

Storage solutions for small spaces

Simple ways to maximize the space in every room of your home.

BY HELLEN BUTTIGIEG

Do you ever wish you had more storage space in your home? Before you consider major renovations or moving to a larger house, organize your space. These tricks will help you maximize your space at a minimal cost.

Bedrooms and closets

- Install an extra shelf above the existing one to store seldom-used items.
- Use the space under hanging blouses or shirts. Group all the short items together and put a dresser or a freestanding shelving unit under these shorter garments. Use it to store sweaters or shoes.
- Eliminate the need for a stand and free up floor space by mounting your television on the wall or from the ceiling using a mounting bracket.
- Use space under beds to store gift wrapping, blankets or out-of-season clothing. Stash these in shallow, airtight containers. Choose the type with mini wheels and lids that hinge in the middle, so you can pull them halfway out and still open the lid.
- If your linen closet is overcrowded, put



bed linens in a dresser or on a closet shelf in the bedroom in which they are usually used.

- Hang tiered wire baskets from a ceiling hook in an empty corner of the bedroom to hold socks, hats or purses.

Bathrooms

- The space above the toilet tank is often under-utilized. Use a shelving unit designed for this, or, for a streamlined look, hang a wicker, two-shelf cabinet with sliding doors.
- Add hooks behind doors for bathrobes and nightgowns.
- Mount a flat-backed plant basket on the wall to hold toiletries or hand towels.
- Hang your curling iron and blow dryer on a wall stand to free up bathroom drawer space and prevent cords from getting tangled.

Kitchen

- Use deep bowls and baskets to stash small household items. Place containers just high enough that objects are hidden (e.g. on top of the fridge).
- Shelve items of the same height together. Adjust the shelf height to allow only a

few inches above the items.

- Fit a window with shelves for plants.
- Install rollout baskets and shelves in kitchen cupboards to maximize storage for pots and pans.
- Hang your pots on a rack over the stove or kitchen island.
- Use lazy susans in under-utilized corner cabinets.
- Install a rack on the wall behind the countertop to hang cooking utensils. This frees up counter space and keeps things within easy reach.
- Place a step-shelf on an existing shelf to maximize storage space in cupboards. These extra shelves usually cover only a part of the existing shelf and are made of vinyl-covered metal. You can purchase them or make your own by supporting a board on two tin cans.

Attic and garage

- Keep out-of-season clothing inside your stored luggage.
- Hang seasonal wreaths from nails in the rafters of the attic or garage.
- Organize clunky items, like ski boots and roller blades, in a lidded laundry hamper.
- Store long items upright in a holder (umbrellas, hockey sticks) so they take up less floor space.

Living room and family room

- Select furniture or decorative pieces that can double as storage units. Steamer trunks or wicker baskets can be used as coffee tables and storage for videotapes, blankets or toys.

- Use space under skirted sofas to store long, flat items.
- Cut a piece of plywood into a circle, place over a two-drawer vertical filing cabinet, top with fabric and you have an attractive yet functional end table or night stand. For an added touch, cover with a glass top.
- Arrange furniture back-to-back to separate activity areas (sofas positioned this way can create two intimate conversation areas).
- Glue or bolt two bookcases back-to-back to define areas and increase storage space.

Laundry room

- Take advantage of any space between objects. Purchase a rolling cart that slides between a washer and dryer to store detergents. The space between an open door and the wall behind it could be used to store a fold-up drying rack.
- Whenever possible, get things off the floor. Use hooks or specially designed holders to suspend items like an iron and ironing board.

Finally, the secret to living in a small space and loving it is never letting excess stuff take over. Keep clutter at bay by purging every day. 🍂

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