

A passion for PATCHWORK TILES

GEOMETRICS AND FLORALS ARE FIRMLY ON THE STYLE RADAR FOR DASHINGLY DRAMATIC OR SUBTLY STYLISH KITCHEN SPLASHBACKS

PATTERN IS BACK. Florals, geometrics, painterly effects – whichever tiles take your fancy, a unique patchwork panel locks them together to make a striking backdrop for your kitchen sink area.

'PATCHWORK PATTERNS HAVE BEEN AROUND IN INTERIORS FOR YEARS, from homemade quilts to hanging wall tapestries, and the trend is still going strong,' says Jane Addis, new products and design manager, Original Style. 'Modern interiors are now often inspired by patchwork, which brings colour and texture to walls and floors.' The patchwork style is particularly suited to country homes, whether your preference is a riot of colours, picked out from the shades of a cottage garden, or a classically simple yet effective blue and white scheme.

THE FIRST CHOICE FOR PATTERNED TILES IS OFTEN GEOMETRICS. 'These tiles go beyond the kitchen and bathroom – we are seeing them in hallways, fireplaces and even outdoor spaces,' says Lee Thornley, founder of Bert & May. 'There are endless opportunities with the tessellations, allowing unique patterns to be created.' Some patterned geometric tiles make a play on light and shade. The light and dark sections within one tile, when put together, can cleverly create the optical illusion of a 3D surface.

RAISED DESIGNS ARE ONE OF THE BIG NEWS STORIES FOR KITCHEN TILES. New, inspirational 3D surfaces are bringing impact to feature walls, with the facets of each tile reflecting the light in subtle ways to create pattern without the need for colour. However, patterned tiles are not the only way to create patchwork designs. Simple plain tiles in toning or contrasting shades can be shuffled to make a random mix that creates an eye-catching splashback.



Blue Tapestry ceramic tiles, 15.2cm sq, £34.95 for a 12-tile set (one of each design), or £3.25 each, Tapestry collection, Original Style.



1 Perfect harmony

'The tradition of woven and embroidered tapestry dates back centuries, but that doesn't mean it's old-fashioned – far from it,' says Jane Addis of Original Style. 'Inspired by stitched fabrics, these ceramic tiles, which are hand-printed in Devon, provide endless options of mixing and matching. The duet of white and blue is both classic and refreshing – and is guaranteed to bring a vintage element to any space. Combine these quirky patterns into a patchwork to make a bolder statement.'



Vives Kant ceramic tiles in Lynton-R Multicolor, 20x50cm, £34.90/sqm, Solus Ceramics.

2 Honeyed tones

There's a lot to be said for being brave with pattern. Extending a tiled splashback to cover more of the kitchen wall requires conviction, but will pay dividends. These playful patterns are a lively bunch. Printed using inkjet technology, they seem to dance across the wall without overpowering the room scheme. In a subtle, knocked-back mix of sandy tones, they bring the warmth of a summer's day to a country kitchen and are available as panels in three sizes. >>

DESIGN TIP

CERAMIC TILES, MADE FROM CLAY, USUALLY GLAZED, AND FIRED IN A KILN, ARE HARD WEARING AND WATERPROOF. PORCELAIN TILES ARE A TYPE OF CERAMIC FIRED AT A HIGHER TEMPERATURE, RESULTING IN A TILE THAT'S STRONG, LOW IN POROSITY, AND THINNER AND LIGHTER IN WEIGHT THAN STANDARD CERAMIC TILES.