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#immcologne

Six interior design trends for imm cologne 2022: decorative, smart, multifunctional, space- defining, communal and sustainable

Six interior design trends for imm cologne 2022: with furniture designed for decorating, programming, multiple uses, defining spaces, sharing and treasuring for the future.

Home living has become a key topic for many people in recent years. For some it is a passion and a fun way to express their personality - for others, it can mean a lack of space and a source of tension when really the fundamental need our homes should meet is to provide safety and relaxation. With the home office and outdoor living more important than ever, the demand for more rooms per dwelling has increased, but so has the desire for things that add a touch of quality to our everyday lives, without adding complications. Simple, good quality, beautiful pieces of furniture that embody the ideal of a sustainable lifestyle. Designers and the industry are looking for ways to meet these constantly changing needs with attractive furniture and progressive interior design concepts.

The Interior Business Event imm cologne not only demonstrates the inventiveness of furniture makers - it is also a reflection of current interiors trends. In January 2022, the interior design concepts for the 2022 furniture season will - at long last - be set out. The following six trends are key to the developments in home living and the new products and solutions that will be on display.

Trend 1

For Seasons | Seasonal home living, the delights of decor, communicating through interiors

Home living is close to our hearts. As an expression of personality, the home no longer paints a rigid picture but is becoming a continuous process instead. Changes in interior design aren't just influenced by trends, though; they're directly affected by what's happening in the nature surrounding us and the rhythm of the seasons, as well as our cultural customs.

It's becoming increasingly common for the colourways and motifs of interior trends to reflect seasonal changes in nature. Obviously, seasonal decoration is nothing new. Although the form may vary slightly, every year tableware, candles, flowers and Halloween pumpkins return to our homes as the seasons come and go. But for a growing number of people, this tradition is becoming a lifestyle - irrespective of



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their stylistic preference, whether that's Scandi Chic or New Glam, Natural Luxury or Wabi-sabi, a liking for marble or a fondness for terrazzo.

Page
2/12

The For Seasons trend is based on a willingness to embrace the decorative without being hampered by taboos. The interior design sector is taking decorating seriously again, and even in minimalist interiors, using seasonal accessories to create a strong, perfectly placed accent is no longer considered a stylistic sin. Because decoration has become an integral part of interior design.

Furniture as a canvas for changing styles: turning the home into a hobby

When it comes to buying furniture, people who make a hobby out of their home are more likely to consider how well the furnishings can serve as a backdrop for changing styles. Striking the right balance is important here: furniture should be neither too extravagant nor too boring. Ideally, the colour scheme should be relatively neutral, and the design strong but understated. Anything that doesn't fit in is adapted as necessary. A new coat of paint, different buttons or a repurposing hack - the For Seasons trend has no inhibitions.

Sofas become surfaces for displaying cushions and blankets, dressers and sideboards are used for showing off lamps, decorative items and finds from the great outdoors, and even a corner of the oversized dining table is permanently reserved for decorative touches. Glass-fronted units are extremely popular again too - even in the bathroom. Cabinets are dotted with open compartments and coffee tables are used to showcase accessories. And they're being joined by consoles, side tables and cube shelves whose sole purpose is to provide a stage for attractive arrangements. Décor is becoming a collage that changes constantly in keeping with the seasons and our perception of nature.

Walls are also being used as surfaces for making a statement. Covered in wall hangings, distinctive wall hooks, framed pictures or photo wallpaper, they add personality and a sense of the seasons to every room in the home.

Trend 2

Connected Living | Smart home, connected living

We've slipped into the digital world like a second skin - out of necessity, but not unwillingly. This new familiarity will probably have an impact on acceptance of the smart home idea too. It's becoming more common for items in private homes to be connected with smart technologies, and interior design is adapting to this increasing connectivity. Bringing the world into our home is a top trend and a growth market.

Smarter living

Can we use an app to grow herbs? Can computers nurture plants to improve air quality? Does the climate have an impact on building services? Does a smart control system switch off the lights and the coffee machine when you leave the house? Smart applications are becoming increasingly diverse, reliable and easy to use and

can be tailored with ever more precision to the specific needs of residents. As a result, smart technologies are increasingly playing a key role in architecture. Whether it's computer-controlled optimisation of indoor air quality, innovative controls and applications for shower toilets or anticipatory and energy-optimising room temperature regulation, smart technology is being increasingly integrated into the way we live.

Lamps that double as Bluetooth loudspeakers; night tables with cordless phone charging stations; cabinets that provide mood lighting; mirror cabinets with multimedia function, tables that readjust to make sure we change position often enough and sofas that remember everybody's favourite sitting position; lights that help us fall asleep and beds that nudge us gently into a different position when we start snoring - technology is quite literally (and ideally inconspicuously) becoming part of the furniture.

While there is a general trend towards home automation, the kitchen is the room with the greatest degree of connectivity thanks to the many and varied options for connected kitchen appliances. In addition to ovens and kitchen appliances that can be synchronised with online recipe suggestions, the optimisation of day-to-day work routines is an important innovation driver.

The bathroom is increasingly undergoing a digital update as well. Here the focus is on lighting that can be controlled and programmed, as well as improved heat and water management. Showers or bathtubs can save and access tailored user profiles. Touchless taps aren't just more convenient, they improve the standard of hygiene as well. And the private spa is increasingly being used for fitness, while multimedia monitors provide content as it is required.

A more connected way of working

But above all, the home office is set to become a permanent feature of the way many homes are laid out. With video calling and videoconferencing for business, not only the demands on our domestic surroundings in terms of design are growing. The demand for integrating the technical equipment into smart home technology is increasing as well.

The home is becoming an AI-based hub: more personal and personalised user experiences

The infrastructure inside (think connectivity) and outside our homes is becoming ever more important. Our digitally managed energy supplies are being complemented by autonomous units like pellet heating and solar energy - important issues for smart homes. However, the increasing role of logistics in domestic arrangements will also call for a high degree of compatibility when it comes to service rooms and docking stations in apartment buildings and private houses. The vision is that someday, robots will clear the table, load the dishwasher or tidy up a messy room.

Multifunctional | Smaller, reduced, more inside

Urbanisation and rising housing prices call for small-footprint solutions for singles and families with multifunctional features: the furniture industry's response to the challenge of creating maximum comfort in a small space must take the form of home office systems, small furniture, smart solutions with connected living features, and intelligent designs made possible by innovative fittings technology and modern storage space solutions. And with all the changes in the home environment as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, people are demanding more from their own four walls. They're looking for innovative furniture and furnishings that can be adapted, added to and modified to suit changing needs. There are two main drivers behind the trend towards multifunctional furniture: firstly, the reduced space available combined with the desire for a perfectly uncluttered feel; and secondly, the demand for greater functionality as a result of changes in usage patterns.

In keeping with the multifunctional trend, small and compact sofas and armchairs are a popular choice and often have a design that echoes classic styles. In future, there will be even greater demand for affordable modular systems and compact stand-alone items that are scalable (allowing them to be adapted to different room dimensions), variable (with pull-out technology, etc.) and versatile. And levelling up is becoming trendy too: the high sleeper is making a comeback. But given the broad range of applications for these kinds of furniture systems, from tiny apartments all the way to spacious lofts, manufacturers are placing the emphasis firmly on a modern aesthetic that's compatible with an urban living style and isn't the slightest bit evocative of a teenage bedroom.

More flexibility

Although the dining table has long been the focal point and communication hub of family life, with options for extension it is now becoming the multifunctional star of the show. When floor space is limited, a convertible table can accommodate requirements as they change over the course of the day and week. And the sofa has long since ceased to be merely a sofa: it's now a flexible, adjustable, multifunctional platform. Doors are being added to shelving systems to keep the home office in order and clutter out of sight.

Furniture is very literally a movable asset, and users are increasingly demanding genuine mobility from it. Nowadays, it's not uncommon for functional units like the desk to be designed as a self-contained, stand-alone system that integrates everything you could possibly need for working from home: a writing surface, cable management, drawers, room for the printer, organisers, lighting, storage units on wheels, and a chair, all of which can be pushed together or folded up into a compact entity that can be moved to wherever it's required next. Whether it's an office on wheels, a compact kitchen, a storage bed or a multimedia chair - mobility is a genuine bonus.

More comfort

In addition to furniture that can vary in size thanks to its modular design, we're also seeing an increase in products that can adapt to the ergonomic needs of their users with increasing precision. Lifting mechanisms that turn the home office table into a standing desk, an extra worktop that can be extracted from a kitchen cabinet as if by magic, a sofa that reveals a hidden neck support or footrest at the touch of a button: adjustability is a highly attractive feature that's in great demand even when there's no shortage of space - a luxury that comes as standard in the case of this trend. The desire for multifunctionality is rooted in the need to get more out of the minimum (space) - and make it look like less. An uncluttered look is the main thing.

Trend 4

Blurring Boundaries | Seamless spaces that satisfy the longing for freedom

The growing desire for boundary-free living is leading to a blurring of the physical and stylistic lines between indoors and outdoors, (semi-)public and private, living and cooking, living and dining, living and working, living space and bathroom.

Furniture for zoning spaces

When walls come down and the impressive panoramic window commands an uninterrupted view of the city, when there's a desk next to the bed or the kitchen transitions seamlessly into the living area, it's up to the interior design to suggest limits, so as to give the eye something to rest on and ensure the space reflects the mood and functionality required at any given time. Areas with a specific function and purpose can be zoned accordingly, using elements such as (movable) partitions or permanent built-in units. Furniture and fixtures are increasingly being used to designate zones within larger spaces - with the modular sofa demarcating the relaxing zone, the dining table doubling as the working zone, and shelving units functioning as room dividers. And rugs don't just add a touch of colour and cosiness, they mark out important zones and bring a sense of structure to the interior design. Different colours and materials - like wooden flooring, tiles or curtains - can also be used to define areas with a designated use.

A new generation of furniture made for more flexibility

When it comes to the Blurring Boundaries trend, modern furniture has to be flexible. The growing desire to rearrange the interior and the many and varied layout options for seamless spaces offer call for furniture that can be used in different situations. A stool might look just as much at home in the bathroom, living area or home office as it does on the patio, for example. Other types of stand-alone, mobile elements that are suitable for use in various rooms or spaces include shelving, coat racks, console tables and cabinets.

Where there are fewer walls or partitions, furniture has to be able to stand, make an impact and function all by itself. That's why stand-alone pieces don't have a "best side" anymore - they look good from any angle. Elegant side tables often double as seating. Conversely, poufs are frequently used as side tables - and modular sofas can be rearranged into different configurations effortlessly. And there's

bathroom furniture that looks just as much at home in the hallway or kitchen as it does in the bathroom too. This kind of versatile furniture is often inspired by the outdoor segment, where the feel of open-air living is reflected in light and airy furnishings - an aesthetic that works equally well in modern, loft-inspired layouts. It's no coincidence that mobile furniture on wheels - especially the classic serving trolley that can be moved effortlessly between the kitchen and living area or indoors and outdoors - is particularly popular right now, and always the first thing to sell out on sales platforms and in shopping clubs.

Outdoor living - connecting with nature

The trend for outdoor living has transformed the furniture market. The "second living room" has been growing in importance over the last couple of years. It doesn't matter whether you have a large garden or a small rented flat: balconies, patios and gardens are being revitalised and upgraded to become fully fledged living areas with high-quality outdoor furnishings, intelligent furniture concepts, water-repellent fabrics and suitable lighting solutions. New types of flooring such as concrete tiles for interiors and exteriors are levelling the boundaries as well. "Is it meant to be used indoors or out?" This is our almost instinctive response when faced with this new garden and patio furniture. Wood, metal, wickerwork and plastic; cotton or PVC; stone, concrete or composite materials - it's hard to distinguish by sight alone, neither from surface texture nor the aesthetics of their workmanship. That's because the design of these items is no longer based on typical patio furniture, but rather on what we have in our living rooms. The main thing is to be stylish. Conversely, the aesthetic of many a living room sofa seems to have been influenced by the understated design of outdoor lounge furniture, bringing a touch of sunshine indoors as a result. The two types of living space influence each other - and they sometimes even swap furnishings. Properties are increasingly being chosen for their "green" connections with nature and command a noticeably higher price when they come with a garden or roof terrace.

Trend 5

Sharing Spaces | Convenient living with social connections

Home living is perceived today as a holistic sphere of life that encompasses the need for retreat, but also indoor and outdoor social activities, entertainment and home working. However, it is not just integrating the home office into traditional living environments that is creating new future challenges for the interior design industry. The sector must also develop models for "new living" - providing solutions for phenomena such as urban densification, demographic change and growing mobility.

A new symbiosis between living and service, apartment and facilities

The urban lifestyle, remote working and flexible working models are demanding more flexibility and logistical convenience. A temporary home from home is what people are looking for. Co-living concepts create additional housing for highly mobile people who, as a rule, are accustomed to a lifestyle in which living and working overlap. It's for them that the real estate industry and interiors sector are

developing new models for “furnished accommodation”. Existing office and residential space is being converted, and in urban areas more money is being invested in new ideas for flexible housing concepts. The multitude of innovative rental concepts is set to increase demand for top-quality and functional furniture and furnishings in the next few years. Rental furniture is playing a growing role too, and has to meet new standards of quality and longevity.

Page

7/12

A different kind of communal living: long and short stay apartments plus co-living and co-working areas

The more centrally located a co-living facility is, the more multifaceted the apartment building’s concept tends to be. That’s why major cities are seeing a growing number of residential towers containing not just apartments but office space, restaurants, shops, cinemas and gyms as well. Work, leisure and home are combined under one roof, usually with exclusive long and short stay apartments available as private units.

Long and short-stay apartments represent a new segment for the interiors business. Brands from the office sector offer lines for private consumers that are more substantial and homely than conventional office furniture. At the same time, we’re discovering the opportunities that office and hotel living offer for the implementation of flexible working time models, training and Work 3.0. Executives, expats, digital nomads, commuters, career starters and students have very different requirements when it comes to managed urban living concepts.

Professional interior design and a quality experience

As a rule, well-appointed shared spaces like long and short stay apartments are fully furnished and ready to move into. Generally speaking, an all-inclusive lease covers all maintenance and utilities costs, furnishings, Wi-Fi and streaming services, with additional options like co-working spaces, cleaning, laundry and mail services, fitness facilities or even regular events. Comfort, attractive furnishings and good infrastructure are equally important quality criteria when it comes to deciding on an apartment - but even so, the emotional aspect of an appealing interior design is probably often the decisive factor.

When it comes to creating co-living spaces, a great deal of importance is attached to an on-trend interior, because social-media savvy target groups see the Instagram effect as crucial to building a personal image. At the same time, a stylish interior design, longevity and flexibility aren’t all that matters when it comes to furnishing a long or short stay apartment. It’s about identity too - both in the sense of giving the interior design a palpable character and in terms of being open to the cultural identities that the temporary occupants bring with them.

Trend 6

Natural Luxury | Quality is the real luxury

Traditional craftsmanship, simplicity, premium materials, soft-edge design - these

are the signals that point to “pure” luxury - pure because it’s natural, defined by a focus on what really matters and the willingness to renounce mass consumption in favour of sustainable product concepts.

Page
8/12

Similarly to what’s happening in the fashion world, in the interiors sector the trend seems to be moving away from “more and more, cheaper and cheaper”, towards a focus on quality. More than ever before, interior culture - influenced by the design scene - is exhibiting a preference for an understated, simple design language with a natural look and authentic, high-quality materials. Exquisitely crafted wood and leather, accompanied by marble and stone with soft contours and a smooth feel, are unmistakeable indicators of high-end quality.

At the same time, people are looking for more glamour in both modern and more traditional interiors, although the high-gloss look is giving way to an ultra matt finish: upmarket, with an original touch and classic charm. That’s why the Natural Luxury interiors trend embodies several different aspirations: we want our homes to be greener, more stylish, more colourful, more natural and more sustainable.

A global interiors trend: sustainable furniture with a quality guarantee

Quality is the real luxury. It manifests itself not so much in “more” and the opulence of forms and materials, as in top-quality workmanship, in details, in the individuality of the furniture. Natural Luxury starts with the materials. Quality and authenticity are best expressed in simple forms that clearly showcase the manufacturer’s expertise and skill. More than ever before, concentrating on the essentials is becoming the maxim of design fans. The high-value strategy deliberately renounces mass consumption in favour of a sustainable, responsible take on home living, where furniture should have a story to tell and can (in theory) be handed down.

A more colourful way to live: neutral and natural shades add warmth to interiors

There’s always demand for a cosy home - especially during a lockdown. Which is why it seems plausible to assume that the pandemic has had an impact on the colour palette in people’s homes. And yet the range we’re seeing at the moment is also affected by an influence that has been making itself felt for some time now - a desire for natural shades and a natural ambience. Elegant wallpaper, authentic and elaborate parquet flooring or sophisticated tiles, and furniture and accessories with light, modern beige tones as their basic colour create this kind of ambience, providing a sense of homeliness. This season’s colours are inspired directly by nature. Sandy beige is returning to modern interiors, taking over from white as a base colour. Brown shades are tending towards taupe rather than chocolate, and even the shades of grey seem to have been inspired by earthy hues. Natural linen fibres for the seats of chairs and benches, Viennese rattan, pure new wool or premium leather - sustainable materials with a story to tell enhance home furnishings and are often modelled on nature itself. Beige tones are being combined with splashes of the latest on-trend colours - from warm ochre to glowing honey yellow, from pastel terracotta to vivid saffron red, from delicate greens to vibrant olive shades. And interior designers are increasingly turning to dark green or night blue as an alternative to black. The desire for strong colour tones is growing.

Summary

The way we live is important to us. An ever-increasing number of people are thinking about how they can make their lives and their homes more sustainable and considering where they should live, who they should live with, what the way their homes are furnished says about them and how their homes need to look for them to feel comfortable. Different areas of life are overlapping, and this is being echoed in interior design. imm cologne 2022 will set out six interior trends that are key in interior design and the way we use our homes:

The **For Seasons** trend reflects the increasing interest in colour and decoration. Decoration has become an integral part of interior design. Home living is a topic close to our hearts and one we share on social media. As an expression of personality, the home no longer paints a rigid picture but is becoming a continuous process instead. This process isn't just influenced by trends, though; it's directly affected by what's happening in the nature surrounding us and the rhythm of the seasons, with furniture acting as a canvas for changing styles.

When connected living is vital, the smart home becomes part of everyday life. The **Connected Living** trend brings together the wide range of options for digital connections in our homes, where connected furniture and smart technologies are increasingly becoming par for the course. Bringing the world into our home is a top trend and a growth market.

The **Multifunctional** trend is rooted in the need to get more (comfort and flexibility) out of the minimum (space) - and make it look like less. An uncluttered look is the main thing. Urbanisation and rising housing prices call for small-footprint solutions for singles and families with multifunctional features: home office systems, small furniture, smart solutions with connected living features, and intelligent designs made possible by innovative fittings technology and modern storage are answers to this trend.

The **Blurring Boundaries** trend corresponds to the desire for boundary-free living, leading to a blurring of the physical and stylistic lines between indoors and outdoors, (semi-)public and private, living and cooking, living and dining, living and working, living space and bathroom. The trend describes how the boundaries between living and cooking, living and working, personal hygiene and bathing, exercising, and so on, are merging. With open-plan spaces and a sense of transparency between indoors and outdoors, stand-alone furniture and systems are increasingly being used to create zones and even replace walls.

The urban lifestyle, remote working and flexible working models are demanding more flexibility and logistical convenience. The **Sharing Spaces** trend has resulted in a variety of models for a temporary home from home with social connections and aesthetic appeal. Co-living concepts create additional housing for highly mobile people who are accustomed to a lifestyle in which living and working overlap. It's for them that the real estate industry and interiors sector are developing new models for "furnished accommodation".

The **Natural Luxury** trend expresses a conviction that has been growing in recent years - that quality is the real luxury. Traditional craftsmanship, simplicity, premium materials, soft-edge design - these are the signals that point to “pure” luxury - pure because it’s natural, defined by a focus on what really matters and the willingness to renounce mass consumption in favour of sustainable product concepts.

Visuals: <https://we.tl/t-WSLOnRBDHA>

Image captions

01

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Page
11/12

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Koelnmesse - industry trade fairs for the interior, outdoor and design sector:

Koelnmesse is the world's top trade fair organiser in the fields of interiors, furnishings, design, home living, garden lifestyle and modern work environments. At the trade fair grounds in Cologne/Germany, the leading international trade fairs imm cologne, LivingKitchen®, spoga+gafa and ORGATEC showcase the latest trends, products and innovations, serving as international, central gatherings for the global industry. In addition to the events at its Cologne headquarters, Koelnmesse is strategically expanding its portfolio internationally: The inaugural ORGATEC TOKYO will be hosted in 2022. It will be the first trade fair in Japan to focus on professional and hybrid work environments. As the satellite event for imm cologne and ORGATEC, idd shanghai provides European companies in the premium and luxury segment of the interior design industry with a unique platform for showcasing exclusive, design-driven products.

The in-person events are complemented by ambista, the online business network for the international interiors industry, which provides direct anywhere, anytime access to relevant products, contacts, expertise and events.

Further information: <https://www.imm-cologne.com/trade-fair/imm-cologne/industry-sectors>

Further information about ambista: www.ambista.com

The next events:

FSB - International Trade Fair for Public Space, Sports and Leisure Facilities, Cologne
26.10. - 29.10.2021

ORGATEC TOKYO - The dedicated information and communication platform for the office furniture industry in Asia, Tokyo 26.04. - 28.04.2022

spoga+gafa - The garden trade fair, Cologne 19.06. - 21.06.2022

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