

Marie Turner Carson and Shawn Henderson with bedside tables by Rose Tarlow Melrose House, left, and Pacific Connections. See Resources.



THE TOP 10 BEDSIDE TABLES

Rest assured—designers Shawn Henderson and Marie Turner Carson have taken the measure of these nighttime essentials that are crucial for any bedroom

In 18th-century France, the latest bedroom accessory, the chamber pot, prompted the invention of a new piece of furniture. Early bedside tables—some with legs styled after classical columns—kept the vessels from view by way of a hidden cabinet. Today, nightstands fulfill a different purpose, but one no less important, providing a place for a lamp, reading material, and more.

For designer Shawn Henderson, a drawer or shelf is a plus. “The more storage, the better,” he says.

Another key element is size: His rule of thumb is to have the nightstand no more than two inches taller than the mattress. If using a mixed set, he says, make sure the heights are consistent. “It’s important for lamps to sit at the same level.”

Decorator Marie Turner Carson uses both table lamps and wall-mounted ones, which can offer better reading light and free up space for books, flowers, and other objects. “Accessorizing,” she says, “makes the bedroom feel finished.” ▶

THE EXPERTS

MARIE TURNER CARSON

The decorator joins her mother and sister in running the California firm M. Elle Design. The family’s Idaho retreat graced our December 2010/January 2011 cover. melledesign.com

SHAWN HENDERSON

Based in New York, this designer infuses his interiors and furniture line, Amalgam, with modern sophistication. Current projects include a Mississippi estate and a home in Aspen, Colorado. shawnhenderson.com

TEXT BY LAURA REGENSDORF / PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAX KIM-BEE / PRODUCED BY QUY NGUYEN



6 / ENFIELD NIGHT TABLE BY SHAKER WORKSHOPS

Based on a 19th-century design developed by a community of New Hampshire Shakers, this maple nightstand can be dressed up or down, Carson points out. "Painted, it can add a pop of color," she says, while a stain shows off the wood grain. "The legs taper ever so gracefully," she adds. Henderson also likes the slender proportions. "You can stack books underneath," he says. "It's perfect for a country house or a guest room." Various paint colors, including soldier blue, shown, and stains are available. 23" w. x 15" d. x 26" h.; \$465; shakerworkshops.com



7 / LOUIS SIDE TABLE BY JOHN REEVES FROM ABC CARPET & HOME

Henderson is a fan of this split-personality table: turned-wood legs on the inside, right angles outside. "It has a Hollywood Regency feel—I imagine it in a teenage girl's room," he adds. Carson is a fan of the glossy black lacquer and seamless design, which includes a hidden drawer. "This is for someone who takes risks," she says. A white version is also offered. 14" w. x 15" d. x 22" h.; \$349; abchome.com



8 / LOFT SIDE TABLE BY CHADHAUS

Handmade from solid poplar, this nightstand is proportioned for a low bed, says Carson. Citing its "relaxed, Zen feel," she pictures it in a white, minimalist room. "The design is simple, so it's all about the natural wood grain." Henderson praises the first-rate craftsmanship and white-washed finish. Despite its petite size, he adds, "this has a nice weight to it." The table can be ordered in a range of other woods. 16" w. x 16" d. x 18" h.; \$1,200; chadhaus.com



9 / MARSEILLES NIGHT-STAND BY RESTORATION HARDWARE

Covered in a distressed white buffalo leather and accented with brass nailheads, this nightstand is ideal for a rustic lodge, says Henderson. "The finish will take on an interesting patina with age," he adds. Carson describes it as contemporary-meets-vintage and likes its "edgy, Western feel." It's practical too: The drawer provides storage, while the open cubby offers a place to display a basket or books. 27" w. x 18" d. x 27" h.; \$895; rh.com



10 / RIGOLETTO TABLE BY ROSE TARLOW MELROSE HOUSE

"This looks like an antique," Carson says of this walnut table (available to the trade). "The designer has paid attention to all the details," she adds, pointing out the drawer, pullout shelf, and turned legs. She would use just one beside a bed: "As a stand-alone piece, it seems like more of a find." Henderson seconds her praise, saying simply, "This is incredibly gorgeous." 24" dia. x 28" h.; \$3,980; rosetarlow.com

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