



What is a couch by day can be a bed by night with a daybed, such as this antique brass design covered in floral chintz.

Ideas for increased livability

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yellow, green, orange or purple sofa. Color will become the focal point of the room, and deflect the eye from the smallness of your environment. However, be sure to invest in the finest quality you can and choose a timeless design, such as one with soft styling and tailoring.

- Use area rugs to define space on a shiny hardwood or tile floor. Create "walls" with dividers and screens. Or, use a glass etagere or open shelving system as a divider, an etagere does double-duty for storage and display, while giving an airy look to your living environment.

- Light-colored wall-to-wall carpet can increase the appearance and feeling of spaciousness — especially when used with furnishings of the same shade. A soft, monochromatic color scheme highlighted with a plush saxony texture softens a room's sharp angles and diffuses light.

- Carpet also can help to increase apparent space when used as a construction material. By covering simple, geometrical structures with the same dense carpet used on the floor, you can create a bed platform, a sofa base, extra seating or a table. Used in a living/dining room area, a raised dining platform can gracefully divide the two spaces, helping to give each a distinct personality.

- Use whatever space you have creatively. With the help of an interior designer or contractor, a nook can become a home office, a windowed alcove, a small sitting room or an unused closet a sewing space.

- Search your home for hidden storage possibilities. There often is space behind the drywall and paneling in your home between the two-by-four studs to which the finished walls are attached. If you're a handy do-it-yourselfer (or with the help of a skilled contractor), you can create bookshelves, cubbyholes for knickknacks, even a second medicine closet.

- Replace an ordinary window with a bay window for a decorative sitting niche.

- Rather than hiding behind doors, storage areas now are being integrated into the total design of the room, thus taking advantage of spaces that normally would be ignored. Some examples: open bookshelves; armoires; free-standing closets; nesting tables; platform beds; and bedside cabinets.

- Mini-blinds and shades take up virtually no space.

- Shine light on small spaces with wall-mounted lamps that never need a table. Uplighting with tracks or torchieres can push the ceilings and walls outward.

- Finally, make the most of what you have. If your closet is overflowing, give a closet customizer a call — most guarantee they can double your existing space through shelves, bars, storage units and wall attachments. Or, do it yourself with supplies from your favorite retailer.

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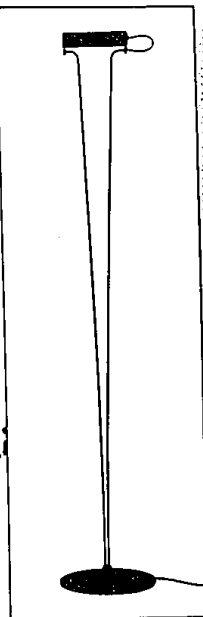
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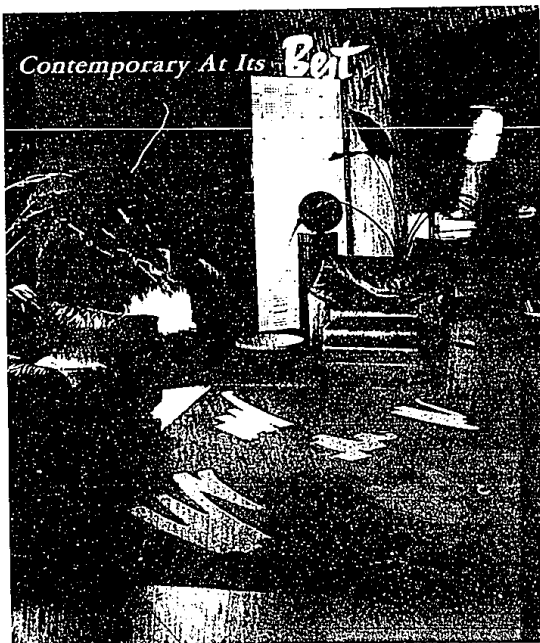
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