

INSIGHT

Multifunctional furniture

If space is at a premium try using smart multitasking furniture as Sidika Owen D'Hauteville has done



With compact spaces, hard-working furniture and fittings are a must. Fortunately, there are plenty of options available that combine practicality with aesthetic appeal, from concealed kitchen storage to streamlined shelving.

WORK IT

Don't shy away from making a big statement in a small space. Striking furniture will make an impact and multitasking pieces that conceal storage or double up on function will maximise your home's efficiency. Natalia Miyar, design director at Helen Green, suggests a bold approach. 'Proportion is so important; I like to use large-scale furniture as it makes a space seem bigger and more luxurious,' she says. 'The key is to choose carefully. Buy a few large, impactful pieces rather than lots of small items.' Bespoke or standalone shelving is a simple way of creating storage, as well as acting as a room divider. Open shelves can also inject a sense of spaciousness. Anna Richmond of Conley & Co, who designed Sidika's apartment, suggests installing banquettes in kitchen or living areas, which double as handy bench seating, with drawer and cupboard storage underneath. She also advises adding practical lighting inside deeper kitchen cupboards and mirrored cabinetry, operating on push-latch systems. This design bounces light around, and helps cupboards disappear into a bathroom, bedroom or hallway.

BRIGHT IDEAS

Plan your furniture, while also considering the functions you need. Bespoke will allow for a totally tailored finish, but you'll also find stylish options at Ikea, Heal's, Habitat and The Conran Shop. In living spaces, opt for items that can double up as a discreet study area with a pull-out desk, while in the bedroom, choose a divan with large storage drawers. Mila Podiablonska

of Absolute Interior Decor suggests opting for coffee tables and ottomans with storage beneath or inside, while sofa beds are great space savers. Choose extendable dining tables, too. 'Glass and mirrors in small rooms reduce obstructions and enhance the feeling of space,' says Mila. 'Glass tables create an open feel while maintaining their function.'

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE ...



- 'Fitted cabinetry helps maximise space. Consider a full wall of large units in your living room. A TV in the middle can be surrounded by storage and softened with books.'

- In smaller spaces, concealing study areas and desks behind bifolding doors is a great option. Ask a reputable joiner for designs.

- In kitchen-diners or open-plan kitchen/sitting rooms, tuck the dining table against a wall and add bench or banquette seating along one side with built-in cupboards underneath.

- In bedrooms, a storage bed is useful for stowing pieces you don't need everyday access to. Bespoke floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall wardrobes can really help maximise space, too. If made with beautiful doors, they'll become very much part of the design of the room.'

ALMAS SHAMSEE, MAISHA DESIGNS

EXPERT EYE

'Space-efficient design is sought after by young families and professionals in areas where the price per square foot is high. While a spatial challenge can be tricky to resolve, it also often creates a unique home, tailored to the person living in it'

DOROTHEE JUNKIN, DOROTHEE JUNKIN DESIGN STUDIO

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