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Modern fireplace inspiration by **Regency** on page 24

FEB./MAR. 2022

\$4.95

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FOR SMALL SPACES



Designer Kate Davidson shares some helpful advice to maximize your small home

Small spaces have become the norm, as real estate values continue to rise and people recognize the economic and environmental benefits of compact living. From a design perspective, my clients approach their small space in two ways: To make it appear larger, or accept and appreciate its compact, cosy attributes. The challenges of decorating and living in a small

area are real, but they're not insurmountable. Here are some tips to make the most of every inch, with examples of how I put these principles into practice.

Make the most of it

There are a few tricks for living larger than your square footage may dictate on paper. Start by decluttering. Nothing makes a home feel cramped like an onslaught of

stuff. Evaluate everything. If you don't love it or haven't used it in the past six months, except for seasonal items, get rid of it. You can sell or donate gently used items and recycle or trash the rest. Then, explore storage solutions to tackle everything you intend to keep.

Storage is an industry with no shortage of custom and off-the-shelf products to tackle clutter, from shelves and cabinets, storage baskets and boxes, and multi-functional furniture.



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qualities, such as glass and chrome. The idea is to lighten their visual weight within the room.

It's not small, it's 'cosy'

Of course, I believe that small spaces are appealing. They offer several benefits: They're easier to clean and organize; they cost less to finish, furnish and maintain; and have a warm, welcoming vibe that's impossible to replicate in wide, open areas.

Don't fight it. Instead, play up the cosy factor by focusing on softness and warmth – layer in lots of texture



by marrying materials such as natural wood, leather and various textiles. Cover the walls with dark, brooding paintings or photographs, and add dimmer switches on all light sources, allowing you to adjust the light level based on your activity and mood.

Your home may be short on square footage, but every small space offers endless opportunities. It just takes some creativity, an open mind and, at times, a little professional help!





Beyond storage, some decorating strategies can create the illusion of space. Start by painting the walls in a light, neutral colour. Lighter colours make the walls appear further away, thus enhancing the sense of space, while darker hues tend to pull them in. This trick applies to large-scale furnishings and floor coverings, as well.

While we're on the subject of light, maximize the natural light in the room by removing heavy window treatments. Then add mirrors to double the natural light visually. Beyond this, ensure you have sufficient lighting in the form of ambient (overhead) fixtures, task lighting and accent lighting. By brightening the space, you'll increase its function and your perception of its size.

I applied these light principles in this space, which features continuous white walls and trim, with light furniture. The rug underfoot anchors the area while tying together the light and dark tones of the space. The wood furniture echoes the hardwood too. Here, less really is more, with minimal use of accessories and a focus on simplicity.

When choosing furniture, consider scale. It's unlikely that a compact home has the room for a massive sectional or a huge dining table with seating for 12. Instead, choose pieces with slim silhouettes, lower profiles and legs that let light pass through. Also, look for furniture that has see-through and reflective



Kate Davidson, is the Founder and Principal Designer of Kate + Co Design. For more than a decade, the multidisciplinary interior design firm has been providing complete residential and commercial design services throughout North America. Kate + Co is known for creating luxurious livable interiors. kateandcodedesign.com @kateandcodedesigninc
