

Wash space tech that's worth splashing out on

1

audio

PUMP UP THE VOLUME IN THE BATHROOM

Bathrooms are no longer just functional spaces, but places to relax in and enjoy, too. For some of us, that means no technology at all, but according to Jools Browning at home-tech specialist BrownHen Solutions, audio is a popular request. Yes, many of us want to enjoy our favourite radio station, playlist or podcast while relaxing in the bath, taking a shower or getting ready. 'We're not talking audiophile quality, but a decent sound that can be heard over the shower,' says Jools. Options include affordable all-in-one solutions with amplifier, Bluetooth and wi-fi built in, which can be easily retrofitted. For the aforementioned audiophiles, there are more expensive solutions, such as 'invisible' speakers, which not only provide excellent audio quality but are also plastered over so they can't be seen. If you need a Netflix fix, then how about a waterproof TV that doubles as a mirror? 'The great thing is that you don't even know the TV is there until you turn it on,' adds Jools.

2

lighting

ILLUMINATING IDEAS FOR EMBRACING TECH

Adjustable lighting is the ultimate way to tailor your bathroom's atmosphere to your mood. 'A few companies are pushing forward with spa-style technology, including integrated control panels that turn lights off and on and dim them,' says Cinzia Moretti, creative director at Moretti Interior Design. 'Typically, control panels are placed just outside the bathroom door, but increasingly they're being synced with a smartphone so that the lights can be controlled from inside the room.' Another emerging trend is voice control, which uses smart home hubs such as Amazon Echo to link to smart LED lights so that you can control them on command. 'Currently, the integrated control panel is still more popular, but I believe voice control will eventually take over, simply because it makes life much easier. For instance, when you're in the bath unwinding after a long day at work you can ask to change the lighting colour to something a little more soothing,' says Cinzia.

3

protection

PREVENT WATER DAMAGE WITH AN APP

Even well-insulated homes run the risk of frozen pipes over the winter months, leading to leaks and bursts that cost, on average, £7,000* to repair. As with everything, there's now an app for that. The innovative and tech-savvy kitchen and bathrooms fittings brand Grohe has two devices that work with its Ondus app: Sense and Sense Guard. Sense is a smart water sensor that is placed on the floor which, if it detects a leak, will send an alert to your phone via the app, allowing you to turn your mains off and get things sorted. The Sense Guard is fitted to the water mains, which can be controlled via the app. 'Use the Ondus app to help you keep tabs on how much water you are consuming and which of your appliances are guzzling not only water, but money, too,' explains Elina Enqvist-Twomey, category manager at Grohe. 'By using information from the Sense and Sense Guard, you can track your water consumption, which may help identify dripping taps or tiny leaks that you can fix before they become a bigger problem.'

innovation