

SMALL SPACE SOLUTIONS

A little imagination can help transform a modest room into a majestic retreat

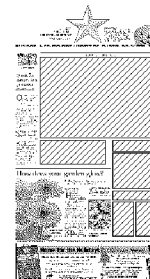
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YOU'D really like to live in a warm and welcoming space. But you're on a shoestring budget.

And the only place that you can afford is small — some would say tiny.

Do not despair. Most folks start out in very modest digs, and there are plenty of ways to make tight spaces and inexpensive furnishings spell home.



Here are 12 ways to turn your humble abode into a castle, thanks to Cara Christian with IKEA Houston, Desiree Banks with RoomStore Furniture in San Antonio and Elaine Williamson of Elaine Williamson Designs in Dallas.

1 Paint. It may be the cheapest and most effective way to make things look fresh and new.

2 Before you go out and buy furniture, take a good look at what you have. Don't be afraid to move things around or use pieces in new ways.

3 Go through every room in your home and get rid of clutter. Less is more.

4 If space is at a premium, go up. Invest in tall storage cabinets and bookcases.

5 Make sure the furniture you buy is to scale. King-size beds or massive couches or chairs can crowd a room.

6 If the small living room has a bright focal point — say a cherry red love seat — use pillows and other accessories.
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cent pieces that are muted, say blacks, whites and grays.

7 Buy shelving designed to fit in corners.

8 Focus on function. Think about what you're going to do in each room of your home, and furnish accordingly.

9 If you have kids, help them keep their things organized with clothes hampers, baskets, drawers and closets.

10 Don't worry about matchy-matchy. That's old school.

11 Buy a few houseplants. If you take care of them, they'll add grace and beauty to your home.

12 Experiment with mirrors. They can give a room both depth and dimension.

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IKEA

LOOK UP: Think vertically with shelves and displays to make the most of a small space.