

# conran's CREATIVE HOME DESIGN

NONIE NIESEWAND  
AND DAVID STEVENS



0743713

conran's  
**CREATIVE HOME  
DESIGN**

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and David Stevens



LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY  
BOSTON • TORONTO

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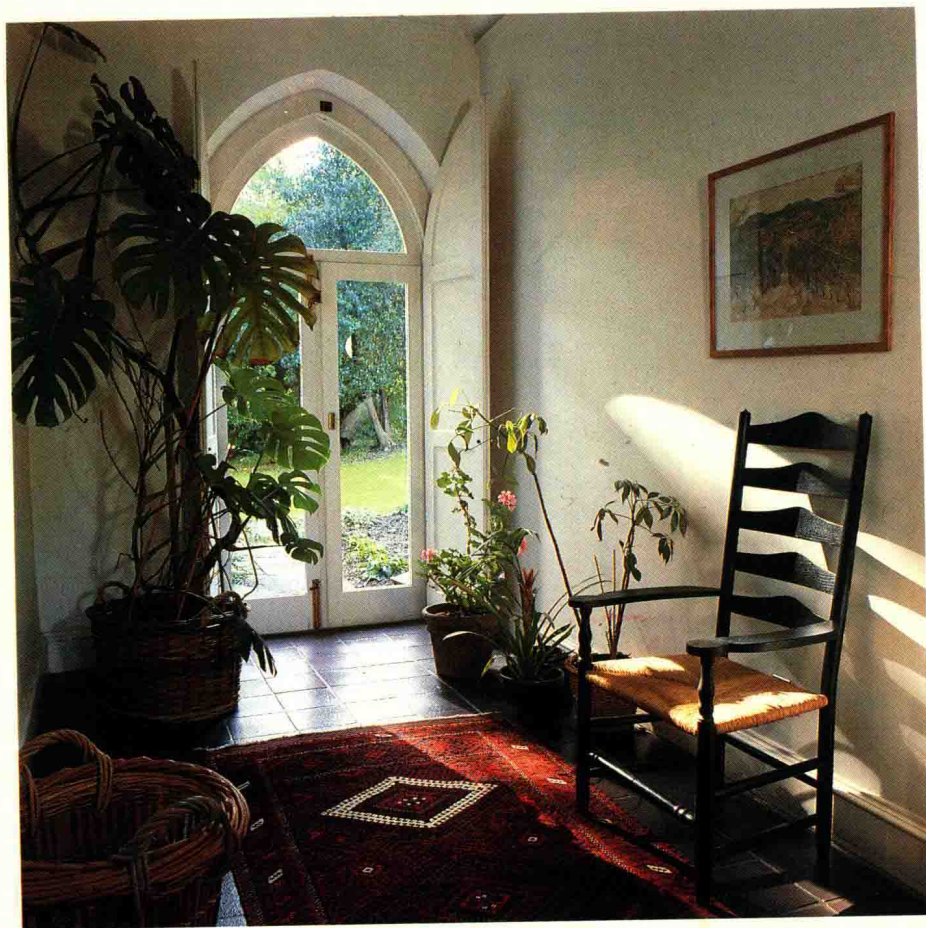
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# HALLS

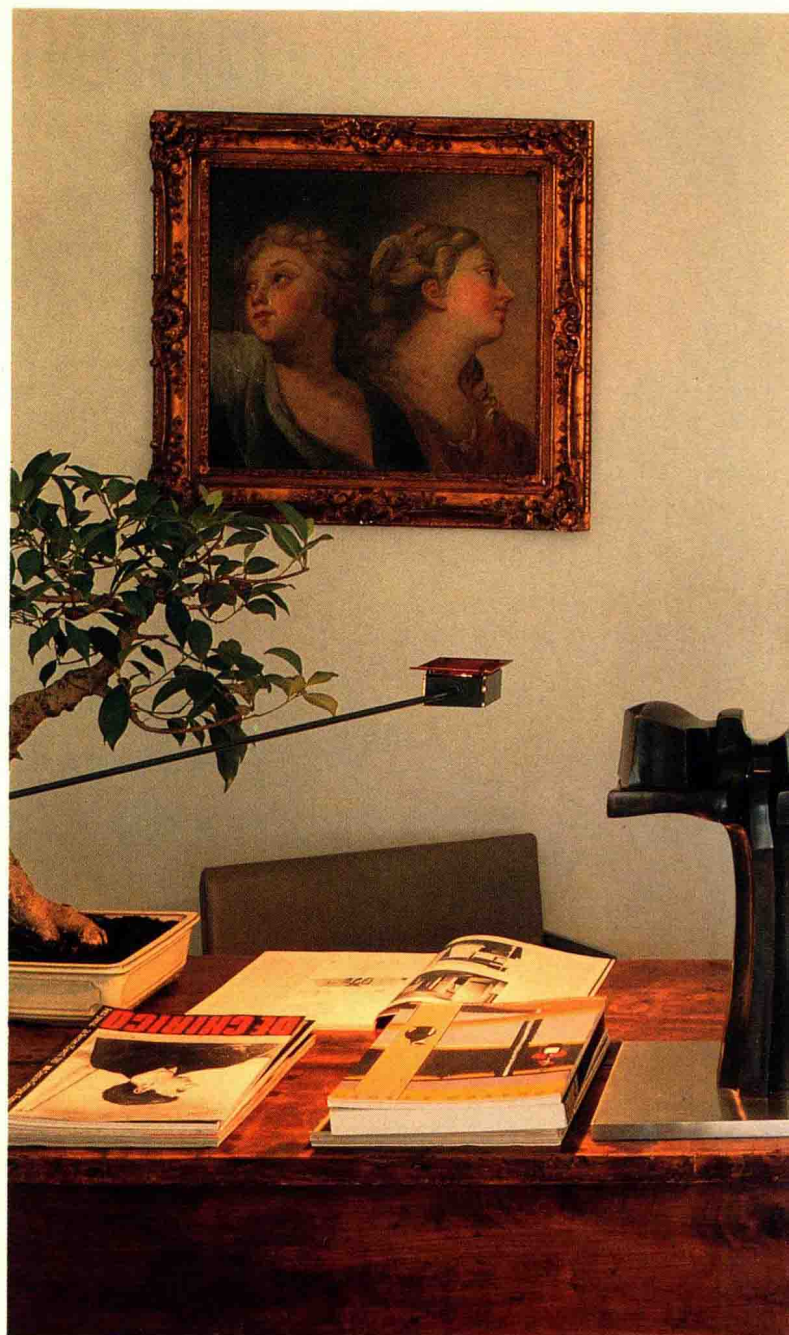
First impressions linger, but many times visitors step inside to find a neglected hall, rather than a welcoming introduction to the occupants' style and taste. Unlike other rooms, halls are not usually given over to any particular function – aside from postal deliveries and meter reading – and it is easy to forget about them. When you first move in, the hall may be the logical place to stash boxes and cartons – whether still packed with possessions waiting to be put away or already emptied of their cargo. Later, any item relating to the outdoors may also find its home in the hall, from winter coats to gardening implements to summer sports equipment.

To make a grand entrance, you must first think of the hall as a room in its own right, and then start by making sure that everything in it is intentional or has a place. Tidy away the coats and hats on decorative stands, add an umbrella stand and build cupboards around unsightly meters and fuse boxes. Such cupboards can be designed to store cleaning equipment as well. If you have a favourite outdoor hobby, the entry hall is the place to store the gear in a practical and pleasing still life display. For example, an angler's rods, hamper and umbrella can be mounted beneath an arrangement of fishing prints; the paraphernalia of a sporting life – trophies, flags, pennants, crossed skis, cricket bats, golf clubs – can be teamed with pictures which reflect the enthusiasm in an arrangement which is easily dismantled when the gear is needed.

Halls can also be adapted to other functions, and are especially good as storage areas. There are many imaginative ways to use the dead space under the stairs. Open shelving can transform a hallway into a library; racks of wine create a vintner's cellar; picture rails and hooks establish a personal picture gallery. Halls lend themselves easily to closed cabinets or open shelving systems.

A mirror is always a useful hall accessory, since it is the place to keep up appearances before making an entrance or exit. Good lighting changes a dull cloakroom into a brightly welcoming area. A skylight admits natural light, under which houseplants thrive.

When all the rooms of a house radiate from the hall, the way the space is decorated sets the tone for the whole house scheme: you can make a bold statement or start out with a restrained approach.







## PLANNING CHECKLIST

- Have you measured the hall areas and left enough space for doors opening outwards?
- What items and equipment require storage space?
  - sports equipment    ● books
  - linens    ● coats
  - overflow from other rooms    ● boots
  - cleaning supplies    ● hats
  - umbrellas
- Do you want storage systems you can take with you when you move, such as hatstands or adjustable shelving, instead of built-ins?
- What features do you want or need in the hall?
  - notice/message board    ● mirror
  - seating
  - storage shelves, or cupboards    ● houseplants
  - pictures
  - telephone    ● boot rack
- How many other rooms are visible from the hall that will influence its decoration?
- Will any special activity areas be needed, such as a small desk, ironing board or sewing table?
- Are electricity or gas meters or fuses sited in the hall?
- Is the hall well lit and welcoming?

*The elegant lone white wire chair in this hall – a collectors' piece originally designed by Harry Bertoia in the fifties and still reproduced today – makes a firm sculptural introduction to a home that has other collectors' pieces, not many, but all reflecting the eclectic taste of the owner.*

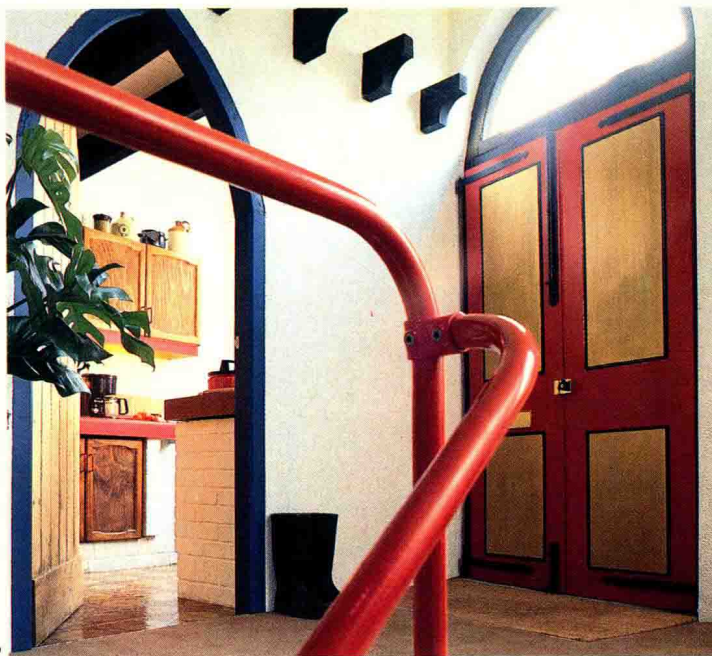


*The front door opens to reveal the first glimpse of your home. A folksy and countrified hallway follows naturally after an old, stripped pine door and can be created (even in the inner city) with flagstone-effect vinyl flooring and pastel rag-rolled walls accompanied by furnishings such as a stripped pine table and a bentwood or bamboo hatstand. A faceless, blank white door leads easily into an empty, minimalist-style hall, perhaps lined with storage cupboards disguised as plain walls. A heavy, panelled wood door would belong at the entrance to a formal hall.*

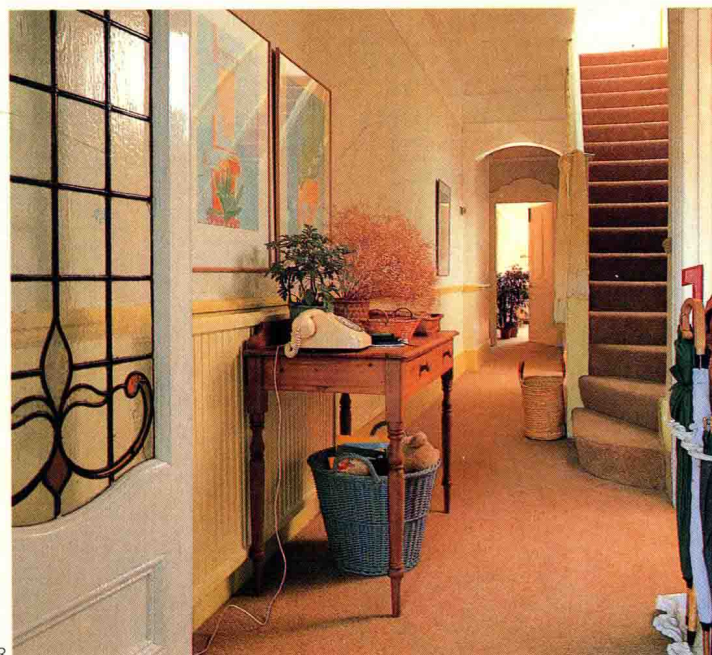
- 1 *In a room of such formal simplicity as this hallway, striking keynotes set a stylish tone. The black and white chequerboard floor – made up of linoleum tiles rather than traditional marble and laid on the diagonal to make a diamond pattern – emulates grand entrances of the eighteenth century. The white walls have been carefully marbled with hand-painted veining and even fine lines to enhance the illusion of marble slab panelling. A simple white bench with grille-like upright slats to screen the modern flat-panel wall-mounted radiator provides a hallway seat for removing muddy boots or waiting for the grand double doors to open, their stripped wood façade an invitation to step inside.*







2



3

2 To complement the grand scale of the arch leading to the kitchen, there is a matching semicircular fanlight above the double front door leading into this cheerful entry hall. Red and blue emphasize the dramatic, soaring structures of the architectural joinery and ironmongery. The bright spots of unpainted wood – in the front door panels, the enormous kitchen door and the kitchen cabinet doors – supply a yellow tone which rounds out the primary colour scheme. Immaculate white paint unifies natural surfaces, from the brick kitchen base units to the walls. Such textural contrasts are enhanced by the soft fawn carpet underfoot.

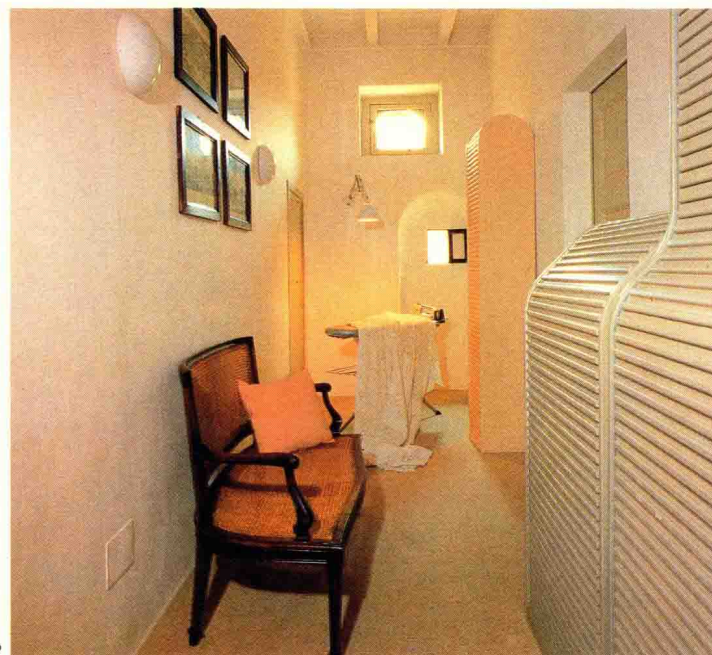
3 In this more traditional style of hallway, the same fawn carpet is used under very different circumstances. Here, lemon yellow dado rail and skirting board visually lengthen the corridor without making it seem too narrow. It is in fact wide enough to display a generously proportioned, two-drawer telephone table. The table decorations – a green houseplant and baskets – are echoed further down the corridor by the natural basket, and by the large houseplants visible in the living room. The door is painted a gleaming, glossy white – the perfect foil for its Art Nouveau-style stained-glass window panel.



1 When halls double as storage areas for invasive household clutter, the limitations they impose can lead to original schemes which become features in their own right. Here, a very tall, conventional storage cupboard acts as a visual anchor for an unusually graceful staircase. The cupboard transforms a stairwell into practical storage space, but because the staircase is open-treaded and backed by a large window, the effect is not at all dark or gloomy. Venetian blinds echo the horizontal slats of the louvred doors. A terracotta pot and a chrome-edged perspex stand are the only furnishings.



2 In this late nineteenth-century Italian farmhouse, a box-like entryway with three doors opening into it and limited natural light has been transformed into a bright linen room with a combination of traditional and modern furnishings. A well-planned, careful facelift replaced the door at the end with an arch, and added ultra-modern linen chests with pencil-case roller shutters whose undulating curves echo those of the arch, and which are tall enough to house an ironing board. A wall-mounted lamp provides task lighting for ironing. The traditional style of the house is maintained by the Vienna cane and wood sofa positioned beneath four etchings.







3 *This ingenious storage system was designed to complement the spacious period style of a late nineteenth-century London apartment. Based on the look of classical exterior stonework, this imposing hall of cupboards is fronted with modular panel doors. Here, the detailing is superb, from the highly polished wooden floorboards to the glossy, monochrome, custom-built cupboard units. No surface lacks enlivening embellishment, from the segmented wall panels to the curved alcoves.*

4 *Although this storage system seems almost an integral part of the original building, it was clearly designed to take careful account of the needs of the modern owners. Here, one cupboard from the restrained line-up is opened to reveal shelves to accommodate the usual array of household paraphernalia.*





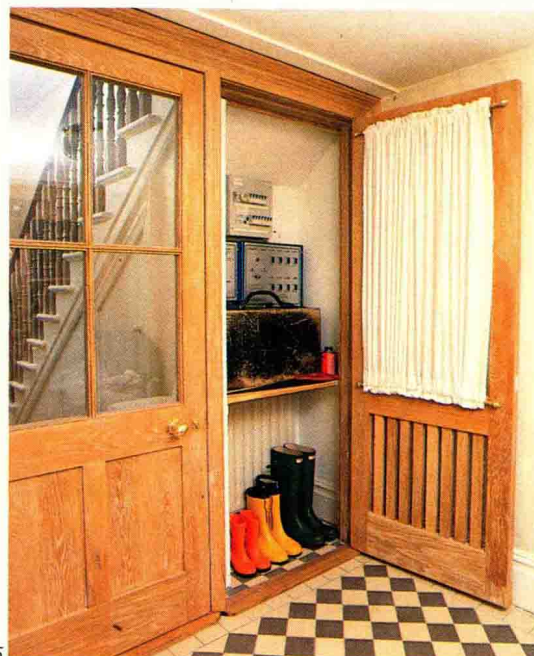
- 1 *In this tiny hallway, little wider than the door, both walls are lined with open bookshelves for browsing when the door is closed. A downlighter recessed into the ceiling is not only a space saver in this incredibly small room, but also a necessity – anything else would have blocked the door.*
- 2 *Space around and above doors which would otherwise be wasted can often be used for storage shelving. Here, a stripped pine door has been made into an impressive feature by display shelves filled with a collection of decorative baskets and bears. This hall's countrified look is strengthened by the stripped pine staircase and the pretty green and white wallpaper, with its tiny floral pattern. It accommodates a great deal without seeming cluttered.*
- 3 *Here the angular, uncompromising lines of a joist are echoed and enhanced by the triangular top half of the stylish bookshelves, a shape doubtless imposed on the designer by the space available beneath a flight of stairs. The elegant flooring has been laid so that the pattern of narrow tiles runs from wall to wall, thus visually widening this long, narrow hall.*







4



5



6



7

4 When hall space is at a premium, even the smallest areas can be brought into use. The tallest area under the top tread of this modest staircase has been made into a broom cupboard, with a washing machine tucked neatly into the remaining space.

5 Halls must often house working mechanics which most people prefer not to look at, but which need to be easily accessible to servicemen and suppliers, such as electric fuse boxes, timers or gas and electric meters. In this hall, these essential but unsightly boxes are hidden behind a stripped wooden door.

6 Fashion footwear for every occasion is neatly hidden behind the carefully shaped doors of this custom-built, below-stairs cupboard which was designed to meet the highly individual requirements of the owner. Space between the shelves is evenly proportioned to hold shoes from the flattest moccasins to the highest stilettos, with boot rails provided in larger compartments.

7 Instead of boxing in the space below stairs to make a cupboard, a low table has been built in beneath this open-tread staircase to provide display storage space akin to a sideboard. Scarlet woodwork links the whole area.