

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

storage solutions

COUNTRY COLLECTIBLES™ #74 • 2013

EXPERT SECRETS
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176
WAYS TO CUT CLUTTER & STAY ORGANIZED

TACKLE TOUGH SPACES

- * Laundry
- * Garage
- * Home Office

WHAT WORKS!

Kid's Room • Kitchen • Basement

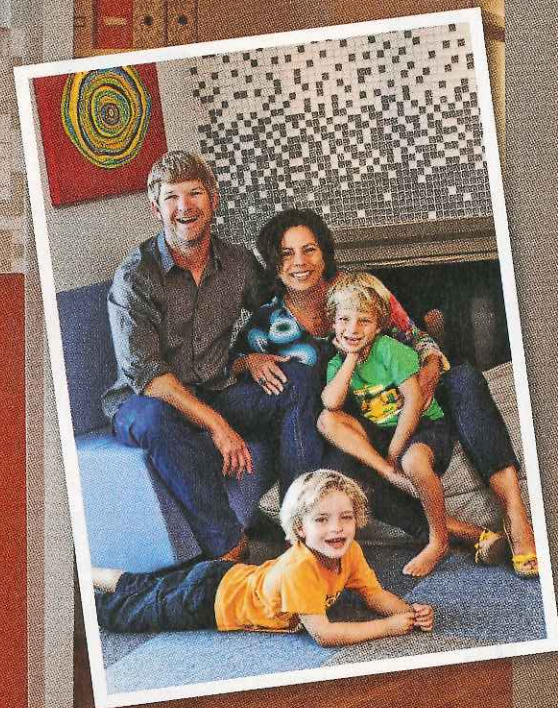
Experts Double Your Closet Space

Display Until April 29, 2013

\$9.95



IN short ORDER



This ingenious family makes keeping order look easy.



Pushing the sofa away from the wall allowed space for this lookcase.

ARTISTIC BOOKS Adjustable bookshelves store the family's enormous book collection while adding a floor-to-ceiling montage of color. That's because they're sorted by hue. Kristy put light-color tomes at the top to give the illusion of a higher ceiling.

SPACE BOOSTER
BOTTOM SHELF At only 12 inches wide, this customized coffee table does its job without interrupting the traffic flow to the backyard swimming pool. A suspended shelf increases real estate for books.



SOOTHING SPACE By concentrating storage in the adjacent kitchen, the family enjoys a living room that looks and feels like a haven. Kristy teamed low-profile furniture with artwork hung near the ceiling to make the room feel bigger.

Use a ceiling-high fireplace surround with light-color tiles near the top to visually lift a low ceiling.

Living smart

When Kristy and Martin Kropat bought their compact San Diego home, the couple identified savvy storage as a priority. That's because the 1,400-square-foot home had to serve a family of four, plus hold burgeoning collections of art, books, records, and toys. So the couple reimagined the house inside and out. Their first project? Transforming the front yard into an engaging outdoor room. Kristy and Martin then turned a dark kitchen into a light-

filled space open to an artful living room. They transformed underutilized closets into a home office. Both the master bedroom and family room gained functionality when outfitted with storage-smart furniture. And the couple's two boys learned to share when their separate bedrooms became a single room for sleeping and a second one for playing. "You have to be practical about how you live," says Kristy, an interior designer. "The benefit of designing a home for yourself is that you understand exactly what type of storage you need."



“We are constantly purging stuff. That's really critical for keeping things in order when you live in a smaller house.”

—Homeowner/designer
KRISTY KROPAT

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* Hidden Genius

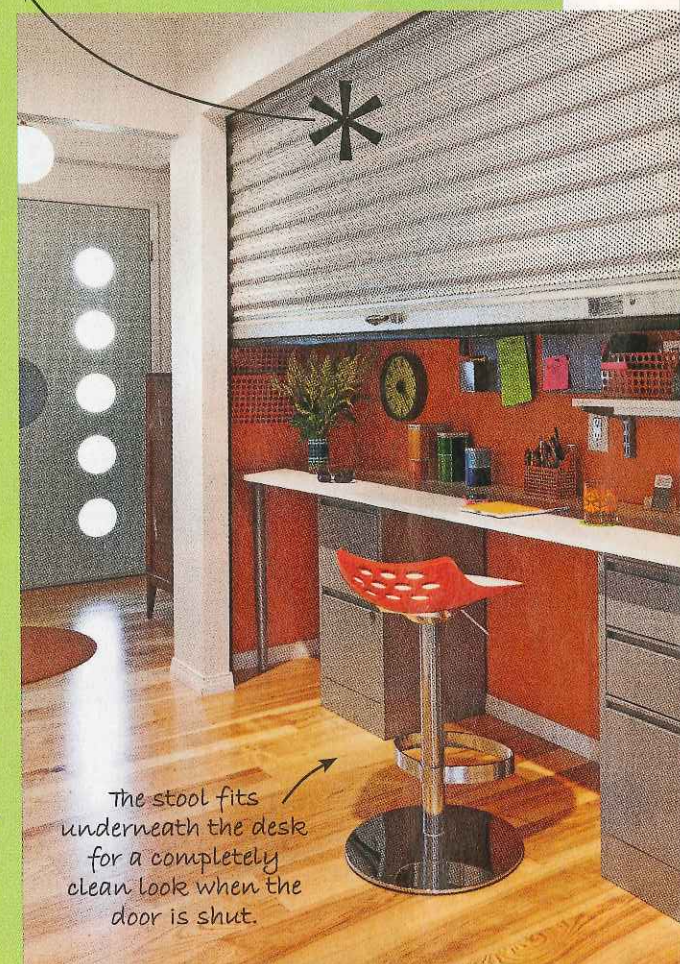
(FRONT ENTRY)

To upgrade the front entry, Kristy teamed the original amber-glass sidelight with a custom wood-slab door. Five glass circles add mid-century style that can be admired from the home office inside.



(HIDEAWAY HALL OFFICE)

Merging a coat closet and furnace room let the Kropats create a smart home office near the front door. (The furnace was moved to the attic). After gutting the now 10-foot-wide space, the Kropats added the necessary wiring and phone line, shelving, and a desk made from a stock top supported by table legs and file cabinets. The custom roll-up metal door lets them access the entire space, plus can be closed quickly to hide clutter. "Installing the door was tricky," Kristy recalls, because the office is so shallow; such doors are usually installed in industrial areas.



The stool fits underneath the desk for a completely clean look when the door is shut.

(ART SMART)

Near the hall office, magnetic strips create a space-efficient art gallery with a dynamic personality. "We change it every couple of weeks," Kristy says. "It's much more engaging than looking at the same framed family pictures all the time."



Eat & Relax With the kitchen open to the living room, it needed to be stylish as well as storage smart. Among the clever ideas: **□ Upper cabinet doors** hinge from the top and open straight up, making contents easy to access. Frosted glass obscures clutter. **□ Deep drawers** replace base cabinets, making more efficient use of available space. The corner cabinet includes a Lazy Susan. **□ A microwave-hood** does double the work in the same amount of space. By choosing white cabinets and appliances, the microwave blends into the background, Kristy says.



WHITE DONE RIGHT Sleek white cabinets, white appliances, and being open to the adjoining living room make this compact kitchen feel larger. Kristy limited her use of upper cabinets in order to give the room an airy feel.



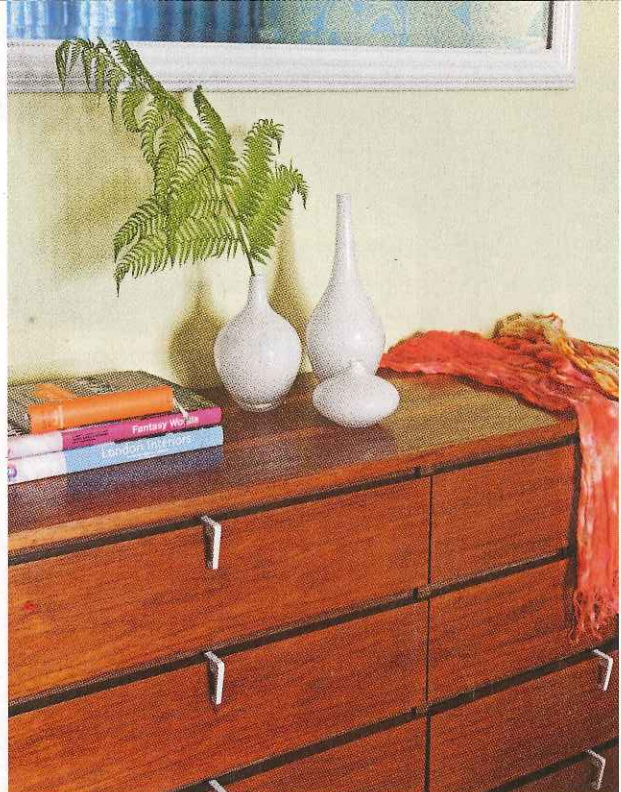
DOUBLE DUTY Family-room furniture works hard to keep chaos under control. The coffee table and end table feature mix-and-match cubes that stow blankets, TV remotes, magazines, and other clutter. A corner bookshelf corrals albums, books, and cushions that top the coffee table to create extra seating. Floor cushions tuck under the bench when not being used.

*** Hidden Genius**
(SKINNY-MINI POCKET SHELVES)

Even a few inches can do a lot. Here a small vertical space between the dishwasher and trash pull-out keeps trays organized.



BEHIND CLOSED DOORS Kristy stores shopping bags in the end table next to the sofa. Found on Craig's List, the sofa was reupholstered with cushions shortened in the process to give the piece a custom look.



Sleep tight Here's how Kristy maximized master bedroom storage without making the space feel cramped.

- ❑ **Space-efficient dresser** Kristy chose this long, low piece because it included eight drawers and accommodated the mirror she wanted to hang. "Huge pieces of furniture make a room look smaller," she says.
- ❑ **Hard-working platform bed** Six integrated drawers and a bench for storing shoes help the custom-designed bed keep clothing and extra bed linens stowed out of sight.
- ❑ **Hidden closet** To disguise the clothes closet, Kristy removed its three doors and instead added drapes that stretched across to the slider. The drapes match those that hang in front of the window.



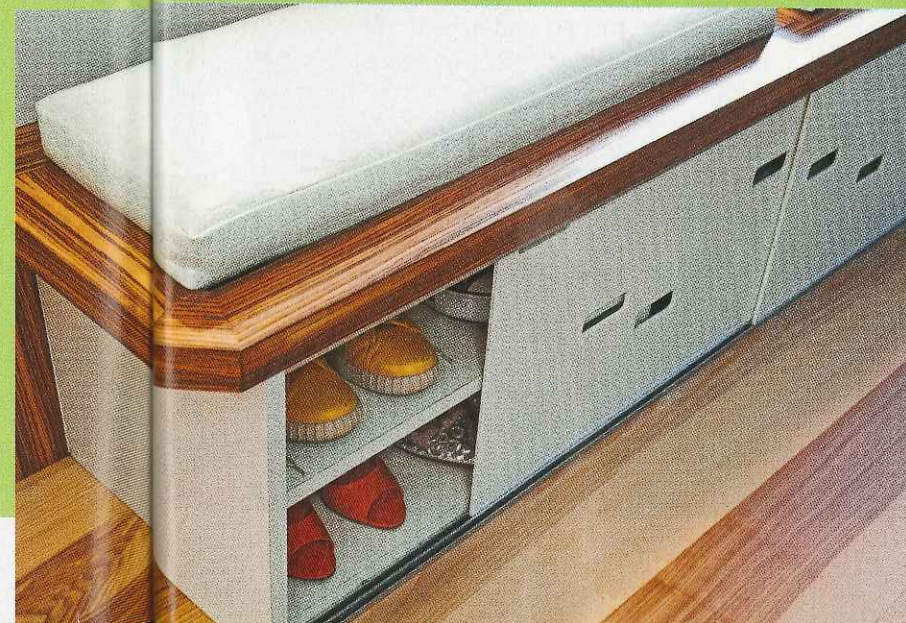
bright idea!
Brilliant walls and curtains supply color and pattern.

NATURALLY SERENE
Visual clutter is kept to a minimum in the master bedroom by maintaining a neutral palette in the main furnishings. Natural wood tones outline the large white bed and matching wall-mounted nightstand, natural leather cushions the chair, and a stained wood dresser adds warm notes against a side wall.

* Hidden Genius

(UNDER-BED STORAGE)

To complement the master bedroom's inadequate closet storage, Kristy added a custom-built platform bed that accommodates six deep storage drawers underneath—three on each side. Each white-painted oak drawer includes three sections to keep bathing suits, gloves, hats, scarves, purses, bags, linens, and more under control. On both sides of the bed, a floating nightstand is positioned to let the storage drawer beside it pull all the way out.



(END-OF-BED BENCH)

At the foot of the bed, the zebrawood frame extends to create a dual-duty bench. A pair of upholstered cushions offers a comfy spot on top for putting on shoes or chatting with the kids. Below, shelves for shoes are disguised by sliding panels.

(CUTOUT HANDLES)

Kristy added cutouts on the storage bench panels, drawers, and headboard as a design element. The cutouts double as handles for the panels and drawers, the latter of which are mounted on wheels for easy access.



TWICE AS NICE Instead of giving each boy his own room, Kristy created a sleeping room and a playroom. The former includes both beds, and a bookcase (unseen). "That way they can read before going to bed without any distractions," she says.

Play time!

Two active young sons benefit from Kristy's design savvy. Here's how.

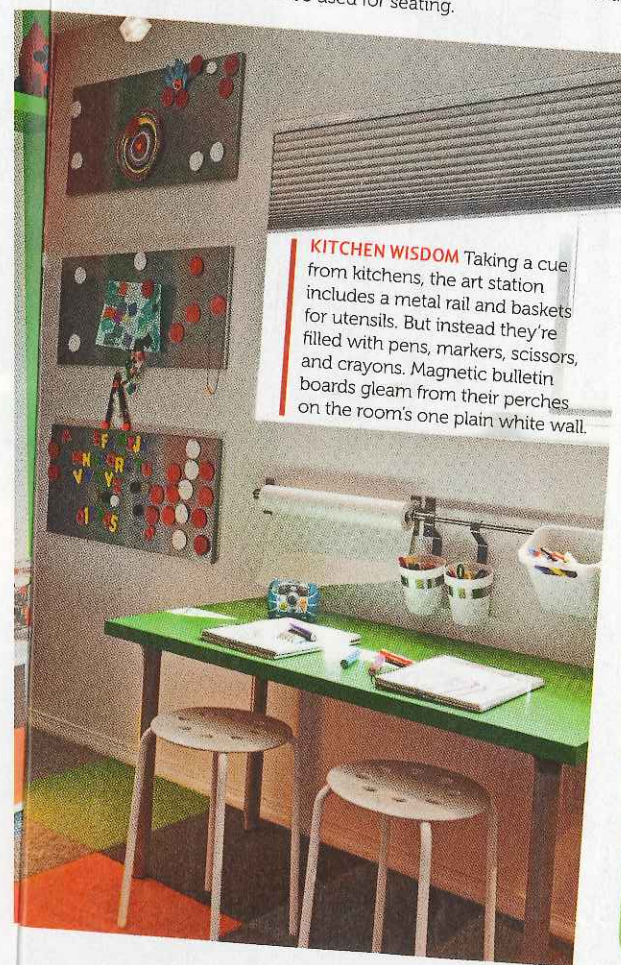
❑ **Twin beds** are designed so that the trundle bed can be turned 90 degrees and tucked underneath the higher bed to increase play space.

❑ **A separate playroom** is outfitted with tons of storage for toys and books, plus display shelves for three-dimensional artwork.

❑ **An art station** in the playroom keeps the boys entertained while making sure supplies stay neat and tidy.



FOCUS ON FUN Dominated by storage options, the brightly striped room makes it easier for Kristy to keep toys organized. Rows of shelves hold baskets and bins that keep playthings in order. The storage cubes on the floor can also be used for seating.

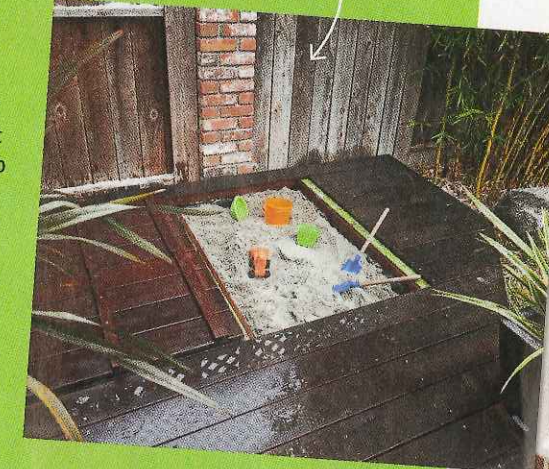


KITCHEN WISDOM Taking a cue from kitchens, the art station includes a metal rail and baskets for utensils. But instead they're filled with pens, markers, scissors, and crayons. Magnetic bulletin boards gleam from their perches on the room's one plain white wall.

* Hidden Genius

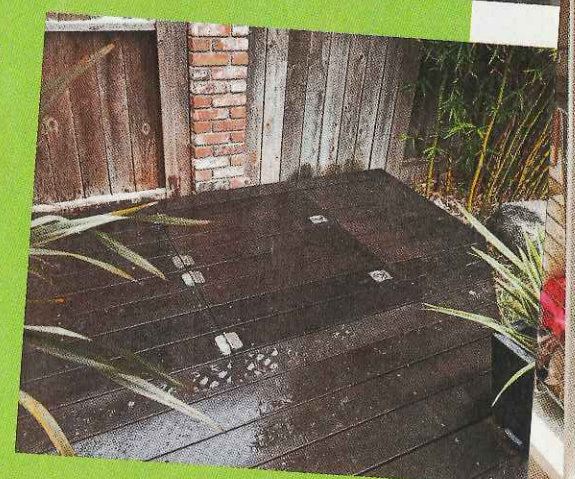


(HIDDEN SANDBOX) Because their backyard is all about the pool, Kristy and Martin wanted to turn the front yard into a play space. So they added a fence and deck with an integrated sandbox.



(PLAY TIME) Most of the deck is devoted to seating. But near the fence, the Kropats added a cut-out just large enough for a mortar-mixing tub full of sand. With the hinged door open, kids can play with shovels, buckets, and other sandbox toys.

(PARTY TIME) When Kristy and Martin entertain, they can shut the sandbox door and use the entire deck. "Plus, the door keeps cats out of the sand," she says.



“ This house is small and we have two little boys. We use every space possible. ”

—Homeowner/designer KRISTY KROPAT