

# Home made

A fresh start inspired Victoria Butler to gut a dated bungalow, expand her DIY skills, set up an upholstery business – and create a home that felt all her own

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## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**  
Semi-detached  
1930s bungalow

**ROOMS** Sitting  
room, kitchen-diner,  
three bedrooms,  
two bathrooms

**LOCATION**  
Brighton

Victoria Butler has been a great believer in making a house feel like home in every property she's lived in. So when she downsized from a family house to a chalet bungalow, she took on the project with gusto. 'I've always been very hands on, whether it's putting together an Ikea flatpack or hanging pictures,' says Victoria, who owns an upholstery business @mybrightonhome. 'I've been sewing since I was 13 and more recently I've been asking for power tools for presents – the bungalow was my biggest challenge yet.'

Victoria was drawn to the dated bungalow with its modest kitchen extension, small loft conversion, large garden and four bedrooms because it was ideal for herself and younger adult daughter, who lives with her. 'There were swirly brown carpets, a chunky Yorkstone feature fireplace and a very brown kitchen,' Victoria recalls. 'But I knew this property would be perfect for stripping back and starting again to make it my own.'

With two bedrooms on the ground floor and two upstairs, Victoria decided to create an upstairs suite by turning one of them into her bathroom. 'Top of my wish list was a large bathroom with a bath,' says Victoria. 'The whole top floor is mine now and it's such a lovely space.'

Although Victoria relished getting stuck into the project, she wisely accepted help from friends

**'SMALL DETAILS  
ELEVATE THE FINAL  
TOUCHES - THE  
GOLD TABLE LAMP  
IN THE KITCHEN  
COMPLEMENTS THE  
TAP, DOOR  
HANDLES AND  
PLUG SOCKETS'**



**DINING AREA**  
'It took a while to find a table to fit the narrow space,' says Victoria. 'The simple style goes with chairs I already had in black that I sanded back to natural wood.'

Panelling in a colour-match to Roasted Macadamia, Farrow & Ball. Nordic 150cm solid oak dining table is similar, Oak&More. Set of two Windsor spindle-back chairs are similar, La Redoute. *The Plane Tree* by Matisse print, Desenio

**KITCHEN**  
'The oak shelf was important to bring warmth, texture and design interest to the cool white tiles and cupboards,' says Victoria. Try reclaimed oak shelf, Pipe Dream Furniture. Lampas Cloud Pattern tiles are similar, Topps Tiles. Hortology's Charlotte plant pot in Green is similar



**SITTING ROOM**  
'I upcycled the coffee table, adding legs and sanding the orange wood back to a raw finish,' says Victoria. 'I also tiled the hearth myself with the same floor tiles as in the bathroom but in a green tone.'

Brina acacia wood coffee table would work, Sklum. Similar bus blind, The Letter Arty. Lynden sofa in Natural by Laura Ashley is similar, Next. Try Andre rattan easy-fit lampshade, Dunelm. Hearth tiled in Semaphore Britannic tiles in Dark Green, Claybrook. Twisted willow is similar, Sally Welch Flowers on Etsy. Cream urn, South Downs Nurseries



**GARDEN**  
Painting the exterior walls white adds a relaxed Mediterranean feel. Try the black Skeleton indoor/outdoor wall clock from Dunelm. Dawson's Living has a similar indoor/outdoor standing egg chair



**HALLWAY**  
 'I bought the console because I like the simplicity of mid-century furniture and the style goes with my dining table,' says Victoria.

Lussan double top ash console, La Redoute. Brushed metal-effect pewter grey round mirror, Dunelm, has this look. Cumani wood table lamp base is similar, Light & Living



**'UPHOLSTERING  
 A GREEN VELVET  
 CHAIR BECAME  
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 INSPIRATION FOR  
 THE ROOM - AND  
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and family, some of whom had experience in building and plumbing, and colleagues who could recommend tradespeople. 'Everyone I hired was great at consulting me and they were hard workers - I couldn't have achieved what I've done without them,' she says.

In the months that followed, Victoria took on the extensive task of stripping off layers of wallpaper and removing polystyrene ceiling tiles with her friend. The bungalow was upgraded with new electrics and pipework, a revamped shower room and the new bathroom. Meanwhile, Victoria had been planning a fresh new look for her home that was different from her more usual monochrome style. 'I'm still a neutrals person - I dress like my home - but I was tired of black,' she explains. 'I wanted a new start and a warmer feel in this house and moved onto whites, beige tones and natural wood textures with gold and green as accents.'

Symmetry, straight lines and order are how Victoria likes her interiors, noted in the linear kitchen layout, rugs and wall panelling, all softened with feathery touches of greenery. Upholstering a beloved armchair in green velvet prompted an unexpected new start. 'I was already making cushions for myself and I really enjoyed the process of reviving the chair so I decided the time was right to start an upholstery business,' she says. 'I've loved the whole house renovation process. I feel very connected to my home - of all the houses I've lived in, this one is my absolute favourite.' 5

**GUEST BEDROOM**  
 Warm beige panelling draws the eye and is complemented by green tones in the bedding. 'I reupholstered the chair in the same velvet fabric as the one in the sitting room but in the off-white colourway,' says Victoria. Wall panel in Driftwood, Neptune. Faux tree, La Redoute. Jaipur bedspread in Olive, Christy. Habitat's Seersucker Gingham bedding in Green is similar, Argos



**DAUGHTER'S  
 BEDROOM**

'The brown Formica wardrobes were still in fairly good condition so my friend made new MDF doors and I fitted the moulding and painted them,' says Victoria. 'I made the striped bolster cushion with fabric from The Cloth Shop on the Portobello Road in London.'

Pride & Joy Linford frill sage cushion is similar, Dunelm. Bobby Paint Your Own table lamp, Dunelm.

Green Botanical on Linen print, Desenio. Humlemott throw, Ikea. Wardrobes painted in Drop Cloth, Farrow & Ball. Ball bamboo light shade is similar, Searchlight

