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Style and Substance

A wide range of hardware options, along with myriad choices in finish, size and shape, support eye-catching design and optimal functioning for any cabinet or drawer.

BY ELIZABETH RICHARDS

Whether part of the functional structure that makes a drawer or door operate, or the final decorative feature, hardware is an essential component of the overall design story. It requires both style and substance, and the pieces selected are a clear representation of the homeowner's unique personality.

Functionally, features that increase efficiency and ease of use are important. "Choosing the right hardware can be the difference between a kitchen you love to look at and a kitchen you love to use," says Karen Smith, brand communication manager for Blum, Inc. based in Stanley, NC. "Choosing full-extension drawer runners for base cabinets makes finding items easier, saving time and effort."

"Hardware provides the final finishing touch that ties together the overall design, and its importance cannot be overstated. These are the details that can take a great design and make it look stunning," says Billy Peele, marketing representative for Doug Mockett & Co., Inc. in Manhattan Beach, CA. "Finding that perfect blend of complementary style and thoughtful, practical execution for functionality can make all the difference."

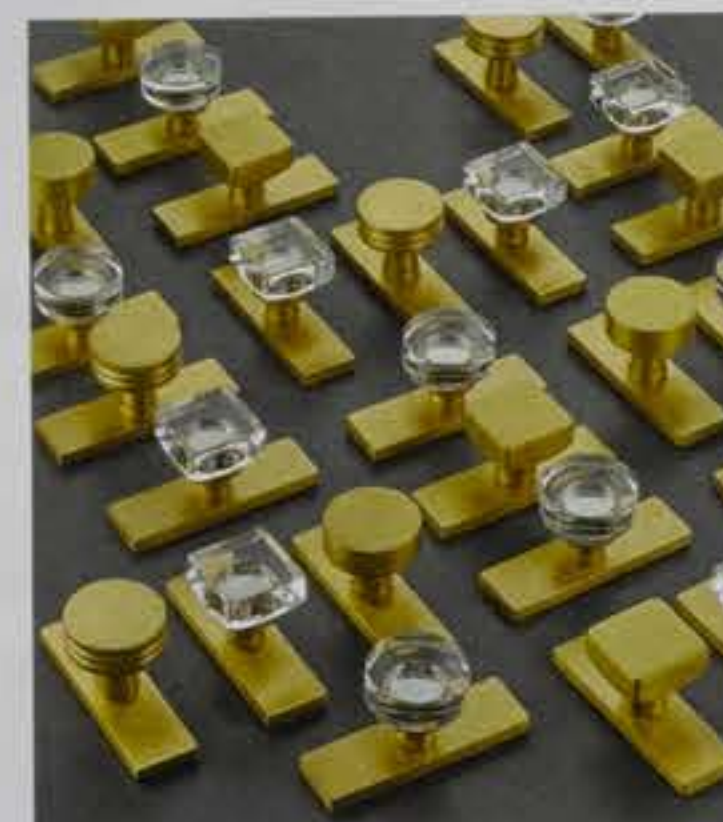
Mihai Subran, decorative hardware product manager at Richelieu Hardware in Montreal, Quebec, Canada says that decorative hardware can change the value perception and design orientation of the furniture it adorns. "It can achieve several roles – it



Belwith-Keeler launched eight collections of decorative cabinet hardware derived from trend-leading inspirations, simplistic lines, organic shapes and 20th century American craftsmanship. Wexler, shown, is inspired by the mid-century modern style, with clean lines, subtle curves and linear shapes. Circle No. 155 on Product Card



CounterBalance Concealed Brackets from **Chemical Concepts** are low-profile brackets that provide a clean, floating appearance for the countertop. The brackets are hot rolled, 1/8" steel with a powder-coated finish in black or white, and are available with 9", 12", 18", 24" and 30" support arms. Circle No. 156 on Product Card



Emtex notes that crystal door hardware continues to be a big seller. For a modern twist, the company pairs modern crystal styles with Satin Brass for a fresh take on a traditional look. Knobs are also offered in Satin Brass in a range of softened geometric shapes. Circle No. 157 on Product Card



Amerock's St. Vincent hardware collection includes pulls and knobs with metallic faceted edges and soft curves. The jewel-like cuts capture and reflect light. St. Vincent is offered in three pull lengths in Polished Nickel (shown), Golden Champagne, Satin Nickel and Oil-Rubbed Bronze finishes. Circle No. 158 on Product Card

can create classy, elegant, unique, distinctive, extravagant or daring looks," he says.

This versatility is a key factor in satisfying the demand for a range of looks to complement the design of the home and to allow homeowners to make their own uniquely personal statement.

"With open-concept living spaces, the kitchen is now more aligned with the overall style of the home, creating a need for cabinet hardware that coordinates with lighting and home accessories in these same finishes. As sleek and modern styles become more popular, the hardware finish is really important to make it pop off the cabinet," says Michelle Zeller, chief marketing officer at Rockford, IL-based Amerock. "The era of matchy-matchy has officially ended," she adds. "Today's homeowners approach their interior as a space where they can express their individual preferences, aesthetics and style."

A large overall trend in the kitchen and bath market is the move toward clean and simple lines, and modern design. Hardware is no exception. This focus on a crisp, clean look allows for a dual approach – designers can blend decorative hardware seamlessly into the overall look, or use functional hardware to get the job done – or both. Finishes are trending toward warmer tones and, regardless of the chosen style, products must work smoothly and efficiently to allow easy access to storage spaces, according to manufacturers recently surveyed by *Kitchen & Bath Design News*.



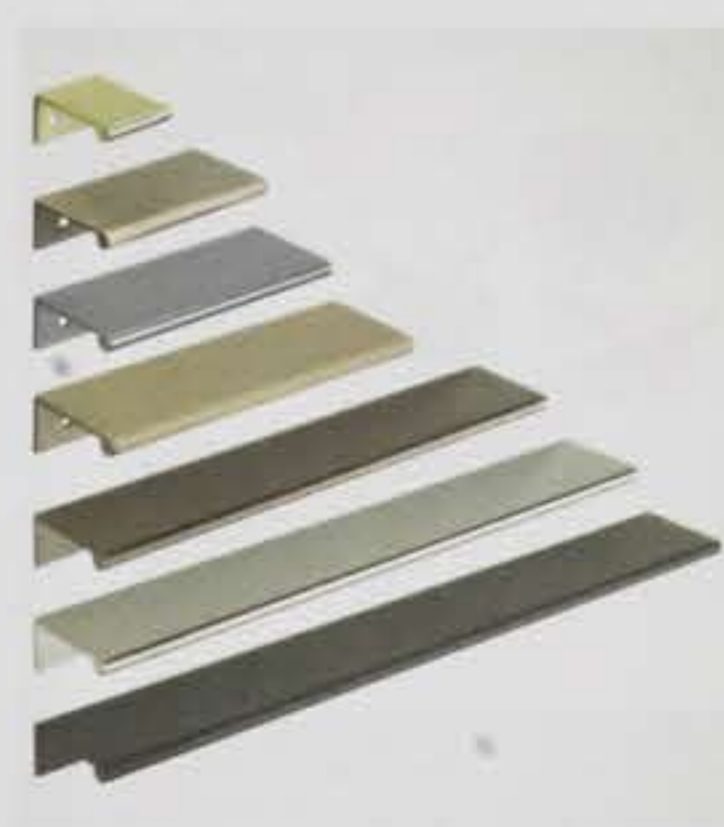
The new Salice Air hinge, available from **Häfele**, is mortised into both the cabinetry and the door it closes, delivering full functionality. Fully adjustable in three directions, the Air features a choice of integrated soft-close or push-to-open options.
Circle No. 159 on Product Card



Much of today's focus for decorative hardware is on finishes and mixed materials. These trends are reflected in pieces available from **Schaub & Co.**, including modern acrylic styles like this Lumiere pull, paired with satin brass.
Circle No. 160 on Product Card



The ZBox from **Grass America** is a metal drawer system combining Zargen drawer sides with ball-bearing drawer slides. Approved for 100-lb., full-extension drawer slides, it is offered in three side heights (85mm, 149mm, and 213mm) and five lengths (350mm, 400mm, 470mm, 510mm and 550mm).
Circle No. 161 on Product Card



The Tab Drawer Pull from **Doug Mockett & Co.** showcases a timeless and distinctive drawer pull design. Seven standard lengths and seven finish options make the handle suitable for any drawer or cabinet size. Custom lengths are also available.
Circle No. 162 on Product Card



The Choice line from **Cliffside Industries** replicates the firm's most popular and timeless solid brass handles, knobs, bin pulls and cabinet latches in zinc in up to eight finishes. New collections such as the Oceano Suite, shown, come in up to five patinas in both traditional and contemporary styles.
Circle No. 163 on Product Card



With **Accuride's** undermount slide – the 3160EC Eclipse – cabinet makers can design cabinetry with wide drawers up to 60". Lower spacer clips with extra plastic ball bearings were added to give additional lateral support and reduce drawer migration, while an anti-racking system provides stabilization.
Circle No. 164 on Product Card



The T-Bar handle from **Buster + Punch** is made from solid metal and designed with a solid base with diamond-cut knurled handle detailing and a T-shaped appearance. Finished with penny buttons and secured onto a circular backplate, the piece showcases an industrial look.
Circle No. 165 on Product Card



From wide, deep drawers to narrow top ones, Movento concealed runners for wooden drawers from **Blum Inc.** allow for freedom in design. When combined with the company's newest motion technology, Tip-On Blumotion, these drawers open with a light touch and close softly and smoothly.
Circle No. 166 on Product Card

DIVERSE DESIGN

Pinpointing any specific material, size or style of hardware as the top trend is difficult due to the wide range of options available. This variety is important, manufacturers say, to keep up with an increasingly educated consumer base.

"Millennials are beginning to influence trends in cabinet hardware design due to their use of social media inspirational platforms like Pinterest and Instagram providing them access to international trends," says Zeller. Not only are there requests for clean and contemporary European styles, but there is a pull toward updated retro styles like those in their Glacio Collection, which is a nod to vintage crystal door knobs. "The smooth glass reflects this timeless look, but moves it from traditional to transitional and even contemporary, depending on the overall design of the kitchen cabinetry."

"Hardware helps to tell the story of the design; sometimes subtle and other times bold, it provides dimension and acts as the glue to hold all the pieces of the design together," says Shari McPeck, marketing manager at Rev-A-Shelf, LLC in Jeffersontown, KY. Just what that design looks like varies widely. Some are looking for modern hardware featuring straight, clean lines in brushed steel, she says. Others choose a vintage look, mixing knob styles and choosing bold colors to add their own personal statement to the design. According to McPeck, the rustic look is also moving

forward, particularly in smaller kitchens, with the handcrafted distressed look allowing hardware to stand out and add another visual dimension.

AN ARRAY OF FINISHES

Diversity is vital when looking at hardware finishes. Stainless steel and satin nickel are longtime top choices, but warmer tones, black, and even a mixing of finishes are all on the rise.

"Brushed Satin Nickel and other silver tones have remained the most popular finish choices, but we've also seen strong growth in our warmer, gold tones and matte black finishes," says Christine Zimmer, product manager/decorative products for Top Knobs in Hillsborough, NJ.

"Stainless Steel and Satin Nickel are still the safest play for most kitchens since they have a very natural feel and tend to settle into any color scheme with ease. They can also easily complement a compilation of mixed metals and materials," says Peele. He adds that matte black is experiencing a surge in popularity, as it is able to both create a striking contrast against whites and neutrals, and settle into darker finishes.

Greg Sheets, decorative hardware product manager for Häfele America Co. in Archdale, NC, sees both brass and gold as popular, but notes that they don't have the same look they always have. "The brass and gold knobs and pulls now have a satin or matte finish to give them a softer look. Matte black is also popular. Stainless steel continues to be popular