

GRAND DESIGNS

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SMALL SPACES TURN YOUR SHOEBOX INTO A SHOWSTOPPER

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Who William and Ann Tozer, whose Bloomsbury, central London abode is a compact flat with less than 10sqm of floor space, which has been successfully transformed from a poly, one-bedroom property into a light-filled, two-bedroom home.
Book 10pm Tue month
Budget: £90,000
Architects William Tozer (020 7734 0022; wtoz@on.co.uk)



SPACE MAN

WHERE OTHER POTENTIAL BUYERS JUST SAW A COMPACT FLAT, WILLIAM TOZER SPOTTED THE CHANCE TO GET CREATIVE WITH THE LAYOUT

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This picture by introducing several external walls and relocating the kitchen, William (pictured opposite) has created lots of space, stretching from one end of flat to the other. Vertical lighting, lights and clever lighting create the impression of space.

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Just a few streets away from the hustle of London's Sutton Road, it's something of a surprise to stumble across a quiet residential area where the canopy of car horns is little more than a distant hum. Tucked away on one such side street is a row of traditional mansion blocks, inside of which lies William and Ann Tozer's compact flat. It was the appeal of 24-hour city living that drew them here. 'We'd been renting a flat in Soho for about six years and were on the lookout for our first home,' recalls William. 'We wanted to stay in central London so it was a question of finding something we could afford.' As is so often the case for first-time buyers, that meant buying something fairly small and in need of work.

After initially viewing what is now their home, William, a successful architect with his own practice, was confident that even with less than 10sqm of space to play with, he could rethink the layout and turn the small one-bedroom flat into a two-bedroom pad with plenty to show for it. And this he has done, showing that there's no reason why a tiny pied-à-terre in the city shouldn't, given the right treatment, feel incredibly light and spacious.

'In any of my projects, there's always one central idea that drives the whole thing forward,' explains William. 'Here, it was a question of creating one big, open space. We did this by introducing long views, stretching from one end of the flat to the

other.' The flat originally had a small lobby area with a corridor leading directly to the bathroom, and the kitchen was located where the second bedroom is now. By removing several of these internal walls he was able to create one main living space, with the kitchen as a self-contained 'pod' where the corridor used to be.

With the kitchen relocated to its new spot in the main living space, William started to think about creating the illusion of light and space. In the area above the kitchen cabinets, he fitted mirrors and then lit the space with fluorescent tubes. This tricks you into thinking you can see through into the adjoining room, a feature which is replicated on the other side of the wall above the wardrobes.

The lighting effects don't stop there, either. Industrial-looking garden lamps fixed to the wall in the main living area and bathroom are used to create various effects. Tilted upwards, they cast a bright light across the ceiling to mimic the effect of natural daylight – a welcome addition on a damp and grey afternoon. 'I've always loved building sites more than finished buildings,' explains William. 'There's too much certainty to a finished project. Items such as the garden lamps, old floor and stark white walls give this place an unfinished feel, as if it's a work in progress.'

Stripping the flat back to a bare shell also allowed William to play with the ceiling heights and floor levels. 'These subtle changes manipulate your sense of space, helping to define each area and making you believe there might be several other rooms hidden around the next corner. Dual ceiling levels in the bedroom draw your eyes upwards, giving...



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As most of us know, small spaces can be difficult to design. The secret of success is to think about how you can make the most of the space you have. Here are some tips to help you get started.

WILLIAM'S TIPS FOR SMALL-SPACE LIVING

- 1. Use mirrors to create the illusion of space.
- 2. Use vertical lighting to draw the eye upwards.
- 3. Use dual ceiling levels to create a sense of depth.
- 4. Use industrial-style lamps to create a sense of character.
- 5. Use built-in shelving to maximize storage.
- 6. Use a mix of materials to add texture and interest.
- 7. Use a neutral color palette to make the space feel larger.
- 8. Use a mix of furniture styles to create a sense of personality.
- 9. Use a mix of lighting to create a sense of atmosphere.
- 10. Use a mix of textures to create a sense of depth.



CLUTTER CLAMPDOWN
William Tozer has a simple rule: if it's not necessary, it's not wanted. He has removed all unnecessary items from the flat, leaving only what he needs to live. This has helped to create a sense of space and calm.

"perfectly formed home"
"creative with the layout"
"subtle changes manipulate your sense of space"
"clever lighting"