

L I F E S T Y L E monitor™

A monthly update on consumer attitudes and behavior based
on ongoing research from Cotton Incorporated



DESIGN OF THE TIMES: CONTEMPORARY GETS AN EXTREME MAKEOVER THAT'S EASY TO LIVE WITH

Less is more, more or less. While traditional continues to be the style of choice of most Americans, a new wave of contemporary product is whetting the decorating appetite of consumers everywhere. Clean, simple lines and strong palettes speak of a new streamlined lifestyle that is casual, comfortable and cathartic. For young and old alike, today it's cool to be hip.

"The new contemporary sensibility is easy to live with," suggests Chris Madden, designer, author and TV personality, who is turning "home into haven" with an extensive collection of furniture, accessories and bed and bath linens for JCPenney. "It doesn't mean minimalist anymore. It's a driving force in the market right now that is bridging the generation gap. The younger generation likes it because it's fresh and clean and not what their grandmothers or mothers have. Empty-nesters who are moving back into the city love it too. The key is that the new contemporary works whether you live in a mansion or a small apartment."

"We recently sold our house in the suburbs and decided to make a lifestyle change," says empty-nester Julia, who with husband, Bill, moved into a new condo in Chicago. "We wanted to start fresh, so we bought contemporary furnishings, accessories, and new bed linens. Everything is stylish, comfortable, practical — and modern. We love our new look!"

Fueling this excitement is a contemporary aesthetic that is different than in the past. "There is more understandable pattern and product for a broader audience," comments Dana Poor, trend forecaster, home, for Cotton Incorporated. "It's no longer cold steel and glass. Even in more traditional settings, contemporary elements are being incorporated for a more modern look."

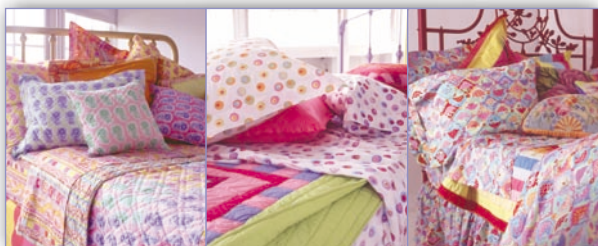
Color, in particular — long associated with a contemporary sensibility — is making a strong statement at home. "The consumer is showing more interest in brighter, more vivid colors," says Poor. "She is building on what she has by updating her neutrals with brights. And the surprising offerings in the marketplace at every price point make it really easy."

Perhaps that's why, according to Cotton Incorporated's *Lifestyle Monitor*™ Home Fabrics Study, there was a significant increase in the number of women and men (22.6%) citing contemporary as the current style of their home in 2004, as opposed to 2003 (19%), for a gain of 3.6 points.

Contemporary style is also becoming more popular with both men and women when redecorating their home, according to

Monitor research. It posted a significant increase from 2003 (22.2%) to 2004 (28.3%), for a gain of 6.1 points. And once again, these respondents were less enthusiastic about traditional style, which continued to fall out of favor.

"As a young newlywed setting up a household, I knew I didn't want the same traditional stuff that I grew up with at home," explains Jodie from Providence, Rhode Island. "We went the contemporary route because it reflected more who we are and how we live,



and we were so excited by all the options we had it was hard to make a decision."

Every room in the house seems to be going under the modern knife, including the bedroom and high-end linens. Penny Murphy, vice president of Pioneer Linens, an upscale bed and bath retailer in West Palm Beach, Florida,

	Current Style of Home			
	2000	2003	04Q2	Change 04Q2-03Q2
Traditional	30%	35%	31.4%	-3.1
Contemporary	20%	19%	22.6%	3.6
Eclectic	21%	21%	20.2%	-0.3
Country	25%	25%	21.6%	-3.4

	If Redecorated Home			
	2000	2003	04Q2	Change 04Q2-03Q2
Traditional	31%	32%	28.4%	-4.0
Contemporary	25%	22%	28.3%	6.1
Eclectic	16%	15%	16.3%	1.2
Country	25%	25%	21.6%	-3.4

reports that "contemporary" was among the top three search words on the store's Web site. She says that her older customers, who are the majority, are embracing the updated, modern sensibility. "Because it's what our customers want today, we're offering cleaner lines with geometric designs in quilted and tailored coverlets, embroidered 100% cotton bed linens with more modern-looking details, and brighter colors like persimmon in all-cotton matelasse coverlets."

"The new contemporary sensibility is easy to live with. It doesn't mean minimalist anymore. It's a driving force in the market right now that is bridging the generation gap."

— Chris Madden, Designer, Author and TV Personality

Traditional quilts are getting edgier too. Earlier this year, Pine Cone Hill introduced a collection by Kaffe Fassett, featuring his colorful, contemporary designs interpreted into bedding and accessories, including 100% cotton quilts. "Our line is very broad, but we have product that also appeals to the contemporary consumer," reports Jane Wright, the company's marketing director, who says their offerings increased this year and will continue moving forward. "Our fuzzy cotton fleece blankets in non-traditional colors are a clean, fun aesthetic, as is our new contemporary Bubbles sheeting line in 200 thread count cotton," she explains.

The good news is that both men and women say they are planning to make more changes in their home textile purchases in the coming months, according to the *Monitor* study. Given the plethora of options in stores right now and new product on drawing boards, contemporary is sure to make their shopping lists.

"Our perspective with Wamsutta branded product is cleaner, simpler designs — less pattern and more color, which is our spin on what's modern," explains Rick Langone, vice president, director of design for Wamsutta, Springs Industries. "We will continue the same focus for the Wamsutta brand at the upcoming textiles market and expand it to include, for example, traditional elements with a new modern spin on color and scale. We're also updating our sheeting palettes with cleaner, fresher colors and bringing in the popularity of yellows, corals and aquas."

Chris Madden's Resort and Spa Collection will debut in JCPenney stores this year with a fresh, clean aesthetic in terms of style, color and fabric. "It will have a cotton focus in bed and bath," says Madden. "Cotton, like my collections, is durable, affordable and very stylish, and it translates beautifully into modern designs."

This story is one in a series of articles based on findings from Cotton Incorporated's Lifestyle Monitor™ tracking research. Appearing periodically in these pages, each story will focus on a specific topic as it relates to American consumers' attitudes and behavior regarding home fabrics, decorating, fiber selection and many other timely, relevant subjects.

