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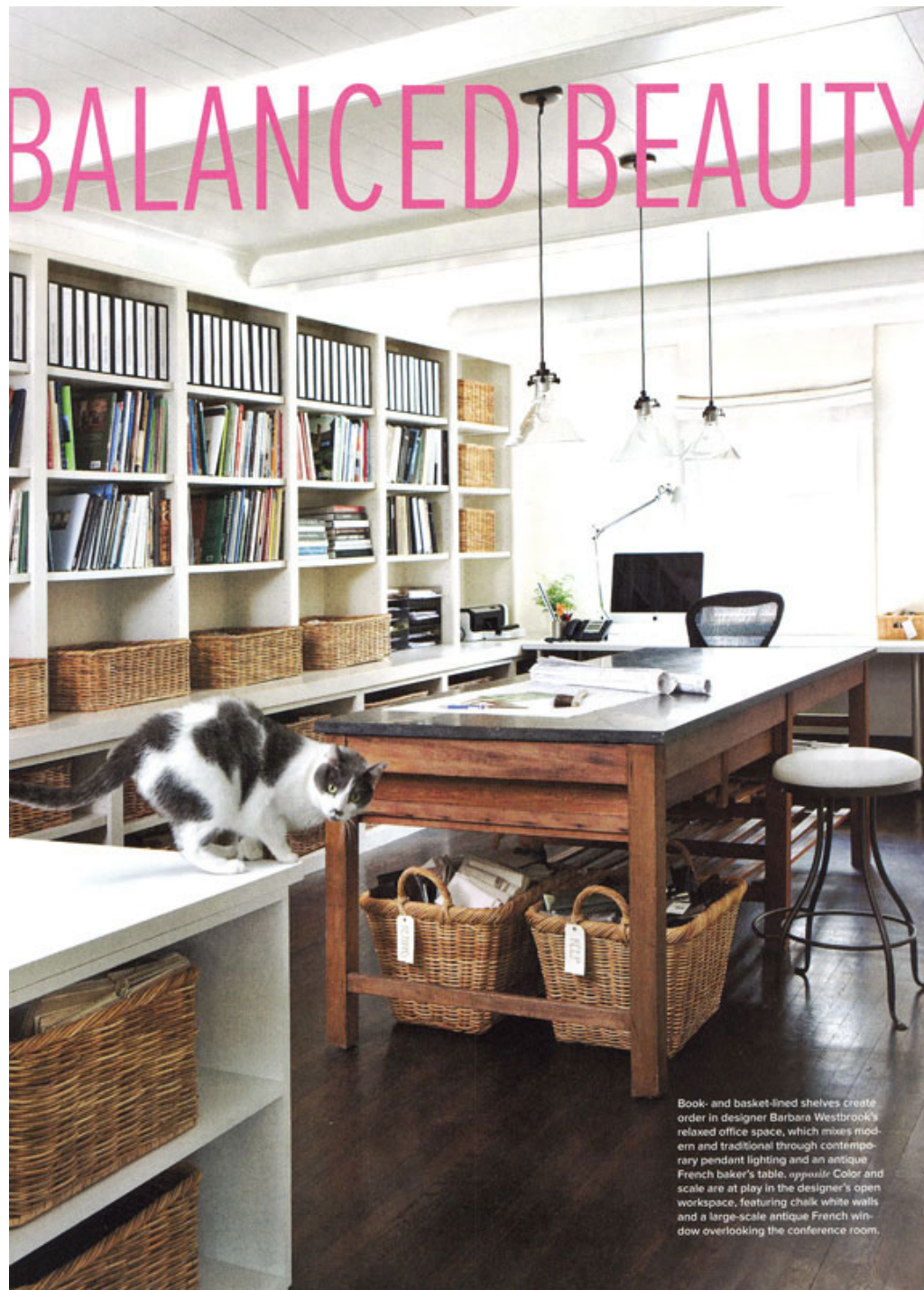
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BALANCED BEAUTY



Book- and basket-lined shelves create order in designer Barbara Westbrook's relaxed office space, which mixes modern and traditional through contemporary pendant lighting and an antique French baker's table. *opposite* Color and scale are at play in the designer's open workspace, featuring chalk white walls and a large-scale antique French window overlooking the conference room.

FORM MEETS FUNCTION IN THE CHARMING COTTAGE OFFICE OF INTERIOR DESIGNER BARBARA WESTBROOK

WRITTEN BY ALISON MILLER PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERICA GEORGE DINES



DESIGN IN NEUTRAL

Barbara Westbrook's short but sweet Master Class on decorating with whites and neutrals

Use white and neutrals to accentuate. White and cream highlight everything, making anything next to them more pronounced and more sculptural. Even a cabinet pull becomes more apparent on a white or cream cabinet.

Vary textures of neutrals for interest. Texture adds dimension to a room. If walls are painted in a high-gloss lacquer, cover the accent chair in a heavier fabric, like chenille. Otherwise, the room feels very one-note.

Mix neutral shades for sophistication. Mixing multiple shades of white creates warmth in a space. If the white linen on a sofa is slightly richer than the white on the walls, there's a bit of visual contrast and excitement in the variation. I used to design beds with really white sheets, topped with a cream linen blanket.

Determine style before selecting a shade. Whether your space is going to be elegant or casual, traditional or contemporary, affects the color you're going to pick. Certain whites and creams evoke those styles. For contemporary looks, the whites should get whiter; for traditional, the whites should get softer and warmer.

Paint light-filled rooms neutral. Follow what's already happening in a room. Rooms that boast natural light best take to white walls; they enhance the room's glow. Conversely, dark spaces are best in warmer colors; painting them white tends to make them feel cold.

Accent neutrals with just a touch of color. Whites and neutrals provide a nice backdrop for the introduction of color. Instead of dramatic pops of color, add interest in a quieter, more inviting way with a painting or a pair of vases that share the same grey-blue hue.

Make daytime rooms neutral. The rooms where we spend the most time, such as the family room and kitchen, tend to be friendlier environments for lighter tones. Dining rooms, powder rooms and even some bedrooms are good spaces to introduce darker shades to create warmth.

Westbrook's go-to white paint picks:

- Pratt & Lambert Chalk Gray, 11-32. "It's a super creamy wall color."
- Farrow & Ball Pointing, No. 2003. "It looks really crisp, but it has some softness. It's contemporary, but it's not harsh."
- Benjamin Moore Acadia White, AC-41. "It's a creamier white."



In the conference room, slipcovered Person chairs and a flatweave rug from Sullivan Fine Rugs create an interesting contrast to the space's earthier tones, from the walls, painted in Satchel by Benjamin Moore, to an overscale patinaed lantern and French oak table.



With open shelving and contemporary painted oak veneer cabinetry for extra office storage, the galley kitchen exhibits maximum style and efficiency. *opposite, clockwise from top left* A restored 1940s English cottage-style bungalow is home to Westbrook Interiors. Creating drama in the foyer is the juxtaposition of an oversize Belgian secretary and pale walls against dark wood floors; the handrail is by Calhoun Design and Metalworks and the plaster houses on the secretary are from Holland & Company. The light-filled work space, which runs the length of the cottage, features white laminate tables, textured linen Roman shades and just a touch of color via framed photographs by Phil Grossman.



ATLANTA INTERIOR DESIGNER BARBARA WESTBROOK'S projects always refrain from conforming to clichés, and her sunny and chic office, located in an English bungalow on a sleepy street off Pharr Road, is no exception. Outside, oversize porch beams and cheery red shutters heighten the curb appeal of this 1940s cottage, while inside, a comfortable mix of contrasting elements—patinaed antiques, architectural photography and her signature palette of whites and neutrals are a testament to the designer's tactile, timeless designs. "It's creating that little bit of tension between the modern and the old that makes it more personal," says Westbrook.

The designer's signature style is evident throughout the five-room office, from the contrast between its low, bright-white ceilings and stained wood floors and door frames to the commanding presence of oversize antiques, such as the Belgian secretary in the cozy entry hall. The heart of the home, though, is an open, collaborative work space with sleek white laminate surfaces running the length of the house, which allows Westbrook's team of four to constantly interact.

To counteract the cottage's low ceilings and make the room seem loftier than it's eight-foot height, the designer added ceiling boards and covered beams, painting them, as well as the walls and crown molding, in her favorite whites: Chalk Gray and Glass of Milk.

In the adjoining workspace, where Westbrook pulls up her swivel stool, the designer accommodates the team's preference for openness, the need for storage space and her own tendency to spread out all her work. "If there's a surface, I will put something on it, so each room has a big table where you can lay everything out," she says. A spacious antique French baker's table—its casters removed to fit the space—makes an eye-catching addition. Natural light and a layering of contemporary lighting—from pendant lamps and monopoint lights—shines on shelving for books, binders and woven baskets that stylishly store fabric swatches and client projects. The room's utilitarian elegance underscores the marriage of form and function. "I like to have a place for everything," says Westbrook. "Just because it's utilitarian doesn't mean it has to be ugly."

Adjacent to the offices is the conference room, separated by an unexpected and generously sized antique French window. In her most dramatic color gesture, Westbrook painted the walls in a well-worn leather hue. Slipcovered Parson chairs, a French oak dining table, a giant patinaed lantern and a perfectly aged Swedish armoire strike chords of tradition and laid-back luxe. "I always think of our work as being modern with a dash of the old," says Westbrook. Indeed, her "home" office beautifully captures this mix. **SEE RESOURCES, BACK OF BOOK.**

