

# MULTIFUNCTIONAL OTTOMANS: STYLISH AND SOPHISTICATED

They may not be a decor staple yet, but cushioned seats and stools make a unique addition to any room and serve myriad purposes.

*By Ashley Ryan*



Ottomans can be used as additional seating for guests, or they can be placed in front of sofas or chairs, providing a comfortable place to rest your feet.

COLORFUL SOFAS AND UNIQUE BED FRAMES MAKE for important focal points—but smaller pieces of furniture can be just as important to the design of a room. Though they have been in use for years now, ottomans are gaining popularity in the world of interior design.

“They’ve become a trend in recent years because people started using them as coffee tables,” says Sheldon Harte of Laguna Beach-based interior design firm Harte Brownlee & Associates. “They are a classic item for decorating and will likely stay with us for many years ahead. There is so much flexibility in fabric and detailing with ottomans, which make them very versatile pieces in a room.”

Harte explains that the type of ottoman chosen for a specific room depends on the style the

designer is going for—whether traditional, contemporary, architectural or decorative, there are various shapes, sizes and fabrics to choose from.

Ottomans may be upholstered in fabric, leather or even kilim. And while there are plenty of round, square or rectangular options, Harte says that star- or clover-shaped ottomans can also provide a unique element. Meanwhile, round ottomans fit in nicely with any style.

“It’s also important to pay attention to scale. Make sure you have an ottoman that’s proportional to your sofa,” he says.

Beyond stylistic purposes, ottomans can be a great way to add a touch of practicality to any room, especially considering their many uses. Plenty of designers will place large ottomans in

the living room as additional seating for guests. And for those looking for a unique touch, Harte recommends replacing the central coffee table with an ottoman and topping it with a tray. He says smaller ottomans can also be placed in front of sofas or chairs, providing a comfortable place to rest your feet.

But ottomans aren’t strictly for the living room. Harte says placing one in a closet provides an ideal spot to sit while you slip on shoes. Additionally, ottomans make the perfect seats to place in front of a vanity for skin care or cosmetic application.

While ottomans aren’t necessarily a must-have for every room, they are definitely versatile pieces that can be used in a variety of ways to make the most of your space.

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