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THE SUNDAY TIMES

The wallcovering that looks posh, for pocket money **18**

# Home

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# Home

**KATRINA BURROUGHS**

@Kat\_Burroughs

**R**obust and handsome, with a dash of period drama, panelling is a practical wallcovering for high-traffic areas of the home and the only acceptable face of the feature wall. Panelling will disguise imperfect surfaces, add an extra layer of insulation and add instant character to an uninspiring interior. It's a classy architectural feature that interior designers use to bring warmth and texture to a scheme, but it can also be bought as inexpensive MDF panels from Homebase. In other words, panelling looks posh but it might be your perfect cost of living crisis update.

Bathrooms are prime spots for panelling (given a moisture-resistant paint finish). And in small cloakrooms cladding wrapped around the room, from the skirting to a few inches above the sink, fulfils a similar function to tiles but has a warmer character.

And in the bedroom, panelling is increasingly being deployed as a feature wall – or a supersized statement headboard – positioned behind the bed. Athina Bluff of Topology Interiors says cladding is her secret weapon in the fight against boring new-build interiors. "They're empty shells and can feel quite lacklustre if not designed well. In a recent project we used abstract panelling on the whole back wall behind the bed and it really made the space pop."

Paint panelling the same colour as the walls and radiators for a contemporary colour-drenched look. Paint is Pickleson's Filthy Terracotta, 2.5 litres Chalky Matt; £53. [picklesonpaint.com](http://picklesonpaint.com)

# PANEL SHOW



Practical and with a whiff of Downton, this wallcovering looks posh but is also perfect for the penny-wise



This sitting room by Hux has wall-wide panelling that opens to reveal the television screen. Panelling with in-built storage from £1,000 a sq m; [hux-london.co.uk](http://hux-london.co.uk)



Tongue-and-groove panelling is a practical option for the kitchen. This kitchen by Olive & Barr is painted in Farrow & Ball's Green Smoke. Kitchens from £10,000; [oliveandbarr.com](http://oliveandbarr.com)



The English Panelling Company sells Georgian-style grooved MDF panelling in three sizes; from £22.50 per 60cm x 80cm sheet; [theenglishpanellingcompany.co.uk](http://theenglishpanellingcompany.co.uk)



Interior stylist Emma Jane Palin's Ikea hack gives a panelled effect: she added B&Q wooden batons (£2.97, [diy.com](http://diy.com)) to the front of her Ivar cabinet (£85, [ikea.com](http://ikea.com))



The interior designer Nicola Harding mixes two types of panelling on the wall: tongue and groove above dado height and Jacobean grid panelling below; [nicolaharding.com](http://nicolaharding.com)



In this renovation of a Victorian family home, the architect De Rosee Sa used panelling to conceal shelves, a utility room and a cupboard at the bottom of the stairs; [deroseesa.com](http://deroseesa.com)



In a small space, panelling to the top of the wall and up over the ceiling creates a spectacular wraparound effect, as in this bathroom by Beata Heuman; [beataheuman.com](http://beataheuman.com)