

FEATURE

# Shelf life!

Our style file gives you an insight on the seasons' trends on racks and shelves  
↳ Vanita Arora    Casa Forma, Huelsta, Visage



*"A few decades ago, bookshelves were used only to keep books. But now they are being used as design elements in their own right. Combine-use structures are quite in vogue these days; for instance, a wall unit with book shelves can also have a slot for displaying the television and be fitted with drawers for storing DVDs and knick knacks," explains Seema, Marcom Manager, Visage.*

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You collect books, but often stack them in a meaningless heap on the first shelf available in your home. After all, who looks at a bookshelf, right? Wrong! "Shelves should not be underestimated. They occupy not only physical space but also visual space; thus becoming focal points," explains Faiza Seth, CEO, Casa Forma.

**PLANNING**

"Depending on the space available and the priorities of the home owner, a book shelf could be made under a staircase or on the most prominent wall of the living room. Adjustable shelves are an important feature to keep in mind as the requirements tend to change over the years," adds Seema.

Other essential elements to consider are:

- Making the most of the space that you have
- Whether you want a stand-alone or wall-mounted unit
- Would the bookshelf act as a space divider or be open from both sides, etc.
- Whether it is being made for an adult or a child
- What you need to store – only books, or CDs, or other artifacts as well
- Do you want it to be all covered, exposed or a combination of both
- Is there enough natural light

"If you intend to display decorative objects, make the shelves seamless and discreet so that the objects really stand out. For displaying books and CDs, opt for shelves with niches," explains Faiza. Adding on, Interior Designer, Punam Kalra says, "Lay emphasis on the design elements of the shelf. Motifs can be classical, fusion, typical English, etc. A selection should be made keeping in mind the theme, if any, in the room."

# The Ideal Home & Garden

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With these easy tips from Visage, you can get the best out of your

- bookshelves:
- Regular dusting and cleaning is a must, with a dry or wet soft cloth.
  - As direct sunlight is not good for your books or bookshelves, place the shelf away from windows
  - Store books that are used less frequently on higher shelves and ensure there is a ladder handy to reach them. Keep books for children at an accessible height
  - Books on a common theme should be stacked together.
  - Stacking books both horizontally and vertically on the same shelf creates an interesting look and breaks the monotony
  - Keep plants and flowers away from the shelf to avoid fungus and insects
  - Keep heavy books and encyclopedia sets on lower shelves to maintain a balance
  - Leave some open space within shelves for a clean look. Avoid clutter and stack loose papers, magazines and CDs in drawers or on magazine racks





### OPTIONS

According to Capt. Mukesh Kumar, CMD, Huelsta Furniture – German Made India, versatile designs go a long way in making your bookshelves unique. “The designs can always be customised. Unique technical refinements — flush front doors, sliding doors — vertical as well as horizontal, can add to the look. For finishes, there is an array to choose from, like veneer, lacquered, natural oak, cherry wood gold, high-gloss white and black and oak anthracite,” he says. “Light and reflective materials such as glass and polished lacquer surfaces can bring a touch of lightness to shelves. On the other end of the spectrum,

dark coloured and sturdy shelves can enhance the design, especially when it’s a rich atmosphere like that of a gentleman’s club is what you may want to achieve,” explains Faiza. “Basic materials are wood, glass, stainless steel and leather. For a classical look and feel in wooden finish, you can use real teak wood; for a contemporary feel, opt for polished veneer, matt lacquered veneer and laminates. Clear glass, frosted glass, coloured glass and a combination of any wooden finish with glass can be used for a fresh look and feel. Stainless steel and other metals can be used in combination with wood and glass as well,” highlights Seema.



**INPUTS BY:**  
 Faiza Seth, CEO, Casa Forma  
 Seema Sharma, Marcom Manager, Visage  
 Capt. Mukesh Kumar, CMD, Huelsta  
 Furniture – German Made India  
 Interior Designer, Punam Kalra