

For Kids — and Kids at Heart

These four children's rooms are anything but child's play. They combine style, functionality, and personality, just like the kids who inhabit them.



A child's room (whether a playroom or bedroom) should be as joyful as the child who inhabits it. For the parents' sake, it should also be stylish and functional.

These four rooms — a nursery, a playroom, and two bedrooms — are all of the above, but each is as unique as the kids themselves. They all have a few things in common, however: style, plenty of storage, and functionality for miles. Here, the three designers behind these rooms share tips on creating a fun and functional space for your child, no matter his or her age or interests.

Two Distinct Bedrooms

A child's bedroom is just as much an oasis for that child as a grown-up's bedroom is for that child's parents. That's why it is so important to create a fun, safe but also serene environment for children to play in and, most importantly, sleep well in.

For these two bedrooms (one shown on previous page), one for a 3-year-old boy and one for a 2-year-old boy, designer Debbie Gottlieb of Finesse Interiors in Armonk used fabric as her inspiration: one a dinosaur-patterned fabric that the client bought, the other a Mr. Fox fabric. "Both patterns are fun and whimsical and easily changed as the boys grow up," says Gottlieb. "I like to design kids' rooms that will grow with the child; pieces like accessories, artwork, pillows, and bedding can be easily changed as the child gets older."

Gottlieb also prefers kid-friendly materials such as soft fabrics that are indoor/outdoor. "I like to use bookcases and benches that are easily reached, beds at lower heights so [they're] accessible, 100 percent wool carpet (most practical for cleaning and wearability), and cozy reading nooks."

And just like any other room kids find themselves spending a lot of time in, a

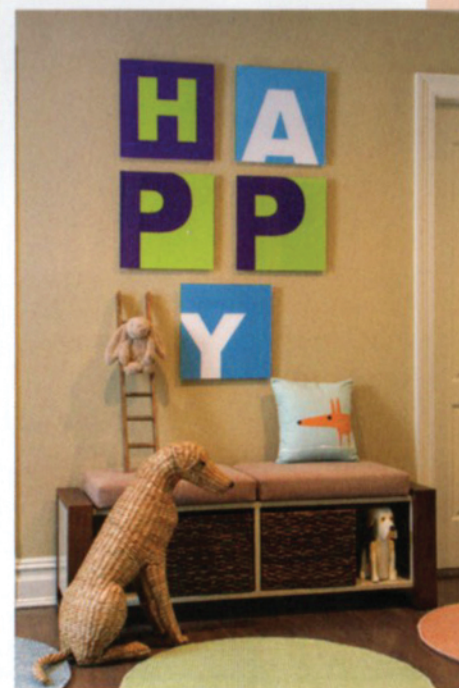


Must Have: A comfortable bed.

Best Design Tip: If you have two rooms that are mirror images, change the floor plan to make them different.

Best Bedroom Tip: Make sure there is good lighting.

Get the Look: Furniture from Ducduc, tie-dyed wallpaper from O&L, and fabric by Zoffany.



child's bedroom also seems to collect a lot of stuff. "I like to add a top shelf on one wall to store stuffed animals, dolls, or trophies later on," says Gottlieb. "That way, clutter stays off the dresser, desk, or night table. Another fun idea is to make a pocket wall, so fabricated big pockets can store various items."

Gottlieb's other ideas for making a child's bedroom fun and stylish include adding circular area rugs, a tent-like window treatment above a bed to make the room feel cozy, low seating for reading, and a corkboard wall for kids' artwork.

And when thinking about the palette for a bedroom, Gottlieb says, "no colors are off limits if done well. However, if a child is active, it might be a good idea to choose a calm color palette."

The palettes chosen for each of these rooms were driven by the fabrics: blue/chartreuse/taupe for the dinosaur room and terra cotta/olive for the Mr. Fox room. "My client selected colors that defined each son's personality," Gottlieb notes.

Overall, she says, "It's important to have a child feel that their room is 'their' space."