



Storage helps tenants keep the house tidy

EVERY THING IN ITS PLACE

Better storage can make your rental more appealing and easier to keep clean and tidy, says **Vicki Holder**



THE RESENE EASY DECORATING GUIDE

WHEN IT COMES to messy rental properties, you can't always blame the tenants. Many small city apartments just don't provide enough storage. And there was no such thing as a culture of consumerism when those big, old character homes were built. Nowadays we all have so much stuff it's a challenge to keep a home tidy. But if you're clever with spaces, you can pack in a whole lot of neat storage solutions to help attract better tenants with higher living standards – and make sure your rentals remain looking good. It's a matter of identifying every wall, nook and cranny that's under-utilised.

HALLWAYS AND STAIRS

Entries and hallways become clutter magnets if you don't make use of wall space. Adding a built-in bookshelf can turn a useless area into a library. Space under stairs can become a big junk room unless

it's organised. Add built-in drawers under the staircase to make better use of space.

LIVING ROOMS

Install shelving to get things off the floor as well as making living areas appear larger. There are hundreds of different shelf units or individual shelves to choose from. Fit them into alcoves and corners of the room or fill an entire wall with stylish storage units. Try floating shelves without brackets from places like Mitre 10, Freedom Furniture, Lundia or MyFlatpack which sells reasonably-priced Ikea products. Many come in raw timber, so you can paint them to match the colours of your walls.

Some old homes have lovely bay windows with built-in window seats. These look pretty but they can be practical by creating concealed storage beneath the hinged, padded lid.

KITCHENS

In small kitchens, inadequate storage space can be frustrating. No wonder this is often the messiest room in the house. To maximise space, cabinets can be installed below the bench as well as above the bench, utilising the full ceiling height. Shelving up by the ceiling around the perimeter of the room is a great way to squeeze in extra storage while keeping items out of view.

Make sure there are enough shelves inside the cabinets to store as many dishes as possible as well as hooks to hang towels and utensils. Attach wire organisers to the inside of cabinet doors to store small package items.

Every part of the kitchen should be viewed as potential storage, even space between cabinets and the floor. Toe-kick cupboards are becoming popular. You can even buy hidden fold-up ladders that stow away beneath cabinets for climbing up to



Storage solutions don't need to be expensive



Floating shelves look clean and neat

or outside of cabinet doors in Resene Magnetic Magic and finish with a Resene topcoat. The surface can be used for magnets to hold invites and notes in place.

BATHROOMS

Storage space can be found inside cavity construction walls. These spaces are a handy bonus in small bathrooms or kitchens as they're just the right depth for bottles, tins and soaps.

BEDROOMS

Wardrobes with a single rod across them are wasteful. To use all parts of the space, purchase wardrobe storage organisers or have them custom-designed. Add shelves above the clothes for stacked clothing and more shelves lower down for shoes.

A good way to almost double the floor area of an apartment bedroom is to build a mezzanine floor for the bed with a built-in ladder giving easy access. To make it as self-effacing as possible, paint the mezzanine the same colour as walls.

ROOF AND FLOOR CAVITIES

Goods that don't get much use every day like suitcases or old treasures can go into unused spaces like roof or floor cavities. Sellwood supply fold-away stairs for access to the vast storage between the ceiling and roof. The fold-away stair frame is simply screwed into the frame of the roof hatch in the ceiling. Space under decks or verandas is ideal for garden tools or children's bikes. It's cheap and simple to add a door to give your tenants have access to this handy area.

For investors, good storage means looking for ways to increase and expand available space in rentals, without having to fork out big dollars. If you're considering renovating, don't waste the opportunity to pack in as much storage as possible. ■

storage on the tallest shelves.

No matter how slim the cupboard it can be better utilised with pull-outs. In older style cabinetry, drawers don't usually run the full length of a cabinet space. Pull-outs are a super-efficient way of filling airspace. Every cupboard can have a pull-out solution behind it. Narrow vertical pull-outs around the oven give handy access to bottles and oven trays. Pull-outs even wrap around difficult areas like under the sink and waste disposal, making optimal use of one wasted space for detergents and cleaning cloths.

Traditional pantries have gone out of fashion as they waste space with gaping u-shaped shelves. Narrow, deep, full-height pull-out pantries can be fitted into minimal areas. Even built-in ironing boards can be neatly tucked away in a drawer that slides out and automatically extends when it's needed.

To remove clutter from benchtops, add rails to under-used walls to hang mugs, foil and wraps. Magnetic strips attached to the wall keep knives and spatulas tidy.

Here's a clever idea: paint the inside

TOE-KICK CUPBOARDS ARE BECOMING POPULAR