

How to Increase Storage in Tight Spaces

Cozy, quaint homes attract many home buyers and renters. Be it a cottage-style house or a studio apartment, smaller living spaces often involve getting creative with storage. People live in a smaller homes for a variety of reasons. Some choose to live in a smaller home so they can be right in the thick of things in a city or urban center. Others scale back on living space in an effort to save money. But storage space in small quarters is often at a premium, and thinking creatively is a necessity to keep the home tidy and items out of view.

Rainy or chilly days are the perfect times to tackle indoor organization projects. When the outdoors isn't beckoning, you can devote all of your attention to addressing storage issues in your home. To begin, take inventory of what you have, going through your possessions and determining what can stay and what can go. Part with anything you haven't used in quite some time.

The next step is to sort items and get organized. Then you can find a place for everything. For example, if you have a dozen bath towels but only one sauce pot, you will need to find more room for linens than kitchen cookware. You may

need to borrow space from one area of the home to give to another area. The following are some additional tips to increase space in an otherwise cramped home.

* Add shelves

Increase cabinet and closet space by adding shelves into them. This may double or even triple the amount of usable space, especially if you customize the shelving to fit storage containers you use to store everything from shoes to craft items.

* Opt for dual-purpose furniture

Benches with lids that lift up and sofas that convert into guest beds are just a few of the many ways you can keep a small home neat and increase storage space. An ottoman is a great place to store extra blankets and linens, while a trunk or crate with a sturdy top can be used in lieu of a traditional coffee table to keep books or board games.

* Think vertically

When floor space is at a premium, you may need to look up for storage. Frequently used pots and pans can be hung from a decorative rack in your kitchen. Use magnets on jars to store a spice rack on the wall near the stove. Racks

above cabinets or on doors can be used to store everything from shoes to jewelry to toiletries. Shelving in children's rooms can store lesser used toys away from the floor.

Empty walls are valuable real estate in a small home, and tall bookshelves can house a number of different things.

* Take advantage of oddly shaped crevices

If you have space under a staircase or a spot by a dormer or in an attic eave, use the space to store items. You may need to get creative, such as adding a door and small closet into the staircase, but such spaces make practical storage areas and add character to a home.

* Use see-through storage containers

Many people find that plastic storage bins are neater and more stackable than boxes. See-through bins enable you to quickly find items so that you are not searching around the house for lost items and creating a bigger mess along the way. Clear storage containers work in



the refrigerator, too. You can more easily spot leftovers, and uniform stacking containers free up more room for bulkier items.

* Make use of space beneath your bed

There likely is ample room to store more things than just dust bunnies beneath your bed. A bed frame with built-in drawers is the perfect place to keep bed linens and out-of-season clothes. Beds can be raised on blocks to create more space underneath for storing rolling plastic containers and even seldom-used suitcases.

* Opt for an armoire

Armoires are not exclusive to bedrooms. Armoires can be used in dining spaces or in dens to store items out of sight. An armoire can be used when retrofitted with a pull-out shelf as a laptop desk, storing all office items behind closed doors when not needed.



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