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Mariette Himes Gomez and David Scott with desks by Pierre Paulin for Ligne Roset, left, and André Arbus by Baker. See Resources.



THE TOP 10 DESKS

Designers David Scott and Mariette Himes Gomez evaluate these hardworking modern-day essentials that get the job done with real style

With letter writing and filing giving way to e-mail and online billing, the home desk has been shedding paper weight. But it still plays a key role in today's hectic lives, serving as a place to reorganize and recharge—literally and figuratively.

"A desk is a home base," says decorator Mariette Himes Gomez, who considers a workstation to be essential, whether in a study or a corner of a studio apartment. And furniture design has kept up as technology slims down. "You need less storage in a

desk than before," she says. "Instead of a big block of mahogany, you can now have gorgeous legs."

Nonetheless, practical details, such as drawers, can be just as important as elegant lines. "A desk is not just a pretty table," says designer David Scott. "It has a job to do." Sometimes more than one, he adds: It can serve as a dining surface or a buffet, or stand in for a bedside table. "Some people use their laptops in bed," he says, "but there's a creative process that happens when you sit at a desk." ▶

THE EXPERTS

MARIETTE HIMES GOMEZ
Recipient of the 2011 Designer of Distinction Award from the American Society of Interior Designers, the Manhattan-based Gomez brings a clean-lined style to her projects and furniture lines.
gomezassociates.com

DAVID SCOTT
The New York designer has an eye for blending natural materials, rich textures, and touches of glamour. *Outside the Box*, his first book, is being published this month.
davidscottinteriors.com

TEXT BY LAURA REGENSDORF / PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER STURMAN / PRODUCED BY QUY NGUYEN

1 / ELBA DESK BY MATTALIANO FROM HOLLY HUNT



To Mariette Himes Gomez, the wrought-iron base of this desk has a subtle yet striking effect—"like drawing a line in a room," she says. The cerused-oak piece (available to the trade) is 61" w. x 31" h. x 29" d. and has three drawers with notched wood pulls. "I love the two shelves, which can hold books," she says. "I see this in an apartment where everything is pared down." \$10,875; hollyhunt.com

6 / JEAN-MICHEL FRANK'S PRESIDENT'S DESK BY ECART INTERNATIONAL FOR RALPH PUCCI



"Strong, simple, and masculine," says Scott of the pure lines of this 1930 design, re-created down to the elegant keyholes on the drawers. The oak desk (available to the trade) measures 65" w. x 30" h. x 34" d., but the novel L-shaped pullouts extend the piece to a full 102" w. A wenge version is also available. "This needs a big room," Scott adds. \$16,280; ralphpucci.net

2 / URSULINE DESK BY PIERRE PAULIN FOR LIGNE ROSET



"It's well designed, with storage for all your little supplies," says David Scott, noting the asymmetrical compartments. Inside one is a grommet for managing wires—a clever detail, he adds. At 47" w. x 36" h. x 26" d., the lacquered-wood desk is petite yet sturdy, with shapely, curved sides. "They naturally conceal what's on the desk," he says. A version in a walnut finish is also offered. \$1,630; ligne-roset-usa.com

7 / BOND DESK BY JONATHAN ADLER



This Lucite-legged desk evokes the 1960s, when the material was in its heyday, says Gomez. The tabletop and two drawers are lined inside and out with opulent burl veneer, so this piece offers "a lot of bang for your buck," she says. Given its slender proportions (45" w. x 31" h. x 20" d.) and feminine quality, it could also function as a dressing table, she says, with space for a laptop, a mirror, and accessories. \$2,800; jonathanadler.com

3 / VICTOR DESK BY ROBERTO LAZZERONI FROM THE CONRAN SHOP



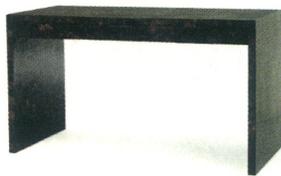
Available in an array of glossy and matte colors, this oak-and-lacquer desk can serve as a vivid accent, says Gomez. "It has a mid-century attitude, so it would be chic with a Danish wood chair from that period." The 66" w. x 30" h. x 28" d. piece has rounded corners and three hardware-free drawers. She imagines it floating in the center of a contemporary room. \$6,450; conranusa.com

8 / TRESTLE DESK BY ALESSANDRO ALBRIZZI FROM LIZ O'BRIEN



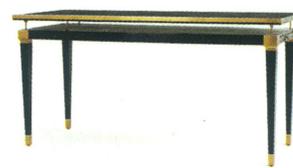
Edged in polished aluminum with a sawhorse-style base, this 1969 design makes "a bold statement," says Scott. "It's retro, but has a very contemporary feel. And the quality of the detailing is excellent." The 60" w. x 30" h. x 30" d. desk has three drawers and a durable laminate surface available in a range of hues. \$7,200; lizobrien.com

4 / JEREMY DESK BY OLY



This spare, rectilinear design is dressed up with a delicate shell veneer in a patchwork of squares. Gomez would offset the deep, rich tones by placing it near a cream-color wall, which would highlight its crisp silhouette. "If it were sitting on a lighter carpet, it would really command attention," she says. At 54" w. x 30" h. x 24" d., the desk is spacious, she observes, with three drawers for storage. It also comes in white-shell veneer. \$3,350; olystudio.com

9 / ANDRÉ ARBUS'S L'ARCHITECTE DESK BY BAKER



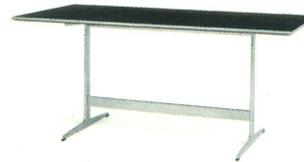
"Superb and sophisticated—this is a star," says Gomez of the French designer's '50s creation. Finely crafted in ebonized walnut with brass accents, the 61" w. x 29" h. x 25" d. desk features more than a writing surface: The top tilts up like a drafting table, with a rail to hold books or prints, and two smaller stands slide out from each end. "This isn't just furniture," she says. "It's a work of art." \$9,020; bakerfurniture.com

5 / TOMBOY DESK BY R&Y AUGOUSTI



With its classic design—three drawers on one side, a knee hole on the other—this desk has the look of traditional office furniture, says Scott. "At the same time," he points out, "because of its luxurious shagreen finish and its refinement and scale, it could work nicely in a bedroom." The 47" w. x 29" h. x 21" d. desk has faceted drawer fronts and bronze hardware. It could double as a vanity, he says. A variety of shagreen colors is available. \$6,625; augousti.com

10 / SHAKER BASE TABLE BY ARNE JACOBSEN FOR FRITZ HANSEN



Pairing an aluminum base with a linoleum top, this is a utilitarian piece for a design purist, says Scott. At 63" w. x 28" h. x 32" d., it could also be used as a dining table, he suggests: "I'd put this in a studio apartment where the aesthetic is very clean and functional." What it gains in versatility, it loses in storage: "This is for the true minimalist," he says. Additional surfaces are offered. \$5,328; fritzhanzen.com

The opinions featured are those of ELLE DECOR's guest experts and do not necessarily represent those of the editors. All measurements and prices are approximate. For details see Resources.