

Designing a Minimalist-Style Home That Feels Warm

Texture, pops of color and proper storage spaces are the way to go

BY JENNIFER TZESES | ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON MARCH 13, 2019 | [MANSION GLOBAL](#)



Textural touches like furry pillows and velvet ottomans lend depth and comfort to a...

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Each week Mansion Global tackles a topic with an elite group of designers from around the world who work on luxury properties. This week we look at how to make minimalist decor feel homey .

Just because a space is minimalist doesn't mean it needs to be stark or cold.

"You should get the feeling of simplicity when you enter a minimalist-styled home—clear surfaces and open floor plans with just the necessary furniture," said Manhattan-based Lotta Lundaas, CEO & founder of Norse Interiors. There's a delicate balance, however, between keeping things minimalistic and stylish rather than sterile, Ms. Lundaas said. It's more about creating "a calming, relaxing space, not just having stark white walls," she said.

To curate your home in a minimalist way that still feels warm, inviting and chic, follow our tips from the design pros.

More: [Decorating Your Home with Stylish Wood Furnishings](#)

Incorporate Elements of Nature

"Adding in lots of texture through organic materials—what we would see out in nature—and bringing in those tones, textures and elements into your home helps keep the look from becoming sterile.

"Playing with a tonal palette is key, but avoid using only one color, which on its own would create a sterile effect. I like to stick to warm, neutral tones and layer similar or darker hues, such as whites, creams and browns incorporated with wood, natural stone and metal. I have also been using a lot of boucle, animal skins (faux and real) and metals to add texture and definition.

"You can go simple with the furniture and louder with the details, such as black-and-white photography and larger artwork on the walls to create interest while still maintaining a clutter-free and airy home."



A clean-lined bathroom designed by Marina Hanisch gets a dose of dimension with a patterned rug.

Marina Hanisch Interiors

— **Marina Hanisch of Marina Hanisch Interiors based in New York**

Focus on the Details

"It's still important to have layers of carefully selected objects, artwork and furniture—just not too many of them.

"We like to use a soft monochromatic palette throughout the house and especially for large pieces of upholstered furniture. There can be different gradients of hues throughout, but we generally like to keep the color story consistent so that all of the rooms relate to each other. That doesn't mean that you can't introduce a dark and cozy hue for a study or pops of color for accessories, for example.

"Mixing cozy textures such as chenille and velvet with linen and leather provides an added dimension and warmth to any room."

— **Allison Babcock of Babcock Peffer Design in Sag Harbor, New York**

More: [How to Add Contemporary Style to a Period Home](#)

Have a Place for Everything

"Spatial planning is key to minimalism. There should be clean lines and a feeling of fluid, open movement with lots of storage behind concealed doors to hide away any day-to-day clutter.

"Furniture, objects and art can be curated within the space, which allows a client's personality to be present, adding warmth—a personal touch will always be welcoming. The purpose of minimalism is to promote the things we value most and remove everything that distracts us from it.

"Minimal design needs symmetry and vistas in order to keep the eyes entertained. Key pieces of art and sculpture have more resonance if given the space to breathe."

— **Jane Landino, creative and design head of Studio, Taylor Howes Designs, London**

Keep it Clean



A tonal palette gets added interest and warmth with a modernist-style sideboard by Norse Interiors, an oversized mirror, candles and greenery.

Norse Interiors

"You should embrace personal pieces but introduce them sparsely and think about what you're adding, why, and how you arrange them. Less is more, and every piece should add purpose to that particular room.

"The key is to stick to neutral colors but not all white, which can make the home feel cold. Go for different shades of off-white, gray and beige. You can break it off with other earthy colors, like ochre and umber, in your accessories. Stay away from busy patterns, and instead focus on clean lines and light colors.

"Texture plays an important role when the color palette of a room is all neutrals. There are so many different ways to incorporate texture, such as blankets, rugs, throw pillows, and things from nature like wood, branches, and plants. Lamps and other light sources such as candles are another way to create a cozy, warm feeling. If you want to stick to the same color, you can mix different textures and finishes to keep it interesting.

"Since minimalism is about showing a clean surface, creating storage is essential—preferably invisible storage. In a bedroom, you could, for instance, add drawers or boxes underneath your bed. In a living room, you might be better off having an extra cabinet with a door to keep your belongings.

"A popular trend within minimalist style right now is using large wall mirrors or pieces of art that fill a large part of the wall. Clay sculptures are another big interior design trend that work well with a natural color scheme."

— **Manhattan-based Lotta Lundaas, CEO & Founder of Norse Interiors**