



## Tackling Small Spaces

By Yanic Simard

Picture courtesy of Yanic Simard

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**Y**ou may often find yourself complaining that you haven't got enough space. When floor space is limited, every inch really does count. If you combine some cleverness with some realistic solutions, and maybe trading in or selling a few items, your small space can feel like home, and not just a 'small space'. Feeling cramped and cluttered will be a thing of the past, if you use my helpful room-by-room ideas.

### Editing

You will need to start cleaning out your belongings before you start to organize. You can only accurately know what space you have when you've narrowed down your stuff. You don't want to waste time organizing things you don't need, never mind spending money on organizational solutions.

Every item in your home should have a home – you'll notice that once you're finished organizing that your space will feel much more open and welcoming.

### Living Room

The living room is generally a communal gathering place for family and friends, and the hub of the home's activities. Here are some easy ways to design your petit palace.

- Purchase furniture that offers hidden built-in storage components, like an ottoman with a top that opens or a purchase a chest for a coffee table
- Trade in your over stuffed sofa and or chair for some sleeker, more 'open' furniture. My personal favourite include reflective and transparent pieces such as the Gus Modern Timber Side Table or the Bertoia chair.
- Hang lightweight brackets and use shelves on your vertical space to store DVDs/CDs, books, picture frames and even small stereo systems. If you don't necessarily want to show off these items, consider mounting a shelf behind the sofa on the lower portion of the wall, to keep it hidden.

### Kitchen

The kitchen is the heart of the home. Kitchens are a bit more work and



take a little more creative thinking, but a small kitchen is not a lost cause.

- Suspend shelving units from the ceiling and display your nicest dish wear here. It majorly saves cupboard space!
- Donate your appliances that you don't use – everyone has a blender, food processor or toaster over that they'll never touch again! Give it to someone who actually will use it!
- Cabinet and drawer organizers are one of the best things to ever happen to a kitchen. There is always a cupboard in the home that when it gets opened all of your Tupperware falls out- there are organizers for these that cost next to nothing!
- If you're in the process of renovating, install extra tall cabinets for extra much-needed storage space.
- Use a small kitchen island on wheels for more storage and for more area to prepare food.

## Bathroom

- Increase your sink space by getting a small shelf that sits on the back of the counter that hovers above the faucet.
- Make sure you have a vanity that has underneath, closed in storage.
- Use a small stainless steel cart to display fragrance bottles and extra bath towels.
- If you're renovating, create wall niches in the shower/tub area. They look pretty and provide great space for your shampoo and soap!

## Bedroom

- Headboards can be purchased with lights and shelves built right in.

- Use risers to lift the bed off of the floor, high enough to store boxes or baskets underneath.
- Purchase a bed frame that has drawers built right in.
- Consider bunk beds for children or even loft beds that allow room for a desk underneath.

## Closets

There are companies that specialize in closet organization systems. It is worth the small investment to have one built because it will open up space that you didn't even know you had.

- Purchase bags that are vacuum sealable, which will completely condense your closet.
- Store off season or clothes that you rarely wear in suitcases.
- Use every wall your closet has to offer, not just the back one. Install narrow shelving units on the side walls to store small items such as shoes and bags.

Be sure to de-clutter regularly to avoid it building up again, and having to go through the entire process again. Less clutter means less dusting, so there you have an added bonus!

If you're organizing your entire home, don't expect it to happen over night. Allocate plenty of time to go through your items; it is not something that should be rushed.

Living in a small space doesn't mean giving up everything, it is just a simple matter of downsizing and using creative ideas to make things fit in a practical way.



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