



Hints For The Home

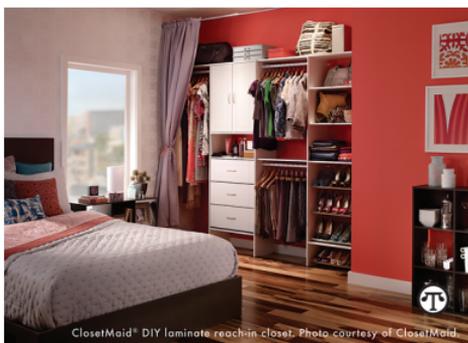
Living Large In Small Spaces

(NAPSA)—From sky-rise lofts to tiny-size apartments, there are innovative and ingenious ways to get the most out of your space with organizational solutions that beat those small-space blues.

Today, many new homes and apartments are designed smaller with affordability in mind, as Americans cut back on everything from personal spending to the size of their homes. Several recent studies from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) indicate that the days of the “McMansion” are over, as consumers look to downsize.

In fact, the average size of new single-family homes in America is now about 2,438 square feet and 46 percent of first-time homebuyers purchased homes smaller than 1,500 square feet, according to the NAHB. As homes continue to shrink in size, storage becomes a real challenge.

Fortunately, you can maximize the living space you have by converting special-use rooms into highly functional rooms that can be used frequently, such as a mudroom, multipurpose living room or an outdoor living space. Don't forget about those unused nooks and crannies, which can be ideal areas for adding extra storage space. For example, an underutilized alcove can be turned into a customized reach-in closet with a ClosetMaid® do-it-yourself laminate system.



ClosestMaid® DIY laminate reach-in closet. Photo courtesy of ClosetMaid.

You don't need a lot of space for home decor that makes a big impression.

An overdecorated small space can look cramped, so cut the clutter. If you can't get rid of it, hide it by supplementing the furnishings you already own with pieces that double as storage. Built-in seating in the dining room can add much-needed storage while accommodating extra dinner guests. Affordable and stylish options include ClosetMaid Cubeicals®, which come in 2-, 6-, 8- and 9-square designs. They can be placed under the window or used as a side table by the couch and even as a mini entertaining area.

Finally, define the areas in your abode and consider furniture that fits the scale of the room. An accessory such as a mirror can become the focal point of a room. It also adds dimension by reflecting natural and artificial light.

To find out how you can create your own unique storage and organization solutions, visit www.closetmaid.com or call (800) 874-0008.