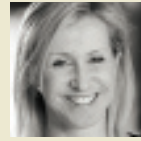




SEAN COCHRANE
Cochrane Design, 020 7062 1064, cochrane design.com.



HELEN GREEN
Helen Green Design, 020 7352 3344, helengreen design.com.



HUGO TUGMAN
Architect Your Home, 0800 849 8505, architect-your home.com.



JOHN EVANS
John Evans Interior Design, 0121 233 9041, johnevans design.com.

KEYNOTES SPATIAL PLANNING

Expert advice so you can follow Matthew Robinson's lead and reorganise your home

HOW CAN I MAXIMISE THE SPACE IN MY KITCHEN-DINER?

According to **Hugo Tugman**, founder of Architect Your Home, zoning is becoming more creative. "If you blur the boundaries between the kitchen and dining area, both spaces can appear larger," he says. "We have previously knocked through between a kitchen and dining room, creating a visually more spacious kitchen, without actually increasing the floor space. The key is to let one room overlap the other's floor space."



CAN I ADD EXTRA ROOMS WITHOUT BUILDING AN EXTENSION?

"Yes you can," says **Hugo**. "People often think they need an extension, but I find a more cost-effective way to achieve their goal is to reorganise the existing space. It is amazing how wasteful some houses are as there can be plenty of unused space in small separate rooms. Simply removing an old boiler cupboard can create extra space for a utility room."

HOW CAN I MAKE THE MOST OF AWKWARD SPACES?

Sean Cochrane of Cochrane Design says, "Badly laid-out spaces are actually a gift if you want to create walk-in wardrobes, laundry rooms or cloakrooms. In a house with a six-foot-wide side extension, we used the space between the original and new outside walls in the upper ground floor living room to create a study."

WHAT IF OPEN PLAN DOES NOT WORK FOR ME?

The answer, says **John Evans** of John Evans Interior Design, is to keep your design flexible; compartmentalise but use semi-permanent fixtures to maximise the space. "I built my own loft apartment in London, adding in sliding panels between spaces," he says. "When you first walk in you see a huge, open space, but you can also section off the bedroom at night for privacy." He also suggests that "instead of having doors that open on hinges, you could slide them into recesses in a double-skinned wall".

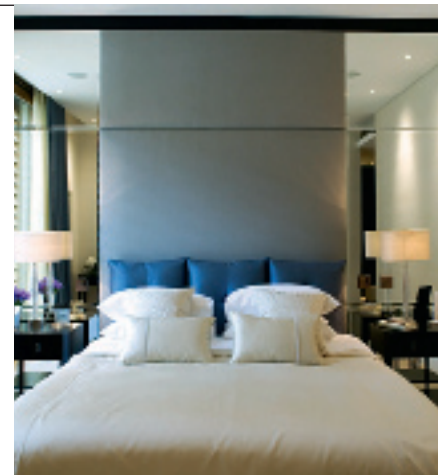
HOW CAN I MAKE SPACE FOR A DRESSING ROOM?

The team at **Helen Green** Design often tucks dressing rooms into existing bedrooms. "It eliminates the need for bulky furniture in the room," says senior designer Natalia Niyar. "Although the dressing room is small, you maximise space by being clever about the design of the joinery, organising things properly and concealing what needs to be hidden." Here, she has added a mirrored wall either side of the headboard to maintain a spacious feel.



HOW CAN I MAKE THE MOST OF MY VICTORIAN PROPERTY?

Sean adapts older properties to fit contemporary living. If family life has become focused around a dark, lower-ground floor kitchen, leaving spacious ground floor rooms deserted, he has a clever solution. "I take out a section of the ground floor to the rear, creating a double-height effect," he says. "Placing the staircase at the back of the rooms means you have to walk through the living room to reach the kitchen." He then links the floors through clever finishing touches, such as a stunning chandelier, that descends through both spaces. ■



WORDS KATRINA BURROUGHS