



CountryLiving

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PERFECT PATTERNS

for Walls, Floors, Fabrics and Furniture

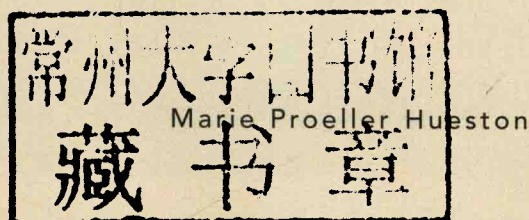
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Marie Proeller Hueston

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Perfect Patterns

FOR WALLS, FLOORS, FABRICS
AND FURNITURE



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Foreword

When we think of country patterns, so many beautiful images come to mind. There are colorful quilts, checked tablecloths, hooked rugs, Beacon blankets, ticking stripe, spatterware—the list goes on and on. Homes filled with pattern are warm and welcoming, but with so much to choose from, it can be difficult to decide what's right for you.

Every month in *Country Living*, we visit homes decorated with great personal flair. Some homeowners prefer period patterns and try to be as authentic as possible, down to choosing wallpapers block printed by hand and historically accurate fabrics and paint colors. Other are more eclectic in their approach, combining the prints they love most from various eras to create a style all their own. What's paramount in either case is that they are true to themselves—that's what gives the rooms you see in our magazine a sense of individuality.

Country Living Perfect Patterns is a collection of some of our favorite interiors where pattern plays a prominent role. There are spaces that overflow with flowers and teem with toile; in other rooms, a few well-placed throw pillows provide the only pattern to be found. It's our hope that all the ideas you see here offer inspiration for bringing more pattern into your home. Enjoy!

The Editors of *Country Living*



A selection of vintage red-and-white textiles brings a sense of importance to this cozy guest room. Stripes in the form of the ticking pillow and the broader brown-and-white blanket

balance the more graphic prints on the bed and echo the lines of the room's beaded board paneling.

Introduction

The patterns we choose for our homes are as influential to the overall décor as our furniture, collections, and color schemes. Patterns add vibrancy and personality to rooms. They can be used in traditional places—on a plush sofa or flowing drapes, for example—and in unexpected spots such as lampshades and cabinet knobs. Best of all, you can use as much or as little of them as you like to create one-of-a-kind interiors in which patterns make the boldest of statements, act merely as an accent, or rest comfortably in between.

An appreciation for pattern is woven into the history of the American home. In Colonial days, wealthy residences were resplendent with fine printed fabrics and graphic floor coverings imported from Europe. Simple checked homespun brightened more modest homes, where inhabitants relied on painted decoration to emulate the look of the wallpaper, carpeting, and exotic woods common in well-to-do homes. The Victorians were unabashed in their love of pattern, leaving few surfaces in the house unembellished. What's more, nineteenth-century advances in the manufacture of just about everything related to the home meant

that more families than ever before could afford to dress their homes in the prevalent style of the day.

Through the years, patterns in home furnishing have paralleled the design sensibilities of the times in which they were made: the elegant flourishes of Art Nouveau, the sleek geometrics of Art Deco, the futuristic motifs of the 1950s, the stylized florals of the 1970s, and so on. Today many of these historic and retro patterns are being reproduced while vintage bolts and swatches wait to be discovered at flea markets and antiques shops. Factor in the new patterns that regularly appear on the market and the result is an almost limitless array of options. While a boon for decorators, too many choices can also be intimidating. Where does one begin? What kind of pattern is appropriate for a particular space? How can different patterns be combined harmoniously?

Country Living Perfect Patterns can help. On the pages ahead you'll find photographs of pattern-filled interiors as well as clear instructions on how to implement the looks in your home. We've divided the vast scope of household patterns into four main categories: stripes, checks and plaids, florals, and



One of the joys of decorating with pattern is the layering effect that can be achieved when you mix and match favorite prints. One key to successfully pairing prints without overpowering a room is to limit the colors you use. Here, reds and browns are the principal hues in this living room, where checks, stripes, paisley, kilim, and

other patterns peacefully coexist. Hints of blue and green are visible in the floral curtains, the carpet, and the quilt draped over one of the armchairs. A small throw pillow on the sofa echoes the sunflower-yellow accent wall, while square tiles adhered to the face of the mantel spread pattern around the room.

pictorials. Each chapter illustrates the myriad ways creative homeowners have interpreted the theme, from spreading a pattern throughout a room by adorning walls, floors, and furniture to concentrating it in a small area such as on throw pillows or a collection on display.

Which patterns will you choose to work with? Inspiration is all around, from your closet (a favorite blouse, perhaps) to your garden (a fragrant bloom) to your home library (colorful end papers). Making an inspiration board is a good way to home in on what you like best; pin snippets of fabric, wallpaper swatches, paint samples, even snapshots and postcards to a bulletin board. If you'd like to carry these items with you for reference as you visit fabric stores and flea markets, transform a thin, soft-cover photo album into an "inspiration album."

Before we begin our journey, a few general rules bear repeating. As with any decorating project, a room's scale will affect the patterns you choose. Big, bold prints tend to work best in large spaces; petite motifs thrive in cozier surroundings. Also, if you find yourself unsure where to start, it can be helpful to locate a room's focal point, whether it's the living room sofa, the master bedroom's stately four-poster, or the kitchen banquette. Choosing just the right pattern for this spot can set the tone for

the entire space and guide your choices as you move outward into the room.

Finally, because fabrics supply a major source of pattern in the home, each chapter will take special care to point out the possibilities—and the pitfalls—of using them. Certain terms used by upholsterers will come in handy when shopping for and working with fabrics. One example is the ground, or background color. Correctly identifying the ground color of a busy print (is it seashell pink or mauve?) can be important when coordinating with solid-color furnishings. Likewise, finding and measuring a pattern repeat, or the complete design unit that is repeated down the length of a fabric, can help determine how much yardage will be needed for upholstery projects.

Whether you're looking for fresh ways to position the cheerful prints already in your home or you're just beginning to explore the decorating potential of pattern, *Country Living Perfect Patterns* will give you the necessary know-how to go forward with confidence.



ABOVE LEFT: Pretty wallpaper and putty-colored woodwork combine to create a serene bath. Suspended from a peg rail beside the pedestal sink, striped bags hold makeup and toiletries in style; ridged items on the ledge up above (scallop shell, creamer, footed bowl) echo the stripes of the bags.

ABOVE RIGHT: Some people are intimidated by pattern, thinking perhaps that its use implies only bold prints and busy overall schemes. But pattern in the home can be subtle as well, as this vignette illustrates. Pattern can be found in a simply painted floor pattern or in the carved



or cut-out design on a wooden chair. A still life of pewter, pears, and blue-and-white china underscores the space's Early American character.

OPPOSITE: Though seen most frequently on fabric and wallpaper, household pattern can take many forms, like this collection of antique plates and platters displayed above a living room sofa. Not only does each piece deserve attention (even the all-white platters have delicately scalloped edges), but the overall arrangement on the wall also becomes a pattern in its own right.

