

**Words (especially words of love), letters, numbers** and almost anything else that will amuse and inspire are all equally important. See them on cushions, especially, but also on tableware.

**Needlework: Knitting**, followed by sewing and baking, exploded in popularity recently with knitting classes regularly sold out.

**Recycle, Remake, Re-use:** Recycling is a long running trend, and includes items that have been remade or reused, like secondhand furniture. Vintage mirrors, chairs, sofas, lamps are being transformed with bright, often glossy color (think yellow, orange, red, green) while a mix of bold, unexpected, even a patchwork mix of fabrics make recycled items at once worthy, individual and eye-catchingly distinctive.



Home Sweet Home Tapestry Cushion from Bon Marche, Paris

**Tapestry** is a key needlework newcomer, with tapestry bags appearing fresh and new at both Gucci and Matthew Williamson. The vintage look tapestry cushions which hit the home products scene several seasons ago were undoubtedly an inspiration. Now watch tapestry kits follow up with exciting new contemporary designs.

**Home cooking/home entertaining** makes a comeback with bakeware as a surprise best seller and supermarkets report increased demand for basic ingredients/recipe cards. Color is the news here, especially in kitchenware which now appears in trend colors such as lilac, pink, orange and yellow.

**Nostalgia:** With hard times comes nostalgia for the Good Old Days -- primarily the 1950's -- when we think things were better or at least easier. As well as an ongoing interest in 50's design, there's an increasing delight in everyday 50's imagery -- kitchen curtain prints, advertising motifs, kitchenalia, aprons, etc.



"You can still do a lot with a small brain" cushion from Liberty, London

# Intelligent

# Consumption

## Trend basics for retailers

The retail world is changing. We all know that. But what we don't know is exactly what we should do about it. However one thing is clear: we're going to think very carefully about everything we buy. Some of the things that influence everyone's decisions are key existing long running trends -- such as Sustainability and Eco-Friendly. Others are more recent. Here are key elements which will influence today's shoppers.

By **JO-AN JENKINS**  
Editor, TrendPulse.net

*Jo-an Jenkins is an internationally known analyst, forecaster and speaker, presenting key retail trends from the new, boutique, on-line service for mainstream fashion and home decor at retail, TrendPulse.net. With more than 30 years experience in reporting, clarifying and tracking trends in retail, color, print/pattern, design and lifestyle, Jo-an has launched this new Web based service to fill the need for tightly edited, very focused information in an increasingly complex market.*

Anything hand or home made:

**A key new item is the mushroom.** In wood, fabric or ceramics, mushroom figures are turning up at the most forward, chic home stores. Watch mushrooms -- and probably carrots, beans and potatoes -- appear as key new motifs for prints.

**The Good Life:** Vegetable seeds are far outselling flower seeds as home growing becomes increasingly trendy, especially among young professionals. Anybody with a bit of garden is digging up plants and flowers to home grow carrots and beans, while new products are appearing to make this so easy, even the non-gardener can aspire to home grown produce.

**Home Comforts:** As we spend more time at home, cozy loungewear, warm slippers, nostalgic bed linens and tableware, and sturdy craftsman pottery all become more important, along with the makings of tea, hot chocolate and other comfort foods.

**At the same time, farm animals and birds such as chickens and ducks** are appearing in print and three dimensional form as decorative objects. (Note that keeping live hens and ducks is a fashionable new hobby for those with enough space whose zoning laws allow it.)



Crochet stool from Conran, London



Applique cushion from Liberty, London

**Fly The Flag:** Flag imagery appeared last spring and continues to explode, for the home. Beginning with the British flag, it is now spreading to flags of other countries along with interpretations of flag graphics and in neutrals as well as traditional red, white and blue. Is this a new patriotism or just a love for the graphic look? Figurative imagery is everywhere -- dogs, cats, squirrels, deer, and birds appear as once again fashionable china ornaments and on tableware, shopping trolleys, decorative cushions, etc. Look, too, for guitars, drums, cars, and bicycles.

**Pop Art:** A strong Pop Art influence is reappearing, using photo imagery with bright color in lighthearted, amusing combinations for decorative effect on cushions and for walls.

**New sewing kits** -- mostly for children's toys -- are springing up at key stores, while sewing supplies (i.e. pin cushions, sewing boxes) are being redesigned for contemporary appeal. Buttons and sewing machines are surprise top sellers everywhere. 🧵

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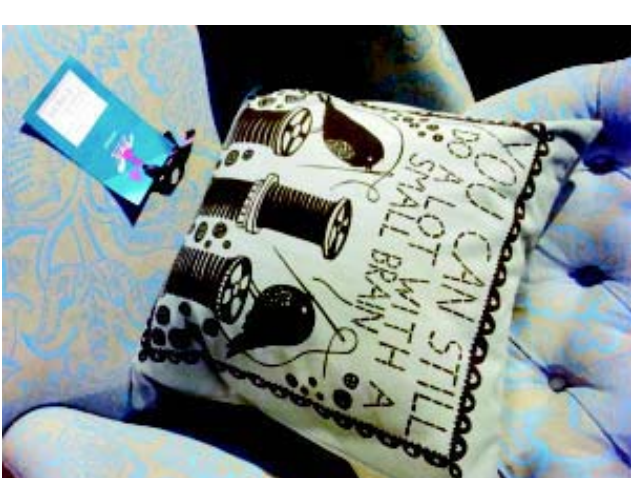
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