

Designing a Wonderland

Decorating your child's room is an opportunity for you both to work together to create something special

BY YANIC SIMARD

COLOUR SCHEME

A warmer colour palette that includes hot pink, chocolate brown, red or even citrus orange will create a more energetic feeling in a kid's room. Keep the palette simple. Three to four main colours in the bedding, wall paint, floor coverings and accessories will unify the room design. If you use the colour your child wants, he or she will definitely want to spend more time inside his or her own room.



LAYOUT AND FUNCTION

Try to give the kids some space to explore and grow. Select furniture that fits your child and pieces that aren't so large that little ones cannot move them out of the way for more active games. Take advantage of floor space by using padding or stain-resistant carpeting. Place tall furniture away from windows so the natural light isn't blocked. Try a low bookcase, chair or bench near the window; this adds both seating and storage below the windowsill.

STORAGE

Take advantage of wall space and create cabinets, bookshelves, desks and other storage solutions that cover an entire wall. Let storage bins serve double duty. Use empty cubes for storage and fit them with padded lids for seating. A large empty bin, or several pushed together, can form a workstation and when covered with chalkboard paint it becomes even more fun and functional. Look for "combo" furniture pieces such as an armoire with drawers and space for hanging clothes to free up closet space. You might want to consider removing the closet doors to help open up your child's smaller bedroom. This option gives you greater flexibility in terms of furniture layout.

THE MOOD

Add a bedside table lamp and desk lamp to provide plenty of ambient and task lighting in your child's bedroom. Use a layered window treatment, using a blind or shade to provide adequate privacy when needed and sheer curtains for a decorative touch that still lets in plenty of natural light when the shade or blind is raised. When it comes to wall art, try to focus on one wall in your kids' bedroom; this will create a visual focal point without clutter and visual distraction. Try incorporating personal touches such as school craft projects.



LAYOUT AND FUNCTION

Playrooms don't have to be huge; in fact, kids often like secret cubbyholes or little out-of-the-way places. Do you have room under the stairs? A large closet? Attic space? Any of these areas can creatively be turned into very special hideaways for your child. Create an illusion of more space by painting stripes on the walls; vertical stripes give the room a sense of greater height while horizontal stripes will make the room seem wider. ♡



Hoarder MUCH?

How to get organized and enjoy a smaller, simpler living space this spring.

BY YANIC SIMARD

We often complain that we never have enough space. Every inch of space counts when it's limited. With a little ingenuity, some practical solutions and yes, maybe selling or trading in a few items, your small dwelling can become your home. Enough of feeling cramped and cluttered! Now is the time of year to finally get organized and make the most of every inch of space with these helpful room-by-room ideas. But before you start organizing, you have to start editing.

EDITING FOR THE HOME

Clean out your belongings before you think about organizing (organizational tools, furniture, etc.). Don't do it the other way around. You can only really accurately know what space you have when you've cleaned up. If you don't really take a hard look at what you're stuffing in your spaces, you'll waste time and money organizing stuff you don't need anyway.

- Organized spaces are simple to use. They have enough room for the items there. It makes sense. Every item in your home has a location. Organized spaces also feel calm, open, and welcoming.

LIVING ROOM

The living room is generally a communal gathering place for family and friends and is the hub of the home's activities. Get organized by doing the following:

- Get a coffee table that has a bottom shelf and store items such as magazines, books and children's toys in baskets.
- Buy furniture with built-in, hidden storage compartments, such as lift-up seat tops on ottomans.
- Hang lightweight brackets and use shelves on the wall to store DVDs, CDs, books, picture frames and small stereo systems.
- Mount your flat panel television above a fireplace or on the largest wall.
- Buy small furniture or trade in overstuffed chairs and couches for sleek, minimalist designs.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is the heart of the home, where all those wonderful goodies are baked and served. It takes a little more creativity but a small kitchen is not a lost cause. Utilize all the space you can find for storage and preparation areas.

- Hang pots and pans on the wall or from the ceiling.
- Purchase cabinet organizers that allow for double stacking of dishes and canned goods in the cabinets.
- Get rid of appliances that are rarely used or are not multi-purpose.
- Get a dining table that has collapsible leaves, allowing it to shrink when the family is not using it.
- Use a small kitchen island on wheels for more storage and food preparation areas.
- If you renovate your kitchen use the vertical space and install extra tall cabinets.
- Keep your kitchen clean and accessorize with a mirror and a small lamp on the top of your countertop for visual impact.



A rolling cart with various-sized baskets is a great solution for items that may move from room to room. Keep art supplies, sewing materials, laptops, financial paperwork and daily mail on this rack. It easily rolls from the living room to the kitchen table and hides away in a bedroom when company visits.

BATHROOM

- Make the most of a small shower in the bathroom by using a basket that hangs over the showerhead for storing shampoo, body wash and washcloths.
- Increase the sink space by getting a small shelf that sits on the back of the counter, going over the faucet and make sure your vanity has storage underneath.
- Use a small stainless steel cart to display fragrance bottles and extra bath towels.
- If you renovate, create wall niches in the shower/tub area.

CLOSETS

Organizing small spaces such as closets is difficult for anyone but with a good closet organizing system you will be amazed by how much you can store in a standard double closet. Switch out seasonal clothing, storing it in vacuum-seal bags below the bed. Organize clothing to maximizes space, such as hanging shoe racks, stackable drawers and hanging cubbies for t-shirts and socks.

BEDROOMS

- Consider bunk beds for children or even loft beds that allow room for a desk underneath.
- Purchase bedroom furniture that has drawer storage built into the bed.
- Headboards can be purchased with shelves and lights built in.
- Use risers to lift the bed off the floor high enough to store plastic bins underneath. ♡

added extras

- Don't expect to get organized overnight unless it's a small area.
- Once you get organized, you may go back to your old habits. Just keep pushing yourself and you'll eventually get organized for life!
- Quiet time - give yourself the time and space to be able to organize your thoughts and your environment.
- Discipline - getting organized might feel like a struggle, or it might just require getting into a new routine habit of keeping things in their place.





ROBERT W. HOROVITZ

Robert W. Horovitz is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor and practices in Markham, Ontario (www.LifelongWellnessCentre.com). His services include customized weight loss, detoxification and hormone balancing using herbs, nutrition and acupuncture. He offers hair mineral analysis and salivary hormone testing. His story on Mood Foods on page 52 will change the way you think about what you eat.

REBECCA ROSENBLAT

Rebecca Rosenblat, host of the call-in TV show *Sex @ 11 with Rebecca*, is a certified psychotherapist, relationship therapist and life coach. She is critically acclaimed as a public speaker and life-changing force, influencing a captive audience of millions. Check out her article on page 46 for tips on keeping a great sex life alive while pregnant.



YANIC SIMARD

Designer Yanic Simard has applied his considerable experience and creative talents to the founding of the Toronto Interior Design Group (TIDG), one of Canada's leading design firms. Yanic is featured in many Canadian and international publications and is a recurring design expert on the acclaimed City TV show *Cityline*. He shares his great ideas for decorating kids' rooms on page 102.



MASSIMO CAPRA

Massimo Capra is the chef co-owner of Mistura Restaurant and Sopra Upper Lounge in Toronto. Author of *One Pot Italian* and the newly released *Three Chefs and The Kitchen Men*, Chef Capra regularly writes for *The Globe and Mail*. Massimo's television work is lengthy, making appearances on City TV's *Cityline* and as a chef host on *Restaurant Makeover* on The Food Network. Drool over his delicious recipes on page 84.



Got a story you want to share?
Send it to:
letters@vivamagonline.com
Read more articles on VIVA's website:
www.vivamagonline.com

Behind the scenes

It was a perfect Southern California day when Lisa Edelstein and her glam team descended on the Hollywood Hills home Viva booked for the photo shoot. At first a bit quiet or, as she said, "riddled with anxiety," the actress quickly warmed up and began to energize the afternoon with personal dance moves to Michael Jackson's *Beat It* and shook her toned booty to Beyonce's *Single Ladies*. In between set-ups, the proud "mother" of two dogs showed off candid canine photos on her iPhone to ooohs and aaahs.

