

HOMELIFESTYLE

Home Library Design

Designers offer ideas for spaces with style and comfort.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Once thought of as space for academics to smoke cigars and sip whiskey, the era of covid-19 has transformed home libraries into now cozy places of refuge. Those who've grown tired of Netflix and election coverage might find solace in curling up with a book. From a reading nook with a small chaise to a grand room with a fireplace and soaring ceilings, five local designers offer inspiration for creating a home library.

Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design

Whether ornate or minimalist, design ideas for accommodating one's personal taste abound, says Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design in McLean. "When it comes to home libraries, the customization options are endless," she said. "Some of my favorite things

"When it comes to creating a space that feels relaxing, while still put together, it's always best to keep it simple."

— Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design in McLean, Virginia.

er, it's always best to keep it simple," she said. "Use soft pillows and throws, textured fabrics on upholstery, and be sure to include a soft rug."

Even for those with a vast collection of tomes, Morris believes in leaving a few open spaces on the shelves to display accessories, like picture frames or bookends. "Completely filled shelves can be overwhelming," she said. "Balancing it with other accessories will make it look stylish, yet relaxed. I like to break up the shelves by including some books turned horizontally with a decorative object resting on top."

One of Morris' most memorable home libraries was at once stately and serene. "We opted for a completely wood-filled space with rich leathers," she said. "Since the space was filled with darker wood tones, we used large windows for added brightness. We also had the mullions of the windows faux painted to match the wood for a seamless look."

Doubling as a home office, the space includes a fireplace focal point. "We used swivel chairs that can pivot towards the fireplace in the room or towards the desk, plus putting an ottoman in between provides a soft place to kick up your feet," she said.

Rebecca Penno, Penno Interiors in McLean,

Determining homeowners reading style and the way the room's overall purpose, is the way that Rebecca Penno, Penno Interiors in McLean, Va. approaches each home library design. "Some home libraries



A fireplace, leather chairs and large windows combine to make this wood-filled home library by Tracy Morris both stately and comfortable.

PHOTO BY GREG POWERS



Large windows add additional lighting to this wood paneled library and home office by Rebecca Penno.

PHOTO BY ANGELA NEWTON ROY

function as a work space, others as more of a den," she said. "This is always a struggle with homeowners when styling their built-ins. "Many homeowners have a true book collection that they do not want to let go of. Other homeowners have books with no attachment. If possible, we always eliminate all paperback books."

An expansive library with multiple functions, says Penno included a desk, fireplace and television. She designed the room to serve as library, home office and a space to relax. "In order for the homeowner to be able to use all three of these focal points, we used comfortable lounge chairs on a swivel base to provide flexibility," she said. "The starting point was the oak paneling. It provided a masculine backdrop with the deep wood tones and strong grain. From there, we layered patterns of all brown tones paired with brass accents."

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