

"I have still to emphasize my belief in the importance of... desks.... The dining room and the bathrooms are the only places where a writing table... isn't required."  
 —Elsie de Wolfe, *The House in Good Taste*

**classic parsons**



**WEST ELM**  
 This unadorned, not-bulky black bleeds with any style, and virtually disappears against white walls. (\$299, 48 by 30 inches; westelm.com)



**DUCOC**  
 The Cabana's simple shape gets an infusion of Hollywood Regency glamour with brass hardware and a flamingo-pink finish. (\$1,295, 47½ by 30 inches; ducoc.com)



**RICHARD HISHMAN DESIGN**  
 Ideal for his-and-her spaces, the drawers of the Halcón Collection Partners desk are accessible from both sides. (\$5,250, 60 by 32½ inches; at Home, 212-764-7705)

**updated secretary**



**BALLARD DESIGN**  
 Resting on dainty legs, the solid-pine Renee Secretary looks appropriately petite in a bedroom. (\$300, 33½ by 40 inches; ballarddesigns.com)



**DECORATIVE CRAFTS INC.**  
 In 18th-century Venetian shape meets the Gilded Age in this showpiece. Hand-painted, it's a useful work of art. (\$1,950, 46 by 37 inches; 800-435-4455 for stores)



**GRANGE**  
 Made in France, the Scriban Chest's hunting-dog hardware evokes the countryside. A drop-leaf front hides a blush of color. (\$6,495, 39½ by 48 inches; grangey.com for stores)

**treble**



**POTTEEN**  
 A-frame supports give the Style-It desk extra storage below. Six drawers keep things organized up above. (\$553, 62 by 33 inches; pottew.com)



**4M USA**  
 For adventurers on the move, the leather-topped, brass-trimmed Navigator's desk disassembles quickly. (\$1,400, 55 by 27½ inches; cottagesandbungalows.com)



**HARDEN**  
 The sprawling 13 ½-square-foot desktop suits those who like to spread out. And the style? Perfectly restrained. (\$2,430, 60 by 30 inches; harden.com for stores)