



**GREEN LIGHT** Ensure any colour you choose for your door fits in with the rest of your home

# Make an entrance

*Your front door has a big impact on the way your home looks, so if yours needs an overhaul, here are a few things to consider*

**E**ntrance doors can take a real battering, especially during a wet and windy winter. If yours has suffered and needs replacing, you have several options. To meet building regulations you need a door with a low heat-loss U value. Most suppliers state this in their specs, so compare before you buy. Wooden doors are usually the most aesthetically pleasing but need regular maintenance and can shrink or expand. To avoid this, look for timber doors that close against a rebate on the outside of the frame and lock onto a gasket to make a seal.

PVC doors and composite doors are strong and secure, and can have the look of wood, but are easier to maintain. Design options may not suit period homes, though. Living in a very contemporary home? An aluminium or steel door could be worth considering.

For designers and architects, getting the entrance just right is vital and for Jane Duncan, former president of RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects), a front door is the most important part of your home. In the foreword to a new book, she says, 'The effect not only on the exterior of a property but on the interior is far more important than many of us realise. Choice of design, material, colour,



**WOOD WORK** An Urban Front design using contrasting panels

context, ironmongery and texture can all affect the end result'.

And the book's author, Elizabeth Assaf, co-founder of door designers Urban Front, admits she has spent 'countless nights dreaming about doors in every shape and form'. In Door Couture she showcases a range of new designs for a variety of contemporary homes. Even for those of us who don't live in a bespoke, architect-designed house, she has lots of advice.

If you're going to paint your door, she suggests first putting together a mood

board with other materials from the outside of your home. And be sure to look at the shade you choose in outdoor light, as colours can appear different indoors.

Generally speaking, a traditional door design works best on a period home – but a style that's not of the era can work well too, says Elizabeth. If the house exterior is busy (perhaps with stonework, wooden cladding and windows that draw the eye), it's usually best to keep the door simple.

If a coat of paint is all your door needs once the weather cheers up, the Little Green range (available at John Lewis) offers great colours in two finishes especially suitable for front doors: Intelligent Exterior Eggshell, an opaque wood finish; and Tom's Oil Eggshell. Or try Dulux Weathershield, another popular, long-lasting paint choice. Dulux creative director Marianne Shillingford says: 'Lush foliage shades connect your home with the landscape, or use a bright colour to draw attention from the pavement.'

If your door just needs a quick fix, Marianne says: 'Clean it with a good car washing liquid that has a little wax in it for a lasting shine, or use washing-up liquid and, once it's dry, a bit of spray furniture polish to help retain a good lustre.'

*Door Couture by Elizabeth Assaf, (£28 from urbanfront.com)*

## What to do with the leftovers...

Unused paint can't just be thrown away – contact your local authority for advice on disposing of it, or find a Community RePaint scheme ([communityrepaint.org.uk](http://communityrepaint.org.uk)) which will re-distribute it to individuals, communities and charities.



## STAY SECURE

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Main image: Dulux Weathershield Exterior Quickdry Satin in Green Glade.