





SMALL SPACE, BIG STYLE

Strategies for Making the Most of Any Small Space

BY LAUREL FEINMAN

Every home has one, and yours does too: that small space you've never quite known how to handle. Deep down, you know your little nook has untapped potential. You just need some fresh ideas and inspiration to access it!

Here are three different small rooms and some expert design strategies that might give your small space a big personality.



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DESIGNER'S PETITE ABODE

Photography by Virginia Hamrick

Designer Linda Martin had the courage to break one of the most highly regarded small space design “rules” when she moved into her petite abode on her son’s property. Many designers would recommend only using furnishings that are scaled for the room. But Linda defied that rule—and with great results.

Across one entire wall, Linda uses an enormous 10-foot long antique display hutch as a media center, bookcase, display space and home office. It’s so big, in fact, that she had to hire workmen to remove one of the windows in the room to get the top half of it in, and they removed the stairway banister outside in order to get the bottom cabinets through the door.

When she saw it at Circa, she recognized it and had to have it. It was a display case from The Young Men’s Shop, a place she remembered visiting as a little girl with her grandfather and father as they admired hats. It brought back happy memories and she knew it would fill many needs in her new home.

Linda says, “I think the key to choosing furniture for a small space has much more to do with its functionality than its form. Choose furniture that serves several purposes.”

Her kitchen table, when its leaves are added, becomes a worktable where she can spread out and create design boards for her clients.



She also explains that the lower cabinets of the hutch hold all of her design files and home office equipment. Everything is neatly tucked away behind closed doors. She saved one cabinet for her grandchildren’s toys. “When they were younger and would come across the lawn to visit me, they would go right to it. They knew that’s where I kept special things for them. Now that they’re older, they still come across the lawn to visit, but we usually just sit on the sofa and enjoy favorite television shows together,” she explains.

Hanging above the sofa is a gigantic painting called “Changing Weather” by Andrea Hahn. One might think that such large artwork could overwhelm the room. In this case, it actually helps anchor the space and relate to the large cabinet across the room.

When she scaled down from living in a 6,000-square-foot home to her new carriage house a fraction of the size, Linda gave her children, who were all-too-happy recipients, most of her former furnishings. “I had such fun shopping for my new little home and choosing just the exact right things for it,” she says.

“Choose furniture that serves several purposes.”

– Linda Martin



Linda uses multi-tasking pieces of furniture in her home. Her bedside “table” is a beautiful chinoiserie dresser, which she uses for holding clothes.