

Creating Design Synergy In the Home

Understanding Your Bathroom & Tapware



Introduction

The role of the bathroom has shifted from being a place of pure function to being symbolic of private luxury, relaxation and recuperation. When designing a bathroom, the goal is typically to create a liveable and functional space that reflects the owner's individual style. A cohesive bathroom design, with matching taps, fixtures, fittings, and accessories that work together in harmony, is needed to convey a sense of comfort and relaxation.

A key priority when selecting bathroom products is ensuring that every feature supports each other in providing an optimal bathroom experience. Simply mixing and matching different products can result in a disjointed or unprofessional look, or you may end up with sub-par solutions that do not meet the functional needs of users. Even seemingly innocuous elements, such as the shape and profile of taps and showerheads, can be the difference between a successful project and a failed one.

With the diverse range of bathroom products and brands available, achieving a cohesive design can be a challenge but the end-result is rewarding for users. Bathroom products and tapware have evolved in recent years, with a plethora of finishes, colors and styles available – the design possibilities are endless. The emergence of bathroom product collections allows designers to create a consistent theme across all elements of a bathroom with relative ease.

In this whitepaper, we look at how to achieve design synergy within the bathroom space, highlighting how tapware, finishes and colour scheme play a pivotal role in a cohesive bathroom design.

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Function and practicality

With the broad range of tapware styles available, it is important not to overlook function and practicality. A cohesive bathroom is one that functions optimally, with features that support each other to create a convenient and enjoyable bathroom experience.

Who will be using the bathroom and how is a major consideration that will dictate the types of tapware and fittings that will be suitable for the project. For mobility-challenged users or children, lever tap handles are easier to operate than a traditional knob or cross handles. Sensor-operated taps are growing in popularity as they eliminate manual operation of taps and increase cleanliness and hygiene. Showerheads with variable spray options and toilets with advanced hygienic design features can be specified to add further convenience.

For environmentally-conscious owners, tapware should have a high WELS star rating. The most water-saving taps will display a 6-star WELS rating, which indicates a flow rate of 4 litres per minute or less.¹ Low-flow taps or flow restrictors can also be specified for further water savings. WELS-rated showerheads and toilets should also be considered.

To ensure efficient installation, the specified tapware should be compatible with the bath and vanity. In addition, the choice between wall-mounted or top-mounted tapware has practical implications. Top-mounted tapware can either be mounted directly onto the basin or on a horizontal surface whereas wall-mounted tapware is mounted to the wall, which is great for creating more space around the basin. For increased design flexibility, leading manufacturers offer universal in-wall body systems that allow fittings to be interchanged and updated at any time.

Choosing the right finish

Bathroom materials and finishes are critical to achieving a cohesive design and thus integral to the success of your bathroom build or renovation. The materials and finishes selected for a bathroom should be durable, moisture-resistant, designed for functionality and reflect the client's aesthetic and lifestyle requirements.

Brass and stainless steel tapware are popular due to their longlasting qualities. Brass is often coated with a chrome finish. The brushed finish of stainless steel provides superior durability and resistance to corrosion. Other

types of finishes include copper, matte black, brushed nickel, and traditional white.

How the finish is applied should be considered carefully as it will impact the coating's quality and longevity. Different elements of the bathroom are subject to different levels of wear and tear. Durable coloured finishes provide longer lasting design synergy across different fittings and fixtures by minimising the impact of wear and tear on their colour and appearance. Below we compare the pros and cons of common finishing techniques.

Comparing finishes

Powder coating

Powder coating is a type of finish that is applied as a dry powder through an electrostatic process then cured under heat or ultraviolet light. It is well-known for creating a hard coating that is more durable than conventional paint. While powder coating delivers a high-quality finish, it is less versatile than other types of finishes with a limited range of tonal variations available. In addition, unlike electroplated surfaces, powder coating applies what is essentially a coat of paint onto a surface – not metal – so while it is resistant to a variety of environmental factors, there are more durable finishes available.

Electrostatic/electroplating

Electroplating results in a durable metal coating on a solid substrate achieved by depositing material using an electric current. Unlike powder coating, electroplating adds several benefits to the material properties of the product, including corrosion protection, friction and abrasion resistance, increased

wear resistance, and electrical conductivity. It is a popular finishing technique due to its protective properties and the versatility in colour finishes available. Note that there are environmental concerns that the electroplating process can produce emissions of hazardous air pollutants and consumes high volumes of water.

PVD (Physical Vapor Deposition)

PVD is a process used to produce a metal vapour that can be deposited on electrically conductive materials as a thin, highly-adhered pure metal or alloy coating. This technique is used to apply a thin-film coating on the surface of bathroom products such as tapware, showers and accessories, to provide superior durability and resistance to abrasions, scratches and corrosion. The vacuum deposition ionic energy process provides a uniform deposit, strong adhesion and avoids the large edge build-ups that are common with electroplated coatings. PVD is also environmentally friendly as the process does not create any toxic by-products, fumes or hazardous waste.



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Harmony in colour

Colour is one of the strongest expressive elements in bathroom design. Designers can incorporate different textures, patterns and color schemes to imbue spaces with a unique character or to achieve a specific style or atmosphere.

The colour scheme of an interior space can impact user behaviours and mood. For example, traditional white bathrooms convey a sense of cleanliness and purity. Green can be used for calming, balancing and healing. Bright and bold colours energise the space while darker tones transmit feelings of relaxation and intimacy.

A fully coordinated colour scheme can make the final design more impactful. When materials and finishes work together to deliver a cohesive aesthetic, it is often the case that the space will feel calmer and well-balanced. Conversely, a space that features visually inconsistent elements creates a sense of discomfort and stress.

However, achieving color consistency is not as straightforward as matching products to the selected color scheme. Natural variations in materials results in variances in finishes and colour. Some materials and finishes fade at different rates. Improper care or inferior quality products can accelerate wear and tear. Brush direction, ambient lighting within the room and installation position can also change the appearance of colour on different surfaces.

Applying a consistent color scheme across a bathroom has been made easier with designer bathroom collections. Leading brands offer ranges that feature a unified design language and durable color options across a broad selection of bathroom products and accessories. Choosing colour finishes from one supplier ensures colour consistency across different products and avoids the time-consuming task of sourcing matching components from different suppliers.

How Caroma achieves design synergy in the bathroom

URBANE II BATHROOM COLLECTION & LIANO II TAPWARE

A key challenge when selecting bathroom products is ensuring that each product works together in providing an optimal experience and cohesive design. The key feature of a Caroma bathroom is that all products are designed to integrate seamlessly with each other to form considered and functional bathroom collections.

The **Caroma Urbane II Collection** sets a new benchmark in contemporary Australian design. Combining refined thin-edge details and a considered design language, this extensive bathroom collection includes toilets, basins, tapware, accessories, showers and baths.

Supported by a beautiful and highly durable palette of five colour finishes including new PVD brushed brass, brushed nickel and gunmetal, as well as electroplated black and chrome, the collection can be tailored to suit a range of styles and tastes. The refined details of the collection extend to matching basin wastes and bottle traps, flush buttons and Invisi panels as well as matching toilet seat caps.

Created with flexibility in mind, the refined and minimalistic appeal of the **Liano II Tapware Collection** is the perfect foundation to any bathroom. Designers can mix and

match elements and select from the stunning range of colour finishes to coordinate a unique bathroom vision. Available in a beautiful and highly durable palette of five color finishes, the collection can be tailored to suit a range of styles and tastes, making it the most customisable Caroma collection yet.

With Caroma's longstanding commitment to water sustainability – all tapware incorporates industry best WELS 6 Star (4.5L/min) rating. The Urbane II shower range also incorporates both 3 and 4 Star WELS (7.5L/min) shower options featuring award winning V-Jet shower technology for the ultimate customised shower experience, while toilets feature GermGard and Cleanflush® – patented innovations that help protect against harmful bacteria and create a cleaner, more hygienic and water-efficient toilet.

For added design flexibility, both Urbane II and Liano II tapware feature Caroma Easy-Switch, the universal in-wall body system that allows tapware colour selections to be easily updated. The in-wall mixers have unique flexibility in that the trim kit, colour finish and design can all be interchanged pre or post installation – eliminating costly hold ups as well as allowing you to quickly and easily update the design, colour and style without costly rectification work.



REFERENCES

¹ The Water Conservancy. "WELS Taps." Smart Approved WaterMark. <https://www.smartwatermark.org/WELS/taps> (accessed 4 April 2022).

All information provided correct as of April 2022