

Remodeling

NEWS

Kitchen
Creations
& Remodeling
The company that sizzles.

Small Space Writ Large

NO MATTER HOW BIG YOUR HOME, chances are you have to deal with at least some spaces that are just too small. Here are some tricks to help you fit the most into the least space:

- **Adjust the Volume.** Emphasize the available space by reducing the number and size of items in it—ruthlessly edit



your possessions and rely on furniture that's small and light in scale. If you can't bear to part with anything, consider adding some built-in storage units or renting space at a storage facility. Or do the opposite—fool the eye as in the

photo on the left. Fill your space to the brim and use large, impressive pieces of furniture and art to create the illusion of grandeur.

- **Sleight of Hand.** Create a feeling of expansiveness by manipulating light. Your eye skips over clear glass tables and shimmering fabrics and upholstery as light

passes through or bounces off them.

Another trick is to use the same color,

pattern or texture throughout the space, creating a

feeling of expansiveness by blurring the background and the foreground. Keep in mind that warm colors tend to make objects seem closer while cool colors make them seem farther away and paint your walls accordingly!

- **Light Layout.** Proper organization can also be your ally. Furniture that serves multiple functions will help make the most of your space: a chest that stores linens can double as a table while a dining room lined with books can also serve as a library. Move furniture away from walls and into the middle of the room to take advantage of space that often goes unused. Create rooms within rooms by setting up different seating or activity areas; a meandering layout can make the space seem larger than it actually is.

With just a few tricks up your sleeve, you can make a small space seem big and truly make your home your castle.

GET THE MOST OUT
OF YOUR

space

Up From the Cellar

IN THE UNITED STATES, MOST WINES ARE consumed within one week of purchase (many within hours). Nevertheless, facilities for storing wine are a top priority for serious wine lovers and homeowners alike.

According to Robert J. Parker, Jr., author of *The Wine Enthusiast*, wine should be stored at slightly below room temperature and kept out of the sunlight (between 65 and 68 degrees is ideal). Be sure to store bottles lying down on their sides to prevent the corks from drying out, which can let oxygen get in and ruin the wine. Keeping these basic facts in mind you have two major storage choices.

WINE STORAGE

DETERMINE YOUR STORAGE NEEDS AND DECIDE ON THE APPROPRIATE SYSTEM. DON'T IGNORE THE DESIGN IMPACT WHEN MAKING YOUR DECISION.

- **Wine Racks.** These are a good choice if you store a modest amount of wine in the \$25-a-bottle-and-under price range for a few months or even up to a year. Most kitchens are not subject to extremes in temperature, so refrigeration isn't usually a necessity in this situation (just remember to situate the racks as far from

the stove as possible).

- **Wine Coolers.** If you're storing high-quality, expensive wines (over \$25 a bottle), you might want to opt for an under-the-counter or freestanding wine refrigerator (called a cooler or chiller). These units are ideal for storage because they are designed to maintain a consistent temperature and humidity level. Available in different sizes, wine coolers typically house 32-60 bottles of wine. You can either cover the front of your cooler with a panel that matches your cabinetry or appliances, or show off your collection with a glass door. Even if you're not a serious wine connoisseur, remember that a chiller can also be used to store hors d'oeuvres and other party food—and think how great it will look.

Fully Loaded

Want to know a better way to clean your clothes? Now many companies in the U.S. are offering front-loading washing machines for home use. Long the standard in Europe and in commercial washers in this country, these machines are easier to load and unload, and clean more gently and thoroughly since they spin the clothes on a horizontal axis rather than relying on push and pull agitation. And front loaders are even more energy efficient, since they use less hot water and electricity to operate.

Book Report

HERE ARE TWO BOOKS THAT WILL MAKE YOU want curl up and dream of an even more beautiful home.

- **Making the Most of Kitchens** (Rizzoli, \$19.95, hardcover) by Gilly Love is an excellent source of practical design ideas for building, remodeling or just simply rearranging your kitchen.
- **Bathrooms: Designs for Living** (MetroBooks, \$24.98 hardcover) by Wanda Jankowski offers advice on fixing up any size bath—from the tiny powder room to the grand, at-home spa.

Save Your Energy

IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT SAVING energy, then listen up. It's easy to evaluate the energy efficiency of new appliances—makers of dishwashers, refrigerators, freezers, and clothes washers are required by law to test their units for energy efficiency and to post those results on a bright yellow-and-black sticker called the Energy Guide label. The EnergyGuide label also features a scale that shows the biggest and smallest energy users in any appliance category. If conservation is a top priority, look for the Energy Star label on the front of appliance panels, which identifies appliances that the Department of Energy deems to be the most energy efficient in their class. For more information, contact the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Network at 800-363-3732 or visit their web site at www.eren.doe.gov. Bear in mind that his type of labeling is based on averages, so your actual energy usage may differ.

Turn to the Internet for Information on Your Home

Looking for home improvement tips and product information? These are two good sources:

Electronic House Online
<http://www.electronichouse.com>

This site is great if you want information about home automation. Topics include climate control, security systems, sophisticated lighting, motorized window coverings, home theater, and audio system.

LivingHome
<http://www.livinghome.com>

Here you can find gardening advice, room planning and design ideas. This electronic magazine is updated regularly.

Keep the Home Fires Burning

FOR THOSE HOMEOWNERS WHO WANT THE fire without the fuss, gas hearth products can do the trick. Not only is a gas fire an efficient heat source, there is a wide variety of styles available to fit any budget. And best of all, lighting a fire on a cool night can be as simple as pushing a button. If your home already has a gas line, installing a gas appliance is simple and affordable. The main thing to consider is how the system will vent to the outdoors.

• **Top-vented.** Here the fire takes in oxygen from the room for combustion while exhaust is let out through the roof, by means of either a chimney or vent pipe. While there is less heat loss from a top-vented system than there is from a traditional fire, this is your least energy efficient option.

• **Direct-vented.** This type of system is very convenient—there is no need for a chimney since the unit is vented directly through the wall behind it. Two



pipes run from the back of the unit through the wall; combustion occurs when oxygen is brought into the unit through the outer pipe, while the exhaust is emitted through the inner pipe back to the outside. This design allows for a great deal of flexibility and energy efficiency, since the unit can be installed just about anywhere and doesn't allow heat from inside the house to escape.

• **Vent-free.** Recent innovations have made it possible to burn gas so efficiently that no vent is necessary. Easy and inexpensive to install, vent-free

systems have become increasingly popular over the past few years, although building codes prohibit their use in some local areas. Another benefit of these units is that they are “zero clearance,” they can be placed directly next to other fixtures or structures without creating a fire hazard.

Flat Top | Try this trick to flatten a vinyl tile on which the edges have started to curl up. Warm the tile with an iron or blow dryer, applying just enough heat to soften the adhesive underneath. Then lift up the edges of the tile and put a dab of fresh adhesive under the curled edges. Press the edges back into place and weight the tile down flat for several hours or until the adhesive dries.

Tool Power | Never work with electrically powered tools while barefoot or standing on a wet surface—always stand on a board, mat, or some other dry surface. Most people know enough to wear eye pro-

tection when using power tools, but also be sure to cover or tie back long hair, and to avoid loose clothing and jewelry that can get caught in machinery.

Condensed Version | Vacuum the condenser of your refrigerator occasionally to prevent it from getting clogged with dust. The condenser, which is located in the back or on the bottom of the appliance, looks like a large grill. If your condenser is located underneath the appliance, get at it by removing the front bottom panel from the refrigerator. Then use the vacuum hose to reach underneath.

Draft Dodging | Check for drafts by holding a lit match to gaps at your doors and windows on a windy day. Blow the flame out to see how the draft affects the smoke.

Nail it Down | If you're having trouble hitting a nail square on, try imagining that there's a pinpoint in the exact center of the head and focus on that to aid concentration.

Clean Machine | To clean out your dishwasher, place a bowl containing 2 to 3 cups of vinegar on the bottom rack. Leave all the racks in place but don't put any dishes in them. Run the dishwasher through the wash and rinse cycles only,

shutting the machine off before it goes into the drying cycle. The vinegar will splash about as the dishwasher runs, thereby cleaning it out.

Cast Off | A cast-iron bath tub will last indefinitely, but its porcelain enamel surface won't.

To clean this kind of tub, wet the finish with hydrogen peroxide and sprinkle lots of cream of tartar (sold in grocery stores) on top. Leave the mixture on for an hour, then scrub and rinse.

BRIEFS

HELPFUL HINTS
FOR YOUR HOME

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The company that sizzles. ***& Remodeling***

10608 Meyers Way South • Seattle, WA 98168

Return Service Requested

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