

10 things to love

More in Less

There's small—and then there's really small, like this 534-square-foot home. Steal the tricks that make it live big.

BY JODY GARLOCK | PHOTOS EDMUND BARR
PRODUCED BY LYNN NESMITH AND JESSICA THOMAS

1 MIRROR MAGIC
Old mirrors work space-enhancing charm—with a perk. “Antique glass is a nice way to open up a room without feeling like you’re staring at yourself,” homeowner and designer Doug Davis says.





AT HOME WITH Doug Davis, an interior designer in the Birmingham, Alabama, area.

MY GOAL Something casual and easy that would make the space feel bigger.

TRICK FOR SMALL-HOUSE LIVING Using a consistent color palette throughout, like all neutrals. Then you add pops of color here and there to make things interesting.

WHAT I LEARNED In a small house, you have to grab storage space wherever you can find a little hole. You also learn to prioritize and only bring in things you love.



SMART MONEY Keep big pieces neutral for flexibility and longevity.



2 SO VERSATILE A dresser is a media console and, with drawers removed, a bookcase. "It's also like a mantel, giving me a place to create a focal point," Doug says.

3 AIR TIME Exposed-leg furniture airs out the living room. An exception: the skirted sofa. Without it, the leggy pieces would look as if they were ready to walk.



SEAMLESS LOOK
Match curtains to walls for easy flow—no visual stops-and-starts here.

SUBTLE SHIFT
Yes, a neutral can read as color. This chair in khaki proves the point.

MIMIC THIS
A glass-top coffee table is another way to avoid a solid mass in front of a sofa.

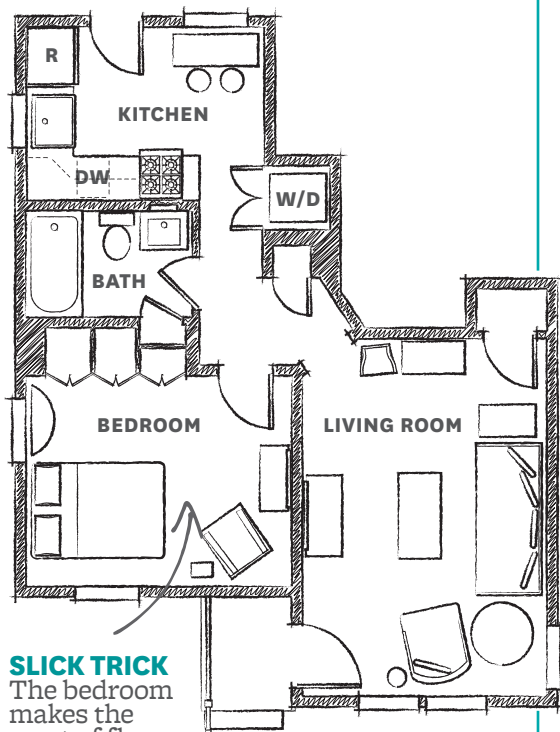
“I wanted a blank canvas to keep rooms open. The trick is to subtly mix different shades of white to create interest.”
Doug Davis

4 LAYER PLAY
A patterned area rug can make a small space look busy. Doug’s trick: a small antique rug layered on top of a large jute one, both in quiet neutrals.

5 FADE AWAY
A wire mesh coffee table adds function and texture. “It’s the same effect as a Lucite piece in that it’s almost invisible,” Doug says.



The 1942 bungalow was built as housing for shopkeepers and teachers. The floor plan is traditional in that the kitchen is at the back of the house; the meandering layout is less conventional. Updates include a stacked washer and dryer in a closet off the kitchen and a wall of built-ins in the bedroom. Learn how to maximize your home's storage at BHG.com/SmallStorage featuring tips specifically for small spaces.



SLICK TRICK
The bedroom makes the most of floor space with trim furniture and deep built-ins, including one that can be accessed from the bath.

ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS GLOWACKI

6 SHOWY SURFACES
Doug dressed up the 8×11-foot kitchen with marble counters and a mosaic tile backsplash that runs to the ceiling. “It makes the room feel a whole lot nicer than it probably is,” he says.

7 PRO STYLE
Slimmed-down appliances, including a 24-inch-wide gas range and a 27-inch-wide fridge, give the kitchen an unexpected gourmet quality. Bonus: Stainless steel lightens and brightens. The apron-front sink is another small-space surprise.

8 ENHANCED VIEW
Ribbed glass (rather than clear glass or solid doors) becomes built-in decoration in a hard-to-decorate space. Inside, everyday dishes stand out like display pieces.



REIMAGINE
Salvaged window trim with hooks makes a kitchen rack.



TRY IT!
Rounded pieces—like a demilune table—allow more move-around space.



SLY STORAGE

A 4-inch-deep filler piece of cabinetry by the range is a spice and glass rack.

9 EAT, PREP, WORK

A restaurant work table is a dining table, countertop, and desk rolled into one. The wire basket and wooden crate? Doug's portable pantry. Backless stools keep things visually light.

10 FOUND STORAGE

Built-ins save the day in any storage-starved home. Doug went between studs to gain to-the-ceiling storage on a bedroom wall (where a small closet was). A mix of drawers and cabinets outfitted with rods and shelves optimizes function. It's Doug's primary stash spot; his printer and office supplies live here. ■