

# Live better by living with less



YANIC SIMARD

## THE DESIGN FEED

**L**iving in a small space doesn't have to mean living with less, or at least, it doesn't have to feel like it. Here are five of my top (sometime shocking!) tips I've drawn from experience — designing both for clients and for multiple compact homes of my own — for furnishings you can lose and not miss.

### Take out dining

Think about your real-life daily routine — do you more often than not grab a quick bite on the sofa, or at your kitchen island? If so, don't be ashamed to ditch your dining table!

A lift-up coffee table can take care of everyday dining for one or two, while a wall mounted fold-out table, or even a rental unit, will handle group dinners without wasting space the rest of the week (or month, or even year).

If you do eat at the counter, treat yourself to truly comfortable stools rather than hard metal seats.

### Knock down doors

The amount of space doors take up is deceptive: they don't use much room themselves but they demand a lot of space to swing, and create visual blocks.

Consider taking doors down off the hinges between rooms, and replacing closet doors with pull curtains, or leaving an organized closet open like a boutique display.

If a little reconstruction is an option, pocket doors will allow privacy while saving room, for the best of both worlds.

### Clear the area

While in a large room, an area rug can be key to defining zones, but in a smaller room breaking up the floor can actually shrink the space, so consider going naked!

If your floors are already attractive, leave them exposed for a more expan-

sive, European look. If you don't love the material, use a rug large enough to almost reach the walls (about a 6"-12" border) so the look is continuous.

An organic shaped cowhide style rug is also a smart option for adding some style without creating strong lines that shrink the room.

### Hold the table

It almost feels like a hard and fast design rule that a sofa must always be paired with a coffee table but actually skipping the bulky table can make a room feel much more open, and prevent many banged shins in the future.

A pair of side tables (for drinks) and/or a stool (to lift your feet) can do all the work while taking up much less space, and tuck out of the way when not in use.

Smaller tables and stools will also easily travel to a back yard or patio, so they serve double duty. Can your coffee table do that? Break the rules and ditch it!

### Ban media overload

So now you have no doors, no rug, no table, can you lose your TV too? Committing to using a laptop or tablet for tv viewing frees your floor plan from having to face the "tv wall", so consider the value of switching to a smaller screen. I know it's hard sell for many of you, but the benefits can be worth the trade off!

Maybe you can't lose the TV but ditching bulky speakers for a compact, wireless audio station also declutters your look, for more breathing room but still plenty of big sound.

— For more small space design ideas and to see the Yanic Simard Selected collection of accessories for any sized home, visit [tidg.ca](http://tidg.ca). Find Yanic on Twitter and Instagram @yanicsimard.

### QUICK BITES

1. Skip the dining table if you don't use it! Get a lift-up coffee table and/or fold-down wall mounted style.

2. Take down doors for a more open look with fewer space-planning obstacles.

3. If you don't have much space to define, you don't need an area rug to define it!

4. Trade a coffee table for side tables and/or a small stool, for a more open space that saves your shins.

5. If you often use a tablet/computer for tv viewing, free your floor plan from being tied to a tv!



How much space do you need? Yanic Simard on the set of Cityline with Tracey Moore.



Don't be afraid to ditch your dining room table in favour of a kitchen island. Photo by Brandon Barre.