

Laundry Day

Create a laundry that's not just organised and efficient, but gorgeous too. Interior designer extraordinaire Massimo Speroni from Massimo Interiors shares his expert advice on laundry design elements, colours and easy decorating tips.



Splashback by Pressed Tin Panels,
www.pressedtinpanels.com

ESSENTIAL LAUNDRY DESIGN ELEMENTS

A laundry may not be the most glamorous room in the house, but it's still important. If you have a family you're probably spending about a third of your life washing and sorting clothes, so a well-designed laundry will not only be aesthetically pleasing but functional and practical too.

As with any project, the first step is organising and purging. If your laundry has turned into your 'catch-all' room, it's time to clean things out. Start with a fresh and clean space so you can envision exactly what you want to do, and what you have room to do. Laundries tend to be on the smaller side so keep it light and bright – this is not the place to paint the walls navy blue, unless you have very large windows and good light sources. A light and bright room will feel airy, fresh and upbeat for doing those slightly less-than-desirable tasks especially when done after dusk.

Next, maximise the function of the space. If you have the room, dedicate a space to have a table surface. This will make folding and organising clothes and linen much easier and cut down on the mess in the rest of the house.

Consider adding hampers, bins or a laundry sorting space. The more organisational options you have for laundry, the less last-minute gathering and sorting you will have to do. Teaching your children to sort their laundry is a relatively easy chore to learn and when you

have an easy-to-understand system, they will be happy (and may even think it is fun!) to sort their own clothes – just imagine how much time that alone would save!

Utilise your wall space by adding hanging racks or built-in cabinets for storage of unsightly detergent and bleach bottles. A single shelf can hold some things, but often, products multiply and before you know it, you have a messy, overcrowded shelf and you can't find your fabric softener! Adding cabinets or extra shelving can be done relatively inexpensively and will add a nice design element to the room.

Air circulation and a dry environment are of utmost importance where linen is stored – moisture becomes trapped in fabrics and leads to musty odours, mildew or mould. Wire shelving allows air flow to reach every piece of linen tucked away, while louvered doors permit air to pass through even if you don't open them, preventing moisture build-up which leads to musty conditions.

If you have room, install a washtub. It may seem unnecessary but it's a luxury that will actually come in handy for soaking clothes and will prevent you from having to use the sink or bathtub to soak or hand wash items.

Add personal touches to your laundry decor. It may seem like a waste of time as it's a room few people will see, but if nothing else, it will make you smile each time you enter! Whether its art, wallpaper or a chandelier – adding a

stylish design element will elevate your laundry from basic and boring to beautiful and stylish.

LAUNDRY COLOUR

There is no reason why 'utility' rooms like laundries can't be pretty. Decorate your laundry in a similar style to the rest of your house, particularly your kitchen. A home that flows comfortably from one room to the next in style, character and colour is more pleasing to the eye and mind.



Interior design by Hurt Interiors.



Laundry by IKEA, www.ikea.com/au

Smaller rooms are great places to use colour as a primary statement and don't be afraid of bold, beautiful shades for your walls. Whether you prefer paint or wallpaper, take your style a notch above your comfort level and experiment with a bolder version of your decor. Work from the colour palette surrounding your laundry and then use a shade that intensifies those colours for your new theme. If you love lavender, consider painting your shelves purple to brighten the laundry.

Art and other wall accessories can add a bit more punch and personality. Backsplash and floor tiles help to create a cool environment for your laundry by adding texture and colour. An area rug can also make a significant statement in a small space. If you are worried about durability or water spills, opt for an outdoor rug – they can literally be hosed down and are incredibly durable. Make your laundry a beautiful, light filled space where function has been disguised as style!

LAUNDRY DECORATING TIPS

In homes where space is limited, laundries are integrated into the bathroom or kitchen, and in some cases, also double as a home office or craft room. Since we spend so much time in the laundry it's time homeowners put some effort into creating a space just as aesthetically pleasing and functional as the kitchen and bathroom. When it comes to laundry decorating, start by visualising your materials like water-resistant ceramic counters and stone floor tiles, which are a smart alternative to standard, run-of-the-mill tiles because they are easy to clean and durable. In addition to a washer and dryer, consider adding these five great elements when you design an organised and functional laundry room.

1. Custom Cabinets Not only do custom-built cabinets provide storage for cleaning supplies such as detergent, bleach and more, they can also be as decorative as the rest of your home's interior. With custom cabinetry, you can get door and drawer fronts to match the style of any room in your home or give your laundry its own unique style. If your laundry is a multi-purpose room, you can install custom door fronts to cover your washer and dryer when not in use. In addition to storing pullout laundry baskets and an ironing board, you can also get shelves deep enough to serve as a linen closet.

2. Clothing Rods Similar to a custom wardrobe, installing a clothes rod provides a place to hang shirts and delicates straight from the dryer or to hang garments as you iron. For those who prefer to air-dry their clothes, install a double hanging rod in a custom-built system, which also provides additional storage when not drying clothes. If you have limited space, use a pullout garment rod, which will perform the same duty.

3. Counters and Cubbies Getting counters with different heights will help you perform different tasks. If you have front loading machines, the top of them will provide counter space that works well for folding. If you have a sink in your laundry, a 920mm height is the norm for sink counters, which provides additional surface area for folding, hand washing and other tasks. Installing low cubbies with one for each member of the family can encourage kids to retrieve clean laundry themselves.

4. Slatwalls Commonly used for garage storage to vertically hang car care, yard tools and sports equipment, slatwalls also work well in the laundry room, especially if space is limited. With the latest sleek designs, slatwalls allow you to hang dirty laundry bags, cleaning tools like brooms or mops, and you can also store laundry supplies in various sized baskets that hook into the wall.

5. Decorative and Task Lighting Lighting is an important functional and accent element for any room. Design-wise, choosing the right lighting fixture will top off the look of a laundry room – whether its country, modern or any other style. Installing task lighting such as under-cabinet or shelf lights will provide functional use since they illuminate specific work zones.

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