

INSIGHT

Making the most of a small bedroom

If you're keen to maximise a particularly cosy bedroom like Stephanie and Ludovic Riglet, consider these points first



Even the most humble of box rooms can be a comfortable bedroom, and clever use of furniture can turn it into a multifunctional space, too. Careful planning and a dash of inspiration are all that's needed.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

The key to a successful compact bedroom is to create adequate storage within a functional layout. Often in a small guest room, a couple of large, hard-working pieces of furniture will achieve a less cluttered look than several small pieces. Consider how the space can serve more than one function, such as doubling up as a workstation. Try incorporating a wall bed instead of a traditional sofa bed. It takes a standard mattress, can offer greater comfort, and will fold away completely to look like a wardrobe or cabinet. If you have adequate ceiling height, consider bespoke options, such as a simple mezzanine incorporating a sleeping area on a raised platform with a wardrobe or shelving below.

FORM AND FUNCTION

Another option is to go for a statement bed and little else, as the Riglets have done. If you follow this route, use a bed that incorporates storage. Debra McQuin at McQuin Partnership suggests creative thinking. 'If there's no space for a headboard, then paint one on the wall and use wall-mounted lights,' she says. And in all bedrooms, small or large, a sense of luxury comes from a good mattress and high thread-count sheets. These make the most difference to a sense of well-being.'

EXPERT EYE

'No matter how small your bedroom is, a chair is always practical. If it seems to eat too much space, consider opting for something less obtrusive such as a Ghost chair by Philippe Starck.'

NICOLA HOLDEN, NICOLA HOLDEN DESIGNS

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE...



● 'Play up to a room's assets. If it's small and dark, don't try to change it, opt for a cosy feel instead. And don't be afraid to place a large piece of furniture in a compact space. It will look much better than a number of smaller pieces.'

- Maximise storage by choosing clever multifunctional furniture, using the walls and height of the room as well as the floor space.
- Provide one or two key focal points to draw the eye to the outer areas of the room, for example a striking piece of artwork, or headboard covered in stunning fabric.
- Lighting helps to visually maximise the space. You could try lighting the narrower sides of the room to provide a sense of width, with wall lights or tiltable recessed spotlights. Choose lampshades that allow light to reflect upwards if you have a low ceiling.
- When it comes to wooden flooring, use visual tricks to provide a sense of width or length. It can be laid diagonally to make a room appear wider, or run it parallel to the longest wall to elongate the space. Buy wide planks as they look less confining.
- Make sure furniture isn't too bulky. Transparent surfaces and open structures will give the impression of an item taking less space.
- Think about the entrance door - if you can't re-hang it so that it opens away from the room, consider installing sliding pocket doors that don't eat into the usable space.'

MARY BARBER FRAY, MARY BARBER FRAY INTERIOR DESIGN

ADDRESS BOOK

- **BRITISH INSTITUTE OF INTERIOR DESIGN**
020 7349 0800, biid.org.uk.
Professional organisation for UK interior designers.
- **HOW TO LIVE IN SMALL SPACES,**
TERENCE CONRAN
£19.99, Conran Octopus

A practical reference book, which has plenty of tips and ideas for compact living, as well as inspiring photography.

- **BONBON**
020 7823 9090, bonbon.co.uk.
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