

DESIGN FEATURE OF THE MOMENT

interior curtains

DRAPES AREN'T JUST FOR WINDOWS: THEY CAN TRANSFORM THE FEEL OF YOUR SPACE AND EVEN ALTER THE FLOW OF FLOOR PLANS

FEATURE Keith Flanagan



Curtains don't need to be confined to windows. In a pinch – or shall we say cinch – statement curtains and drapes can stand in for heftier renovations like partition walls, sliding panels, hinged doors and more. And many designers lean into their flexible architectural qualities, softening the lines of rigid contemporary layouts while adding a gentle dose of drama. 'I think that embracing the idea that a "wall" can be made out of something soft, like a curtain, seems very of the moment – this notion that space can be defined with materials that are impermanent,' says Adam Charlap Hyman, principal at New York's Charlap Hyman & Herrero.

Modern track systems can create soft, flowing curved 'walls' and straight ones alike. They are also simply installed and manipulated without an architectural degree, making this one of the easier DIY room dividers for your home. Designers using curtains beyond the window frame can expertly change the flow and form of layouts, particularly in open-plan living spaces in need of articulated zones. 'Utilising curtains as space dividers contributes to a softened ambience and introduces an element of warmth within the environment,' says Joyce Li of Design Pair.

Don't underestimate the decorative potential of this idea. 'The extensive range of fabric colours and textures further enhances the versatility of this design choice,' says Joyce. Certainly, using a statement fabric as a strong yet not-entirely-structural element creates an entirely softer feeling compared to a permanent wall – and along with it, you can select from a range of decorative variations (from patterns to colours and pleat options) that add a element of style at the same time. ►

1 CUT CORNERS

The curtains in this Hamptons home smooth over an awkward corner while adding a statement feature thanks to a bespoke wooden cornice that cleverly edits the room's architecture. 'Curtains can act as a cinematic backdrop for a space, but of course they can also close off smaller areas or hide select elements to increase a sleek sense of organisation,' says NY-based Timothy Godbold. 'Curtains specifically are elegant; they aren't fixed or static but move and follow long gestural lines.'

PROJECT BY Timothy Godbold

2 BLURRED LINES

Using a flexible curtain partition helps blur the lines in this dual-purpose living space. The gentle transition allows a spacious niche to feel just as much like a sitting area by day, as it does a guest room by night. For Charlap Hyman & Herrero, a monochromatic colour scheme, in soft blue,

was key to uniting the zones. 'The idea was that by masking the space entirely in one colour, we could create a more expansive experience when the curtain was closed,' says Adam Charlap Hyman.

PROJECT BY Charlap Hyman & Herrero

3 FIFTY FIFTY

Bringing a theatrical touch to a growing family's Singapore studio, burnt orange velvet curtains, positioned on either side of the room, reveal – or conceal – separate bed and crib areas. But the soft transition, according to the designer, requires an extra layer. 'When selecting fabrics, bear in mind that when using curtains as room dividers, two layers of fabric are required since both the front and back of the curtain is visible,' says Joyce Li of Design Pair. 'This is in contrast to using curtains for window treatments where only one side is exposed.'

PROJECT BY Design Pair



2



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RIGHT TRACK

Stretching the limits of curtains, this serenely filtered bedroom envelops an entire expanse with translucent, billowing Kvadrat fabric along a Silent Gliss track system. 'The curtains help to really soften the angular lines of the space,' says Ben Ridley, founder of Architecture for London. 'The system used is an S-wave track, which keeps the curtains in neat folds so they still feel "architectural"'. The curtains extend right the way along the front of the room and meet a full height mirror at the side wall, creating the illusion that the curtains continue even further.'

PROJECT BY Low Energy House by Architecture for London



PHOTOGRAPHS (RIGHT TRACK) LORENZO ZANDRI; (STANDOUT BACKDROP) ORI HARPAZ

STANDOUT BACKDROP

Wall-to-wall drapery is having a moment in the bedroom, particularly as a bold yet minimal backdrop for the bed. 'I will often employ this trick with lower headboards, as the vertical lines of the drapery draw the eye upwards and provide a necessary contrast,' says Darren Jett of NYC's Jett Projects. You can also add an extra dose of drama by floating a piece of artwork in front of the curtain. 'This is easily installed with strong transparent fishing wire hung from a minuscule hook in the ceiling,' he adds. 'A true trick of the eye, that one never forgets.'

PROJECT BY Jett Projects >



BALANCING ACT

One of the key rules for creating balance in interior design is proper use of visual weight, and this highly curated Prague apartment measures up. 'In our particular case, the curtain works well as a contrast to the solidly embedded architecture,' says Jakub Červenka, partner at Objektor architekti, noting how the green fabric partition, a visibly lighter material, balances out the room's heavy concrete surfaces. 'We enjoy the idea of possible movement – the creation of new, unexpected views, zones and filters.'

PROJECT BY Objektor architekti