

# TRICK OF THE LIGHT



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A wall of antiqued mirror panels visually doubles the size of this slim room, while a bold piece of art adds a modern edge

**CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE PROJECT?** This sitting room, which has been knocked through to the dining room beyond to create a double-aspect space, is typical of a Victorian London townhouse. It is quite narrow, and a low ceiling and making the room appear dark. The clients were happy to start afresh, although they were keen to keep their gold curtains.

**WAS THERE A STARTING POINT FOR THE SCHEME?** The owners had seen a project of mine featuring an antiqued mirrored wall, which they loved, as it gives the illusion of doubling the size of the space while increasing the available light. They were also keen to have a strong sense of symmetry, so we decided to arrange a pair of sofas centred either side of the new stone fireplace. This classic layout helped to distinguish the seating area from the adjoining dining space.

**WHAT ARE THE PRACTICALITIES OF INSTALLING MIRRORED PANELS?** If you plan to hang pieces such as art and light sconces on the panels, the holes must be pre-drilled; you have to be sure about the entire scheme as late changes are difficult. Other tricky decisions are how to divide the mirrored panels, as well as deciding what will go on top of them. A bold painting hung on mirror stands out, but still allows the room to be reflected, giving depth to a narrow space. The light sconces, which belonged to the clients, lend a glamorous touch and we simply added silk shades to soften the light and to avoid any reflection.

**WHAT ROLE DO FABRICS AND WALLPAPER PLAY IN THE SCHEME?** We wanted to achieve comfort and warmth as well as a little bit of glamour, and this wallpaper does exactly that: it is quietly elegant and creates enough interest so that the owners need not worry about having to source too much artwork. The soft background teams well with the existing gold curtains, which were freshened up with a white border to tie in with the white of the wallpaper. I find that even if clients want to stay with a neutral scheme, they are often happy to add further interest with soft furnishings, hence the rich red cushions that echo the hues of the painting.

**HOW DID YOU MAKE THIS SCHEME APPEAR MODERN?** The leather ottoman is a clean-lined, simple piece and is a contemporary foil for the traditional buttoned sofas. We laid limed-oak flooring to help freshen up the space, adding a sisal rug with a leather border as a contrast to the sumptuous textures of the fabrics. Above all, I think that hanging a bold piece of art on top of mirror really gives a modern edge and offers a new take on a classic decorating trick.

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PHOTOS: RACHEL LESTER/PHOTODISC.COM; FURNITURE: JAMES



## SOURCES

Similar antiqued mirror panelling: [www.roughgoldglass.com](http://www.roughgoldglass.com), 0845 548 8898.  
Haresfield large sofa, from £1,654.  
Sofas & Shutt, 125-126, 76, 5011, [sofasandshutt.com](http://sofasandshutt.com).  
Bespoke ottoman: VSP Interiors, 020 8995 6684, [vspinteriors.com](http://vspinteriors.com).  
Similar patterned cushion fabric: Lakota Paisley in Canterbury Road, 822m, Ralph Lauren Home, 020 7635 4600, [ralphlaurenhome.com](http://ralphlaurenhome.com).  
Tight weave linen cushion cover in Maple Road, 2229, Ikea, 0344 3211 7380, [ikeairect.com](http://ikeairect.com).  
Eau de nil cushion fabric: Brits Village velvet in Cambridge, 820m, Jan Sanderson, 01535 33181, [jansanderson.co.uk](http://jansanderson.co.uk).  
Wallpaper: Jasper Brown in Berkeley, 156/60m, Lewis & Wood, 01483 576217, [lewisandwood.co.uk](http://lewisandwood.co.uk).  
Curtain fabric: Ian Thomas silk in Gold, £27m. James Hire, 0113 243 1204, [james-hire.com](http://james-hire.com).  
Artwork: Adrian Emery, 07819 124240, [adrianemeryart.com](http://adrianemeryart.com).  
The Scriptorium, £2,100, Chesney's, 020 7627 7830, [chesneys.co.uk](http://chesneys.co.uk).  
Rug: Siel herringbone, 842, 386sq m, leather border, £33,000, both Alternatives Flooring, 01264 333311, [alternativesflooring.com](http://alternativesflooring.com).