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Ceiling Wallpaper: An Interior Design Move That's Topping the Trend List

As designers and DIYers look for a finishing flourish and a way to visually expand a room, they're adding pattern to the ceiling—known as the fifth wall



OVER THE TOP In her children's craft room in the family's Dripping Springs, Texas, home, design consultant Apollina Baker painted the cabinetry a blue pulled from the wallpaper overhead. PHOTO: TREVOR SMITH/VIVID IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY

By *Yelena Moroz Alpert*
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PRINT TEXT

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APOLLINA BAKER had every intention of papering the walls of her children's craft room. Then reality set in. "Paint splatter and markers often end up all over the walls," said the attorney turned design consultant in Dripping Springs, Texas. "We decided to install wallpaper on the ceiling only." She chose Hygge & West's Daydream, in which blue swallows swirl through cotton-candy clouds. "The room seems so much bigger and taller with the 'sky,'" said Mrs. Baker.

That perception-altering effect of papering the ceiling—and its sheer exuberance—has design experts and DIYers looking up. "More of our customers are making a statement through wallpapering the ceiling," said Elizabeth Rees, founder of Chasing Paper in Milwaukee, Wis. "It provides an unexpected design moment, something we've been looking to create this past year." Wrapping an entire room like a present skews maximalist, but you can add a more subtle dimension with textured neutrals like grasscloth. "People are starting to realize how much design potential has been hanging above their heads," said Adam D'Agostine, chief marketing officer of A-Street Prints, another wallpaper company, in Randolph, Mass.



HEIGHT OF FASHION Needham, Mass., designer Dina Holland mixed patterns to vary scale. PHOTO: JESSICA DELANEY

If your room otherwise features wall treatments with presence and a graphic rug, ignoring the topside is like wearing a ball gown without a tiara. "It's a balance story," said Karen B. Wolf, an interior designer in Short Hills, N.J. "With a patterned ceiling wallpaper, you tie the room together."

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PRO TIP

Ceiling wallpaper can trick the eye into 'expanding' or 'shrinking' a space. A dark, tight print can make a room feel cozier by bringing the ceiling down, while an airy, painterly motif can sneakily give the impression of greater volume.

graphics on the walls with a dense coral print above, varying scale to give the eye a place to rest.

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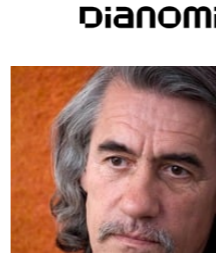
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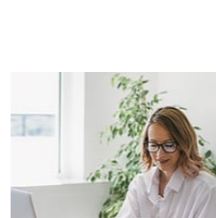
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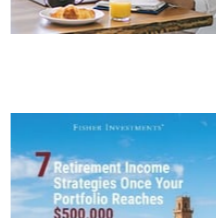
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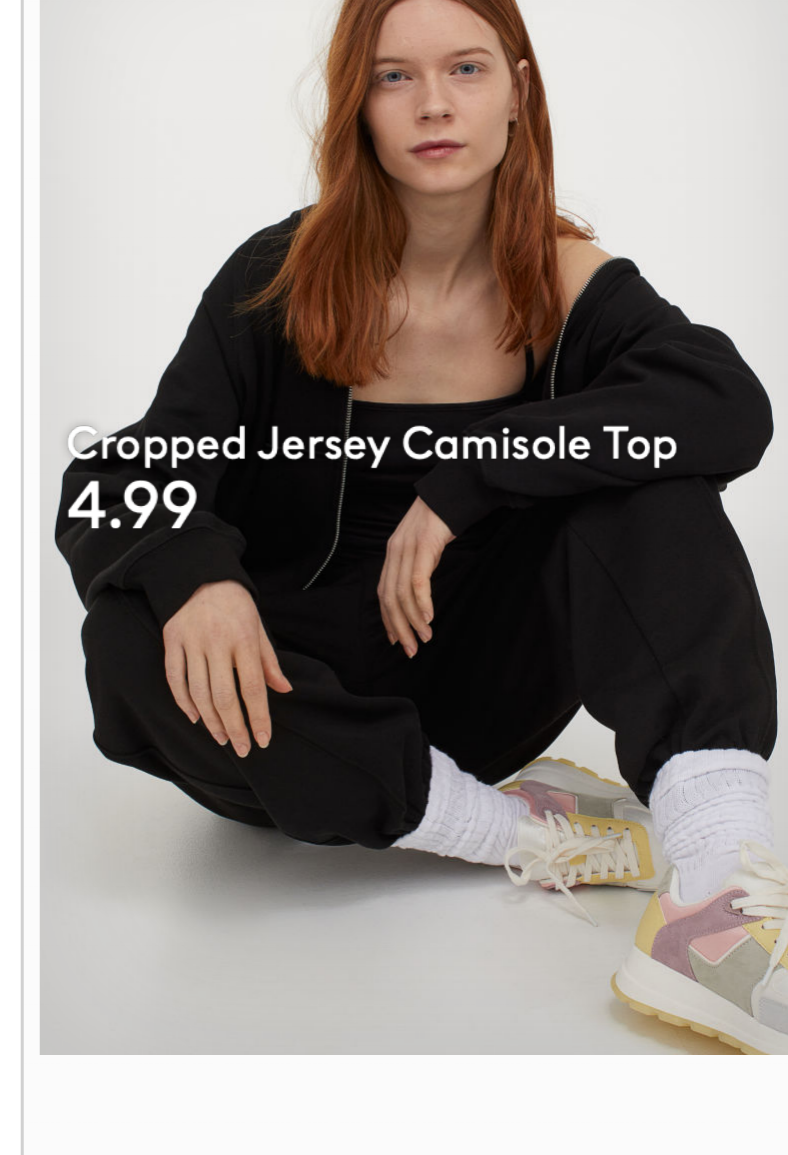
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