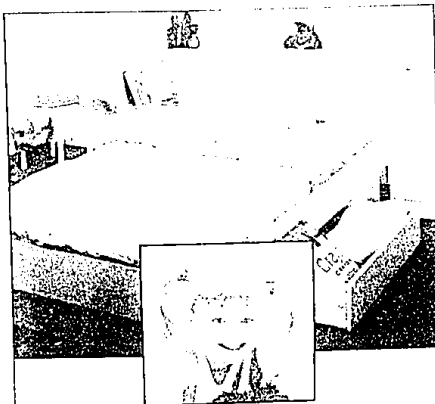




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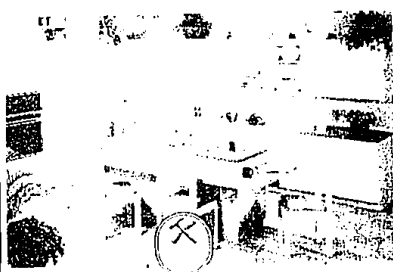
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Space wars

Here's some ideas to make small space big on livability

HOORAY FOR small spaces. Thanks to the high cost of housing and a renewed interest in city living, small is chic and bigger is not necessarily better anymore.

Lack of space isn't a decorating roadblock for creative home owners and tenants who seek new ways to make their small spaces great spaces. And today more than ever, they have the interior design industry on their team.

Furniture designers have gotten in on the act, creating a new wave of furniture designed to provide flexibility and storage as well as add beauty to the home, from entertainment centers to sophisticated shelving systems to the newly popular Murphy bed.

Meanwhile, contractors and architects constantly are seeking new ways to add space through remodeling — knocking out a wall here, adding a raised platform or loft there — to make the most of every square inch.

Whether you choose to increase your space structurally or visually — or simply scale down your decorating scheme to fit the room, these tactics can help make any room that's short on space one that's big on innovation and livability.

• To open up a small space, decorate in lighter, brighter colors. Besides paint, use upholstered furniture in white and soft shades to make a room appear bigger.

• Explore the latest home furnishings by browsing through the pages of decorating magazines, stores and showrooms. Many people don't realize just how far furniture design has come in the last decade, especially in the area of flexible design.

(For instance, Carlson's of High Point makes a "gravity chair," which shifts from an arched ottoman into a lounge with various positions and a sleek contemporary design — an update on the old-fashioned recliner. Modular units and double-duty ottomans provide plenty of sitting space, yet don't gobble up the room.)

• Take a tape measure with you when shopping. What your eye sees on an open floor may be too big when you bring it to a small room.

• Consider glass tables in a room that otherwise may appear cluttered — such as a small dining room or breakfast nook. Glass tables appear to take up next to no space at all, yet are functional.

• Create the illusion of more space with mirrors — either by covering a wall with them or hanging them at eye level.

• For a small living room area, add the new occasional tables that actually slide over a sofa cushion and take up no floor space. If you move into a larger space, they can be used as side tables.

• With furniture in small spaces, less is definitely more. Don't worry about filling up every corner of the room — instead, choose a few knockout pieces for decorating drama.

• It also helps if furniture can serve two purposes. Upholstered chairs have a versatile look as appropriate in a living room as a dining room, enabling you to have just one set of chairs. What is a couch by day can be a bed by night with futons, daybeds and sofa beds.

• In a small space, surprise the senses with bright color such as a

Please turn to Page 12

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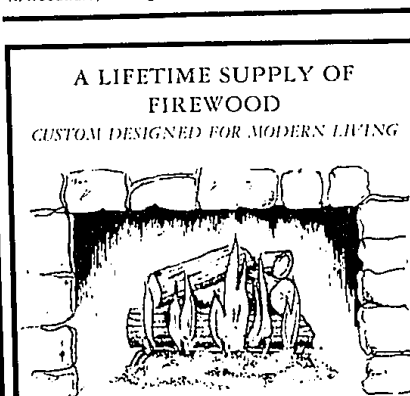
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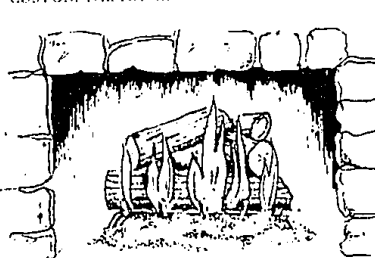
Infinite view

This unusual wall mirror is made of two round components connected by a steel tube frame which may rotate by 180 degrees. The small mirror, with a lens on a side, may rotate by 360 degrees. It's available at Arkitektura, 800 N. Woodward, Birmingham.



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