

Tried and True... and Moving Forward

Top designers weigh in on a “new traditional” style for today.



What Americans once thought of as traditional is rooted in English country style, with its matched sets of furniture, saturated colors, multiple patterns, and heavy layers of window treatments and accessories. But modern life has changed how we use our rooms as well as what we expect from them. “Being modern is actually philosophical,” says designer Jeffrey Bilhuber. “It’s how you move through space, how you raise your family.”

Says designer Victoria Hagan: “I think it’s all about comfort and a relaxed point of view. I love nothing more than a traditional sensibility. I love nothing more than a familiar shape. But it’s all about being tuned in to the way we live.”

The new traditional is characterized by formal furniture with comfort, sleeker forms, and personal touches. Classic seating silhouettes are still popular yet bigger in scale. Reproduction cabinets hold media equipment. Designers feel free to mix finishes and periods. Whatever you call this new style, it’s clear traditional decorating has evolved. *continued*