

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The Top 5 Interior Design Trends for 2023

White bouclé gives way to performance velvet, and tired tile to great slabs of stone. These are among the trends coming and going next year, according to the hundreds of interior design pros we canvassed.



AS INTERIOR DESIGNERS look ahead to 2023, they disagree on a fundamental question as to the shape of furniture to come: Will it be curvy or linear? A significant number of the hundreds we polled for our annual end-of-year trends predictions foresee more of the bowed sofas and circular swivel chairs that have been dominating chic living spaces. “Rounded shapes have been popular for a while now and continue to be a huge trend,” said architect Mary Maydan, in Palo Alto, Calif. Meanwhile, New York City designer Todd Raymond has tired of organic shapes and forecasts that rectilinear, restrained furniture will feel fresher to tastemakers and clients alike. His impassioned plea: “Bring back right angles!”

Consensus was reached in many areas, however. Here, five trends that a quorum of design professionals agree will loom on the horizon and the five to which they’re happily bidding buh-bye in 2023.



SHUTTERSTOCK; VISUAL COMFORT

OUT: Look-at-Me Fixtures

Beyond the razzle-dazzle confines of a bar or game room, glass and metal chandeliers that bend and branch and poke have lost their luster, said Shannon Callahan, director of design at Marc-Michaels Interior Design, in Winter Park, Fla. Hard and sharp chandeliers feel angry, she said, and call to mind martial-arts weapons. Teresa Manns, a designer in Wauwatosa, Wis., pointed to the unappealing frigidity of such fixtures in a postpandemic world that craves coziness: “Angular fixtures are out, as are cold, brushed metals.”

IN: Retiring Lights

“Plaster chandeliers will be making a statement in 2023,” forecast Katie Paulsen, designer at Maestri Studio in Dallas. Their statement, however, will be rather muted and poetic. The chalky white finish blends into décor delicately and, noted Houston designer Paloma Contreras, keeps fussiness to a minimum. Above, the Julie Neill Alberto Medium Two Tier Chandelier for Circa Lighting exemplifies the handmade quality that Ms. Paulsen admires and the organic imperfections that Ellen Kavanaugh, a designer in Palm Beach, Fla., considers key to this trend’s appeal.



ISTOCK; ALAMY

OUT: Makeshift WFH Offices

A work-from-home command center at the dining table or kitchen island imposed a “Will this workday ever end?” feeling few of us need to tote into 2023. “Covid is not as big a threat, and the burden on homes’ square footage to do everything is not as great,” said Michael Gilbride, an interior designer based in New York City. The WFH sprawl had also cramped our entertaining style. “In the past, a junk drawer or two would be filled and shut when entertaining. This is much harder when an entire room has turned into an eyesore,” said Nashville, Tenn., designer Kate Figler.

IN: The Return of the Dining Room

The reclaiming of the dedicated dining room dovetails with our waning love of the open plan. “Many of my clients are looking for the intimacy and coziness a formal dining room brings,” said Ms. Figler. Her customers want to spend dinner parties and holiday gatherings in conversation, not shouting above the clamor of dishwashing and a TV on in the background, she said. Both new and regained dining rooms offer the opportunity to create a romantic, almost restaurant-worthy space that’s a reprieve from the rest of the house.



OUT



IN

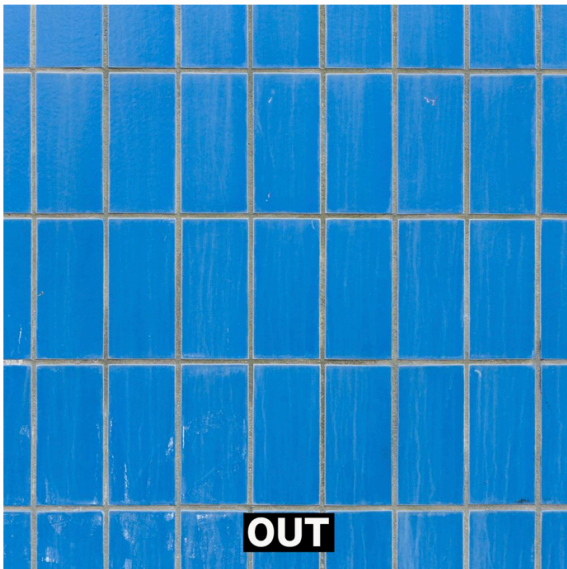
SHUTTERSTOCK; KARDIEL

OUT: The Bouclé Bust

We noted the boom in bouclé in 2021, but the creamy looped fabric is already a victim of its success. “I love me some bouclé, but every single vendor is upholstering their furniture with the fabric,” said Joshua Smith, an interior designer in Dorset, Vt. Susan Davis Taylor, a Los Angeles designer, believes that in future, bouclé will denote, “Oh, you designed your house in the early 2020s.” The fad “started at the Paris flea markets [as a way] to display vintage pieces for sale,” said New York City designer Kati Curtis, a detractor. “It’s not only impractical but completely lacks imagination.”

IN: Performance Velvet

Like bouclé, velvet invites you to touch it, but until now, you’d catch heck if you ate ice cream anywhere near a sofa upholstered in it. Good news: Technology has made performance velvet indistinguishable from real, say designers. Witness the Kardiel Swagger chair above. Plus, said Ms. Taylor, these hard-wearing velvets can hold a deep, rich color in ways other performance fabrics cannot. “This fabric can be put to the test, so you won’t have to sacrifice style and sophistication when designing your kid-friendly home,” she said.



OUT



IN

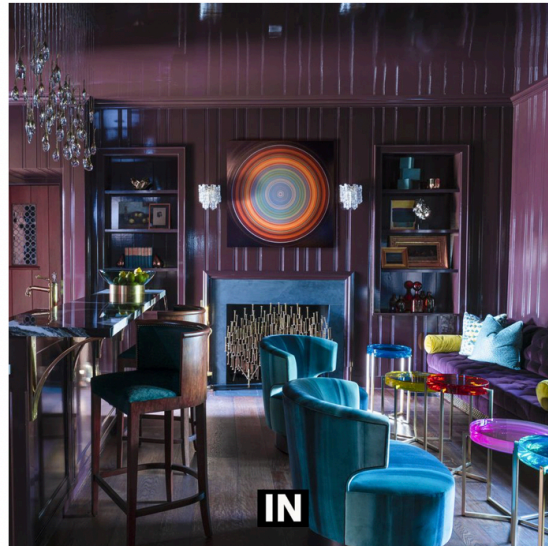
ALAMY; ABC STONE

OUT: Grout Is Out

Before 2022, subway tiles had already sadly gone from classic to commonplace. But now even the refreshing installation tweak of neatly stacking the tiles either vertically or horizontally instead of offsetting them like bricks has been overplayed. Shaolin Low, an interior designer in Honolulu, notes that the affordability and ease of slapping up grids of rectangular tiles may have led to their lethal overuse. The other reason why she suspects they're out: "Everyone is over cleaning grout for days and dealing with tiny tiles."

IN: Splashy Slabs

When there are wonderful ways to install a seamless counter or backsplash, dirt-catching grooves hold no appeal, said Alexander Adducci, senior designer of Chicago's 210 Design House. We flagged strongly colored marbles as ideal for this purpose in 2020, and now swaths of quartzite are gaining favor. Quarried deep in the mountains, quartzite is ultra-durable, explained Marina Yu, senior designer at New York City's Whitehall Interiors. It comes in transfixing shades, from blush pink to blues and greens, like the example above, called Fusion, from ABC Stone, based in Hicksville, N.Y.



SHUTTERSTOCK; JACK THOMPSON

OUT: Icy Scandi Rooms

Newark, N.J., designer KD Reid has noticed a departure from the “early IKEA days of pale wood and colorless interiors.” Meg Lavalette, of Manhattan’s LAVA Interiors, says that unless it’s implemented perfectly, “a Scandinavian room can feel cold and a little bit too open.” If you don’t understand how to orchestrate factors like scale, texture and tonality, she said, “it falls flat so much more quickly because there isn’t anything to hide the errors.” Noted Rachel Cannon, a designer in Baton Rouge, La., “Sterile, white and driftwood rooms have filled our social media feeds to the point of exhaustion.”

IN: Moody Hues

No fewer than 15 pros in our pool cited a return to rich, dramatic color palettes. A star shade: purple, which Sydney designer Greg Natale deemed “the new pink.” Other players, per Ms. Cannon: “Sand, maroon, cream, chocolate brown.” Aileen Warren, of Jackson Warren Interiors, in Houston, the team responsible for the room above, said their design goals include “championing bold color, moody schemes and swathing an entire room in deep color.” Ms. Taylor sees recently in-demand light oak supplanted by dark woods such as walnut and mahogany.