

DESIGN

→ Where there's a will, there's a way. Shallow vertical space in this apartment by architect Brad Schwartz is perfect for wine storage. Ceiling height cupboards make room for everything in this small apartment. Picture: Katherine Lu



# TOP SECRET storage ideas

There's storage space all around you, if you know where to look, writes Kirsten Craze

**S**o minimalism is not your thing and your home is still filled with items that "spark joy" after downsizing the Konmari way.

"There has been a lot of talk lately about decluttering and Marie Kondo, but that's not for everybody," says interior stylist Lauren Keenan who hosts the podcast Find It. Style It.

"At the end of the day, we're humans and we have stuff.

"Finding more storage solutions around the home can be simple, but be warned that once you have more storage you will find a way of filling it up."

Architect Brad Schwartz says the biggest challenge with creating more storage space is finding the perfect balance between functionality and design.

"The last thing you want is to be sitting in your lounge room and feeling like you're in a walk-in wardrobe," he says

Whether it is going up, better organising your current storage spaces, or buying multifunctional furniture, there most likely are storage spaces around the home you're not exploiting — yet.

### BEING BESPOKE

Lauren's advice is to stop and think before you shop.

"People often think they can just go and buy off-the-shelf solutions which could work, but there are a lot of ways you can customise storage options to really maximise the amount of space you have," she says.

The humble entertainment unit is a great starting point.

"Quite often it can be a large space in the living room, but so many people tend to buy a cabinet that is relatively small for the nook, then you just have dead space either side," she says.

Brad says custom-made cabinetry can be highly effective.

"If your joinery is doing multiple things, including storage, then it's working well for you," he says. "It could be a seat, or a desk, or a TV cabinet. That's an alternative approach to simply just putting cupboards in."

### HIGH EXPECTATIONS

While using the full height of a wall is practical, Brad says it's not as simple as just going up.

"You have to find the right balance. In a terrace house that's

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### SECRET SPACES

- \* **Exploiting cavities** Think under the stairs, behind kitchen kickboards and underneath bench seats for under used space.
- \* **Break it up** Simple dividers within larger storage spaces will help you stack your stuff and make it easier to access it when you want it.
- \* **Looking up** Attics can offer lots of storage. Just make sure your ladder is strong enough to take your weight — and what you're carrying.
- \* **Love it or lose it** Don't waste space on stuff you don't want. Decluttering is the best space saver.



already narrow, you won't want to be putting storage right over an entire wall because that's making the house even thinner," he says. Anoushka Allum, of Smart Space Interiors, says the space around a door is often under used. "In some small apartments, try building around a doorway and above it all the way to the ceiling," she says.

**TWICE AS NICE**

With space at a premium, multi-purpose furniture is on the rise. "Look for pieces with built-in storage such as a sofa that opens up, or a storage seat that sits at the end of your bed," Lauren says. Anoushka says it's surprising where you can find extra space. "Consider banquette seating in an eat-in kitchen, which can offer up a huge amount of storage underneath in a spot that would otherwise just be chairs around a table," she says. In the kitchen Anoushka says the trick is not necessarily finding more space, but better use of the existing footprint.

"I find people often struggle when moving from cupboards in older-style kitchens to drawers after a renovation," she says. "But it can be a practical way to store things such as small appliances and still have easy access." Drawers rule in wardrobes too. "Go wider with drawer space so you don't have to squash things in," she says. "Those larger spaces can be used more effectively than having additional shelves, or even more drawers." More: [smartspaceinteriors.com](http://smartspaceinteriors.com) [laurenkeenan.com.au](http://laurenkeenan.com.au) [bradswartz.com.au](http://bradswartz.com.au) [freedom.com.au](http://freedom.com.au) [kogan.com.au](http://kogan.com.au)

↑ Store out-of-season clothing and spare blankets under the Shangri-La bed from Kogan.  
 → It's not so unusual to include a washing machine in a well-designed bathroom but few are concealed as well as this, hidden in a vanity by Smart Space Interiors.



← Look for storage space outside, such as in this deck area designed by Luigi Rosselli Architects.  
 ↑ A mix of open shelving and drawers, where you can see all the way to the back, works well in wardrobes like this from Freedom.

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