HOMES & GARDENS

Redefining colour

BOLD, BRIGHT, BEAUTIFUL AND BRAVE INTERIORS

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Green

Botanical tones work with most shades to create rooms that are harmonious and easy to live with

GREEN is in general a calming and relaxing colour. Being the colour that represents nature, it's one that makes us feel good and positive. 'The poet and philosopher Goethe used to describe green as a useful colour, a good colour to have around,' explains Francesca Wezel, founder of Francesca's Paints. 'Dark green is often used in traditional gentlemen's clubs and libraries, goes well with wood and is a colour that stimulates concentration and deep thinking. Light green is a perfect tone for bedrooms, as it is calming and relaxing and helps us to sleep well.' When it comes to choosing colour combinations, Francesca adds, look to nature for inspiration. 'Green looks marvellous with pink, red, orange and brown. I also love green and blue together.'

The source of the adage of never mixing blue and green has murky roots. Scratch beneath the surface and its origins are hard to fathom. One of the most likely theories, given that so much idiom in the English language derives from maritime vernacular and superstitions, is that sailors were warned not to paint the hulls of their boats green lest they become invisible when capsized. But it's tenuous.

For decorator and designer Susan Deliss, it's nonsense. 'It just doesn't occur to me to work with a rule book when it comes to colour. It's about what feels right for the room, its light and the environment around it. It's a question of tone and judgement: in a sunny climate, you can probably get away with pairing acidic greens and cobalt blues for example but in an English country house, it's important to rein things in and look at greens and blues from nature for inspiration.' Sarah Vanrenen of Vanrenen GW Designs is another fan of blending blue with green. 'To warm it up, add a splash of pink in the cushions.' She chose it for the walls of her garden room to create a

seamless link to the grass beyond the open sides. 'I always find green an incredibly uplifting and mood-enhancing colour; it feeds my soul.'

Decorator Kate Guinness believes that finding the perfect combination colour to go with green is all about the particular mood or atmosphere you want to create. 'Pinks always work really well with greens though most other colours can work too, depending on the shade chosen.'

Green is a great choice for a hallway – particularly one that offers views of the garden beyond. 'If you think of the colour green in garden, it's the backdrop for the whole setting – the foliage, grass and trees,' explains Emma Deterding, founder and creative director of Kelling Designs. 'You can really see how any colour will go with it. But in a hallway, it adds a freshness and provides a base from which personality can shine through, setting the tone for the rest of the home.' Emma recommends using it with creams and whites to keep a hallway bright and airy. 'We really like to use a zesty green to stimulate the senses and add an element of fun. Avoid going too dark either with the green or combining colours, or you might feel you're entering an oppressive pine forest.' →

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Left Set a contrast: here, grass green, turquoise and teal in this bedroom by Graham and Green are grounded by pale grey and coffee brown **Bottom left** In this dining room, Kate Guinness paired coral and rich pinks to give the room a bright yet relaxed feel **Bottom right** Natural materials such as wood and stone are perfect partners against walls in Moss by Francesca's Paints in a room by Retrouvius