

How to design a home with wood

From choosing the right texture to picking a unique style, there's much to setting up a place with the material, writes **Sowmya Putran**



A Kumta-based wooden home designed by Andagere Architects, Gollarapalya, Bengaluru Rural. Interiors of the house have roofing done with marine plywood and coconut timber.



Planning to build a new house? Make a statement in your neighbourhood by using wood. These designs are eco-friendly while offering the best of aesthetics, say experts.

Choose wisely

Akarsh Tiwari, CEO of Woodniido, Chennai, works with a construction technique called wood-frame housing. These homes can be completely dismantled into about 15 wooden panels, he notes. He works with five types of wood: Spruce-pine-fir is for the structures (due to its strength), Western red cedar works best for the facade and Yellow cedar for doors, door frames, windows, and outdoor furniture (as they naturally secrete protective oils), and Western hemlock and Douglas fir are for furniture and decor (as they bend well).

Ajith Andagere, an architect with Andagere Architects, Gollarapalya, Bengaluru Rural, designed a mesmerising wooden home in Kumta using traditional carpentry. "We built this home on stilts. There is a gap underneath and termites cannot climb up," he shares. They used non-forest timber for the floors and main walls, he notes. For the roofing, Ajith combined marine plywood with coconut timber. In places where he wanted a cheaper

option, he used cement corrugated sheets and country tiles on top of the coconut timber rafters.

At his ongoing project: a wooden Goan home, Akshat Bhatt, principal architect with Architecture Discipline, New Delhi, is working with a complete mass timber prefabricated structure. "We count on charring to protect the timber. Charred timber claddings are our go to. We have also created a unique cantilever structure," he notes.

Sunitha Kondur, co-founder and partner, Hundredhands Design, Bengaluru, wanted to accentuate the entrance of a Yemalur villa project, and then go into taller ceilings. She opted for a ceiling design articulated by ply with veneer rafters and concealed the air conditioning unit with trap doors (integrated into the design), so that they don't get dirty like painted trap doors.

Sunitha works with two kinds of wood: veneer and solid wood. "When we work with large panelling, we usually use ply with veneer. But for more detailed design, we pair it with solid wood, or work completely with solid wood based on the design," she says.

Keep it real

Sunitha works with veneer that has subtle grains for large surfaces, and veneer with artistic or prominent texture grains when she wants to high-

light a piece of furniture. "I love using live solid logs (logs of wood that have been cut without removing the bark or natural edge) for counters and tables as well," she adds.

Devika Khosla, creative director of The Works Interiors, Delhi, worked with a sloped wooden ceiling built from locally sourced pine wood for a Kasauli home in December. Sloped wooden roofs lend a cosy look, and work well for attic spaces and farmhouses, she says.

The shade and texture of the wood can have a major impact on the aesthetics of a room. To make a bold statement, one can contrast the ceiling with the furniture. And for a subtle look, one can tone it down to white or beige shades. "I think it's best to let the grain structure and natural knots show through, rather than hiding them by painting," she adds.

To cut away the monotony, Akarsh counts on gypsum boards that are screwed onto wood and then finished with paint. Ajith says it's important to stay true to the original texture and aesthetics of any wood. "For instance, don't colour a cheaper wood to make it resemble teakwood," he says.

Unique creations

Ajith crafted a moving wall at a Kumta wooden house. "If you slide the wall open by a few inches, the entire wall opens up. If you slide it back, there are small linear openings where we have a copper mosquito mesh," he elaborates.

At a boutique villa in Jalakara, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, he crafted a movable pivoted woven teakwood wall that acts as a louvre. It's perforated to beat the humidity while offering complete privacy. It gives the user an option to keep the space open or closed.

Sunitha worked with sliding solid timber screens in an outdoor bathroom at a Whitefield penthouse. Mixing timber screens with fine metals like brass and copper can highlight the design even more beautifully, she notes. For wall claddings, wall panelling, headboards, and screens, another idea is the use of wooden slats. "At the Whitefield penthouse, we wrapped a powder room with solid wood slats," she says.

Wallet factor

- Wooden homes cost about Rs 4,000-Rs 7,000 per sq ft.
- Set aside a budget of Rs 700-Rs 1,200 per sq ft for wooden ceilings, slats, and screens.

Challenges

- Selecting the right type of wood and design interventions in the case of harsh climates can be challenging.
- Achieving precision in carpentry work according to the customer's needs.

Tips to remember

- Use hardwood for bathrooms.
- Apply a yearly coat of teak oil or any PU wood coating on outdoor wooden surfaces, recommends Sunitha.
- Always use sloped roofs for wooden homes, especially in a tropical context.
- Use a house wrap to protect the structures and bitumen sheets for waterproofing roofs, says Akarsh.



A sloped wooden ceiling built from locally-sourced pine wood for a Kasauli home by The Works Interiors, Delhi.



A wooden modular home designed by Woodniido, Chennai. Gypsum boards screwed on top of wood have been painted blue and white to break the monotony.

5 books on the anatomy of watches

These are for novices and connoisseurs alike

The world of watches is an intriguing one. From the history of how some watches came about to the variety of features and facets available in them — flip through these page-turners to learn more.

The Watch, Thoroughly Revised

Authors: Gene Stone and Stephen Pulvrent

This book covers vintage and contemporary mechanical watches, and is a revised version of the original that was published more than a decade ago. Here, the authors look at the current world of watches and have added insights on new brands and models, and offer a deeper coverage of brand leaders, including Patek Philippe, Omega, etc. It contains information that will be enjoyed by collectors and neophytes alike.



The Wristwatch Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Mechanical Wristwatches

Author: Ryan Schmidt

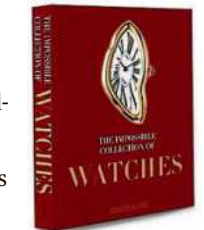
A book with captivating images and text, it covers aspects like development, production, and many other topics that are horological. It looks at the many forms, functions and facets the mechanical wristwatch now has. The book was written between the Quartz revolution and the rise of the smart device as we know it now. Featuring more than 470 illustrations from over 90 brands, this book provides the reader a detailed understanding of a watch's mechanical movement, and varied functions existing in modern horology.



The Impossible Collection of Watches

Author: Nick Foulkes

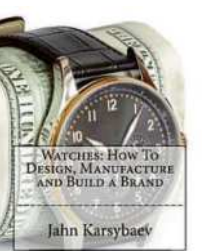
British historian Nicholas Foulkes has picked 100 timepieces from the 20th century and explored them here. It features brands such as Audemars Piguet, Blancpain, Jaeger-LeCoultre, and Tag Heuer, and makes a mention of models like 1915 Omega Lawrence of Arabia aviator chronograph, and the 1962 Breitling Navitimer Cosmonaut, among others.



Watches: How To Design, Manufacture and Build A Brand

Author: Jahn Karsybaev

If you are someone who loves watches, their dynamics, and want to start your own watch brand, this book could be a good option. While it doesn't offer any winning formulas, you will find valuable information about the horology world, and even some "trade secrets".



Watches: A Guide by Hodinkee

Author: Benjamin Clymer

Find out about the history behind the big names in watchmaking in this 261-page book. Clymer has brought together his passion for horology and writing here. The book has chapters that break down chronographs, dive watches, high design, and horological icons.



(Compiled by Tini Sara Anien)

SPEND

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