

on reflection

Mirrors have long been used to create a spacious feel, but with these clever ideas, they can also elevate a room

WORDS MATILDA DUFFEY



↻ mirrored wall

Think of a mirror as a surface option and add it to your moodboard alongside the wallpaper, tile and paint swatches. Just as these choices can make an impact on bare walls, the polished look of a mirror speaks volumes *en masse*. If you're planning to add a mirrored wall, be aware that the clutter of one space will double with its reflection. On the other hand, a considered design approach will magnify the best features of your zone. This open-plan living and dining area makes use of clean lines and opulent details to tap into a luxe look. Metallic hits are picked up in the reflection without overwhelming the space.

↻ mirrored barn door

Trend watchers will have seen the custom-designed barn door pop up in more and more design-savvy homes, and it's easy to see why. Not only does it look super streamlined and add industrial appeal, a barn door is also a fantastic piece for small spaces, as the sliding mechanism means there's no swing space needed and there's flexibility as to where it's positioned. This door always offers the mirrored side, whether open or closed; while a hinged mirrored door becomes hidden when it's completely opened.

↻ wall-mounted mirror

Getting a mirror custom made to fit a particular space is a sure-fire way to add real wow factor. Rather than opt for a small-scale mirror, this living area makes use of a large-format design that has been specially created to fit between the mantelpiece and the ceiling. With its dark frame that extends to the ceiling, the mirror becomes a focal point that exaggerates the room's dimensions. Many businesses cut mirrors to suit your specifications, but you may need to tag in a framer if you're after the ideal finishing touch to your mirror. Add a strong frame for definition, or keep it frameless for a more airy feel.



tip "Hanging mirrors need two anchor points. Have wall fixings almost as wide as the mirror, so the weight is spread out on the wire or chain and keeps it flat against the wall" GREG MACINNES, HANGING AROUND

PHOTOGRAPHY: (OPPOSITE) NICOLE ENGLAND, (THIS PAGE, TOP) JODY KIVORT, (BOTTOM) DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON

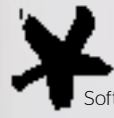


DESIGN INFO

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This page, top: Designer Cristiana Mascarenhas of InPlus Inc Design, inplusinc.com. Construction by Sagewood Construction, sagewoodconstruction.com.

This page, bottom: Architect Cary Bernstein of Cary Bernstein Architecture, cbstudio.com.



Soft-close doors continue the seamless look of these mirrored cabinets and will minimise fingerprints.



🕒 mirror joinery detail

Think outside the square and add a mirror to an unlikely spot for an element of surprise. The sleek and seamless joinery of this kitchen gets a practical lift from a mirror in a spare nook. The mirror also creates a focal point that draws the eye away from the sink and prep zones. This application is also great for those who want the look of the mirrored splashback, with less maintenance required.



Adding a mirrored kickboard to the base of kitchen cabinetry is another way to make an impact in an often overlooked area.



DESIGN INFO

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PHOTOGRAPHY: (OPPOSITE, TOP) SIMON WHITBREAD. (BOTTOM) SHARYN CAIRNS. (THIS PAGE, TOP & BOTTOM RIGHT) TOM FERGUSON

🕒 mirrored cupboards

While splashbacks are often the go-to use of mirrors in the kitchen, a hit of reflective glass brings a dynamic look to cabinetry. Placing mirrored cabinet doors up top will also showcase a different perspective to the usual splashback treatment - you won't have to worry about the clutter of a busy benchtop being doubled. These cabinets provide glimpses of the home's second floor, with the strong lines of the cantilevered staircase becoming a feature of the kitchen, too. Be aware though if you're a bit of a perfectionist, the fingerprint marks that are likely to cover those glass doors may turn you off - such prime kitchen real estate will get a lot of use!

🕒 mirror tile splashback

Subway tiles are the look *du jour* in kitchens, bathrooms and laundries, and the use of a mirrored tile takes this look to the next level. Going with tiles also marks a departure from a single mirror as a splashback, and adds a more eye-catching detail. This space incorporates mirrored tiles with bevelled-edge options and a smoky dapple. The slight dark tinge ensures that any splashes won't be too visible, as opposed to a pristine mirror where every errant drop is glaringly obvious.

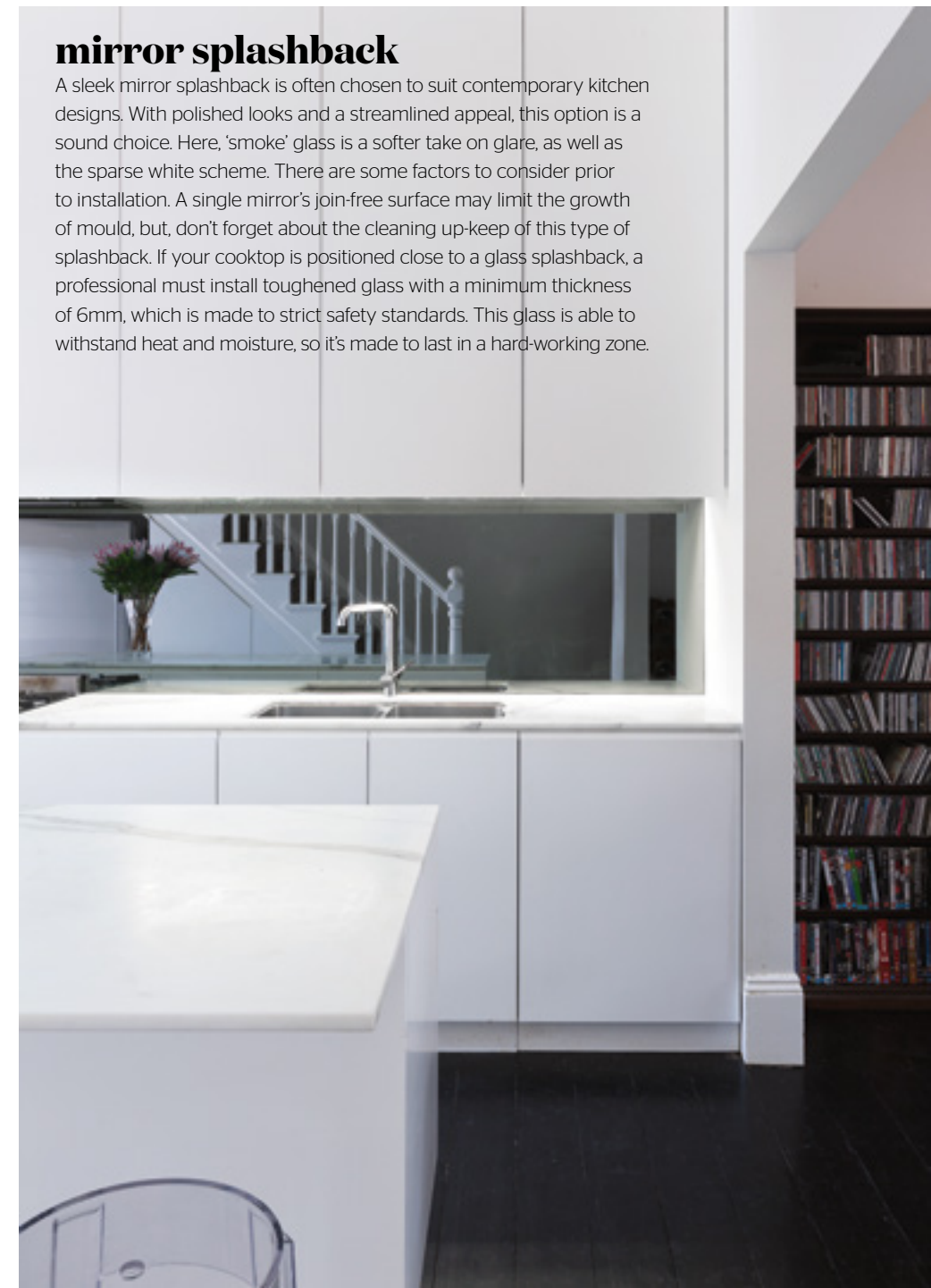


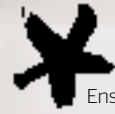
Brighten up the look with coloured pens that work on glass. That way, your splashback can house your shopping list or menu, too!



mirror splashback

A sleek mirror splashback is often chosen to suit contemporary kitchen designs. With polished looks and a streamlined appeal, this option is a sound choice. Here, 'smoke' glass is a softer take on glare, as well as the sparse white scheme. There are some factors to consider prior to installation. A single mirror's join-free surface may limit the growth of mould, but, don't forget about the cleaning up-keep of this type of splashback. If your cooktop is positioned close to a glass splashback, a professional must install toughened glass with a minimum thickness of 6mm, which is made to strict safety standards. This glass is able to withstand heat and moisture, so it's made to last in a hard-working zone.





Ensure your mirrored splashback is made from toughened glass that can withstand the heat of a stovetop.



↻ antiqued mirror tiles

The faded beauty of antiqued mirror tiles softens the crisp look of a standard mirror. The weathered patina of these tiles offer a more muted finish, so they're a fantastic choice for a bathroom. Similarly, the choice of tiled options, rather than a whole mirrored glass surface, also helps to mellow the reflection, which can be a nicer prospect in a space that demands more privacy. As bathrooms can sometimes err on the clinical side with stark white palettes and bright task lighting, any chance to play with texture and tones should be relished. With each mirror tile offering a variation on the artfully distressed design, this bathroom achieves a unique and intriguing look that sets it apart from the usual powder room.



Clever placement of tiles with less of the antiqued patina above the basin ensures that users can still make the most of the mirror.



tip Avoid abrasive glass cleaners when cleaning mirrors, as they will damage the backing. A soft microfibre cloth and warm water will do the trick – add a bit of white vinegar to cut through streaks.

↻ antiqued mirror splashback

While a classic gleaming mirror stands the test of time, an antique-look treatment makes cleaning a little easier. The expansive polished surface of a mirror splashback is best when it is just that, so when food prep and cooking get a bit messy (likely), you'll need to clean it as well as your benchtop. Choosing a mirror with a pattern detail via faux patina helps mask the spray of bubbling pots and pans, so you can get away with a less intensive clean-up. The dappled look will mean a quick post-cooking wipe down is all you need, rather than a full-scale clean every time you use the kitchen. Choosing this finish also adds a subtle textural detail to a zone that is often made up of strong block colours and hardwearing surfaces.

↻ mirrored bathroom wall

Bathrooms are one of the home's hardest-working spaces, and you can keep yours streamlined to ensure maximum efficiency with the lustrous look of a mirrored wall. This bathroom taps into a thoroughly modern look. The strong lines of the fittings and fixtures showcase the bathroom's minimalistic style – definitely the right approach if an entire wall is devoted to a mirror. In this case, the mirror also becomes a space-saving saviour, as it not only conceals the toilet cistern, but it also integrates hidden cabinetry behind the four panels above the sink. With only the bare essentials on display, and the strict white-and-steel colour scheme, the mirror is a fitting choice to give this bathroom its strong look.



The combination of reflective glass and a steamy bathroom can be problematic, so install a serious ventilation fan.



PHOTOGRAPHY: (OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT) ADELINA ILIEV (OPPOSITE, CENTRE) CHIPPER HATTER PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, BOTTOM) IAIN D. MACKENZIE (THIS PAGE, TOP) GAP INTERIORS (JULIEN FERNANDEZ (THIS PAGE, BOTTOM RIGHT) JACQUI WAY

mirror collections

If you want to inject a bit of personality into your mirror arrangement, try grouping them together. Just as a cluster of frames creates an eye-catching wall display in living and sleeping zones, an eclectic assortment of mirrors gives a bathroom wall a curated look. Don't stop mixing and matching with sizes and shapes – mirrors from an array of design eras will weave a sense of history into your display. Hit up antique shops and look for vintage shaving versions and mirrors housed in unique frames with chains or frosted detailing. Seek out mirrors with bevelled edges that capture a traditional style and can have moisture-resistant properties.



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Leaning mirrors

Not ready to make a commitment to a mirrored wall? A leaning mirror offers a little more flexibility in your display, as you can switch it out with art if you're not loving the look. With a leaning mirror, you still need to secure it to the wall, just as you would with a hanging mirror, using wire and two anchor points. This ensures that it will be safe and secure in the event of a bump. These examples highlight the benefit of a leaning mirror in a transitional space, such as a hallway or in an open-plan area. This positioning maximises a sense of flow and connects different zones of the home.



shapely mirrors

Playing with the silhouette of a mirror is an easy way to set a space apart from the rest. While you can always rely on a square or rectangular frame to deliver good looks, a mirror with a curved or uniquely shaped form becomes a real hero piece. A rounded edge imparts a smooth look to bathrooms, which are often furnished with angular or strong-lined pieces. The striking silhouette of this bathroom's mirror complements the curved shapes of the fixtures, and also contrasts with the cubic form of the basin. Keep an eye out for mirrors with ornate shapes to bring a point of difference to your bathroom.

Backdrops can play up a cool shape. Here, the generous curve of the mirror's edges are amplified by the small-format tiles.

mirror-fronted joinery

There's definitely still a place for the good old mirrored bathroom cabinet. Not only will bathroom joinery ensure all and sundry are stashed away, but, with the addition of a long-mirrored panel, your morning dressing routine can be contained to the bathroom. Plus, as bathrooms should house strong task lighting, you'll be able to see a crystal-clear reflection. The dimensions of this option are also fantastic for adding to the illusion of height which, when combined with a mirror's ability for exaggerating dimensions, are great in smaller spaces.

The tall mirrored cabinet pictured is from Ikea (ikea.com.au), proving that small budgets can deliver smart style.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (OPPOSITE, TOP FAR LEFT) PRUE RUSCOE; (OPPOSITE, BOTTOM FAR LEFT) DANA VAN LEEUWEN/TAVERNE AGENCY; (OPPOSITE, TOP) JUSTIN ALEXANDER; (OPPOSITE, TOP) DANA X PHOTOGRAPHY; (THIS PAGE) SIMON KENNY; STYLING: (OPPOSITE, TOP FAR LEFT) KIRSTEN BOOKALLIL; (OPPOSITE, BOTTOM FAR LEFT) JESSICA BOUVY/TAVERNE AGENCY

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mirrored garden wall

Everyone wants a bigger garden, but petite courtyards are the norm these days, so a mirrored wall is just the thing to work in spatial trickery that expands outdoor zones on the smaller side. Be strategic with positioning, so that all the vibrancy and life of the garden is echoed throughout your home. Adding a mirror to an outdoor area is also fantastic for a tight budget, as you won't have to break the bank populating the space with plants - the greenery factor will visually double. If you're planning to add a mirror to an uncovered area, install a bevelled-edge version or one with moisture-resistant glass as rain and humidity will damage standard mirrors.

Rather than installing your mirror flush with the wall, place it at a slight angle to play with the view and capture glimpses of the sky.



Arrange your furniture so you can best enjoy the view afforded by your mirror.