

tap dance

Bathrooms have never looked better, with the latest trends in tapware and basins bringing an upmarket element to any space

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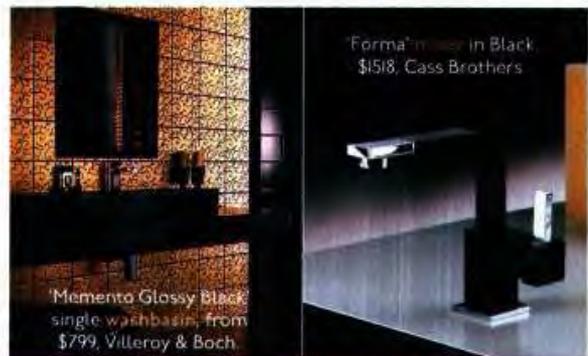
The bathroom basin has undergone a dramatic makeover, with this humble heart of the bathroom the focus of some striking innovations and bold new shapes and styles. Among the surprising new trends are black tapware and floating washplane basins, while there has been no waning in the existing trend for organic curves, offbeat surface materials and sculptural, water-efficient tapware – all of which are bringing a beauty and clever functionality to the basin area. From practical technology to exquisite design, the latest fittings offer an easy way to transform your bathroom. >



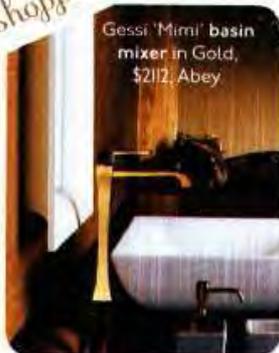
What's new: Gold and black tapware has spearheaded the move away from traditional chrome faucets. "Matt black is a strong trend to watch," confirms Ari Zorlu from Paco Jaanson. Most of the new black tapware comes in a powder-coated finish, although some are in black chrome. "All our taps are manufactured using solid brass and put through the electroplating process, so they're very durable," says Glen Evans of Sussex Taps. "We're mixing black with a few touches of chrome so that the taps work with other fittings in the bathroom."

White vitreous china is an enduring classic for basins - other options include stone, timber, stainless steel and acrylic Corian. "Corian basins provide an organic surface finish that wears well and can really add colour to the bathroom," says Belinda Geels of Reece.

Why we love them: Dynamic colours and unusual materials break all the rules, bringing a fresh, modern look to the bathroom.



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What's new: There's a lot to get excited about in the latest basin and tapware shapes to hit the market, with renovators spoilt for stylish choices. Basins come in every style, from freestanding and wall-hung to those sitting on or set into vanity tops. Make a statement with a tall, floor-standing basin or go for a delicate look with a gently curved model that 'floats', leaving precious floor space free. Square shapes remain popular, but the big trend in basin design is towards sensual curves. "Organic shapes with fluid curves are a huge hit and will be for some time," says Ari Zorlu of Paco Jaanson.

Squared-off, angular tapware has been popular for a while, but 2010 will see a move towards softer edges and more curves and rounded finishes. "Rounded tapware is becoming standard. We're beginning to see the corners smoothed off square tapware and the shape becoming less angular," says Belinda Geels of Reece.

"Organic shapes ARE A HUGE HIT AND WILL BE FOR SOME TIME"
 ARI ZORLU, PACO JAANSON

An attractive and practical alternative to the standard mixer is a wall-mounted outlet, with the mixer fitted to a streamlined backplate. "This is easier to clean as you are not cleaning around taps and flanges on the top of your basin," Belinda says.

Why we love them: Soft curves and organic shapes are easy on the eyes and bring a new serenity to bathroom spaces.

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'Memento New Glory' double washbasin, from \$2099, Villeroy & Boch.

Innovations

Bathroom designers aren't just focused on looks, with new whiz-bang technologies offering improved safety as well

What's new: If you like a little drama in the bathroom, check out the very latest tapware technology, featuring built-in LED lighting and integrated heat sensors. Brands such as Gessi offer basin taps with temperature-controlled LED lighting that switches on when you turn the tap. As well as the neat visual effect, it also has a safety benefit, with a red light indicating hot water and changing to blue when the water's cold. More safety innovations can be found in mixers with adjustable ceramic cartridges, like those from Methven, which allow you to set a maximum water temperature - perfect for families with small children. Along with the innovations in water efficiency are improvements to the way taps are made. "Some tapware designs have carbon fibre integrated into the design for added strength and reduced weight," says Tim Dawson of Tradelink. **Why we love them:** The new breed of tapware is lighter, stronger and more clever than ever, with great safety benefits. ■



Offbeat: a glass basin in acid yellow.

Omnivo 'Onda' high washplane, \$4999, Reece.

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Kohler 'Purist' wet-surface basin, from \$1609 (small bowl, not included), Tradelink.



Gessi 'Rettangolo Cascata' mixer with LED, \$2805, Abey.



Love Me 'LM 200' basin mixer, \$695, Paco Jaanson. Stockists, page 198

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