck on the Yellow Pages to use as a base and then decided I rather liked the look!'

Rooms are furnished with a mix of vintage and upcycled furniture gleaned from charity shops, eBay and flea markets – some pieces have been reinvented many times over, such as her childhood chest of drawers in the bedroom and the tea chest coffee table which had once been a kitchen seat in their previous home. 'I never spend a lot of money on projects, then it doesn't matter if something doesn't work and I need to try a different approach,' she says.

✦ An online tutorial taught Emma how to paint the cloudy sky. 'I added blue, then white and used round brushes to make the cloud effect,' she explains. She used Dulux's Sapphire Salute and made the macramé hanging

✦ 'I love the wallpaper in the downstairs cloakroom but it's expensive so we just papered one wall,' says Emma. She picked out the black and green for dramatic walls and fun joinery. The wallpaper is Mind The Gap Other Worlds from Rockett St George

✦ 'I like bright colours against understated walls,' says Emma. The cushions are from Debenhams and the marbled bed linen is from Urban Outfitters



It took just six months for Emma and Lee to turn their bland, uninspiring chapel into an eclectic home brimming with colour, pattern and intrigue. 'They're enjoying their efforts but Emma admits she still has the urge to do more. 'I like

learning new skills and crafts so there will always be finishing touches to add,' she says with a smile. 'I've inherited my grandmother's old sewing machine – next on my list is to learn to sew and to make some new curtains and blinds.'

6 IDEAS TO STEAL



'You don't have to water these plants, they'll stay green forever!'

Fajita artificial plants, £3 each, H&M

Add a funky Californian touch with a gold palm table lamp

Hachi table lamp by Dar Lighting, £89.99, Wayfair



Jazz up a single wall with an eye-catching print, like Emma did in her downstairs WC

Walltastic Space Adventure mural, £40, Argos

Emma injected fun into the bedroom with a selection of cute and colourful animal face cushions

Animal cushion by Posh Totty Designs, £15, Notonthehighstreet



Pairing gold with velvet adds a luxe look to the living room

Margot antique gold velvet two-seater sofa, £499, Made

Switch up your artwork with a macramé wall hanging

Sass & Belle Boho macramé wall hanging, £16, Asos

