



How Does Your Indoor Garden Grow?
Abundantly or barely, depending whom you ask **D11**

OFF DUTY

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FASHION BREAKTHROUGH
Dress, \$1,880, azfactory.com;
Earrings, \$350, area.nyc

Zoom In On Style

After a dispiriting year of living and working via video, women are investing in fashion and skin care to truly shine on-screen. How to make an impact from the waist up—and the neck up, too.

By KATHARINE K. ZARRELLA

IF WE'RE GOING to do this, then let's *do this*," declared Tanya Golesic over Zoom, flashing a wrist stacked with bangles and a kinetic gold cocktail ring. Ms. Golesic, the 49-year-old president of the Americas for shoe empire Jimmy Choo, initially surrendered to casual wear after leaving her New York home to shelter—and videoconference—in place on Long Island last spring. But once June rolled around, she snapped out of her sartorial slump, slipping into blouses and blazers with outsize sleeves and textural sweaters, all eventually augmented by baubles. "I think people are over being boring...The whole idea of glamour is coming back." She fantasizes about setting track pants on fire.

Over the past year, we've learned how to conduct everything from job interviews to divorces via computer screen. The halfhearted leggings-

and-collared-shirt thing was fine when we naively thought confinement would last a few weeks. But the novelty of slobbering about in workout wear all day has waned. Now, thanks to some combination of optimism, sweatshirt fatigue and longing for a pre-pandemic world, many women are not only getting dressed for Zoom—they're getting decked out.

"Feeling like you have a reason to look great is empowering," said Mercedes Posey, a Dallas clinical operations project manager who has logged into video work calls, galas and girls' nights. Throwing on such exuberant wares as can't-miss-'em chandelier earrings, bright-pink tops and a pearl-dappled beret gives Ms. Posey, 35, something to look forward to. Her vivacious work outfits have become such a small-screen sensation that her colleagues protest on the rare occasions her camera's turned off.

If you're ready to elevate your own Zoom ward-

robe, designers are conveniently offering plenty of tempting waist-up fodder this season. Miu Miu saw fit to embellish turtlenecks with crystals. Versace's oceanic prints will pop against any Zoom background; and Alexander McQueen's puffy sleeves (like those on the tromp l'oeil corset sweater shown on D2) cut a sumptuous silhouette on the screen. Swarovski's new creative director Giovanna Engelbert has just unveiled a bevy of supersize crystal jewelry that, even if worn with a plain T-shirt, will inject even the most droning video call with sparkle. Ms. Engelbert, who designed her debut collection in lockdown, admitted that she "went bigger because of Zoom, probably."

Harriet Hawksworth, the editor in chief at e-commerce platform Farfetch, has noticed a rabid appetite for bright colors, punchy prints (like Marine Serre's signature crescent moons) and statement accessories. Chunky chain necklaces, hoops

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DESIGN & DECORATING

ERROR, ERROR ON THE WALL

Home-Run Home Offices

Productivity doesn't require a sweatshop. Designers recall inspiration-crushing workspace gaffes, and tell you how to avoid them.

By RACHEL WOLFE

FOR A YEAR now we've all been getting copious advice on how to make our remote workspaces worthy of our toil. Why then, incredulous designers want to know, are they still seeing people's unmade beds during video calls?

"Professionals should exude professionalism," said New York designer Vicente Wolf, who's seen home offices cheapened by obviously plastic floral arrangements. "Keep the space clean and tidy. Straighten pictures, edit your bookcase. Take the time to see your background as it is conveyed by your computer's eye."

Here, interiors pros share five other home office blunders they've observed, and what to do instead.

Dead-end Desks

The quickest way to make your office feel like a college dorm room? Shove an undersized desk against a windowless wall, warned Dallas architect Eddie Maestri. "Nothing looks more sad and depressing."

Instead "What you see affects your mood and increases your work performance," said Mr. Maestri. If a real vista isn't available, he positions the desk so its occupant has an expansive view of the room.

Cable Mayhem

Leave webs to the spiders. "I hate when tangled cords dangle from the desk in plain sight," said Dallas designer Traci Connell.

Instead If you have scope to place your desk against the back of a sofa or love seat, suggests Mark Laverder, an interior designer in Winnetka, Ill., "cords can then run behind the sofa, and the desk lamp pulls double duty as a sofa light." Ms. Connell channels cords through grommet holes she has drilled into desk tops. Adapting the same idea, New York architect Eric J. Smith outfits a drawer or cabinet with a power strip and cables for an out-of-site charging station. Mr. Maestri suggests this hack: "Connect all your cords to one power strip, then place the power strip and additional cord lengths in a small wastebasket under your desk."

Workplace Drift

If you can't shut the door on a dedicated workplace come day's end, your "office" confronts you until bedtime, with files and monitors leering at you while you try to relax. Uncontained professional detritus compromises the life part of the life-work balance.

Instead "It's important to retain the other functions of the room," said Mr. Smith. Los Angeles designer Anne Carr's stern advice: Order a



THE RIGHT ANGLES In a New York home by Gideon Mendelson, a large desk perpendicular to the wall optimizes a window view and accommodates two people.

cabinet, "preferably one with doors that close." A bookcase with bins or baskets, she noted, can also hide essential but essentially ugly gear. Another option: a small, wheeled filing cabinet that can be pulled out during the day for extra desk space and tucked under a simple desk after hours, said Jerry Caldari of New York's Bromley Caldari Architects. An inherently beautiful desk itself can pass for a civilized member of the family. Veronica Mishaan, a designer with offices in Bogotá, Colombia, and New York, chooses secretaries, whose surfaces fold up, or

small, delicately curved desks. Both blend into a room without screaming "workspace," she said.

Aping the Actual Office

"You don't need an ordinary black faux-leather chair—or one that looks like your kid's gaming chair—pulled up to a clunky wooden desk to make you feel that you're 'working' from home," said Spencer Bass, creative director for office furniture retailer Label 180.

Instead While the ideal work chair is still ergonomic, you can de-cor-

porate the rest of your space. Chairish co-founder Anna Brockway suggests swapping utilitarian task lamps for ceramic varieties with contrasting color shades—a magnolia-green lamp and cornflower-blue shade, for example. Hang artwork that inspires you, "and don't forget about desktop accessories like vases with fresh flowers and beautiful vessels to hold your paper clips," she said.

Permeable Portals

Pocket doors and sliding barn doors leave gaps that let the voices of re-

mote-learners and WFH mates bounce right through.

Instead Get a real door! Swinging solid ones are Brooklyn designer Adam Meshberg's first choice, "not only for your privacy, but for the rest of the [household which] likely doesn't care much about your conversations." If natural light is a concern, he said, frosted glass doors let sunshine through but not the gaze of curious kids. Mr. Meshberg also finds virtue in hardware that locks to let the "Zoom calls we're all constantly on" unfold uninterrupted.

DESK SCARES / THE WORST WFH SETUPS PROS HAVE SEEN

"A home office situated inside the walk-in closet...with the clothes hanging all over the work area." —Vicente Wolf, designer, New York City

"I designed a home for a family that bought two used cubicles and put them in their formal living room. It was quite the negotiation to get them to sell the desks and start fresh." —Kiel Wuellner, vice president of design at Vesta

"I had a client who was a big-game hunter and wanted me to

make the legs of one of his safari animals into desk legs. I had to take a hard pass on this job." —Chris Goddard, designer, Springdale, Ark.

"A urinal in the room! Can you imagine?" —Elizabeth Krueger, designer, Chicago

"An office that was covered floor to ceiling in white boards with words and tasks listed in tiny handwriting everywhere. It's instant overwhelm." —Christina Kim, designer, Manasquan, N.J.



FEDERICA DEL PROPOSTO (ILLUSTRATION); ERIC PIASECKI/OTTO

FLOWER SCHOOL

Balled Up in a Beautiful Bunch

Floral designer Lindsey Taylor set out to capture both the artistry and anxiety in an Edvard Munch painting

A RECENT EXHIBIT at the Royal Academy of Arts in London made me aware of a painting by Edvard Munch (1863-1944) that, though far less famous than his existentially angsty "The Scream," has stayed with me.

British contemporary artist Tracey Emin (b. 1963) curated the show, called "The Loneliness of the Soul," juxtaposing her own work with the Norwegian expressionist's canvases. Both artists explore themes of isolation and pain, often through paintings of the female body. Given the harrowing persistence of the pandemic, it seemed appropriate to base my February arrangement on this Munch work, "Crouching Nude" (1917-1919), its figure's limbs drawn into the

fetal position.

The final shape and energy of a bouquet—whether tight, loose, draping or upright—really helps capture a painting's mood and connect the arrangement and art work. I knew I needed to create something tight and congested to reflect the introversion of Munch's subject and canvas.

To capture the figure's curled-up fullness, I started with a white rounded ce-

THE INSPIRATION



ramic vase and cut my flowers short, some very short, to fill the vessel snugly and hug its rim. The blooms included shades of pink and peachy ranunculus, including one with a green center that closely matched the depiction of the woman's face and hair. Deep plummy-red tulips, with their foliage still intact above the water, pick up purples and greens in the painting. Pink-and-orange parrot tulips ground the bouquet the way the painting's similarly hued fabric supports the figure, while creamy and deep-yellow daffodils echo the background. Sumptuous and self-contained, this arrangement attempts to be pretty while exuding a feeling of anxiety and a need to burst free.



THE ARRANGEMENT

Ms. Taylor tightly massed the blooms—ranunculus, tulips and daffodils—to capture the clenched pose of Edvard Munch's "Crouching Nude" (1917-1919).

STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; FLORAL STYLING BY LINDSEY TAYLOR, PROP STYLING BY CARLA GONZALEZ-HART; EDVARD MUNCH, "CROUCHING NUDE," 1917-1919, OIL ON CANVAS, 70 X 90 CM., MUNCHMUSEET (PAINTING)