

14 MODERN FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM IDEAS, ACCORDING TO DESIGNERS

Breaking down the science behind this effortlessly cool style.

By KELLEY CARTER MAY 4, 2020



A love for a farmhouse aesthetic shows no signs of waning. And it's no longer just about shiplap and barnyard doors. The new, updated vibe includes elements that make a space cool and inviting. Don't we all want to cozy up in a [light and airy living room](#) with [casual sofas](#), eclectic accessories, and yummy textures? Yes? Well, we tapped a few designers to share their tips and tricks to the modern farmhouse living room of our dreams.

1

NATURAL ELEMENTS



Courtesy of Contour Interior Design

"Stick with the simple sophistication of natural elements like exposed wood beams and stone accents that evoke a clean and relaxed modern farmhouse interior," says Nina Magron of [Contour Interior Design](#). "Introduce accessories that are organic, irregular, or slightly imperfect to add personality and charm."

2

MODERNIZE WITH FABRICS



Chad Mellon

"Respect the architectural elements of a farmhouse space and add clean, straight-lined furnishings," says Nashville-based designer, [Chad James](#). "Color-blocking with fabrics juxtaposed with more primitive elements is also an easy way to create the best modern farmhouse look." A velvet midcentury chair creates a cozy nook next to the rustic fireplace in this [Newport Beach home](#).

3

MODERN FIREPLACE DESIGN



Julia Robbs

"Go with a minimal fireplace. This will offset the rustic ceiling features, which can be overpowering," says San Francisco-based designer, [Heather Hilliard](#). A modern mantle blends seamlessly with the white walls in this [New York City apartment](#).

4

LACQUER THE CEILINGS



Aydin

"I tend to use ceilings as a way to transmit light through a space," says New York-based designer, [Phillip Thomas](#). "The glossy finish helps to accomplish this goal while also reflecting warmth. I lacquered the ceilings in this farmhouse project in high-gloss cornflower paint."

5

ECLECTIC ELEMENTS



Nancy Nolan

"You need some combination of the following: A plaid, a leather, an antique, a loose, flow-y print, and some hard lines," says Charleston-based designer, [Mitchell Hill](#). "A modern light fixture in a room with a salvaged beam ceiling and an extra-large abstract canvas introduces an inviting eclectic vibe."

6

STRIP DARK FLOORS



Michelle Wilson

"A great trick is to strip dark floors and refinish them in a light oak color," says Hilliard . "This instantly makes a space feel more contemporary."

7

BRING EXTERIOR MATERIALS INSIDE



Emily J. Followill

"If I used a stone exterior, I bring that stone inside," says Alabama-based architect, [Jeffrey Dungan](#). "This is especially effective on the fireplace wall where you would want masonry anyway. Many times we will wash it with lime or even paint it in a color used in the room to make it more sophisticated and clean."

8

MIX RUSTIC AND REFINED



Michelle Wilson

"To achieve an updated, more current modern farmhouse aesthetic, mix rustic elements with more refined furnishings, as well as antiques from many periods," says Hilliard. "If you're able to, keep or install exposed beams and wood panelling, but make other modern choices. This will offset the heavy beams, which can overpower the overall look if you're not careful."

9

BUILD UP TEXTURE



Corynne Pless

"Bring in woven elements such as baskets, wicker, and sisal rugs," says Jessica Davis of [Atelier Davis](#). "Layer with broken-in textures like supple leathers, weathered woods, and vintage textiles."

10

BLACK WINDOW AND DOOR SASHES



Durston Saylor

"One of my favorite things to do is to paint all of the door and window sashes in black," says New York City-based designer, [Michelle Gerson](#). "This gives the look of old iron windows." Steel grids are used for windowpanes in this [Connecticut home](#).

11

USE ORGANIC WOOD SPARINGLY



Jerry Atnip

"It's important to keep organic wood elements at a minimum and texture at large," says Nashville-based designer, [Robin Rains](#). "Introducing a wide variety of textures puts a fresh spin on a space without distracting the eye."

12

WIDE FLOOR PLANKS



Jeffrey Dungan Architects

"I really love to use very wide floorboards, like 12-inch planks mixed with 10-inch boards," says Dungan. "It makes it feel less formal and like it has been around for a long time."

13

KEEP IT LIGHT AND AIRY



John Merkl

"I find that a modern farmhouse is all about keeping it bright and airy and really using texture," says Davis. "So I use white paint on the walls. Shiplap is ok but not necessary and use it sparingly if you're going to at all." Gray upholstery and dark wood decorative accessories add contrast to this [white-walled living room](#).

14

DON'T OVERDO IT



Tara Striano

"If you have a rustic floor, you only need one more wood piece in the room," says Hill. "Then you can have a glass piece, a metal etagere, and fabrics." All white upholstery and white walls are a blank canvas for an eclectic mix of accessories in this [Hamptons farmhouse](#).