



Elle Decor  
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## The 10 Most Sublime Stools

Often overlooked in the decorating game, these small but versatile seats get top marks from designers Sara Bengur and David Harris

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Produced by Alison Hall

David Harris and Sara Bengur with stools by (from left) Poul Kjaerholm, George Smith, and Baker Studio. See Resources.

In the aesthetic equation that is decorating, consider a stool your lowest common denominator. As the oldest man-made seat—ancient Egyptians sat on wood X-base frames fitted with fabric and fur—its armless, backless shape has evolved into every manner of throne, from benches to bergères. True, the advent of the chair would forever relegate the form to standby status, but an elegant stool never goes out of fashion.

The reason for that is versatility. “They’re necessary accessories,” says David Harris, a New York interior designer and founding partner of ducduc, a line of modernist children’s furniture. Whether placed beneath a console table, amid a seating area, or at the foot of a bed, stools provide the perfect perch for your person or possessions. In fact, Harris’s Greenwich Village home has two by Alvar Aalto. “In a city apartment,” he remarks, “you always need additional seats.”

Maligned though they are by associations with milkmaids and class dunces, stools in fact promise as much in form as they do function. “They add dimension to a room without taking up space,” explains Manhattan decorator Sara Bengur. Today’s stylish offerings run the gamut from classic designs by the likes of Hans Wegner to upholstered numbers reminiscent of old-world salons. Here Bengur and Harris weigh in on ELLE DECOR’s picks of the ten best. ▶

## truth in decorating



**1 STANDARD STOOL WITH CASTERS BY GEORGE SMITH**  
 "Very English gentleman," Sara Bengur notes, pointing out classic details like nailhead trim and brass hardware. "It would fit in any traditional setting." For extra pizzazz, she suggests upholstering it in a vivid pattern. "With its shape, this one would be great as an ottoman," she says. "Fitted with trays, a pair could even be used as a cocktail table."  
 Height: 17"; width: 24"; depth: 24"; material: birch frame in mahogany finish with all-natural fill (custom sizes and finishes available); delivery: 12-14 weeks; price: \$1,010 c.o.m.



**2 PK-91 STOOL BY POUL KJAERHOLM FROM SUITE NEW YORK**  
 "The simplicity of this is gorgeous," David Harris says. "I can see it as extra seating in a midcentury-modern living room or piled high with books beside a bed." It's well worth the price, he reasons: "It's extremely functional. I especially like that it folds up." And the leather seat, he muses, will weather attractively over time.  
 Height: 14.5"; width: 24"; depth: 18"; material: satin-brushed-stainless-steel frame with leather seat (other fabrics available); delivery: 8-10 weeks; price: \$3,150



**3 JONATHAN FOOTSTOOL BY OLY**  
 "The round shape is so inviting!" Bengur exclaims. "You can move it around easily, and it somehow looks right wherever you put it." She also likes its height and the distinctive button-tufting that gives its minimalist look a luxurious air.  
 Height: 19"; diameter: 24"; material: metal frame in antiqued-gold finish with Dacron-wrapped-foam fill and leather upholstery (antiqued-silver finish and other fabrics available); delivery: 12 weeks; price: \$1,225



**4 HANS J. WEGNER STOOL FROM ROOM & BOARD**  
 "This has such pedigree," Harris remarks of the iconic midcentury design. "It's an excellent value." The paper-cord seat and rustic frame give it a country feel, he adds. Plus, it's so narrow that one or two could be tucked under a console when not in use.  
 Height: 17"; width: 20"; depth: 15"; material: oak frame in black-lacquer finish with paper-cord seat (also available in natural-oak finish); delivery: 3 days; price: \$469



**5 TABOURET ROMA BY OBJET INSOLITE**  
 "The chiseled bronze reminds me of Giacometti," Bengur says. "It feels hand-crafted." She imagines using a pair as occasional seats in a formal conversation area. "They have the strength to compete with a chair," she explains. But for a more casual look, go with a lighter fabric. "Upholstered in canvas, they'd work well in a summer house."  
 Height: 18"; width: 16"; depth: 16"; material: cast-bronze frame in patina finish with Bultex-foam fill (other sizes and finishes available); delivery: 6-8 weeks; price: \$3,378 c.o.m.



**6 OSLO BENCH BY LEWIS MITTMAN**  
 "Really comfortable," says Harris of the leather-upholstered top. "It has a nice seat." And its clean lines give it extra versatility. "This would look terrific in a variety of homes, from a traditional city apartment to a modern glass house." Because of the scale, he notes, a pair would sit nicely at the foot of a bed.  
 Height: 19"; width: 20"; depth: 20"; material: maple frame with Dacron-and-high-resilience-polyurethane fill (custom sizes and finishes available); delivery: 6-8 weeks; price: \$1,650 c.o.m.



**7 ALEXANDRIA STOOL BY BAKER STUDIO**  
 "With the trusslike base, this one is so sculptural that it really stands on its own," Bengur observes. Because of the inset woven-cane panel, she adds, it's well suited to an ethnic-inspired room—"as extra seating in some wonderful Mediterranean house." The distressed finish, she adds, feels very authentic, "like a true antique."  
 Height: 18"; width: 20"; depth: 18"; material: hardwood-composite frame in putty finish with woven-cane seat; delivery: 4-6 weeks; price: \$1,260



**8 MARAIS STOOL BY XAVIER PAUCHARD FROM DESIGN WITHIN REACH**  
 "Very industrial, very French," Harris says of the vintage-style metal frame. "It would be right at home in a contemporary kitchen." The cutout handle and sturdy surface make it especially functional. "It could also be a good place for a book or a lamp." The price is attractive, he notes, "and it's practically indestructible."  
 Height: 18"; width: 17"; depth: 17"; material: sheet steel with epoxy-varnish coating in gun-metal gray (taller size and other colors available); delivery: 1 week; price: \$210



**9 OSCAR STOOL BY ARMANI/CASA**  
 "This belongs in a master bath piled high with towels," Bengur states. "I just love the crisscross base; it feels almost tropical." And the canvas, she states, makes it more transitional: "It's warm and casual so it softens the hard lines." For a more formal look, however, she advises going with a leather seat.  
 Height: 16.5"; width: 18.5"; depth: 16.5"; material: sucupira frame with cotton-linen seat (other materials and fabrics available); delivery: immediate to 1 week; price: \$1,955



**10 TYROL STOOL BY PHILIPPE HUREL FROM PROFILES**  
 "Truly sophisticated," Harris says. "The oak is beautiful and curved legs are such an elegant detail." He envisions several grouped in an entryway. "Three or four would look great against a wall, perhaps beneath a mirror or a work of art. Or, a pair could flank the door," he continues. "What a place to take off your shoes!"  
 Height: 18"; width: 19.25"; depth: 14.5"; material: oak frame in HL9 finish (other finishes and leather upholstery available); delivery: 14-16 weeks; price: \$2,017

## resources

Items pictured but not listed are from private collections.

### WHAT'S HOT PEOPLE

**Pages 66-68:** Patrick Naggar of Patrick Naggar LLC (for information: e-mail patricknaggar@aol.com). **Furniture and lighting** by Patrick Naggar; to the trade from Ralph Pucci International (for showrooms: 212-633-0452; ralphpucci.net). **Page 70:** Home furnishings by Sachin and Babi Ahluwalia of Ankasa (135 E. 65th St., New York, NY 10065; 212-861-6800; ankasa.com). **Brown silk-faille sleeveless dress with ocre and tortoise embroidery, \$5,450; white satin loop halter sandal, \$480; and dark brown alligator belt, \$1,090;** from spring 2006, by Oscar de la Renta (for information: 212-354-6777; oscarde.larenta.com).

### WHAT'S HOT SHOPS

**Pages 72-74:** Mason Baccarat in Moscow (for information: 011-7-495-933-33-89; baccarat.com). **Page 76:** Gucci (725 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212-826-2800; gucci.com).

### TREND ALERT

**Page 94:** Pinwheel dress, in zinc yellow, price upon request, from spring 2006, by Zac Posen; available by special order from Barney's New York (for information: 888-8-BARNEYS; barneys.com). **Pink light silk-crepe dress, #418106, \$4,580,** by Jif Sandic; available at Neiman Marcus (for information: 888-888-4757; neimanmarcus.com). **Ultima wool-nylon, #104,** to the trade from Creation Baumann (for showrooms: 516-764-7431; creationbaumann.com). **Collection Chino cotton, in azalea, #LFY28946F, \$36/yd.,** by Ralph Lauren Home (for information: 888-475-7674; ralphlaurenhome.com). **Classic parasol, in yellow, #22532, \$995,** from The Conran Shop (for information: 866-755-9079; conranshop.com). **Bankers Linen, in thistle,** to the trade from Brunschwig & Filz (for showrooms: 800-538-1880; brunschwig.com). **Luxembourg aluminum bar cart with wheels, in apple green, #22523, \$650,** by Frédéric Sofa from The Conran Shop. **Italian-leather pens, in orange and pink, \$36/ea.,** by Graphic Image (for information: 800-232-5550; graphicimage.com). **#31600 linen-viscose, in sunray,** to the trade from Dursalee Fabrics Ltd. (for showrooms: 800-275-3872; dursalee.com). **Nevada linen, in yellow, \$34/yd.,** by The Silk Trading Co. (for information: 888-745-5302; silkttrading.com). **Cavallini fur-on cowhide, in chartreuse,** to the trade from Edelman Leather (for showrooms: 212-751-3339; edelmanleather.com). **Luxembourg aluminum chair, in sky blue, \$245/pr.,** by Fermob from John Derian Dry Goods (10 E. 2nd St., New York, NY 10003; 212-677-8408; johnderian.com).

### SHORTLIST

**Page 102:** Robert Kime of Robert Kime (121-121A Kensington Church St., London W8 7LP, England; 011-44-207-229-0886; robertkime.com). **Fabrica** by Robert Kime; available to the trade from John Rossell & Assoc. Ltd. (for showrooms: 212-593-2060; johnrossellassociates.com).

### ART SHOW

**Pages 114-16:** Hernan Bas is represented by Lehmann Maupin Gallery (540 W. 26th St., New York, NY 10001; 212-255-2923; lehmannmaupin.com).

### ELLE DECO INTERNATIONAL DESIGN AWARDS

**Pages 118-20:** 1 **Pear bathtub** by Patricia Urquiola for Agape (for information: 860-233-8110; agapedesign.it). 2 **Prins bed** by Carlo Colombo for Flou (for information: 212-941-9101; flou.com). 3 **Frekvenssi cotton fabric** by Harri Koskinen for Marimekko (for information: marimekko.fi). 4 **Little Field of Flowers rug** by Studio Nord Boonje for Nanimarquina (for information: 011-34-932-376-465; nanimarquina.com). 5 **S table** by Xavier Lust for MDF Italia (for information: mdfitalia.it). 6 **Corian Nouvel Lumiers** by Jean Nouvel for Ernestomeda (for information: 011-39-072-148-991; ernestomeda.com). 7 **Skygarden light fixture** by Marcel Wanders for Flos (for information: 800-939-3567; flos.net). 8 **Skin sofa** by Jean Nouvel for

Molteni & C from Modulo 3 Corp. d/b/a Unifor (for information: 212-673-7106; molteni.it). 9 **Vertigo Round tableware** by Naoto Fukasawa for B&B Italia (for information: 800-672-1697; bebitalia.it). 10 **SoHo modular wall covering** by Marazzi (for information: 972-232-3801; marazzitile.com). 11 **Nebula light** by Joris Laarman for Flos (for information: 800-939-3567; flos.net). 12 **Circle vase** by Arak Levy for Baccarat (for information: 800-777-0100; baccarat.com).

### THE 10 MOST SUBLIME STOOLS

**Pages 124-26:** David Harris of David Anthony Harris Interiors (for information: 212-210-5660; davidanthonyharris.com) and ducduc (for information: 877-5-DUCDUC; ducduc.com). Sara Bengur of Sara Bengur Interiors (for information: 212-226-8796; sarabengur.com). **Page 126:** 1 **Standard stool with casters, #P002, \$1,810,** by George Smith (for information: 212-226-4747; georgesmith.com). 2 **PK-91 stool, #PK91, \$3,150,** by Poul Kjaerholm from Suite New York (625 Madison Ave., Ste. 218, New York, NY 10022; 212-421-3300; suiteny.com). 3 **Jonathan footstool, #Jonathanfg24, \$1,225,** by Oly (for information: 775-336-2100; olystudio.com). 4 **Hans J. Wegner stool, #632865, \$469,** from Room & Board (for information: 800-301-9720; roomandboard.com). 5 **Tabouteur Roma, #H151, \$3,378,** by Objet Insolite Ltd. (for information: 860-873-8603; objetinsolite.com). 6 **Oslo bench, #BE2234, \$1,650,** to the trade from Lewis Mitman Inc. (for showrooms: 212-888-5580; lewismitman.com). 7 **Alexandria stool, #BST1152, \$1,260,** by Baker Studio (for information: 800-592-2537; bakerfurniture.com). 8 **Marais stool, #11695, \$210,** by Xavier Pauchard from Design Within Reach (for information: 800-944-2233; dwr.com). 9 **Oscar stool, #45350, \$1,955,** by Armani/Casa (for information: 212-334-1271; armanicasa.com). 10 **Tyrol stool, \$2,017,** by Philippe Hurel; to the trade from Profiles (for showrooms: 212-689-6903; profilesny.com).

### DANIEL'S DISH

**Pages 132-34:** Daniel Boulud of restaurant Daniel (for information: danielnyc.com). **Page 132:** Jardin Celeste dinner plate, #JCEL001, \$75, by Raynaud Limoges from Devine Corp. (for information: 732-751-0500; devinecorp.net). **White-and-turquoise linen napkin, #1626, \$20,** by Kim Seybert (55 A-2 Main St., East Hampton, NY 11937; 631-329-6200; kimseybert.com).

### THE PEACE KEEPER

**Pages 160-71:** Interior design by Darryl Carter of Darryl Carter Inc. (for information: darrylcarter.com). Interiors painted in White, #INT.FRM, by Benjamin Moore & Co. (for information: 800-6-PAINTS; benjaminmoore.com). **Pages 160-61:** Curtains of Lafayette cotton, in ebene, #4328-99, by Manuel Canovas; to the trade from Cowtan & Tout (for showrooms: 212-647-6900; cowtan.com). **Pages 162-63:** In living room, Barton sofa by Darryl Carter of Darryl Carter Inc. (for information: darrylcarter.com), upholstered in Washed linen, in oatmeal, by Savel Inc. (for information: 212-473-2669; saveinc.com), to the trade from Niemann Weeks (for showrooms: 212-319-7979; niemannweeks.com), Italian armchair upholstered in Dream Dye dyed cowhide, in fresh snow, #DRC24, to the trade from Edelman Leather (for showrooms: 212-751-3339; edelmanleather.com). **Antique three-leg chopping table** from Scottish Connection Antiques (Rte. 255N, P.O. Box 88, Millwood, VA 22646; 540-837-3033; scottish-connection.com). **Pages 164-65:** In breakfast room, Primitive dining table by Darryl Carter of Darryl Carter Inc. (for information: darrylcarter.com), in kitchen, range by Five Star, similar model available (for information: 800-553-7704; fivestarange.com). **Professional Series stainless-steel hood, #PRH18-448-SS, and duct cover, #WDC48-SS,** by Vert-A-Hood (for information: 800-331-2492; ventahood.com). **Rittenhouse Square glazed-ceramic subway tiles** by Daltile (for information: 800-933-8453; daltileproducts.com). **Integrated stainless-steel dishwasher, #ZBDO700N,** with Pro-Style door panel, #ZPRO0700S, by GE Monogram (for information: 800-626-2000; monogram.com).

**Pages 166-67:** In studio, partition of carved Indonesian banyan-wood screens from Marco Polo's Treasures (4263 Howard Ave., Kensington, MD 20895; 301-530-3420; marcopolotreasures.com). In dining room, oak gateleg wake table, by Scottish Connection Antiques (Rte. 255N, P.O. Box 88, Millwood, VA 22646; 540-837-3033; scottish-connection.com). **Chandelier dewired** by Artisan Lamp Co. (3331 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20008; 202-244-8900; artisanlamp.com). **Antique armchairs upholstered in Antwerp linen, in A667, #2273,** to the trade from Pindler & Pindler Inc. (for showrooms: 800-689-8002; pindler.com). **Pages 168-69:** In guest room, duvet cover, shams, and curtains of Sonnet linen-silk, in bluet, #910022-03, to the trade from Rogers & Goffigon (for showrooms: 203-532-8068). **Farragut brass sconce, #DC-1000WR,** by Darryl Carter; to the trade from The Urban Electric Co. (for showrooms: 843-723-8140; urbanelectrico.com). **Vintage mahogany beds** from Antiques at the Loop (2103 Airport Blvd., Mobile, AL 36606; 251-476-0309). **Mattress covered in Ticking cotton,** in Mississippi, #910059-02, to the trade from Rogers & Goffigon (for showrooms: 203-532-8068). In master bedroom, **block-footed four-poster bed** by Darryl Carter of Darryl Carter Inc. (for information: darrylcarter.com). **Pages 170-71:** In master bath, antique oak-rimmed galvanized-metal tub from Architectural Old House Parts Inc. (122 E. Main St., Front Royal, VA 22630; 540-636-7984; oldhouseparts.net). **Antique milking stool** from Scottish Connection Antiques (Rte. 255N, P.O. Box 88, Millwood, VA 22646; 540-837-3033; scottish-connection.com). In guest room, **Tizio lamp, in black, #009048,** by Richard Sapper for Artemide (for information: 212-925-1588; artemide.com). **19th-century oak cupboard** from Scottish Connection Antiques. In master bath, **Gwenwood brass pendant lamp, #DC-2100HR,** by Darryl Carter; to the trade from The Urban Electric Co. (for showrooms: 843-723-8140; urbanelectrico.com).

### DEALER'S CHOICE

**Pages 172-79:** Interior design by Eric Hughes of Eric Hughes Interiors (for information: e-mail enchughes2000@yahoo.com). Contracting by SilverLining Interiors (for information: 212-496-7800; silverlininginteriors.com). **Art advising** by Acquire d'arte LLC (for information: 310-968-5520). **Custom audio/video installation** by Sound Sight Technologies Inc. (for information: 212-760-0892; soundsightonline.com). Interiors painted in **Interno Limewash,** in milk, by Sydney Harbour Paint Co. (for information: 213-817-5418; sydneyharbourpaints.com). **Pages 172-73:** Custom-made sofa upholstered in **Palinuro cotton,** in visone, #63631-3, by Etno; to the trade from Clarence House (for showrooms: clarencehouse.com). **Vintage French armchairs** by Guillerme & Chambon; **vintage French chair;** and **vintage cork-top cocktail table** by Paul Frank; all from R. E. Steele Antiques (74 Montauk Hwy., Ste. 11, East Hampton, NY 11937; 631-324-7812; resteele.1stdibs.com). **Vintage French sconce** by Pierre Gueriche from Pascal Boyer Gallery (38 W. 22nd St., New York, NY 10010; 212-242-5594; pascalboyergallery.com). **Pages 174-75:** **Vintage leather-and-chrome armchair and vintage Model 2202 wing chair** by Borge Mogensen, both from Coconut Co. (250 Hudson St., New York, NY 10013; 212-539-1940; coconutcoantiques.com). **Vintage stools upholstered in Ava linen-cotton,** in chocolate, #11205-2, by Lulu DK; to the trade from Hinson & Co. (for showrooms: 212-475-4100). **Page 176:** **Bitter Gulfs,** 2004, by Walton Ford from Paul Kasmin Gallery (283 Tenth Ave., New York, NY 10001; 212-563-4474; paulkasmingallery.com). **Tibetan sheepskin fokati rug,** in natural, #1033614, by ABC Carpet & Home (888 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; 212-473-3000; abchome.com). **Teak cocktail table** from Martin Showroom (1350 Main St., St. Helena, CA 94574; 707-967-8787; martinshowroom.com). **The Modern sofa** by Montauk Sofa (for information: 212-274-1552; montaukssofa.com), upholstered in **Poodle cotton,** in ▶