

WHAT'S NEW

HOW DESIGNERS ARE BOOSTING FORM AND FUNCTION

BY BARBARA BALLINGER

The search continues for innovative ways to make small rooms function better and serve multiple needs. When space is at a premium, every inch has to count. That often means better storage with increased ways to keep organized, plus decorating tricks that make a space feel large, even when it isn't. Following are clever solutions from design pros to achieve these ends.

Don't fear your small space—make it your own!



BE BOLD!

Noa Santos

Designer and founder of 50 for 50 affordable design

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A small space offers a chance to make a bigger statement with less, so don't waste the opportunity. A 600-square-foot New York apartment will never feel like a California country home, so stop trying and own it. You even can go with a bold color on the walls, but use a high-gloss paint so the hue feels richer and re-

flects as much light as possible. Brightly patterned accessories, like throw pillows and lampshades, add instant character to small spaces. Accessorize with confidence. Every morning you get up and put on an outfit you feel great in—furnishing your apartment should be no different.

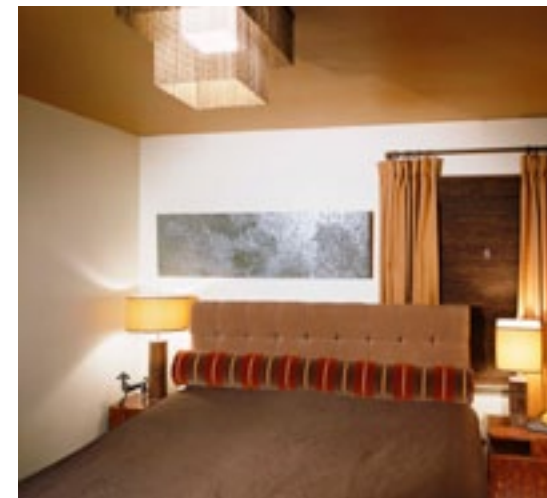
Photo: Francisco Aguila

ATTENTION-GRABBING CEILINGS

Sarah Barnard, interior designer, LEED AP
Sarah Barnard Design, Santa Monica, CA
sarahbarnard.com, 310-823-7331

Despite the urge to introduce color on walls to make a small space seem more important, designer Sarah Barnard feels that white walls keep a space feeling larger-looking overall. Instead, add in color subtly—perhaps on just a ceiling—using a cheerful, unexpected hue. You also can brighten a space using full-spectrum bulbs. People look better in rooms with light that mimics natural light, Barnard says.

Photo: Charlie Daniels



Metallic paints reflect light back into a room, making it seem larger



EAT-IN DINING AREAS

Erica Islas, interior designer, EMI Interior Design, Inc., Culver City, CA
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A far cry from the tiny collapsible bistro table that used to serve as a breakfast nook in a kitchen, today's small spaces don't skimp on style. In a guest house with an open plan, designer Erica Islas's choice of a glass-topped dining table furthers the airy look, while leather chairs suggest that this area is used more for serious dining than simple snacks.

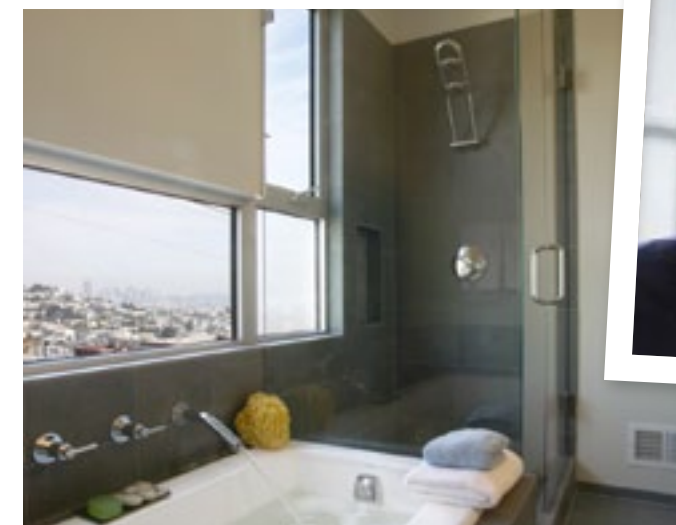
Photos: David Young-Wolff

INTEGRATED BATH DESIGN

Jonathan Feldman, architect
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For those who want a separate shower and bathtub in a smaller bathroom, Jonathan Feldman likes to place them next to each other and integrate their materials, so the shower seems to "roll" into the tub. "This creates a feeling of more room and also results in a strong, unified design element that makes the bathroom look less choppy and cramped," Feldman says.

Photo: Paul Dyer Photography



LOSE THE LAWN, GAIN ENTERTAINING SPACE

Michael Glassman, landscape designer
Michael Glassman & Associates, Sacramento,
CA, michaelglassman.com, 530-902-6163

As more people entertain at home, even small urban yards are being outfitted to expand outdoor living space. Kitchens and fireplaces are the top requests. At the same time, lawns are costly to maintain. The compromise? Extend the patio, build an as-close-to-all-season space as possible and reduce the grass. Photo: Amy Gallo



A compact daybed means guests won't feel like they're sleeping on the couch

NATURE INSPIRED

Katherine Shenaman, interior designer
Katherine Shenaman Interiors, West Palm Beach, FL, katherineshenaman.com, 561-833-4181

For a 12' x 10' guest bedroom that also had to work as a home office/changing room for and passageway to a backyard pool, Shenaman used the homeowners' daybed as a way to fit in seating and also accommodate occasional overnight guests. She used all-cotton materials to stand up to wet towels and add to the natural vibe. The soothing color scheme is apple green with touches of reds and yellows, the green inspired by the grass beyond. Photo: Robert Brantley



SURPRISING TWIST: GO BIG

Kimba Hills, interior designer and owner
Rumba, Santa Monica, CA
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In a small room, Hills likes to use at least one large piece of furniture. It actually makes the room look bigger, she says, as opposed to smaller, which is what most people think. Photo: Joshua Argyle



TINY BATHROOMS GO NAUTICAL

Christopher Pagliaro, architect, Bartels-Pagliaro Architects LLC, South Norwalk, CT
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Fitting a guest bath in a small hallway was tough, but Pagliaro came up with an innovative solution of a ship-style bathroom that consumed less width, as its glass outer walls were thinner than traditional wood ones. Within the bath is a picture of a ship's captain; a ship-style light; and a teak, boat-style floor—ideal for a homeowner in the shipping business. "We made something exciting in a small space rather than just a typical, utilitarian bathroom," says Pagliaro. Photo: Olson Photographic



"Striped" teak floors are not only nautical but also elongating

HIDDEN OFFICE SPACE

Claudia Juestel, interior designer
Adeeni Design Group, San Francisco, CA
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As more people have begun working at home, the design trend has focused on creating home offices. But what if you don't have space for a separate work area?

Designer Claudia Juestel came up with a creative solution in a small home that needed both a guest room and an office. She designed an office/storage system that looks like a piece of furniture. The 44"W x 22"D x 50"H unit can hold a TV for guests or a computer. Shelves stash office supplies. There's also a filing drawer, a slide-out desktop, a bulletin board mounted on one door and room for a pull-out printer. Both doors swing back and out of the way so that nobody runs into them. And the freestanding maple unit fits the contemporary décor of the rest of the room. Photo: Kee Photography

