

1 Real Estate Advisor

Decorating Smaller Spaces

A lot of people are downsizing these days, whether by choice or necessity. Having a smaller space presents decorating and design challenges, about which misconceptions abound. The number one misconception? That using white will make your space look larger.

Not so, say experts. Another mistaken belief is that less and smaller furniture is the only option open to small-space owners. But decorating limited space is more about placement of furnishings and careful color usage.

Let's start with color. It may seem counterintuitive, but sharp, bright colors work best in smaller spaces, with plenty of negative space between. Experts also advise using splashes of color in unexpected places like the insides of bookcases, windowsills and radiators. Try picking one wall in every room as your focal or accent wall and paint it a deeper color than the other three.

When it comes to the kitchen, you can afford to go very bold. One hot trend you've no doubt noticed is the deep red kitchen. Another room people tend to go neutral is the bathroom, but this is another place you can have fun with color.



Here are more tips to make the most of your small space:

1. Use mirrors. This isn't so you can check your hair whenever you want, it's to reflect light and create more depth. It really works. Hang mirrors opposite your windows. Hang groups of mirrors as you would groups of pictures.
2. If you have a studio apartment (meaning just one room), don't be afraid to paint different areas of the room different colors. Use screens, hanging fabric, even detached hanging windows to break up the space.
3. You probably have extremely limited storage space, so the best thing in the kitchen is to hang everything.
4. And speaking of storage, you want to think double duty. Use a trunk for an end table, putting your winter sweaters inside. Buy furniture, such as ottomans and tables, that have storage space inside. Put up plenty of shelving. Just be sure to arrange what goes on the shelves in a visually pleasing way.
5. You must create negative space wherever you can in order to reduce a cluttered, claustrophobic feeling.
6. Use sheer window coverings to let in the light.
7. Most importantly, let your own personal style shine through regardless of how much space you have to work with. Let your space reflect who you are, and visitors won't even notice the size.

Home Maintenance: Plumbing, Fixtures and Appliances

Water damage in your house is both hazardous to your health and costly to repair. The following list will help you maintain your homes plumbing and keep your house dry, from either man made or natural water problems.

- Check washer hoses and connections
- Check dishwasher hoses for leaks
- Check toilet supply/shut-off valve
- Check hot water heater for leaks
- Look for leaks by window and door sills
- Clean and check refrigerator drip pan-icemaker connections
- Check shower-tub surrounds for signs of damage including mildew or mold
- Check traps and drains under sinks, tubs and showers for leaks
- Check boiler for leaks
- Clean septic tank
- Check the attic for leaks or water damage
- Check water main / meter or well pump for leaks or sweating
- Check garage, driveways and other outdoor areas for water damage
- Ensure that water is not pooling near the house and drain properly
- Clean and maintain gutters and downspouts, ensuring water flows away from the house

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