

# 30 WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY NOOK

SEATING, STORAGE OR AN ENTIRELY NEW ZONE – IT'S ALL ON THE CARDS FOR THOSE UNUSED SPACES IN YOUR HOME  
WORDS SALLY PATERSON



IF YOU'RE feeling challenged in the storage department, dreaming of a second bathroom or awash with stuff you'd like to stash, the answer could be under your nose. There's probably an underutilised space – or two – in your home. So dig out your floor plan or do a sketch to scale. This will help identify potential zones and opportunities to rearrange furniture – or even walls – to devise a space solution. >

# OPEN SPACES



## 3

THE CENTRE OF AN *open-plan zone* CAN PROVIDE A DISPLAY OPPORTUNITY. ADD A PIECE SUCH AS A *narrow buffet* OR CONSOLE AND POSITION IT BACK-TO-BACK WITH A SOFA; IN THIS SPACE BY BLACK LACQUER DESIGN (LEFT), IT'S ALSO A NEAT LOOK AESTHETICALLY.

**4** Consider what you're aiming to create – maybe you're trying to put a study nook into a living space or turn a cupboard into a bar – and then think about whether the space has the right credentials, such as ventilation, lighting and positioning. “We take a lot into account – the flooring materials, the skirting and cornice heights, electrical requirements and the current positions,” says designer Louella Woodham of Spaceworks Design. “The height of the end user, potential wear and tear, and structural suitability are all important.”

**5** Use an open bookshelf as both a zone divider and an instant storage injection within open-plan layouts. Here (below), it provides a nice visual break while welcoming you into the living area.

**1** INTEGRATE CUSTOM-BUILT JOINERY INTO OPEN ZONES. THIS CREATES A LOVELY DESIGN *feature*, AND BOOKS AND SPECIAL OBJECTS ALSO ADD WARMTH AND *personality*.



**2** Double up with inclusions that can multi-task; this clever built-in corner by Minted Interiors has retractable pocket doors that open to reveal an elegant bar area, but could equally suit a home office.



PHOTOGRAPHY: THIS SPACE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MARY COSTA, CATTI MUSCAT, CARRIE YOUNG (OPPOSITE) CHRIS MARINES

## 6

“OPEN SHELVING IN *unused* SPACE SUCH AS ABOVE AND AROUND DOORWAYS IS A REALLY PRACTICAL AND SPACE-EFFICIENT WAY TO ADD *layers* TO A ROOM”

– KATE HARDY, CLOTH + STONE DESIGNS

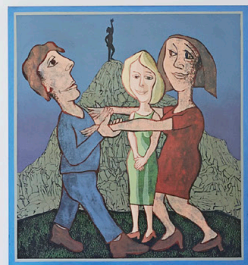


## 7

**TIP** Make the most of your lounge room's blank walls by adding open shelves and cupboards. Let your book collection take centrestage by colour coding your favourite titles. >

# 8

"RECESSED CUPBOARDS CAN OCCUPY *narrow gaps* BETWEEN JOISTS IN THE WALL AND CAN BE USED ANYWHERE, SUCH AS A PHONE-CHARGING STATION IN THE KITCHEN. THEY REQUIRE LITTLE SPACE BUT PROVIDE GREAT BENEFIT" - KATE HARDY, CLOTH + STONE DESIGNS



PHOTOGRAPHY: THE PACE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: SHANNA SUEGDM X2, SIMON WHITEREAD, CHRIS WARKES (OPPOSITE), FRASER MARSDEN

# 9

A SHALLOW WALL NICHE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A KITCHEN MULTIFUNCTIONAL WITH A DISCREET STUDY NOOK. "CHOOSE A *space-saving chair* THAT WILL TUCK IN COMPLETELY UNDER THE DESK," SAYS ARCHITECT SARAH WALLER. THE SAME GOES FOR BAR STOOLS AROUND THE ISLAND THAT CAN BE CONCEALED UNDER THE BENCH OVERHANG TO ENHANCE TRAFFIC FLOW.



# 10

TIP

Use the full height of the room. Take cabinetry up to the ceiling in the kitchen, which also avoids dust-traps, and consider kick plate drawers for the plinth - perfect for shallow items such as platters.



**14** For the bathroom, invest in tall, narrow cabinets to make the most of your wall space; the Kado 'Aspect 1400' cupboard from Reece (\$812) is ideal for an unused corner.

**15** Don't forget the bath hob; not only is there usually an opportunity to install shelving at one end, but the hob itself can often conceal a clever cupboard within. >

**11** Take advantage of areas adjacent to under-pressure kitchens that might not be obvious - such as under the stairs (left). Custom drawers that follow the rake can hold an impressive amount of storage, and are more accessible than the dark depths of an unlined cavity.



**12** Smart fittings will help utilise the oft-forgotten space under the sink in both the kitchen and the bathroom. Try Howards Storage World for pieces you can retro fit.

**13** In the bathroom, look at where you can put storage and clever nooks for grooming needs. A shower recess, for example, is a stylish way to keep body wash and shampoo bottles handy.





16

LOFT-STYLE AND *custom-made hanging beds* ARE A BRILLIANT WAY TO ACCOMMODATE A GROWING CHILD'S NEEDS, WITH SPACE BENEATH FOR A DESK, PLAY ZONE OR BEANBAG HANGOUT.



17 Make the most of the footprint you have in a large bedroom - or, in a smaller room, steal space from a corridor or next door - for a bigger project such as a walk-in wardrobe or ensuite. "I recommend a minimum width of 1400mm for a walk-in-wardrobe," says architect Sarah Waller.



18 Investing in a new bed? Opt for one that has base drawers or under-bed storage or, for a wallet-friendly solution, invest in a set of low-lidded tubs that will slide nicely under the frame; Kmart have ones that are on wheels, for added convenience.



19 In the bedroom or dressing room, make the most of every corner by adding in custom-made shelving to store items such as shoes, hats and bags.

20 In a spare room, consider a wall bed that can fold out of the way. WallBeds Australia's Alpha model (from \$2420) has a desk attachment, letting you transform your office into guest quarters without having to clear the desk.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (THIS PAGE, CLOSETWISE FROM TOP) BEA; (YOUNGHOUSE & LEISURE, SIMON WHITEHEAD); (RAGNAR) RAGNAR VIGGJON; (SUE STUBBS) CHRISTOPHE SHANKA-SHREEDYN

21

IN EXISTING ATTIC ROOMS, THINK ABOUT WHAT *you can tuck under* YOUR ROOFLINE. AN UNUSED NOOK MAY JUST BE THE RIGHT SPOT FOR A PLAY AREA WITH EXTRA STORAGE TO HIDE AWAY TOYS AND LEGOS.



22  
*budget breakers*

NOT EVERY SPACE ADJUSTMENT NEEDS TO COST A FORTUNE

Easy fix: Tall freestanding furniture or floating shelves will help you make the most of wall space. Double-check measurements and consider whether the structural support is sufficient to cater for wall-mounted options.

Mid range: Built-in joinery is specifically tailored to optimise every available inch. "Bespoke joinery gives a sleeker finish as we are not wasting space or leaving unsightly gaps," says designer Louella Woodham of Spaceworks Design.

High end: While moving walls may sound dramatic, that extra investment can make all the difference. "Making one room smaller may result in the creation of something really valuable, like a laundry or an ensuite," says interior designer Kate Hardy of Cloth + Stone Designs.

# CLEVER CORNERS

**23** With a little thought, unusually shaped nooks can become usable and functional zones. Here, simply adding a comfortable bench and an Eames' 'Hang It All' coat rack (try Living Edge) makes a forgotten corner useful without hindering the view into the house from the entrance.



**24** Unlocking the space in the roof can result in some heady gains, if the roof pitch and headspace are appropriate and the access stairs don't absorb too much real estate. "Light is very important when converting roof spaces," explains architect Sarah Waller. "Choose openable skylights to provide additional natural light and airflow."



**25** "ALWAYS CHECK THE *structural* SUITABILITY OF YOUR IDEAS WITH AN ENGINEER OR BUILDER, AND CONFIRM WHETHER COUNCIL *approval* IS REQUIRED"  
- KATE HARDY, CLOTH + STONE DESIGNS

**26** Consider partially sectioning off an extra-wide landing by putting in a divider or screen to create a study nook that doesn't feel closed off but still retains a sense of privacy.

**27** "Space under an elevated deck can be used to store garden equipment, compost or chair cushions if you incorporate some custom-made drawers," says Kate Hardy.

**28** Creating a mezzanine level or suspended shelving in a garage is ideal for storage boxes or those little-required items.

# 29

"YOU CAN CREATE a *study nook* WITH A SHALLOW DESK SURFACE FOR LAPTOPS AND CHARGING POINTS FOR *devices* IN A CORRIDOR," SUGGESTS SARAH. "SOME SIMPLE *bi-fold* DOORS CAN BE FITTED TO HIDE YOUR SPACE WHEN NEEDED!"



**30** Take the top of the stairs from landing to library with a series of floor-to-ceiling bookshelves. If possible, incorporate some seating and a lamp to create a dedicated book nook. **hb**

PHOTOGRAPHY THIS PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: EUGENI POINSIRBA, ALEXANDER JAMES; THE INTERIOR ARCHIVE; MARALIE HUNTER/LAY; (OPPOSITE) PETER NANTING/LEY