

..... SOURCEBOOK Grand Guide

far left Boxed storage and bright colours create a fun child's room

left Use moveable furniture to define different areas

below Mix & match – Montana units in lacquered MDF, £2,255 as shown, from £250 for one unit, 42 unit sizes and four depths, available in 49 colours, Icons of Denmark (07525 171 118; iconsofdenmark.dk)

THE SPACE RAGE

Clearing away clutter into streamlined storage will help you make the most of your square metreage. Read on for advice on how to build it in and for tips on easy updates **Words Sarah Baldwin**

this picture
 Freestanding option – Modern in lacquered MDF in yellow (H123xW120xD45cm), from £2,495, available in a range of colourways, by Piero Lissoni for Porro at Aram Store (020 7557 7557; aram.co.uk)

Ngoc Minh Ngo, Edina van der Wyck



From dead batteries and out-of-date currency to obsolete mobile phone chargers and useless cracker presents, we Brits are a nation of hoarders (if you haven't seen comic Michael McIntyre's sketch about the man drawer, check it out now on YouTube).

But whether it's a case of hanging on to your hoardings, or simply having room for all your family's necessities, well-planned storage is the key to a fuss-free, organised existence – regardless of whether you're building a new home or are in the don't-move-improve camp.

The key is not just to think about what you own right now, but also to consider what you may accrue in the future. Will you be working at home? Will you need extra space for growing kids? These factors need to be taken into consideration when working out your needs. Read on for some tricks to maximise storage in the design phase and for clever ways to gain extra space once in situ. →





left The client was keen to work with the original features of the building, so commissioned Studio Octopi to design shelving within its frame

right Architect Mark Dyson did the majority of the work himself, commissioning a local carpenter to design the drawers to his specification

BUILD IT IN

There are countless nooks and crannies in your home that can be used for storage with a little creative thinking. So, decide what you want to store and where – you only need easy access to the things you use regularly. Hire an architect if you're unsure, who'll suggest clever solutions. Architect Your Home (0800 849 8505; architect-yourhome.com) offers fixed-fee design visits and can be commissioned on a pay-as-you-go basis.

THE STAIRS

An obvious place to build in storage is around your staircase. Consider making the structure itself into open or closed storage. Mark Dyson from Enclosure Architects (020 8469 1969; enclosure.org.uk) recommends fitting drawers beneath the treads. 'In place of functionless vertical risers, fit pull-out drawers that make great storage for shoes,' he says. This is easiest if you're working with a new feature, but can also be fitted once the staircase has been installed.

There are other options for adding storage to an existing staircase. If you have wide treads, consider installing a wall of shallow bookshelves; you need between 15-20cm of depth for standard paperbacks. Or organise the void underneath the stairs into compartments; commission a carpenter to come up with a bespoke design. Pull-out panels are the optimum in efficiency and Deriba Furniture (020 8993 2866; deriba.co.uk) produces a range of pull-out units that hold up to 200kg in weight and can be customised to include coat cupboards or larder-style shelving.

DEAD SPACE

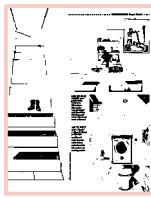
Homes are packed with wasted space that can be transformed into storage. These include under floors, around baths and

doorframes. 'The quality of the design of storage makes a huge difference in a small house,' says Sophie Goldhill of Liddicoat & Goldhill (020 7380 0977; liddicoatgoldhill.com). You saw their two-bedroom house a few months ago in *GDM*'s December issue; Goldhill and husband David Liddicoat designed storage into every available inch. The super-tiny downstairs WC – just 890mm wide – holds the washing machine in a cupboard behind the toilet. They also left out some bricks on the left-hand wall to make room for a sink and toilet-roll holder.

STRUCTURAL SOLUTIONS

'The principal place that gets forgotten is in between stud walls,' says Dyson. There's at least 10cm of depth in a stud wall, and it can easily be opened up and fitted with shallow shelves. Dyson recommends using a stud wall in the kitchen to store slim containers. In a bathroom, stud walls are usually about 20cm thick to allow for drainage, so a recessed cabinet is another space-saving solution. MDF is suitable for lining stud walls, but Dyson suggests using a solid laminate sheet such as Trespa or block board for the shelves, as they're more resistant to sagging.

Architect Chris Romer-Lee of Studio Octopi (020 7633 0003; octopi.co.uk) refurbished a Victorian home by exposing the frame to create space for a collection of design objects (pictured above). 'We stripped back layers of house to expose the timber studwork, which set out where the shelves would sit,' explains Romer-Lee. He inserted grey-painted MDF boxes into the holes. 'Their simple spec means they do not take away from the grandeur of the structure,' he says. Romer-Lee recommends always consulting an engineer for this kind of work as you are working with the bones of the building. Findanengineer.com will help you find a chartered structural engineer in your area. →



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above This dining table folds up to provide extra living space. The stools in this modular lacquered MDF unit, by architect Rob Gregory at around £6,000, are stored underneath

right Very short of square metreage, architects Liddicoat and Goldhill used the void under the stairs, which backs on to the downstairs WC, to house the washing machine

James Balston; Julian Lanoce; Jefferson Smith

