

BATHROOMS :  
**cabinet crush**

THE RIGHT CUPBOARD ADDS WARMTH,  
DIMENSION AND EDGE TO YOUR BATHROOM  
- NOT TO MENTION THAT OH-SO-IMPORTANT  
SPACE FOR ESSENTIALS

WORDS KAREN BURGE

*These pieces from the 'Issy  
By Zuster' range for Reece  
embody seamless elegance,  
where timber is the natural star.*

BATHROOM STORAGE WAS once all about the vanity, the answer to where to stash everything from shaving cream and spare loo rolls to your lipstick collection. However, the current trend for floating, barely-there vanities with top-mounted basins has given rise to a renewed focus on the humble bathroom cabinet for storage solutions. "There are numerous storage options that can be built in and around your central hub, including mirror cabinets, tallboys, concealed drawers, integrated shelving and more," says Daniela Santilli of Reece. Increasingly, too, designers are thinking beyond the simple wall cabinet to produce a range of options that suit the more fashion-forward washzone.



*The mirrored cabinet in this custom-built bathroom by Minosa Design is recessed into a wall of oversized, dark-hued tiles.*

## Take your pick

As always, how you use your bathroom will influence your storage choices. If the room doubles as a make-up station, then space for cosmetics and hair products might be on the wishlist. A family bathroom, on the other hand, may need to accommodate a stash of bath toys and kids' shampoo, as well as fluffy towels. You need to be able to move around the bathroom freely and have space to access the functional elements of the room, including opening doors.

Cabinets come in myriad shapes and sizes, from traditional mirror-fronted cupboards designed to be mounted over the sink to freestanding units that wouldn't look out of place in a living room. For head-height pieces, recessed wall-mounted cabinetry into the wall cavity increases the depth of storage as well as the sense of space. Protruding overhead storage will make

a small room feel cramped. Recessing will require the help of a professional to ensure the cabinet is clear from electricals and holds firm. Another benefit of wall-mounted pieces is that the floor stays clear, which helps contribute to the feeling of spaciousness.

If you're looking for a freestanding cabinet, tall pieces will give you the most storage bang for your buck while taking up relatively little floor space. A tallboy has plenty of drawers to keep clutter hidden, while a slim-but-lofty open-shelf unit can be handy for towels or to display chichi bath products.

If space is plentiful, you could also consider introducing other furniture, such as a chest of drawers, a vintage cabinet or even an armoire, which would chime beautifully with the current trend for bathrooms to look less like functional wet rooms. However, it's important to ensure that any piece you choose can withstand the damp environment. >

## TOP PICKS



Award  
'Wembley'  
cabinet,  
\$213/620mm  
x 600mm,  
Bunnings.

*The timber-look surround adds warmth; features include adjustable shelving, soft-close and finger-pull opening.*



Posh  
'Dominique'  
mirror cabinet,  
\$263/750mm  
x 600mm,  
Reece.

*This simple, streamlined, two-door cabinet in white polyurethane has adjustable shelves.*



'Lotus-Ash'  
mirror storage,  
\$849/1200mm  
x 750mm,  
Parisi.

*The wood-grain-backed glass shelving adds interest to this vanity.*



Finlay & Smith  
mirror cabinet,  
\$165/600mm  
x 500mm,  
Masters.

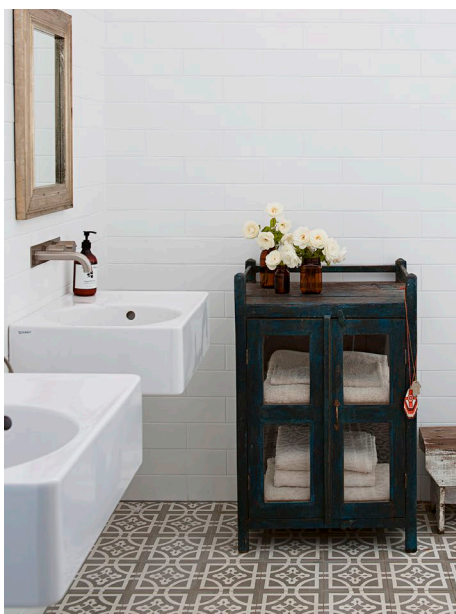
*This stainless-steel unit comes with double zinc handles and magnetic door close.  
Stockists, page 212*

## custom or not?

There are many off-the-shelf products available – some of which are customisable to a degree – that will suit virtually any look or feel. Certain cabinet models have extra features such as glass shelving, different shelf formats, LED lighting and soft-close hinges, and plenty have matching vanities, basins and other accessories. The doors are important, particularly in a room that is traditionally the smallest in the house. Check there will be plenty of clearance for opening and closing; in a tight space, sliding versions might be better.

Custom-made cabinets will inevitably offer you more options. “We nearly always custom make for our clients,” says Melissa Bonney of The Design Hunter. “It works out to be in a similar price range and we can get exactly the dimensions, storage and look for the space that we need.”

Other added benefits? Power points can be fitted inside the cabinet for hairdryers, shavers and electric toothbrushes, and the storage can be tailored to your exact requirements.



Black, white and mirrors make for a dramatic trio here – and provide oodles of storage; (left) vintage-style pieces in a bathroom are delicious eye candy, but make sure they are water resistant.

*“Built-in cupboards behind mirrors are being employed more than ever... they are the workhorses of bathroom storage” ~ Melissa Bonney, The Design Hunter*

## TOP PICKS



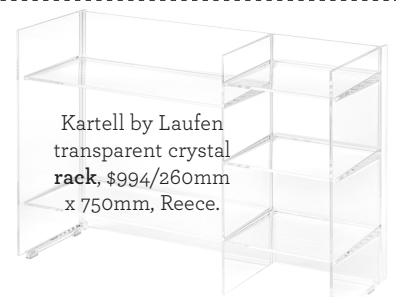
Cibo 'Eco' shelf mirror, \$897/900mm x 400mm, Reece.

*This minimalist integrated mirror and shelf has a vanity unit to match.*



'Ragrund' bamboo corner shelf, \$29.99/340mm x 600mm, Ikea.

*Tuck this three-shelf unit in a corner or under your basin.*



Kartell by Laufen transparent crystal rack, \$994/260mm x 750mm, Reece.

*Incredibly versatile, this clear unit will bring lightness to any room.*



*Built-in timber shelving is the perfect place to display pretty accessories; (below) wall-hung storage creates a sense of spaciousness in this bathroom by Candana.*

## materials and mood

The finishes you choose for your cupboards will set the mood for the room. Glossy white or black gives a practical, classic feel, while timber in its myriad shades adds a lovely textural look. “Raw yet beautifully refined natural materials are a popular choice for the bathroom, and we see these echoed through vanities and storage, as well as flooring and other finishes,” says Reece’s Daniela Santilli. “Ceramic and timber remain popular staples and provide a contemporary yet timeless look that can be ‘warmed up’ or ‘cooled down’ according to tonal qualities and tactile finishes,” she adds. When selecting timber, check that it is moisture-resistant.



## TOP PICKS



**‘Godmorgon’ high cabinet, \$249/400mm x 1920mm, Ikea.**

*This wall-fixed piece comes in six colourways. The door can be right or left opening.*



**‘Como’ side storage, \$899/330mm x 1200mm, Parisi.**

*In high-shine polyurethane, this sleek unit comes with adjustable glass shelves.*



**Kado ‘Aspect’ wall-hung tall boy, \$1221/400mm x 1000mm, Reece.**

*A dramatically hued door/drawer combination unit that comes with soft-closing functionality.*

**‘Shape’ vertical mirror/shelf unit, \$2385/650mm x 8300mm, Rogerseller.**

*Solid timber and Cristalplant combine in this striking piece.*



**‘Molger’ shelving unit, \$89/370mm x 1400mm, Ikea.**

*Sturdy slatted timber gives this open shelf unit a Scandi look.*

**hb**