



5 TIPS FOR SMALL SPACE SURVIVAL

BY YANIC SIMARD

WEATHER YOU'RE STYLING YOUR PINT-SIZED condo, or just your petite powder room, small-space decorating can be made easy if you go about it in the right way. No matter what the scale of the project, some planning is always required. An undersized area needs an immense amount of thought, resulting in a fully functional and practical, warm and liveable space. Here are five tips to take into consideration when designing your tiny quarters:

1 Multi-purposing: If you have a very small space, you may not have separate living and dining areas. Combine the two by purchasing a high streamlined sofa or sofa bed and a few side chairs that can be tucked away when not in use. When dining, bring the chairs in toward the sofa and place a round dining table in the middle. If you decide to go with the option of the sofa bed, this room is now not only a living and dining room, but also a guest bedroom. Also consider multi-purpose furniture – a large ottoman

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with a top that opens can serve as a coffee table, extra seating and even as storage for blankets and pillows.

2 Proportions: If your furniture is oversized in comparison to the area it's in, you will not get maximum use out of every inch of your home. Choosing furniture that is proportionate to the space is key when designing your place. Don't fall in love at first sight. Bring a measuring tape (which should be or will become your best friend when furnishing a small space) with you when you go shopping and if the piece is too big just walk away! You'll find something better!

3 Contain the clutter: Practical storage solutions are a must when space is limited, so make use of your vertical space. Closet organizers will save your life! Floor-to-ceiling wall units and bookshelves are also a great way to make use of the vertical space in your home, and can also be a great place to store items and to show off some of your prized possessions.

4 Open furniture: Furniture that has legs tends to create a feeling of more openness in a space. Having a few pieces with closed bottoms, such as an ottoman or a favourite armchair, is okay. But the majority of your pieces should be open at the base. Transparent furniture is also a personal favourite of mine to use in small spaces, for example, the ghost chair.

5 Visual flow: Visual flow is the path your eyes take when looking at something as a whole. Your eyes should not focus on one particular area of the home. Your space should balance, creating harmony. I create harmony

by using a combination of elements, like a variety of textures. Mix different fabrics, like silk, chenille, linen, suede, velvet and sheers all together in monochromatic tones. I'm also known for painting the walls and trim work the same colour, the walls in matte but the trim in semi-gloss. Maintenance plays a big role in creating harmony, visual flow will be obstructed if you've got a clutter, you need keep everything simple, clean and organized.

Designing your small space may feel like a challenge at first, but if you tackle it in the right way you'll be amazed with the results, and how it ends up not feeling like a small space after all. An undersized area needs an immense amount of thought, resulting in a fully functional and practical, yet warm and livable space.



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is the principal designer of the Toronto Interior Design Group. Specializing in residential and commercial projects, Simard often applies his signature high/low and old/new combination design techniques in developing unique designs. Simard has created designs for clients in Toronto, Montreal and Miami, and has appeared as a regular guest expert on Citytv's *CityLine*. For more information visit tidg.ca.