



**INDUSTRY STANDARD:** Clockwise from top, Loko Stool, £120, [www.nkuku.com](http://www.nkuku.com); 15 Drawer Iron Unit, £355, [www.vincentandbarn.co.uk](http://www.vincentandbarn.co.uk); Pifco Guard Cage Lights, £60, [www.skinflintdesign.co.uk](http://www.skinflintdesign.co.uk); Plumen Drop Hat Lamp Shade, from £29.95.

# FACTORY FLOORED

## Interiors

The stripped down essentials of industrial chic can make it the perfect choice for the modern homeowner. **Jamie Hemsall** reports.

INDUSTRIAL chic has evolved from necessity to become a mainstream movement.

It came up through the trendy ranks of reclamation and upcycling to become a hit on the High Street, with modern furniture now being made to look aged and functional.

This style is typified by the juxtaposition of raw, weathered metal (particularly iron and steel), largely unpainted wood and distressed leather against neutral backgrounds. Essentially the workshops and factories of our forefathers have been translated into modern living areas – think BBC *Dragon's Den* with a bit more furniture and you are not far off.

The look first developed in warehouse conversions, originating largely in US loft districts.

There, the love of exposed brickwork and pipes hanging from the ceiling was actually more one of economic necessity – it was cheaper to leave vast expanses unadorned and embrace the building's heritage rather than cover it up with cladding and plaster.

The look gained credence in architectural and design circles.

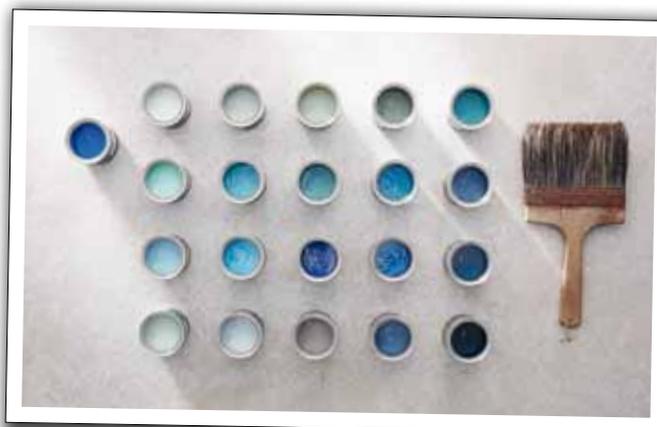
Retailers such as All Saints and modern gallery spaces have assisted industrial chic's mainstream transfer by making us all more familiar and comfortable with this type of environment.

Visitors to The Calder, the new contemporary art space at Hepworth Wakefield, can experience first hand just how exciting a totally unadorned space is.

The upcycling movement is also fundamental to the development of this look. This is not just about refurbishing items, but re-envisaging redundant items for the modern era and imbuing them with new life.

Sites such as [www.antiquesbydesign.co.uk](http://www.antiquesbydesign.co.uk) show the innovative use that can be made of items such as a propeller (side table) or saw (wall wash light).

Others, such as [www.skinflintdesign.co.uk](http://www.skinflintdesign.co.uk) specialise in taking original industrial lighting and redeveloping it for the modern domestic market. Old lockers and filing cabinets have been snapped up and made into modern storage options to such an extent that once cheap options are now highly sought after pieces, with designer price tags.



**CHIC:** Little Greene Blue Collection from £18.75 for 1ltr.

## WHY DECOREX IS FEELING BLUE

**BLUE** is the hottest colour around in interiors these days, reflected by the launch at Decorex this week of the Blue Collection from the Little Greene Paint Company.

Following its innovative Grey collection of a couple of years ago, this selection comprises 21 paint shades, 17

of which have not previously been published by Little Greene.

There are a mouthwatering array of tones and finishes, including the amazing "Ultra Blue" invocative of Yves Saint Laurent's Marrakesh Villa. Available for a limited period only.

So it was inevitable that with cheap modern production techniques, retailers would react to satisfying growing demand by supplying products designed to look used.

Industrial chic is now cropping up all over the place. Searching "industrial" on many retailers, such as Barker and Stonehouse, will bring up a hearty selection of wood and steel options.

There are now also specialists such as [www.vincentandbarn.co.uk](http://www.vincentandbarn.co.uk). Comfort is not out of the question though so do not despair!

Soft leather chairs are the most on-trend seating addition, but recent developments have seen more mid-20th century furniture being introduced into this type of scheme.

Brands such as G-Plan and Parker Knoll were often heavy on wood with clear, straight lines, so have synergy with industrial pieces – the end results can be inspiring when these two design worlds collide.

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