

Dream

Inspiration of the month

For an addition to her Melbourne, Australia, house, Camilla d'Antoine designed the sunken living room around a fireplace to amp up the coziness of the space. Avoiding busy patterns and supplying plenty of low-slung perches for lounging keep it restful.

Sunken TREASURE

We're diving into the resurgence of conversation pits—all the midcentury modern rage—and appreciating the *intimate gathering space* a lowered level creates.

The seat of the sofa sits flush with the kitchen's distressed European oak floor, so it looks like a continuation of the main level.



The Dream List

Tufting on sofas
echoes square tiles
on the fireplace—
the only pattern in
the space.



Down-Shift

Designed to encourage conversation and lingering relaxation, the sunken living room in Australian creative consultant Camilla d'Antoine's home acts as a de facto hug within the ultramodern architecture. Her lounge sits two steps down—nearly 16 inches—and with its palette of cool blues and beachy woods is a serene, soothing version of one in a house

Camilla visited as a child. The space's many horizontal lines—a pair of low-profile sofas, the fireplace's long shelf, even the dining area half-wall—work together to draw the eye down. And the recessed area, she says, "creates separation from the kitchen and dining zones and makes the room feel voluminous by increasing the ceiling height." When creating your own sunken space or embracing one that exists in a midcentury-era home, Camilla's advice is to nestle a sofa or two up to the raised floor for a built-in feel. The intimate, snug effect is maximized with ample, comfortable seating.

shopping Low Profile

With their floor-hugging silhouettes, these modular sofas say relax at a glance—and can help you achieve sunken-room comfort even if your architecture doesn't.



DEEP SEATING

Whitley three-piece sectional by Nate Berkus + Jeremiah Brent in Peyton Fawn, \$2,895. livingspaces.com



MIDCENTURY MODULAR

Angolare three-piece sectional sofa by Athena Calderone in basil green faux mohair, \$4,297. crateandbarrel.com



LONG AND LEAN

Jasper three-piece U-sectional in River performance slub weave with natural oak legs, \$5,290. interiordefine.com



CURVE APPEAL

Bergamo three-piece sectional in Kenley Chenille Moon dust, \$5,797. zgallerie.com

The Dream List



1



2



3



4



5



6

Sunken living rooms (aka conversation pits) hit peak popularity in the 1960s and '70s. Today we see the zen zones in historical renovations and new builds.

1 FASHION FORWARD

Interior designer Alexander Girard went subterranean with this 1957 conversation pit at the iconic Eero Saarinen-designed Miller House in Columbus, IN.

2 ROOM DIVIDER

A double-sided banquette fitted into steps divides a pair of sunken lounges in this midcentury home by architect Donald G. Park.

3 SPACE SAVER

Kristin Korven and Jeff Kaplon of Part Office recessed the seating area in a bungalow's 450-square-foot room to create the illusion of height.

4 TAKE THE PLUNGE

Employing monochromatic tones on the sofa, ottomans, and rug deepens the feeling of being enfolded in this space by New York designer Neal Beckstedt.

5 BUILDING BLOCKS

A screen or bookshelf behind the sofa (like this one in a room designed by Jaqui Seerman) further defines spaces.

6 SHELF LIFE

In a sunken living room by Marmol Radziner, custom wood shelving rests directly on the concrete upper floor, doubling as side tables. ■

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