

TOTALLY WILD

When it comes to styling children's bedrooms, 37-year-old co-founder of interior design studio, Stella + the Stars, Emilie Jacob, knows a thing or two about creating the perfect space. Here, the interior stylist and mother of two shares her top tips to create a fun, yet practical room...

Use colour to add personality.

My number one rule when it comes to decorating children's rooms — or any room really — is to look at adding colour. It's also a really great way to get your little ones involved.

Before we repainted this playroom (right), we got our little clients involved in the process of selecting the wall colour. They got to choose their favourites from several paint colour samples we had pre-selected. Once you have your colour scheme, you can start building around it. It's probably the cheapest and most transformative way to add personality to a room. If painting walls is not an option, you can easily add colour with accessories, soft furnishings, furniture and bedding. The list is endless.

Add pizzazz to the walls. An alternative to repainting walls is to dress them up with temporary and affordable options like removable wallpaper, murals or wall stickers. You don't need to cover an entire room, you could focus on one statement wall. For this playroom, we commissioned the wonderful Dubai-based supplier, PaperPop, to custom make this incredible jungle mural for our little clients who chose every single animal on the design.

Use smart storage. Many new mums vow to only have beautiful wooden toys. The problem is that kids (or at least mine!) usually love toys that are either ugly or made of not-so-chic plastic. The solution? Embrace it but hide it. We used a lot of IKEA smart storage pieces on this project (KALLAX unit used as a storage bench, STUVA drawers jazzed up with leather handles), mixed with beautiful yet practical custom-made shelves to display cute toys and books.

Get arty. Hang prints, posters, sculptures and animal heads. I love the idea of having kid's masterpieces repurposed into lovely framed prints or a collage. For this jungle playroom, we kept with the theme and sourced super fun animal portraits from Drawdeck.

Zone out the space. When little people get older it's a good idea to clearly separate sleeping, playing, reading and homework areas to make the most of the room and avoid mess. Kids also like having boundaries and



PaperPop, custom-made this jungle mural with the help of the client's children who chose every animal for the design

Emilie Jacob

assigning different areas to different activities is a great way to give them a bit of structure.

For this playroom, we created a clear arts and craft zone with the desk, wall storage and wall mounted pen holders, as well as a defined reading zone and a play area with toys.

Choose child-friendly floors. The reality of living in the Middle East means there's a high chance you have tiled floors in your home that may not be to your taste. Using rugs and mats is a simple way to hide tiles without damaging your existing floors. Rugs add colour, texture and warmth to a room. For this project, we sourced two beautiful rugs from Lorena Canals — a very clever Spanish brand that sells super stylish handmade per cent cotton rugs that are machine washable, and perfect for messy children.

Mix old and new. Using existing pieces such as sentimental objects and mixing them with brand new furniture and accessories is the perfect way to create really special spaces with lots of character. For this room, we incorporated our client's vintage rocker (he grew up with it and kept it for his own little boys).