**How to Solve a Shortage of Storage**

**By \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,**

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As communities across the country practice social distancing to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, you might have more people in your home than usual. Whether it’s your college student who has moved home earlier than expected, or young kids spending more time at home than normal, finding storage for blankets, clothes, books, toys and other items that are taking over your living areas can seem challenging. But there are practical and attractive ways to incorporate storage throughout your home.

**Under-Bed Compartments**

A surprising number of people underutilize one of the best storage locations: beneath the bed. Especially for smaller bedrooms, under-bed storage can free up valuable floor space and make way for other furniture like a chaise or a full-length mirror. Large plastic bins are usually an economical alternative, but they can be unsightly if they peek out from beneath your bed. Consider fabric-lined baskets, or industrial-style metal or wood boxes that roll on small castors. A bed skirt is also a chic option. When buying new furnishings, look for beds with built-in storage drawers or cubbies.

**Built-in Shelves**

Free-standing bookshelves serve a function, but built-in shelves can be “wow factors” that significantly enhance the character of a room. Either bordering a fireplace or large window, built-in shelves are a great investment with a dual purpose of adding storage and providing an area to display family photos and décor. A cabinet maker or other woodworking professional can build one to fit your home’s unique dimensions. Or a local remodeler can help you with design and installation.

**Wall-Mounted Storage**

Your walls are meant for more than just paintings, mirrors, or a toddler’s scribbles. They can also function as places to hold day-to-day items like umbrellas, bags and coats near an entryway. Mounting shelves, drawers or mirrors with hooks can be functional and fun. Or get creative with unique items found at antique shops or yard sales that could serve as hanging devices, even if that is not their primary purpose. Just make sure you securely and properly affix such items to your wall to avoid damage. Always use the studs in your wall and the appropriate hanging hardware. If you are unsure, have a handyman or contractor help you, especially for larger items that could cause harm to a person or damage to your home if mounted improperly.

**Garage and Large Items**

When there is extra space in a garage, shed, basement, large closet or even an underused room in your home, remember there are numerous shelving options to help you optimize the vertical spaces. A shelf bisecting an otherwise open closet can give you twice the space through proper organization. And shelves with totes, baskets or doors are functional and can add charm to the room.

Adding storage can help breathe new life into your home. And if done well, those solutions will be long-lasting features that typically offer a solid return on your investment if you decide to sell your home. To locate builders or remodelers in your area who will help you identify design ideas that work well for your home, contact {insert HBA name, website URL}.