

RENOVATION :

ROOM RECKONER

BEFORE BREAKING GROUND ON YOUR OVERHAUL,
IT PAYS TO SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

WORDS SALLY PATERSON

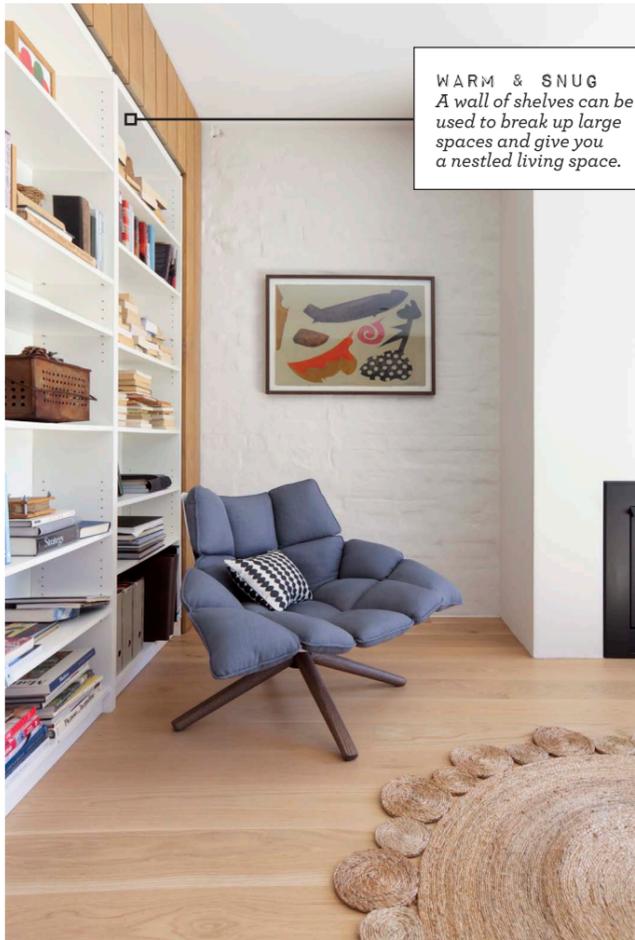


THE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION is approved, the builders are engaged and it's time to focus on things like deciding on a shower mixer or where to place a power point. Don't put it off. Once building starts, the 'rough-in' stage, when these nitty-gritty decisions arise, can really impact your schedule. Inspired by the renovation stories of our Renovation of the Year competition, run in association with Siemens, we pin down the essentials with our room-by-room check list. >



WHAT'S THE 'ROUGH-IN' STAGE?

A 'rough-in' is builder-talk for the early plumbing and electrical works that are carried out 'behind the walls' - you may have also heard it referred to on the UK version of *Grand Designs* as the 'first fix'. "During a rough-in, electricians will run wiring to all of your pre-determined points - the lights, switches, power points, ovens - everything," says Lisa Appleby of Realm Building. "For plumbers, it's the underfloor drainage points plus behind-the-wall water points that work in and around the wall frame." While some changes down the track might be okay, some elements may be too difficult - or expensive - to reposition, so a precise up-front plan is always preferable.



WARM & SNUG
A wall of shelves can be used to break up large spaces and give you a nestled living space.

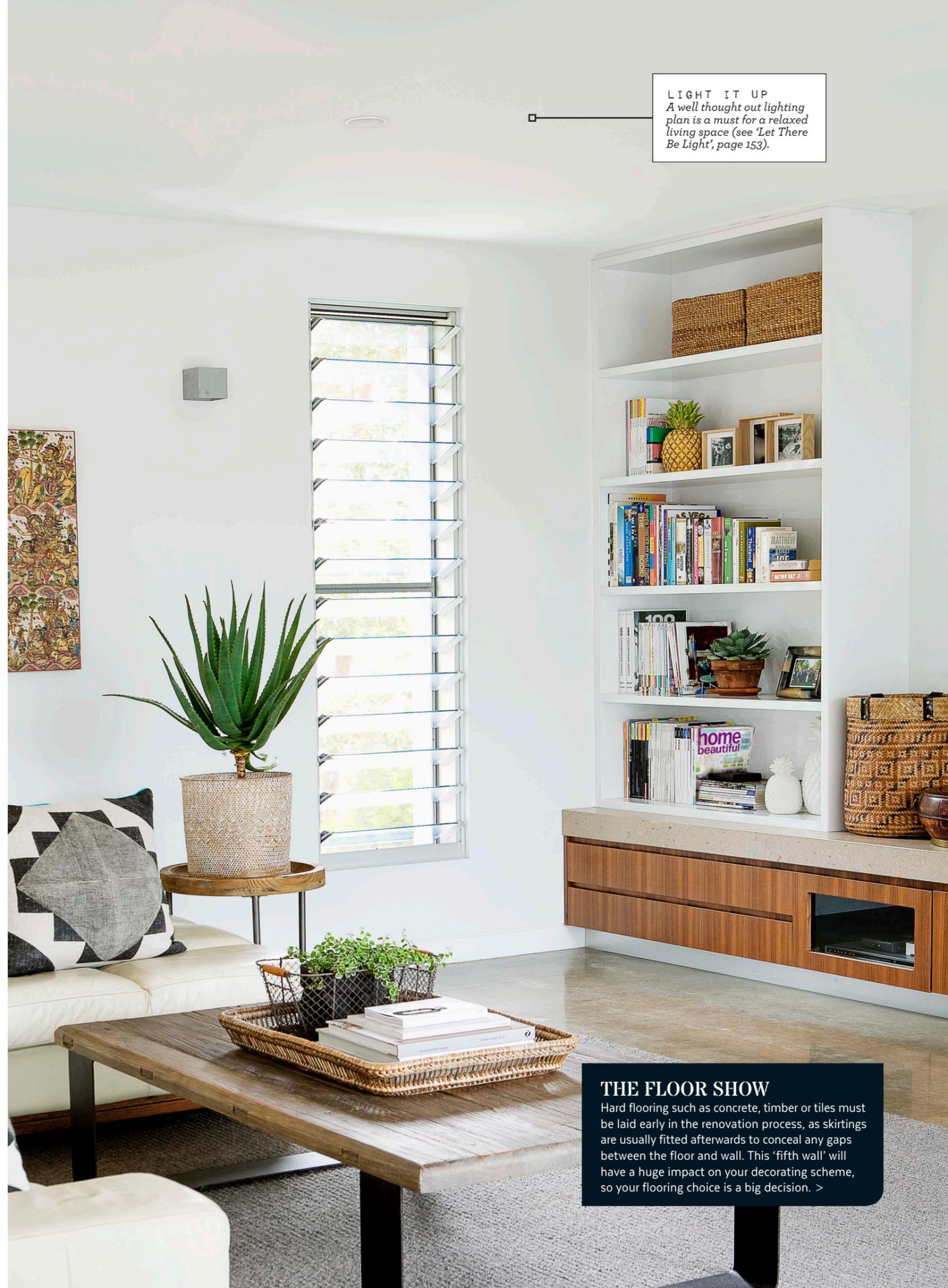
living area

LAYOUT: Consider placement of the walls, doors and windows for an obvious focal point, then orientate your fixtures around it (opposite). "We think of living spaces as the social heart of the home and therefore like to place televisions so they are central, yet not a dominant feature," says Erica Slocombe of Mihaly Slocombe Architects. "It's also important to consider glare from windows that may make the screen difficult to see."

ELECTRICALS: Once you know where powered items are going to go, decide on the position of the antenna, data outlets and power points, and the number. "Ideally, you will know if you are wall-mounting your TV and joinery or using floor-based units, and if you want surround sound or stereo equipment concealed in joinery," says Lisa. "The more you know at rough-in stage, better."

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): CHRIS WARNES, SHANIA SHEGEDYN, DEREK SWALWELL, GAP INTERIORS/BIERE CLAESSENS, (OPPOSITE) JOHN DOWNS. ARTWORK (TOP LEFT) FOUN CITT/OLIVIER RASIR. OTHER ARTWORKS ARTISTS UNKNOWN

LIGHT IT UP
A well thought out lighting plan is a must for a relaxed living space (see 'Let There Be Light', page 153).



THE FLOOR SHOW

Hard flooring such as concrete, timber or tiles must be laid early in the renovation process, as skirtings are usually fitted afterwards to conceal any gaps between the floor and wall. This 'fifth wall' will have a huge impact on your decorating scheme, so your flooring choice is a big decision. >

hallway

ELECTRICALS: Two-way light switches at the front door and the end of the hall are one option and a power point near the entry is essential. "Place these lower to the ground, so console tables can be positioned in front and table lamps used for ambient lighting," says interior designer Donna

Guyler. Don't forget overhead lighting (above), as hallways can have little natural light. **STORAGE:** This area is a magnet for schoolbags and shoes. Get crafty with storage, whether it's up the wall with hooks or shelves (below), a built-in under the stairs or beneath a narrow bench.



TIP If you're extending an existing home, take your design cues from it. For example, with architectural features, choosing similar coving and skirting to what you already have delivers continuity.



WATER WORKS
The type of tap you choose, whether it be a single hole or bridge mixer, will determine your sink selection as well as plumbing points.

LET THERE BE LIGHT
 There are a myriad of ideas for room lighting beyond the downlight, which can be good for task illumination but delivers all the ambience of a dinner hall. A lighting plan will help you explore the many ways you can light different areas - think dimmables, table lamps, focal-point pendants, LED strips that give a soft wash of light, spots for highlighting an artwork, and more. Some lighting shops offer a planning resource. Beacon Lighting is one - its consultation service costs \$100, redeemable on purchases.

"We think about light fittings and joinery finishes long before construction starts" ~ Erica Slocombe, Mibaly Slocombe Architects



PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, FROM TOP): KATRINA CROOK, ARMELLE HABIB, GORTA YUUKI. (OPPOSITE, FROM TOP): WARREN HEATH/BUREAUX COZA, DEREK SWALWELL

laundry
JOINERY: In this workhorse of a room, storage and bench space reign supreme. Interior designer Donna Guylor's go-to layout places a front-loader washing machine next to the dryer under the bench (above), freeing up workspace. "Install overhead shelving or cabinets about 60cm above your benchtop," she adds. "Don't forget a tall cupboard and, try to steer clear of freestanding laundry basin units."
APPLIANCES: If space is a bit tight, go vertical. Siemens' stacking kits allow you to position their dryers on top of a Siemens front-loader machine. "Allow at least 5mm of breathing space around the actual appliance dimensions for ventilation," says Roberto. Knowing whether you are having stacked or side-by-side appliances will influence where the plumbing and electricals go.



UNDER WEIGHT?
Your builder will know if reinforcing is needed to support the weight of any wall-mounted storage.

study
JOINERY: "Built-in storage allows you to optimise space by moving up the wall - with shelves or overhead cabinetry," says Donna. A mix (above) creates the best visual impact. **ELECTRICALS:** Minimise cord clutter with power-point and data outlet placement underneath the desk that can be channelled to your workstation through a hole in the desktop. Also, take overhead and task illumination into account. "Under-cabinet lighting provides task lighting while you're working, with the bonus of highlighting the finish of your joinery," says Donna. >



kitchen
APPLIANCES: These will influence everything, from power and plumbing connections to bench height and joinery measurements. Roberto Finamore, brand manager of Siemens and Neff, suggests starting with the oven. "The oven is the centre of the kitchen," he says. "A built-in oven close to eye level [right] provides the most comfortable access and allows you to configure additional appliances below or beside it, such as a built-in microwave or coffee machine." Check how many benchtop appliances you use regularly, and where to place them. "Think about complementary pairing of appliances, such as placing the coffee machine near the sink and a rubbish bin," says architect Erica Slocombe.

ELECTRICALS: Power points placed on an island bench make it a fully functional workspace. "If you need a power point on the splashback, we prefer them in a corner so they're not so visually intrusive," says Erica. Speak to your electrician and cabinet-maker about in-cupboard electricity and bench space, so small appliances can be used where they're stored. **PLUMBING:** "The plumber will mark out on the floor all plumbing sites, including those for appliances such as a fridge with ice-maker or a gas cooktop," says Lisa Appleby of Realm Building. "Then, during a rough-in phase, they will complete their associated under-floor, behind-the-wall and inside-cabinetry works."



bathroom

FEATURES: Hero items such as a freestanding stone bath (above) may require special preparation. “Firstly, your floor will need to be engineered to take the weight of it,” says Lisa Appleby of Realm Building. “Logistically, it will take several strong bodies to get it from the kerbside into place.”
PLUMBING: Narrow the tapware search by choosing a traditional

set or a mixer, and if they will be fixed on the bench, basin or wall. “Select your vanity and basins in advance, too, as setting your mixer and spout heights on the wall is determined up front,” says Lisa.
LIGHTING: Overhead and eye-level lighting are musts, and mood lighting is close behind. A strip of LED lights under the mirror produces a soft glow.

bedroom

FLOORING: Carpet is a popular choice (below), because of its softness underfoot, its insulation qualities and the way it acts as a passive air filter by trapping dust and other particles. It also gives you more leeway on the decision-making timeline as it’s laid once skirtings are in place.
ELECTRICALS: Position the bedroom power points low on either side of the bed, for lamps and tabletop accessories. Or, if a pair of pendants is on

the moodboard, locate a discreet spot for switches so they don’t become an eyesore.
JOINERY: Whether you prefer a walk-in or a simple closet, the first step to tailored robe design is an inventory of your current wardrobe contents – garment lengths, hanging-versus-folding requirements and bag and shoe volumes. Your cabinet-maker can then measure out a suitable storage for the space.



RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Every year *Home Beautiful's* Renovation of the Year competition, run in association with Siemens, attracts some amazing projects, and this year was no exception. Amy and her husband, Heath, won the Minor category with their makeover of a Queensland home. The worthy winners slept in their new kitchen while they renovated the rest of the house in 18 weeks, doing much of the work themselves alongside tradies, and reshaping a hallway, living room, laundry, four bedrooms and two bathrooms – including this one (left). **hb**