

TRENDS

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SCANDINAVIA-BOUND: 3 TIPS TO GET THIS LOOK

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Photography Courtesy of Lisa Kooistra Designs

Known for simplicity, function and casual comfort, the Scandinavian aesthetic has inspired homes around the globe. This regional decorating style first appeared on the design scene in the early 20th Century, rose to fame in the '50s and it hasn't slowed since.

Scandinavian-style homes are typically characterized by a white or neutral colour palette, coupled with blonde woods, organic fabrics, simple silhouettes, and an overarching sense of comfort. I personally love this look, and as a designer, I frequently get requests for this popular decorating style.

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Try these three simple steps to get that Scandinavian style in your own home.

GO NEUTRAL.

One of the key characteristics of the beloved Scandinavian aesthetic is a fresh, neutral colour palette, commonly including variations of white or off-white, ivory, beige, taupe, and gray. The bonus is that neutral colours are virtually impervious to the rapidly changing design and décor industry. Generally speaking, neutral colours can better stand the test of time – and trends. Choose multi-tonal neutrals to create visual layers with this minimal colour palette, bringing depth to an otherwise basic backdrop in your home. And in case you're wondering, yes, there is room for some colour. Just keep it simple, opting for muted, earth-toned greys, blues, and greens, added in small and subtle doses. In terms of materials, choose natural elements with a focus on wood.

Tip: *If you're feeling a little washed out with all that white and cream, remedy the situation with some strategic pops of black. These simple yet bold details can also bring emphasis to focal points in the room. For example, picture frames, a ceiling light fixture, fireplace or window panels in black will help direct the eye to these key areas in the room, creating interest.*

PUT FUNCTION FIRST.

Simplicity and function are core principles of Scandinavian design. The roots of this notable aesthetic prioritize practicality over decoration, largely out of necessity due to this geographic region's harsh winters. Simply put, if it was cozy and it made life easier to handle, then it had a place in the home. This concept eventually evolved into an established aesthetic, defined by efficiency and function. In practice, Scandinavian-style furnishings feature simple lines, subtle curves, and tapered legs – much like what you might find and inspired by notable Scandinavian designers such as modernist Arne Jacobson, renowned for his iconic Egg Chair design. Similar to the furnishings of this era, everything about a Scandinavian room should reflect a “less is more” mentality – completely clutter-free to enhance the sense of space and air.

NOW, LET'S GET *HYGGE* WITH IT!

A cozy home is one that invites you in and welcomes you to stay. *Hygge* is the Scandinavian concept of comfort as a state of mind. You can use texture to contribute to this vibe. In fact, many people overlook the importance of touch in our overall sensory experience of our homes – a big miss, in my opinion! So, get your feelers out for textural “artisan” cushions, woven woolly throws, knotted area rugs and soft sheepskins underfoot. Textured wall coverings, three-dimensional panels and raised tile can also be an unexpected way to add “touchability” to a minimal room. This is all about creating layers that add warmth, both physical and visual.

Scandinavian style has it all – high function, simplicity and beauty, all priorities in today's hectic world. A home should be a place to escape, and feel embraced by the people, things and emotions that bring you comfort. If you're in search of a new aesthetic, give Scandinavian aesthetic a go.

