

150 Best Mini Interior Ideas



Francesc Zamora Mola

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Introduction



A scarcity of space can trigger talent and creativity. Nothing is sacrificed among the studios, apartments, lofts and other properties that are featured in this book. Architects do not shrink in the face of small spaces—they simply aim to achieve the same level of comfort in six hundred square feet as in two thousand.

In fact, their ambition is to achieve what may sound impossible: the same sense of space in both.

This book is a search for sensory achievement, and these words are designed to focus our attention on the tools.

The illustrations in this book are diverse: rural and urban constructions; townhouses and unusual homes; brand-new constructions and renovations of existing properties. The marks of genius are those that overcome every challenge, but the search for space where there is little is governed by a few common rules.

One important one is pulling down walls.

This creates large empty spaces, and with minimal furniture and optimal lighting, an uninterrupted space seems to expand before our eyes. The space stretches from inside to out, in touch with nature, expanding within the house by connecting it with the infinite beyond.

And many other tricks are used, of course.

Multifunctional rooms; transformable furniture; and architectural elements that are also furniture define these designs.

The items are fitted into the box so we do not feel boxed in ourselves.

What remains is an homage to the use of our living space.

Welcome to this journey through functional architecture.

It is one that you will make with very few steps indeed.



Micro House (Metapod)

125 sq ft

Designer and builder: Jerome A. Levin

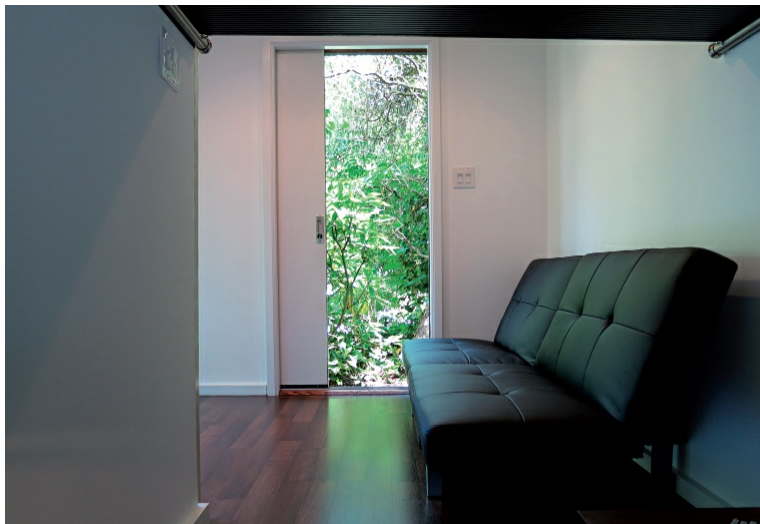
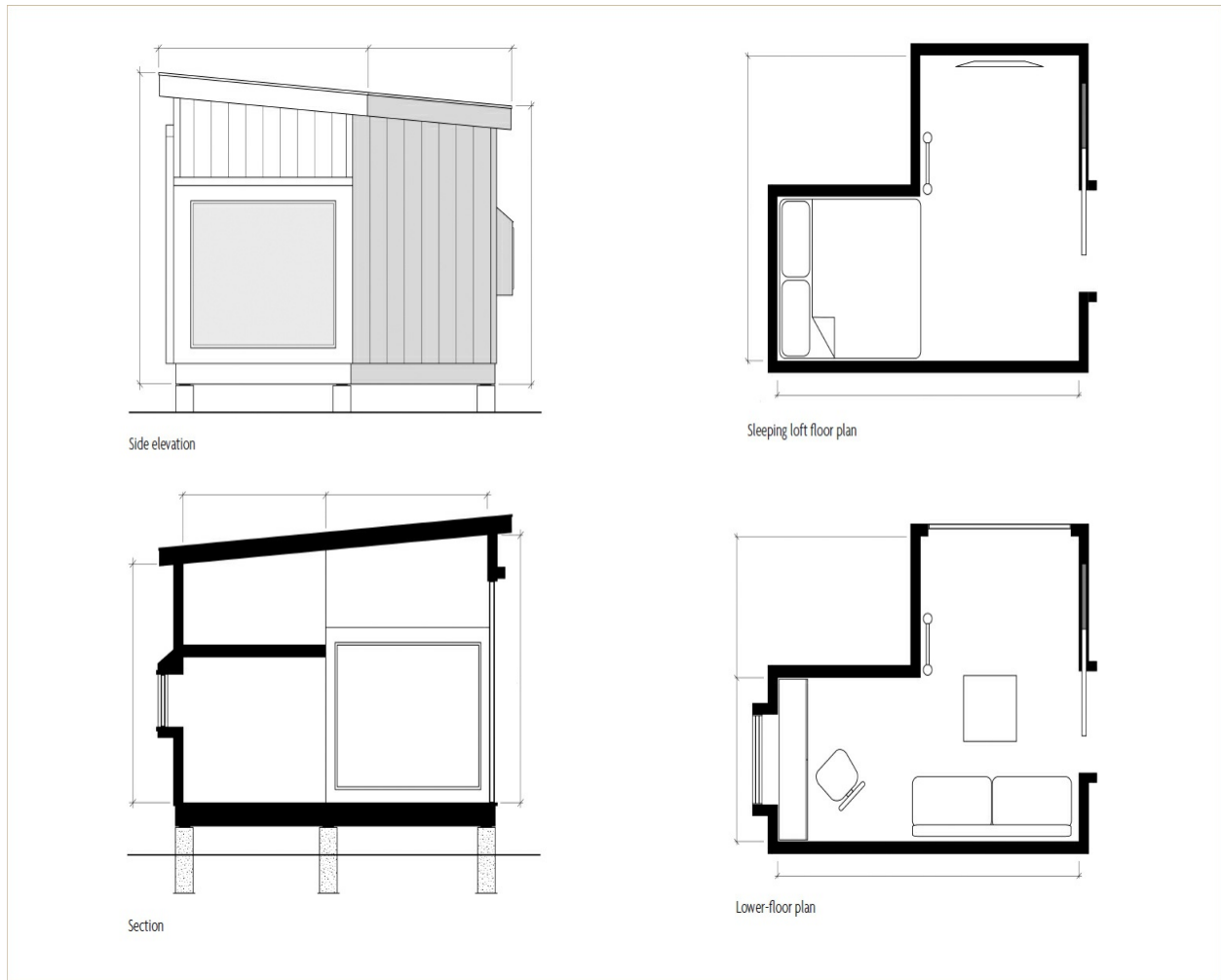
Location: Roslyn Harbor, NY, USA

Photographer: © Jerome A. Levin

Micro House, also dubbed the “Metapod,” was designed as a garden retreat that both adults and children can enjoy. The simple structure can also be adapted to be used as sustainable, affordable and off-the-power-grid housing. All these features contribute to the singularity and character of this project.







The Metapod has a study area, an entertainment area and handcrafted furniture, including a collapsible oak loft bed. A pocket door was custom-

designed to maximize the interior usable space.

001

Bespoke furniture can facilitate the adaptation of a dwelling's existing space to various functions, but it is not necessarily the most cost-effective solution.





Summerhill House

161 sq ft

Architect: Tim Wickens Architect

Location: Toronto, ON, Canada

Photographer: © Bob Gundu

The conversion of an existing 160-square-foot attic space into a functional master suite was a challenging project for these architects, who created a room open to a shaded, south-facing terrace with views of downtown Toronto.





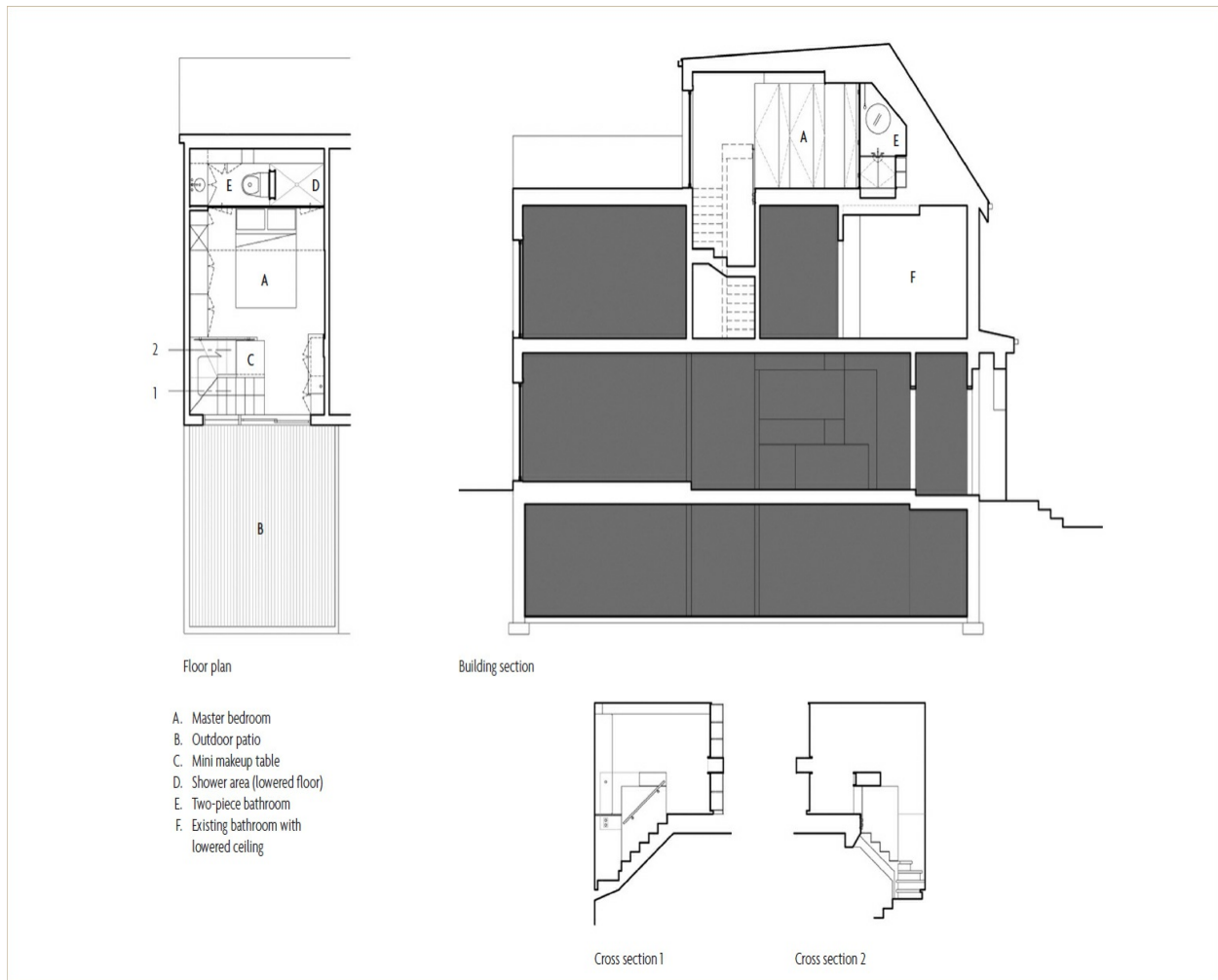
002

Put the space under the bed, which often ends up collecting random junk, to good use. Platform beds can help you take control of that area in an organized manner.





Partially supported by a glass balustrade, the makeup and jewelry table floats over the staircase to the second floor, making the most of limited space.



The en-suite bathroom occupies a three-foot strip of floor space under a sloping ceiling. It is cut out and dropped one step down into the headspace of the second-floor bedroom below.





The two spaces behind the frosted glass headboard are defined by a marble pier as separate shower and powder rooms, but they are linked by a continuous tile bench that runs the full length of the wall.

Apartment in the Heart of Gothenburg

183 sq ft

Architect: Torsten Ottesjö

Location: Gothenburg, Sweden

Photographer: © David Relan

In response to the client's desire to make the most of this small space, the designers transformed it into a multilevel nest that includes two staircases, a bedroom, a bathroom with shower, a fully equipped kitchen, a home office, a closet and a living–dining room that doubles as a guest room. The different areas are placed in relation to the only window.









003

In small open-plan homes, using a multilevel layout can ensure that the space is organized into different zones.



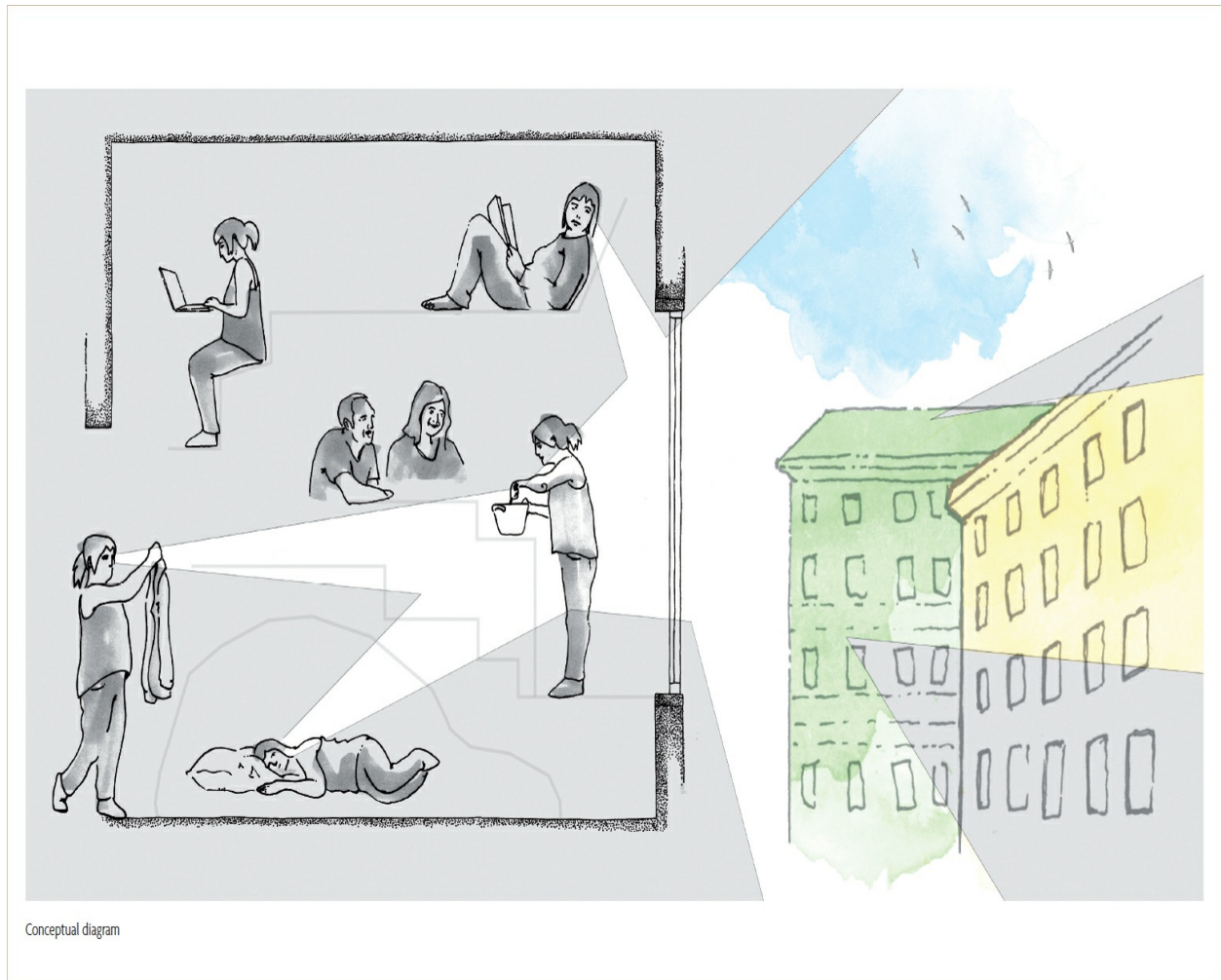
004

The creation of small livable spaces with inexpensive local materials generates sustainable environments that make a statement about living in a resource-conscious way.









The apartment offers a multitude of views and perceptions of the space. The light that filters through the separations produces a sense of coziness and at the same time airiness.



Guesthouse Near Praestoe Fjord

183 sq ft

Architect: Martin Kallesø Arkitekter

Location: Praestoe, Denmark

Photographer: © Martin Kallesø and Lars Kaslov

This guesthouse is situated in an area with a large concentration of traditional Danish summerhouses. Built as an annex to an existing house, it sits on the northwestern corner of the property, taking into account the relationship with the adjacent constructions and the client's need for privacy.





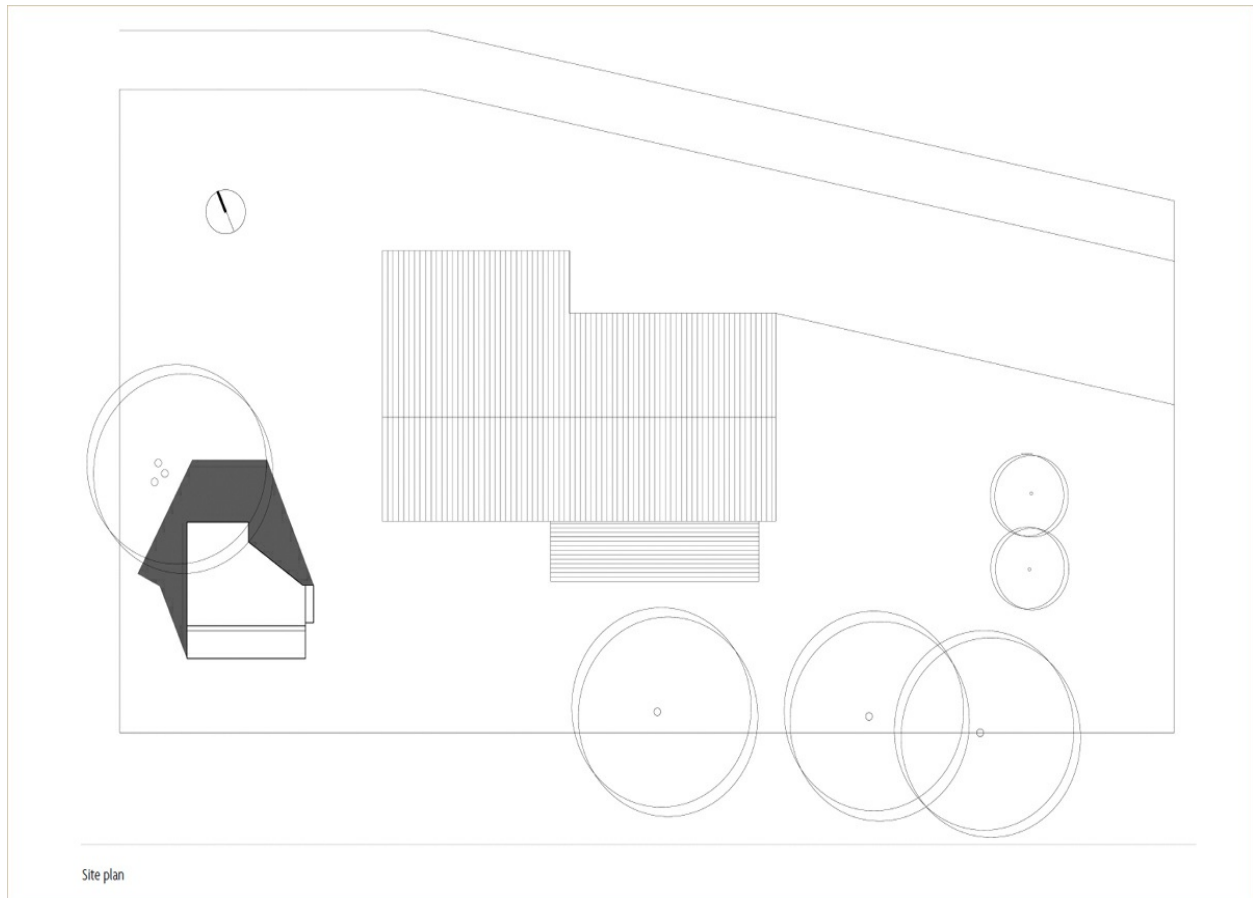


The guesthouse differs from the surrounding constructions in its asymmetrical shape. It was designed based on the need to provide openings

on faces shielded from neighbors' views.

005

Plan the location of exterior doors and windows in single-room constructions according to their orientation and to their proximity to adjacent buildings, as it is easy to overexpose the interior.





006

Use a glass-panel door instead of a solid exterior door to bring more natural light into a room. Light sources from different sides balance the light across a room.







This small guesthouse contains a double bed and a built-in closet, enough to accommodate short-term visitors who won't use the space other than for sleeping.

Le Nuage

183 sq ft

Designers: Buy-Self / Zébra3

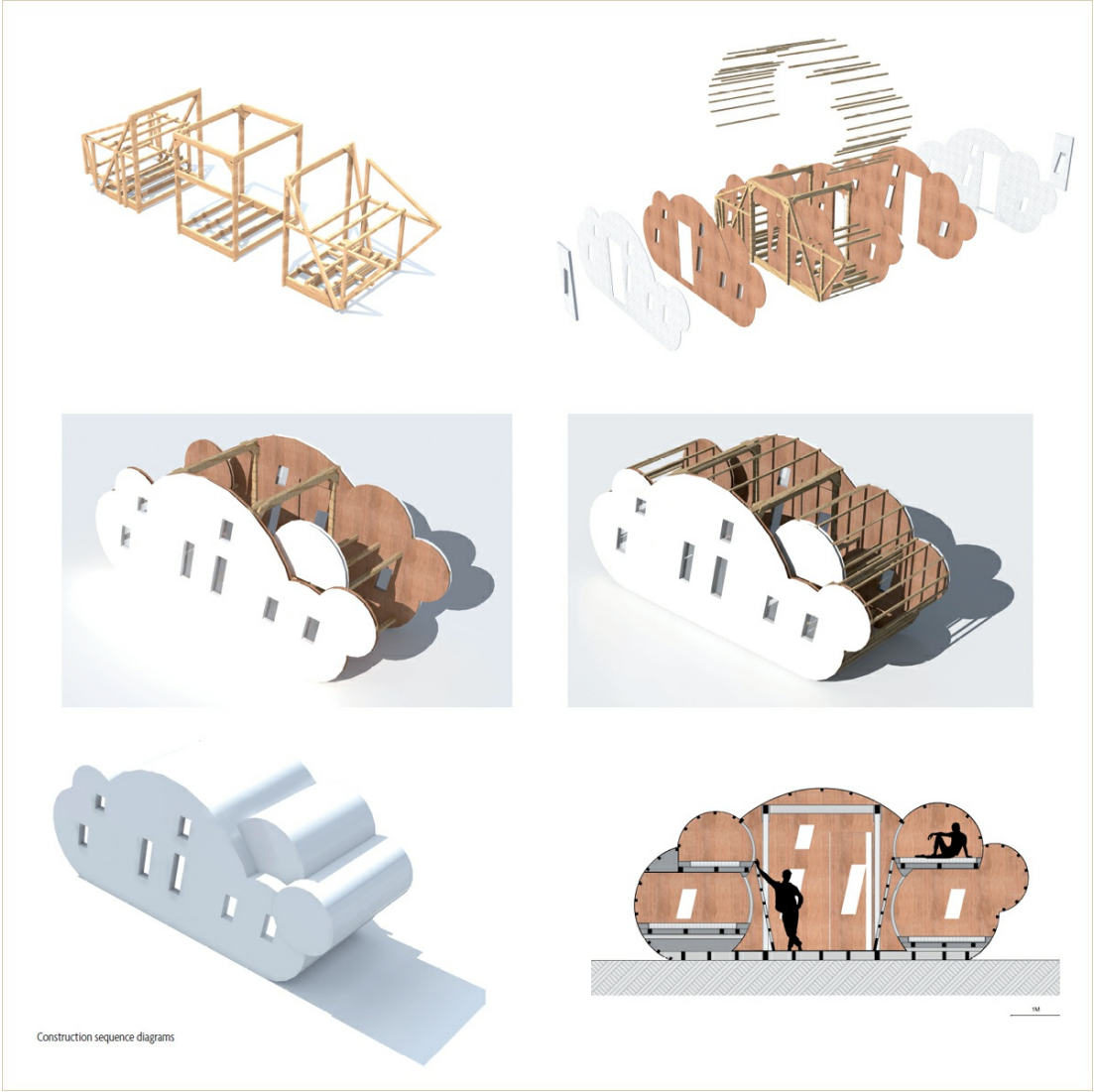
Location: Lormont, France

Photographer: © Buy-Self / Zébra3

“Le Nuage”—the French word for cloud—was originally designed as a small temporary construction and art installation, commissioned by the Urban Community of Bordeaux, France. Now it is used as a new type of public equipment to promote natural areas in the proximity of urban developments. Shaped like a cumulus cloud, “Le Nuage” is a reference to utopian architecture and reminds one of a camp trailer.









Le Nuage is a transportable shelter. Its design is in between sculpture and architecture, between artwork and construction. It is able to offer its guests an unforgettable spatial and poetic experience.

007

Modern bunk beds blend comfort and space-saving convenience. They make the bedroom more spacious and add a playful atmosphere.



008

Built-in bunk beds can provide storage that optimizes the space they are designed to fit in. This is an advantage over freestanding bunk beds, which don't necessarily satisfy this requirement.



Small House

188 sq ft

Architect: Unemori Architects

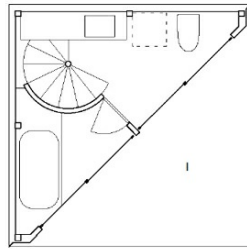
Location: Meguro-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Photographer: © Ken Sasajima

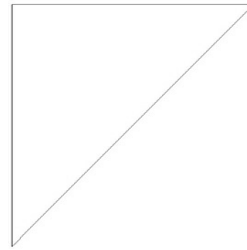
This small house stands in a densely populated neighborhood of Tokyo. The house is as small as the program allows and only occupies a reduced area within the property, leaving enough space for parking. With houses on three sides, this compressed dwelling was designed to make the most of every opportunity to capture air and light.





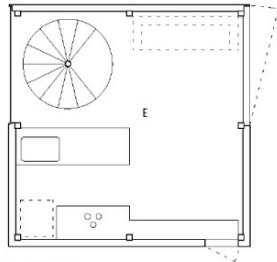


Fourth-floor plan

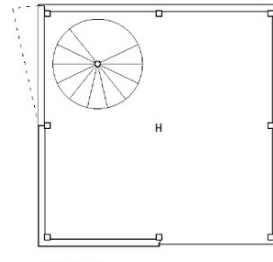


Roof plan

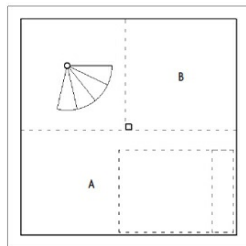
- A. Bedroom
- B. Closet
- C. Parking area
- D. Bicycle parking area
- E. Dining room
- F. Open to below
- G. Entrance
- H. Spare room
- I. Terrace



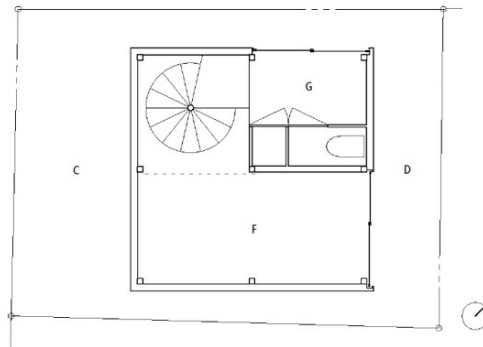
Second-floor plan



Third-floor plan



Basement-floor plan



Ground-floor plan



The floor structures are reduced to a minimum: just plywood on steel joists.
The floors are connected by a spiral staircase.

009

Spiral staircases work well in small rooms because they save floor space and fit into a space where conventional straight-flight stairs would not.







010

Will the turn of a spiral staircase allow for the landings to be in the right place? This is an important design issue that might influence the overall design of the floor plans.







A roof terrace gives the occupants an opportunity to enjoy outdoor living, which is highly valued in such a densely populated city.

Wood House

258 sq ft

Architect: S-AR stación-ARquitectura

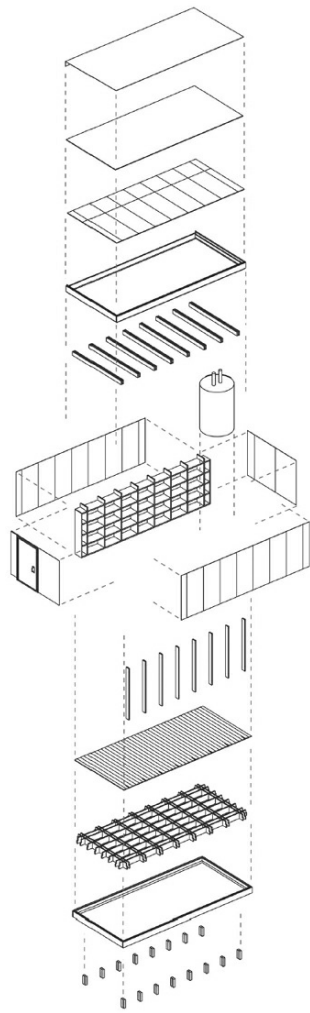
Location: Monterrey, Mexico

Photographer: © Ana Cecilia Villarreal

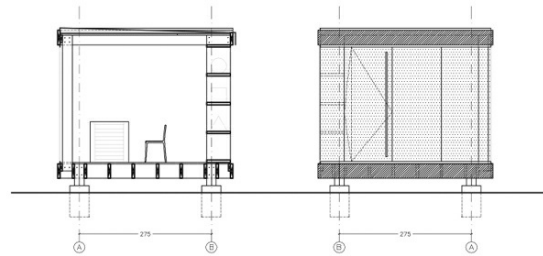
This small, experimental construction was conceived of as an isolated pavilion hosting a habitable open space that would serve as a study and bedroom for one person or a small family. The basic structure, made entirely of wood, stands off the ground to emphasize the construction method. Its glass skin reinforces the structural qualities of the building and offers views of the surroundings.





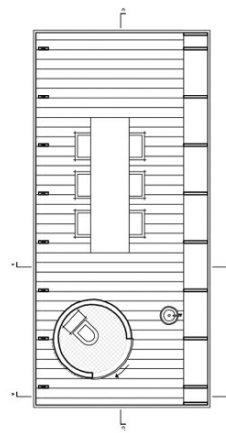


Exploded axonometric view

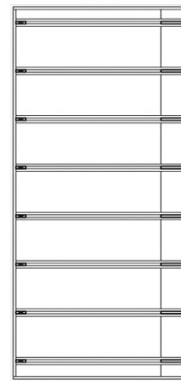


Section B-B'

Entry side elevation



Floor plan



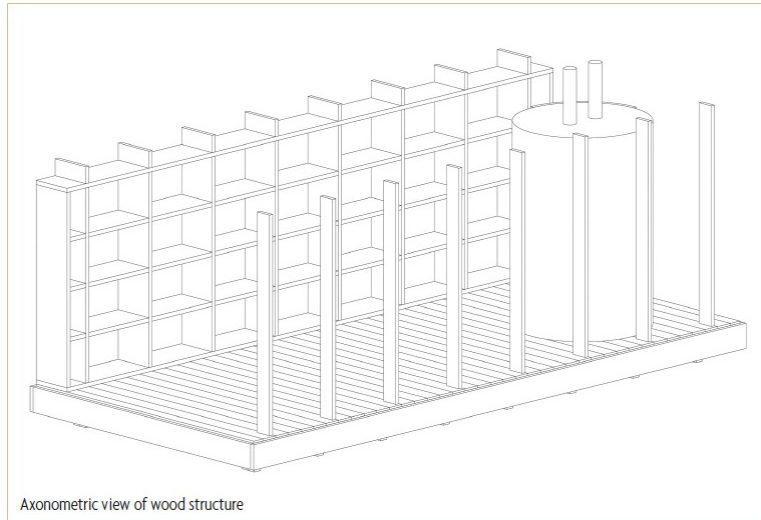
Roof framing plan



The interior is an open rectangular space dominated by a bookcase library wall and two cylinders: one is full height and contains the bathroom; the other is a pedestal sink.

011

This project, with its bookcase library wall, is a clear example of how architecture and furnishings can merge to make the most of limited space and reduce the need for freestanding furniture.





Hypercubus

269 sq ft

Architect: WG3 Architektur und Moebel

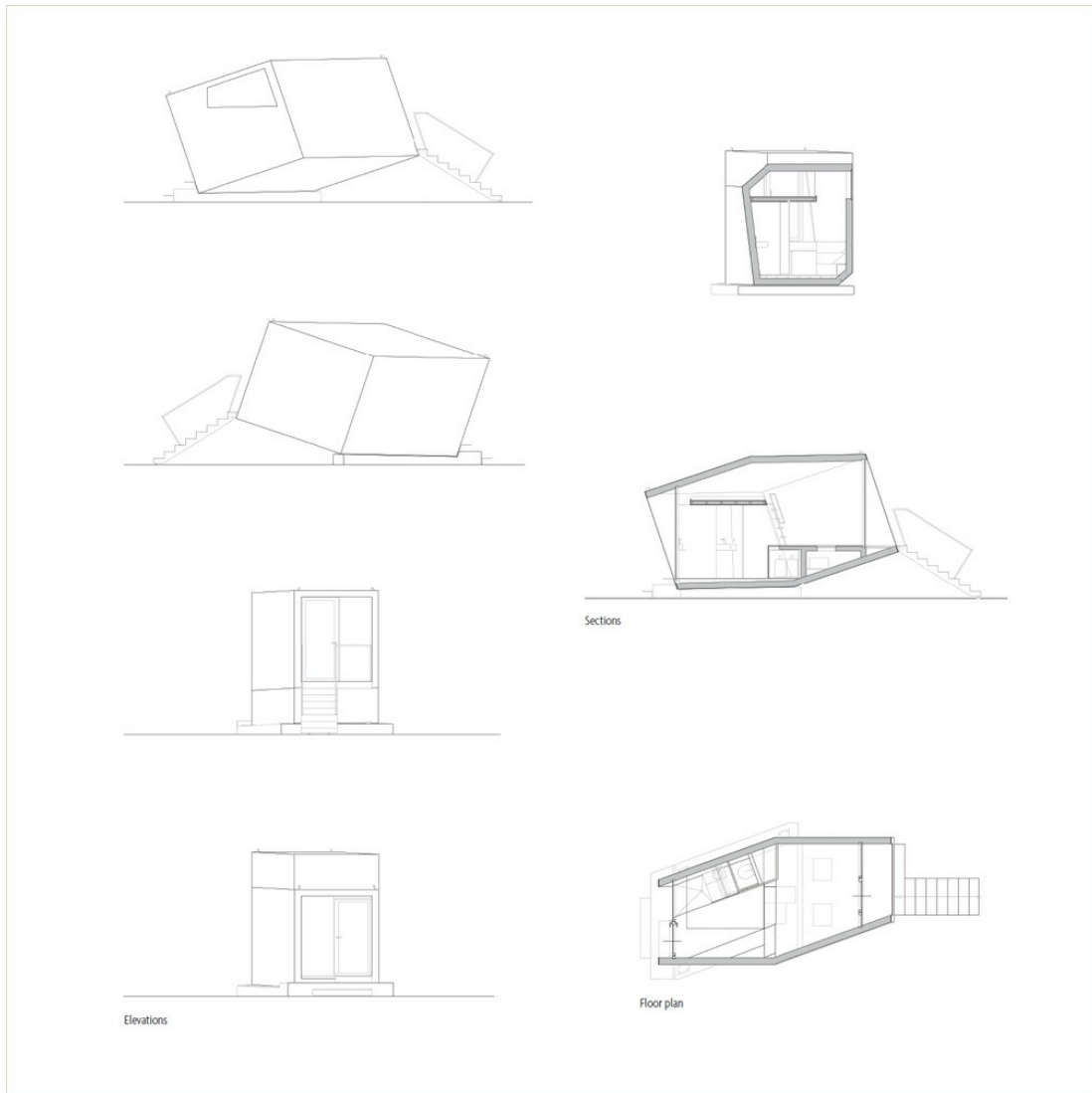
Location: Anywhere

Photographer: © Karin Lernbeiß

Minimalism is a useful tool when it comes to building a house with minimum space. Named after the mathematical hypercube shape, this mass-produced skewed cube creates a space that has more to it than simply fitting three floors into a minuscule box: it offers an attractive lifestyle alternative.









012

Color is a powerful tool when it comes to changing the atmosphere of a space, including the perception of its size and proportions. Explore the creative possibilities of paint or colored light!



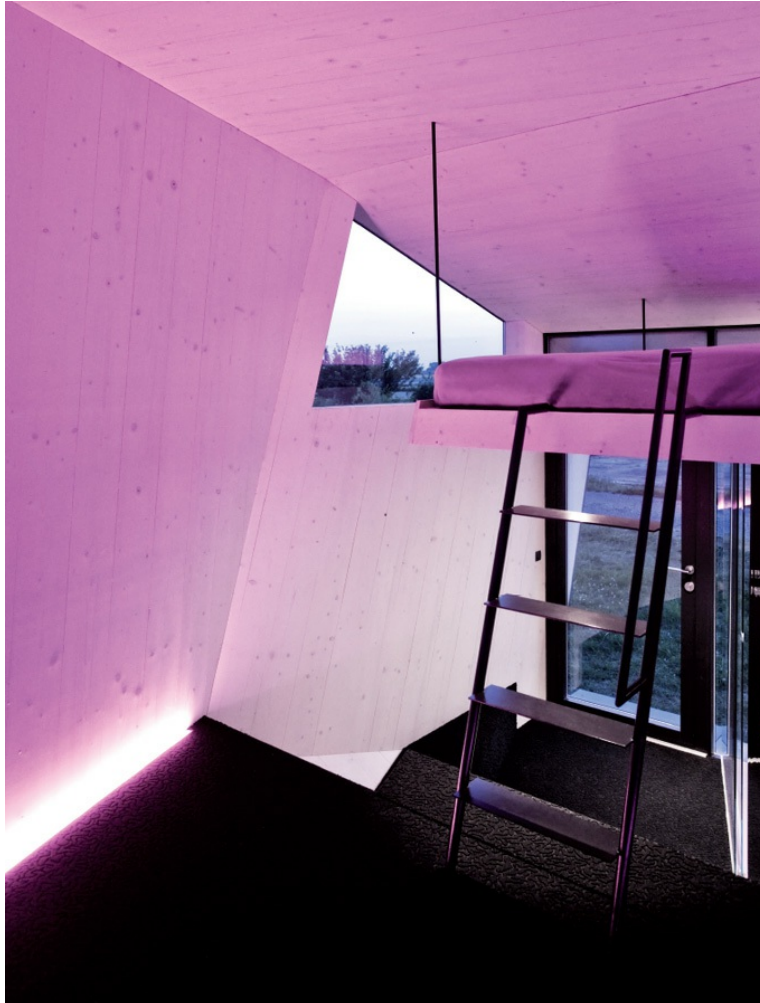




The concept of Hypercubus is based on two fundamental principles: the use of open areas with available infrastructure and the construction of small, modular, transportable living units.

013

Beds occupy the same area regardless of the size of the room they are in. However, the smaller that room is, the more area beds displace. Recapturing that lost space is well worth the effort of installing a loft bed.





Studio in a Mountain Resort

269 sq ft

Architect: Beriot, Bernardini Arquitectos

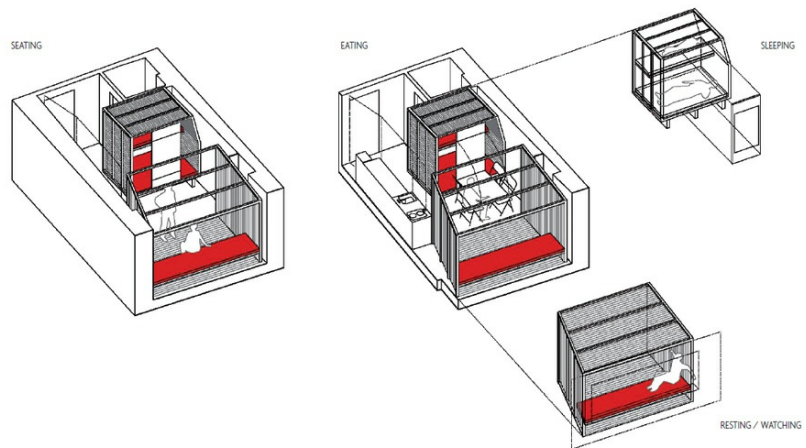
Location: Navacerrada, Madrid, Spain

Photographer: © Yen Chen

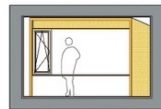
A small studio apartment was the object of an extensive remodel. It was gutted completely, except for a small bathroom. Then two wooden boxes were inserted into the empty space: one for living, the other for sleeping. The living box frames the mountainous landscape through a long window. The sleeping box accommodates a double bed below and a single bed on top.



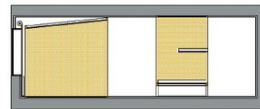




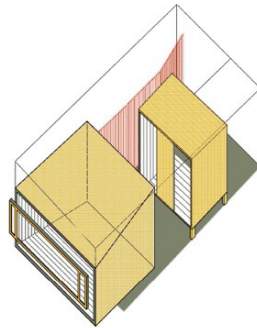
Functional diagram



Cross section



Longitudinal section



Axonometric view



Floor plan

014

Large pieces of furniture, such as the boxes inserted into this small studio, can change the geometry of the space, separating areas with different functions and organizing circulation.



Portable Home ÁPH80

291 sq ft

Architect: Ábaton Arquitectura

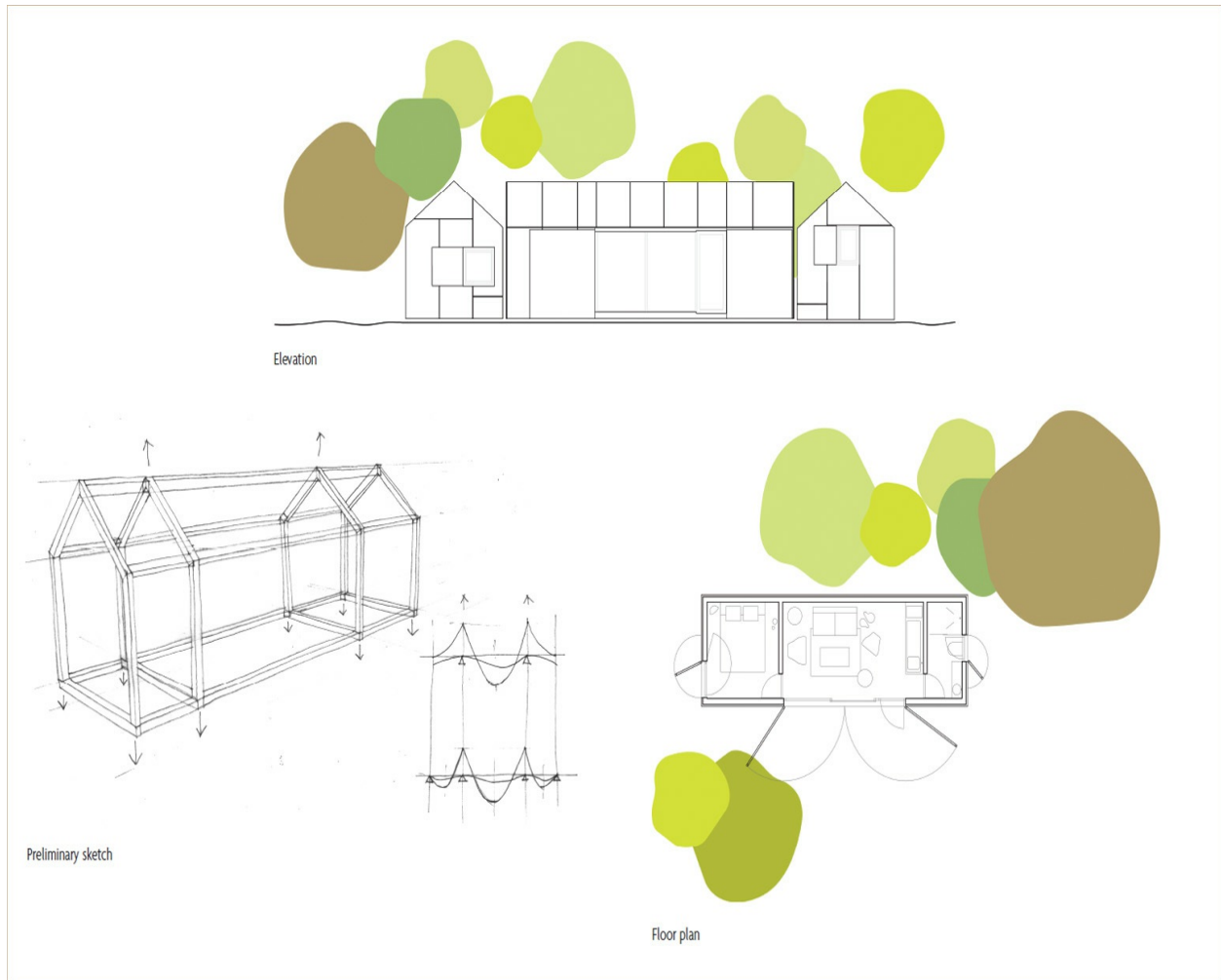
Location: Anywhere

Photographer: © Juan Baraja

ÁPH80 house was inspired by the principles of the architects who designed it: well-being, environmental awareness and simplicity. It was not commissioned for a particular client, so the design focused on making the transportable structure as comfortable and homey as possible. It is composed of three different spaces: living area and kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom. Smaller modules can be added to the main structure, increasing the usable floor area and versatility.







The ÁPH80 house has its origins in an earlier design, which used a shipping container. Its shape, however, is an abstraction of the archetypal rural gable-

roof house, with the added quality of being transportable.

015

A pitched roof adds extra overhead space to the room directly below it. It makes the room feel larger and at the same time more cozy by making the shape reminiscent of a cottage home.





Every detail of the ÁPH80 house has been designed so that being inside is a unique experience. The proportions transmit a sense of amplitude, despite the

limited dimensions.

016

Create a chromatic balance between the different finishes, textures and materials in a room to achieve uniformity. Seeking simplicity will give a room a homogeneous atmosphere.









Apartment in Wrocław

312 sq ft

Architect: 3XA

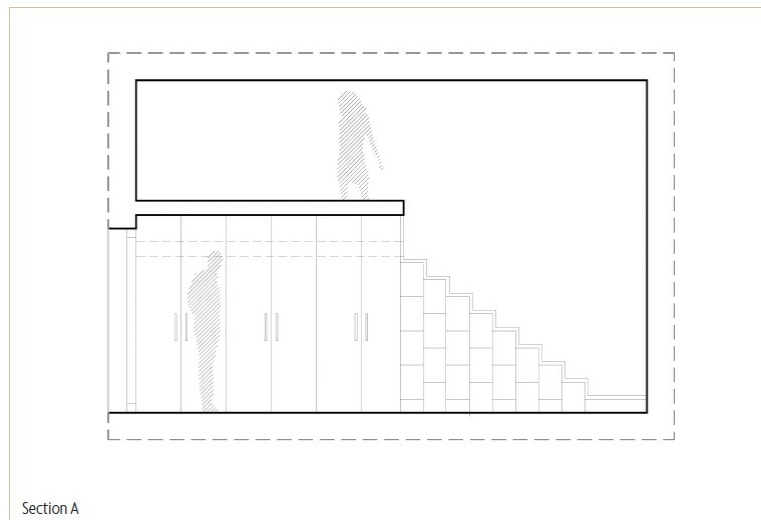
Location: Wrocław, Poland

Photographer: © S. Zajackowski

This tiny apartment in a historic building in Wrocław, Poland, is the result of a makeover aimed at maximizing the space available. Despite its minimal dimensions, the designers made the most of the 12-foot-high ceiling to accommodate a large open space shared by the living–dining area and the kitchen, and a private sleeping area tucked up in a loft.







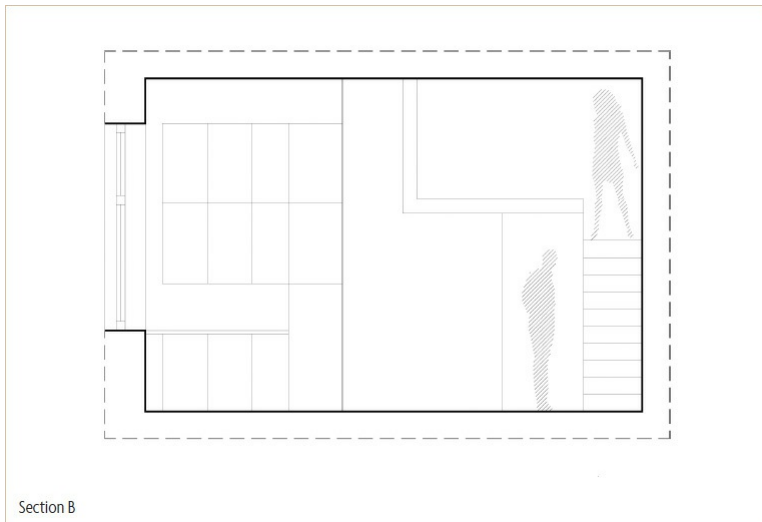
The bedroom is accessed via a narrow staircase that doubles as a bookshelf. The area below the bedroom, directly in front of the bathroom, is used as a

dressing area.

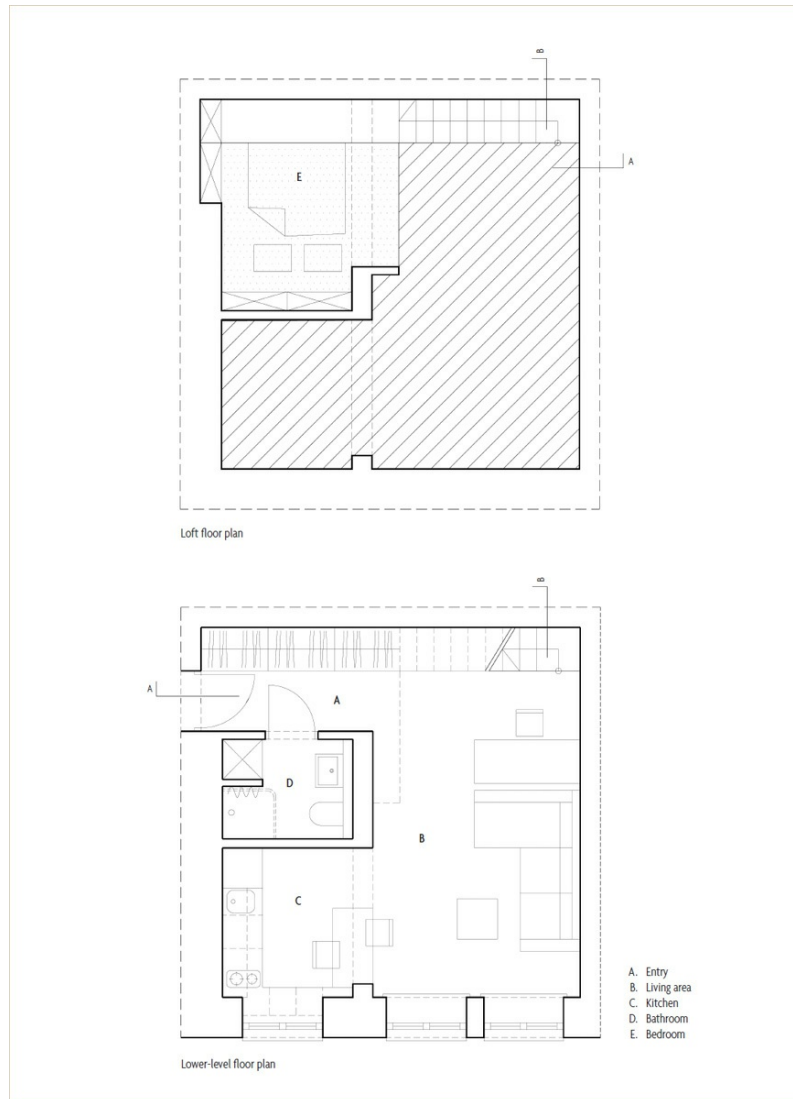
017

What's behind that door? The designers introduce a funny design gesture: placing a dummy door against one wall. No functional purpose, or a good way to hide an unsightly electric meter?





An open plan is perhaps the best option when dealing with small homes. Where there are no walls, furniture serves as an organizer of space, separating areas of different use.



019

In small spaces, it is best to keep materials and colors to a minimum. But this doesn't mean you can't make a strong design statement.



Crabapple Drive Retreat

350 sq ft

Architect: Falken Reynolds Interiors

Location: Whistler, BC, Canada

Photographer: © Chad Falkenberg

Cozy convenience typifies this complete renovation of an urban 350-square-foot condo close to the ski slopes of Whistler, Canada. A weekend escape from Vancouver for the clients, it combines the ease of a hotel room with the comforts of home. The biggest challenge was finding space-saving solutions that didn't sacrifice convenience.





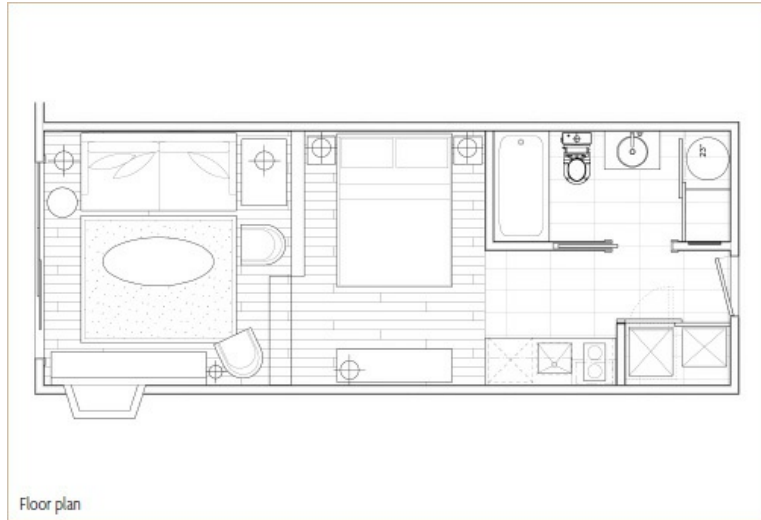


While the condo has a modern design, natural finishes with a lot of warmth and texture were chosen to give the feeling that the space had a bit of history.

020

Two areas of different functions can share the same open space. This can be achieved by raising the floor of one of the two areas.





021

Using different flooring material can create a distinction between areas of different functions. This design solution is also perfect for dividing extralong spaces.





Harbor Attic

377 sq ft

Architect: Gosplan Architects

Location: Camogli, Genoa, Italy

Photographer: © Anna Positano (theredbird.org)

The project is the refurbishment of an attic overlooking the old harbor of Camogli, a charming fishing village near Genoa. Despite the limited area and gambrel roof, the attic includes two bedrooms, a studio, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom. This necessitated the design of built-in furniture, which can be stored away when not in use.





022

Built-in furniture is perhaps the most efficient furnishing solution for spaces of limited dimensions: it frees up valuable floor area, makes the space less cramped and unifies the décor.





The minimal built-in furniture of this attic promotes tidy organization, which in turn highlights the architectural appeal.

023

Live large in a small space with built-ins that provide plenty of storage. No piece of furniture puts available space to better use than a built-in.

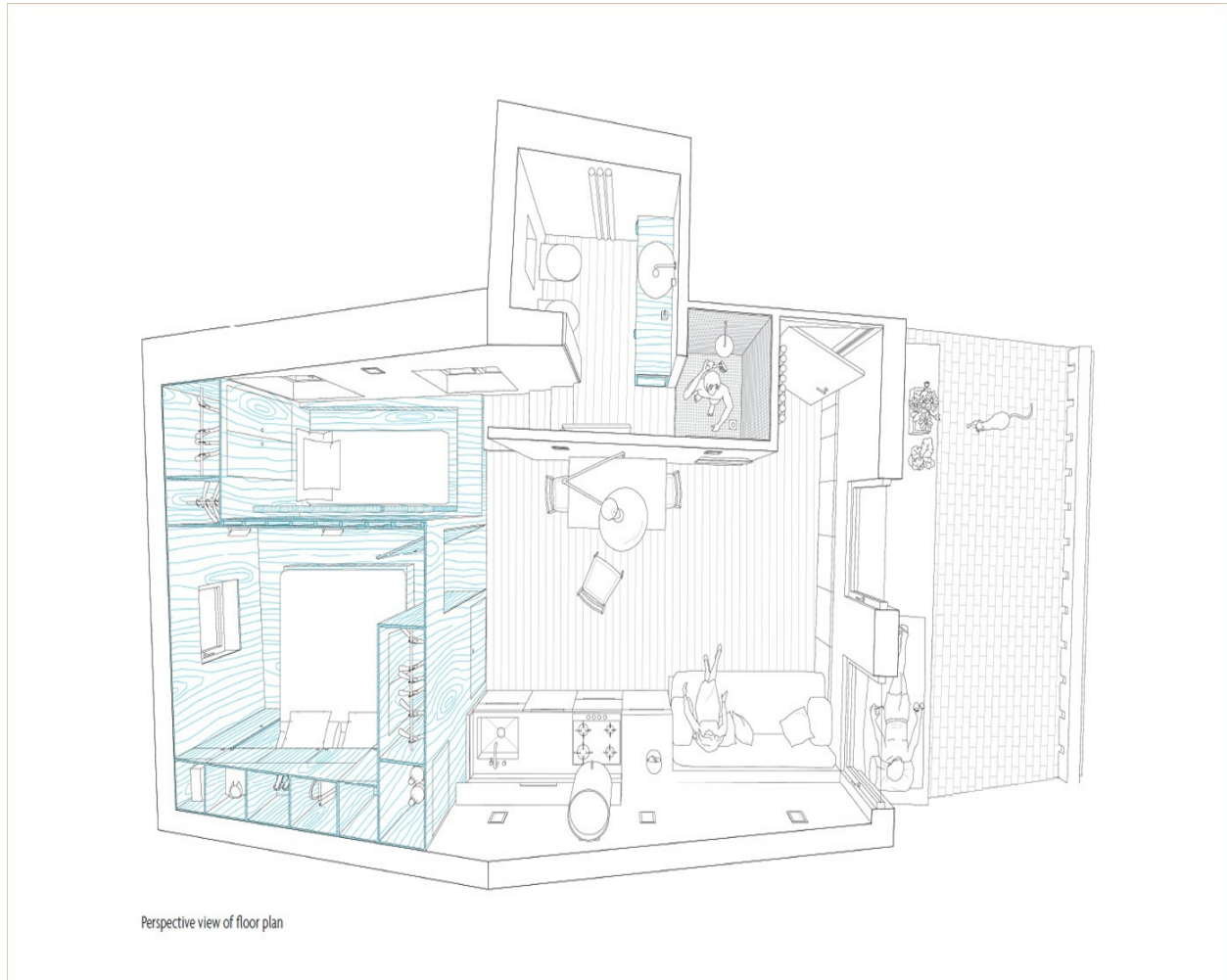








Built-ins provide lots of storage, efficiently occupying entire walls without making a space feel smaller. And they can blend gracefully with the architecture.





Wall-to-wall and floor-to-ceiling closets maximize every square inch of this bedroom. The bed is also part of the storage system.

Three Levels

377 sq ft

Architect: Studioata

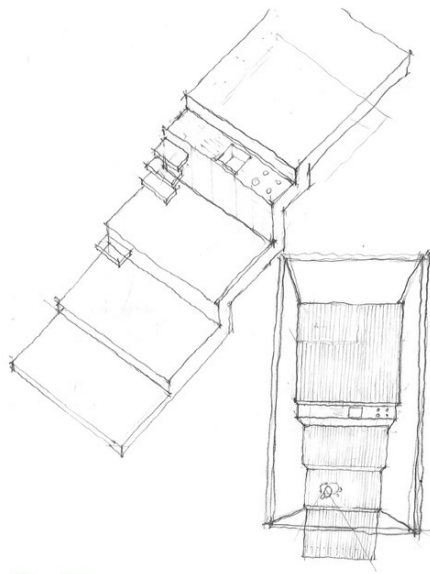
Location: Alassio, Italy

Photographer: © Beppe Giardino

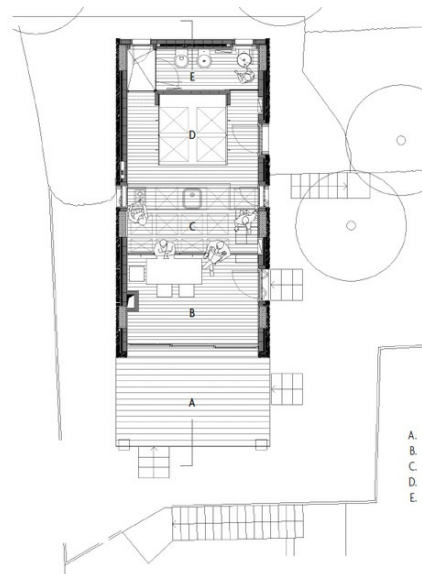
A nineteenth-century villa included an abandoned 377-square-foot pavilion surrounded by a wide terraced park. The pavilion was demolished and a new structure was created that adapted the plan to the sloping site. This solution allowed for the separation of different areas: a kitchen, a bedroom, a bathroom and a terrace.





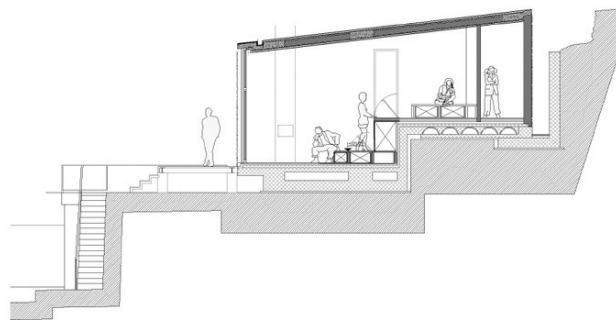


Preliminary sketch



Floor plan

- A. Terrace
- B. Living room
- C. Kitchen
- D. Bedroom
- E. Bathroom



Section

025

High ceilings allow for raised floor levels, which differentiate various functions in a space. Raised floors provide room for plumbing and electrical, as well as additional storage.







The steps in this space double as seats. They also contain electrical appliances, clothes and various other objects. This solution frees the new

dwelling from clutter.

AP 1211

387 sq ft

Architect: Alan Chu

Location: São Paulo, Brazil

Photographer: © Djan Chu

This apartment is a temporary residence for a young businessman. The design plays with the transience of the moment: a time of changes, improvisation and reorganization. The space is distributed between two floors and equipped with a series of autoclaved pinewood crates of various sizes and proportions that serve different functions.







The seemingly random arrangement of the crates and the use of color bring a youthful and unpretentious atmosphere to the environment.

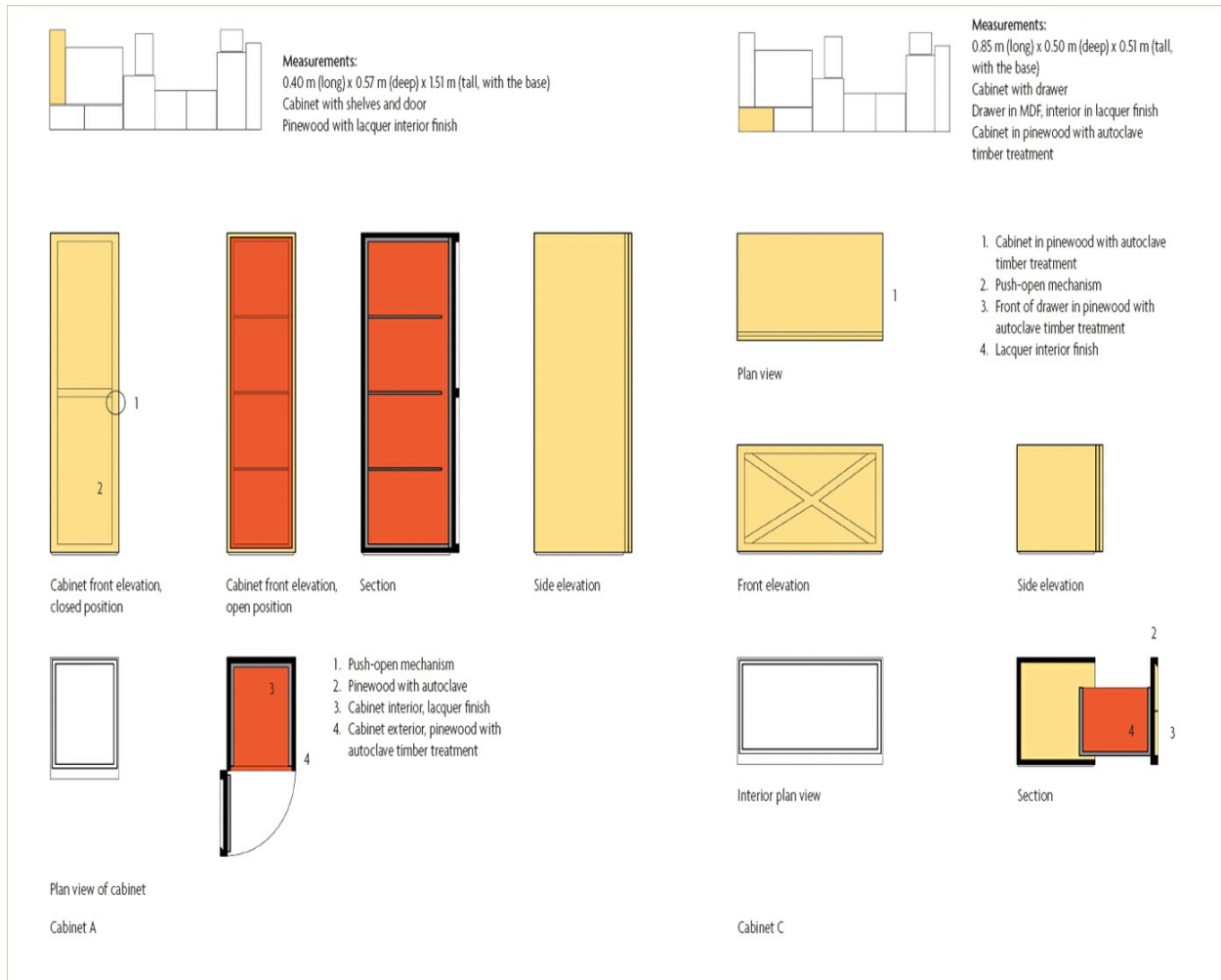
026

Think about how you are going to use your cabinets so you can choose the right type of hardware. Look into different door hinges and drawer hardware.





Design your own modular system with crates of different sizes to bring an industrial touch to your home. It is a creative design solution, especially for short-term stays in a small space.





The crates form the kitchen, the pantry and the living room. A large one, wedged between the edge of the upper floor and the wall, tops a metal spiral staircase.

028

A spiral staircase is a compact alternative to the conventional staircase. Without a doubt, a custom spiral staircase also brings a sculptural quality to the space it inhabits.





The industrial look of the wood crates contrasts with the sleek and refined atmosphere of the bedroom, accented by the One chair designed by Konstantin Grcic for Magis.

Loft Andrés Borrego

398 sq ft

Architect: Beriot, Bernardini Arquitectos

Location: Madrid, Spain

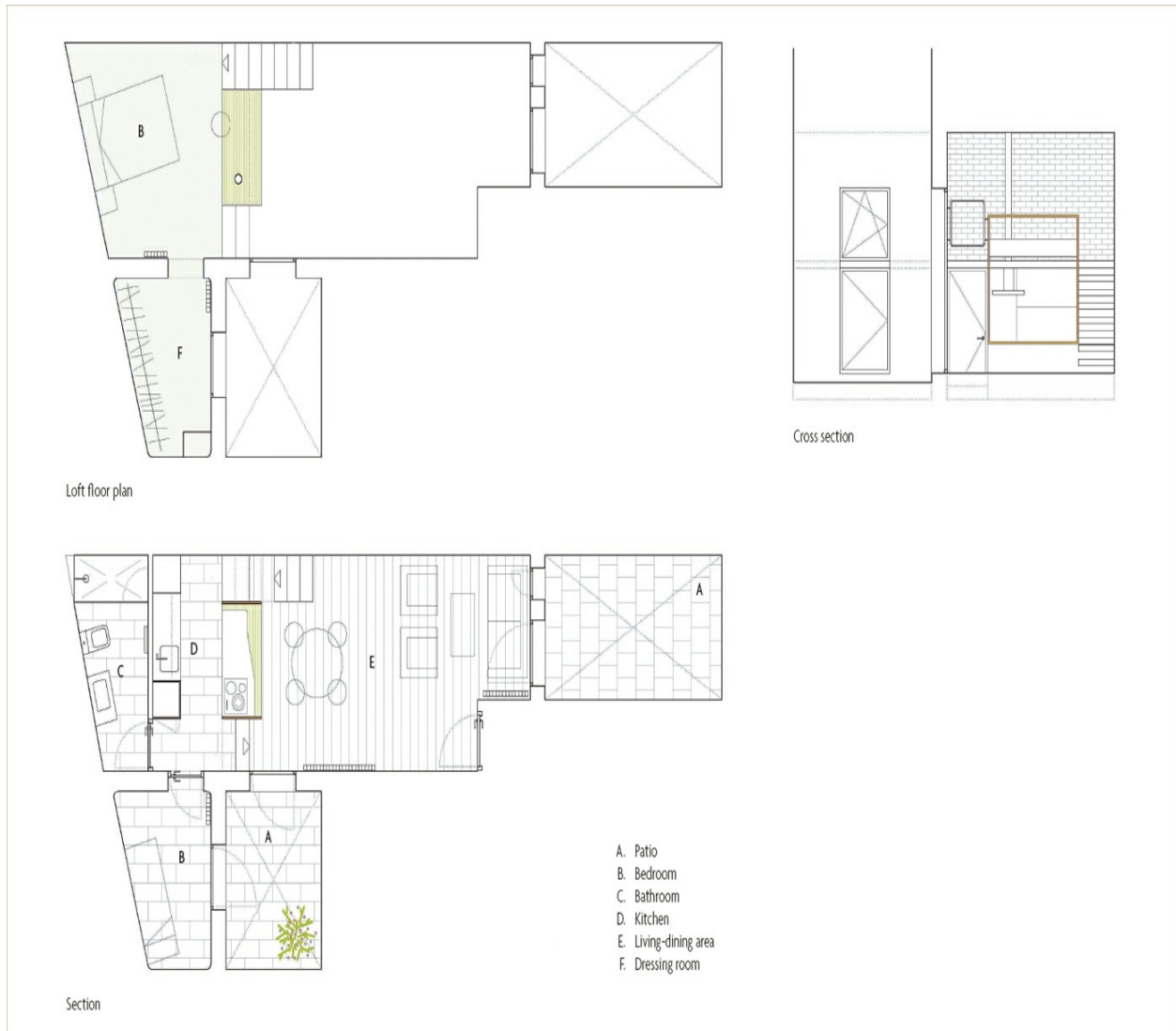
Photographer: © Yen Chen

The ground-floor location of this apartment allowed for the excavation of about 16 inches at the back. This gained enough ceiling height for the construction of a loft, which accommodates a sleeping area. The space underneath it is used for the kitchen and bathroom.







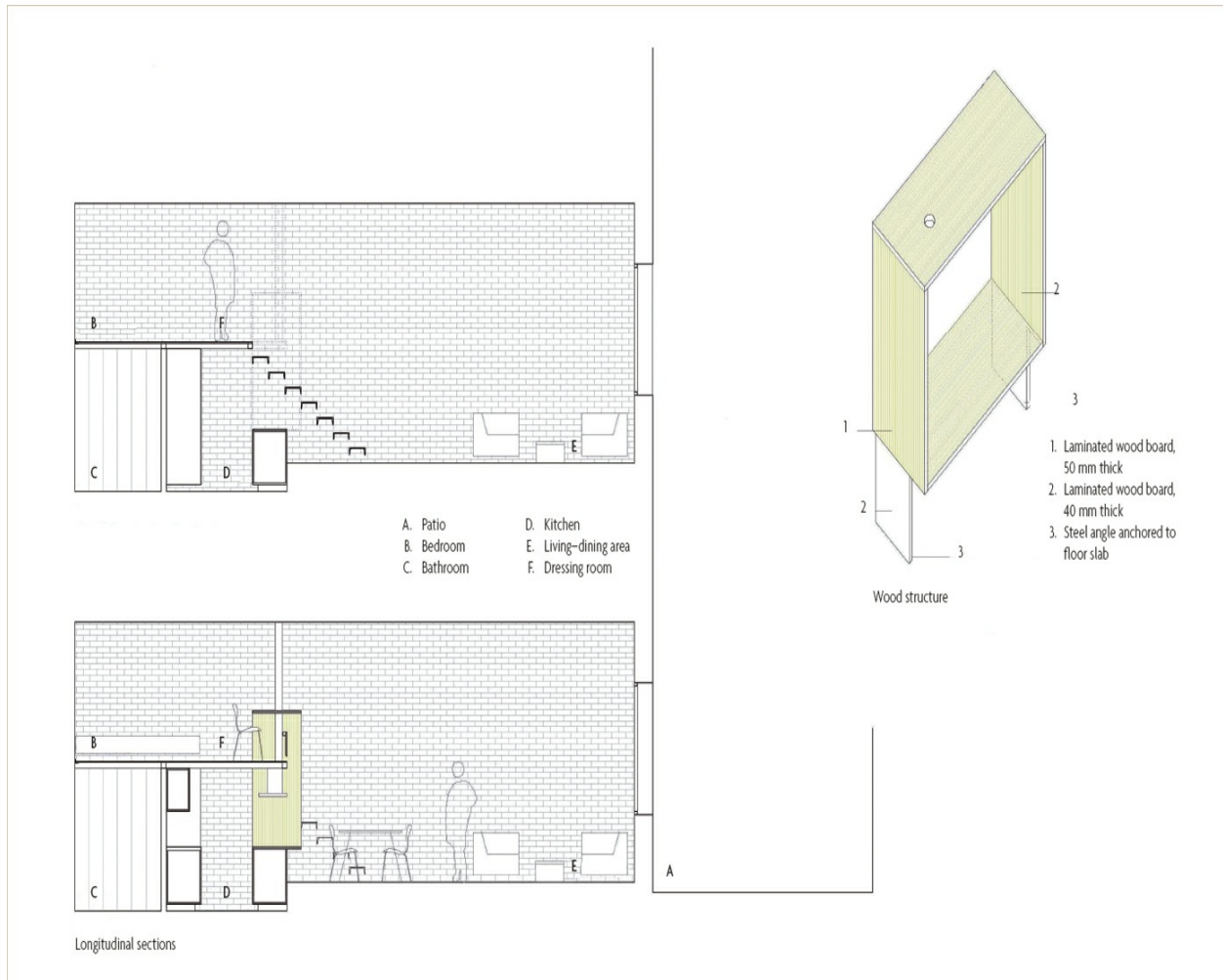


A laminated wooden frame hovers in front of the loft. Its lower side serves as a work surfaces for the kitchen, while its upper side doubles as a guardrail and desk on the upper level.





If you undertake a project that involves the construction of a loft, make sure to check the building regulations regarding headroom. In general, habitable rooms cannot have a ceiling height of less than 7 feet.



030

Furniture can be an effective room divider. It is an excellent solution for studio apartments where different functions share the same space.





Unfolding Apartment

420 sq ft

Architect: MKCA

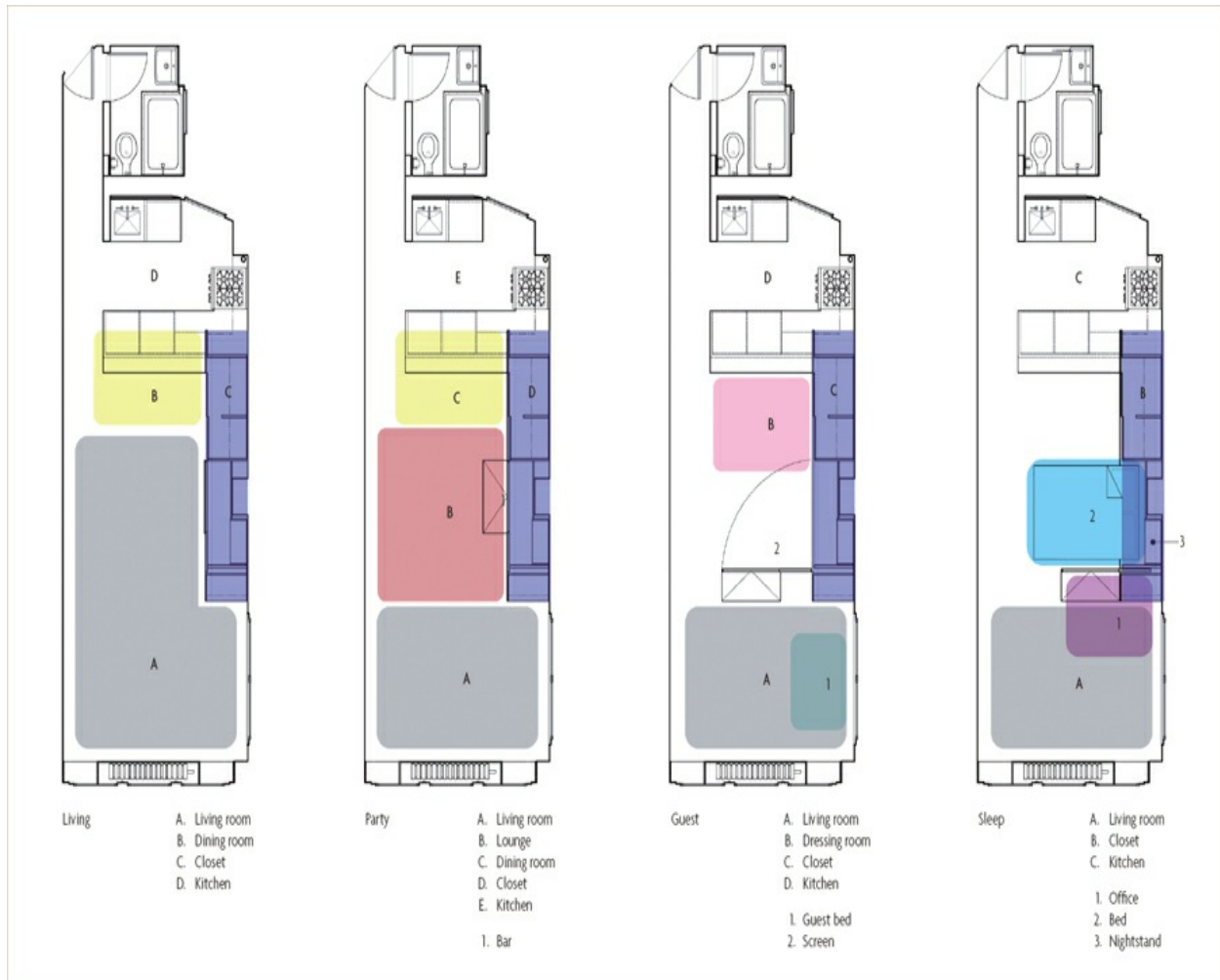
Location: New York, NY, USA

Photographer: © Alan Tansey

A strategy of extreme density and flexibility was employed to design an apartment for a young man who entertains frequently, often has houseguests and occasionally works from home. The challenge was to incorporate all the aspects of a larger space for working and entertaining within a compact studio apartment.







The various spaces of this apartment can be expanded progressively and adjusted via a reconfigurable series of doors and panels that slide and pivot open and closed.





Kitchen items are collected on custom stainless-steel shelving and concealed behind a backlit sliding resin panel.



A single custom cabinetry piece was inserted along one wall. The cabinet contains functional components including a bed, a closet, a desk, a library

and kitchen storage.

031

Integrating furniture with architecture is an efficient solution when dealing with small spaces. Flexibility and mobility are key. The best results occur when you can move items to reconfigure a space.





032

Mobile panels and furniture can create an open feel when packed away, or subdivide a space for different uses. Spaces can be calibrated to be private or more porous by means of different types of materials.





Apartment in Arad

430 sq ft

Designer: Cristina BordoIU

Location: Arad, Romania

Photographer: © Sorin Popa

Living in a 430-square-foot studio apartment takes some creative planning and ingenious space-saving solutions. This home is an example. Three areas are clearly differentiated, thanks to a large pass-through between the kitchen and the living area and a bookcase-screen that provides the bedroom with necessary privacy.





033

It takes good organizational skills and creativity to find storage opportunities in a small space without making it look cramped. In fact, the solutions can give character to a small place.



034

A large pass-through between the kitchen and the living room is a design feature that both separates and connects the two rooms. Use similar details in both areas to better integrate the overall design.





035

Putting a mattress directly on the floor eats up a lot of valuable square footage. Don't take away the opportunity for under-the-bed storage. Consider a platform bed that incorporates storage space.





036

Give an old bike new life by using it to support a vanity. Creative customization of furniture imbues a space with personality.



Raval Hideout

430 sq ft

Architect: Eva Cotman

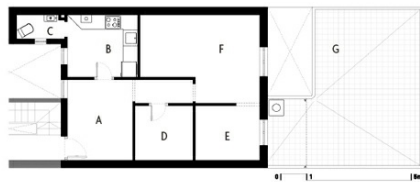
Location: Barcelona, Spain

Photographer: © Eva Cotman, Maria Ceballos

This budget-conscious project was designed to alter and improve an existing apartment for a young couple with a very active social life. The result is a compact dwelling with multifunctional elements that provide flexibility and adaptability. The apartment is organized around one piece of furniture that is simultaneously library, bookshelf, closet, bench and staircase leading up to a sleeping loft.

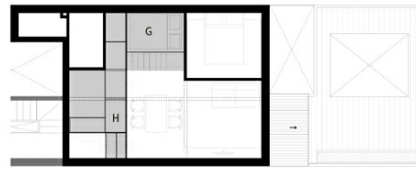




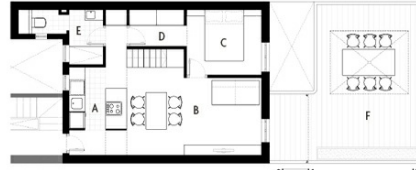


Existing floor plan

- A. Entrance
- B. Kitchen
- C. Bathroom
- D. Bedroom
- E. Dining room
- F. Living room
- G. Patio

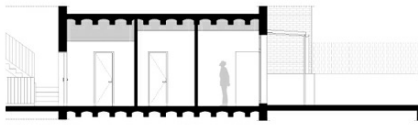


Upper-level floor plan

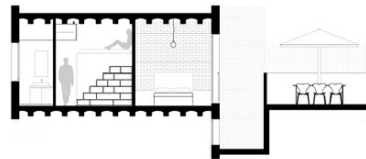


Lower-floor plan

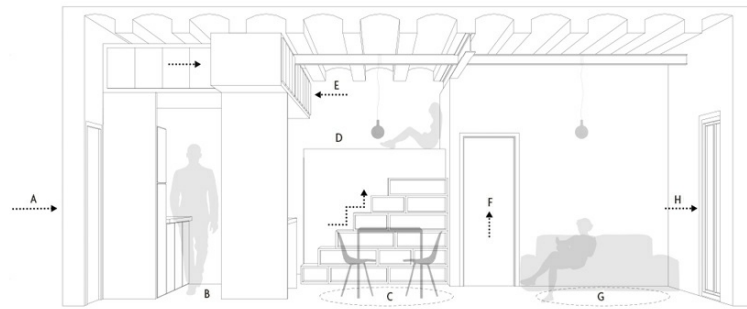
- A. Kitchen
- B. Living-dining room
- C. Bedroom
- D. Closet
- E. Bathroom
- F. Patio
- G. Loft with guest bed
- H. Built-in storage



Existing section



Section



Section perspective

- A. Entrance
- B. Kitchen
- C. Dining room
- D. Gallery
- E. Built-in storage
- F. Bedroom
- G. Living room
- H. Patio



One of the most important aspects of this design is its potential for space optimization. This is achieved by means of multifunctional pieces of furniture that contrast with the original character of the space.



The layout offers the occupants various options to move from one space to another, enriching the spatial perception. The staircase facilitates access to the storage space above the kitchen and entry.

037

Make the most of natural light by establishing connections between the areas close to a natural light source and those far from one.





Passage Buhan

441 sq ft

Architect: FABRE/deMARIEN Architectes

Location: Bordeaux, France

Photographer: © Stéphane Chalmeau

This project consisted of the transformation of a garage into a single residential unit. A 13 x 7-foot cutout into the rectangular space is used as an entry porch, facing a quiet, narrow alley. The porch brings light and ventilation into the living area and can be used as an extension of the interior space in good weather.







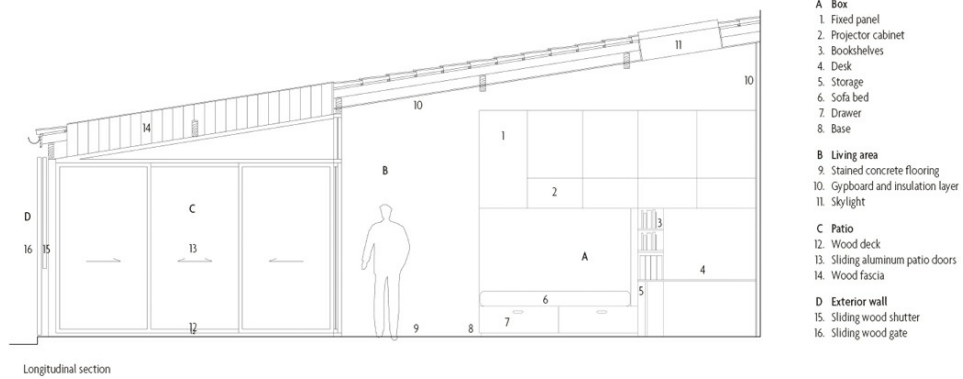
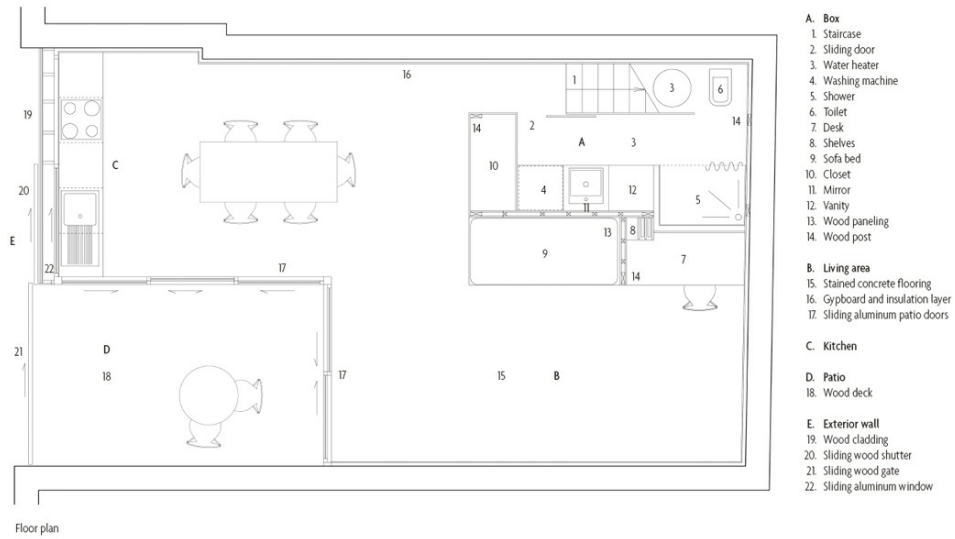
Except for the kitchen, all home functions are concentrated in a 10-foot-long by 10-foot-wide by 10-foot-tall volume containing a bathroom, a closet, a

sofa bed, a desk and a sleeping loft.

038

Place your kitchen in a well-lit section of your home if you can. A dining table can double as an island. It provides an extra work surface and makes it easier for several people to work simultaneously.





039

For small spaces, choose furniture that is not bulky and can easily be moved. It is useful to be able to move things around to accommodate special situations.

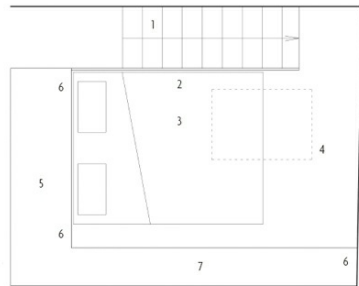




040

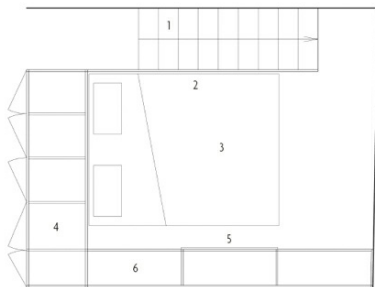
The swing of a hinged door takes up valuable space that limits the possibilities of a small space such as a bathroom. A sliding door is a much better option.





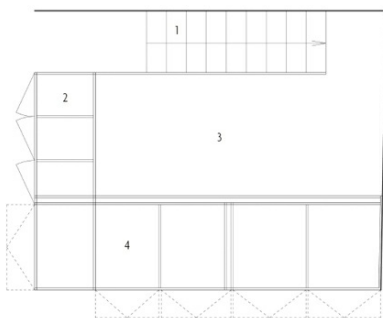
Box: plan view of loft

1. Staircase
2. Parapet
3. Bed
4. Wood floor assembly
5. Headboard
6. Electrical outlet
7. Skylight



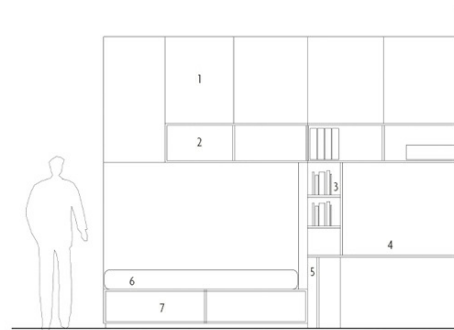
Box: loft level

1. Staircase
2. Parapet
3. Bed
4. Closet
5. Sliding panel (x3)
6. Shelves



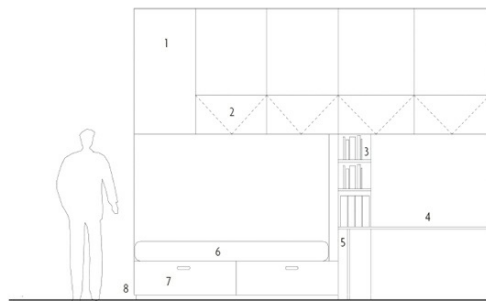
Box: lower level, interior

1. Staircase
2. Closet
3. Bathroom
4. Projector cabinet



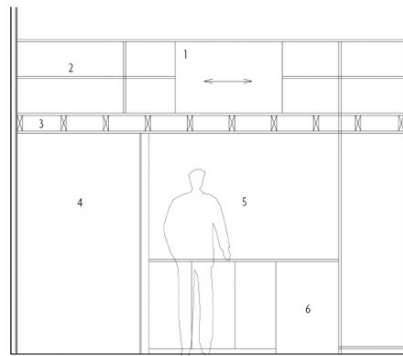
Box: desk side, interior

1. Fixed panel
2. Closet
3. Bookshelves
4. Desk
5. Storage
6. Sofa bed
7. Drawer



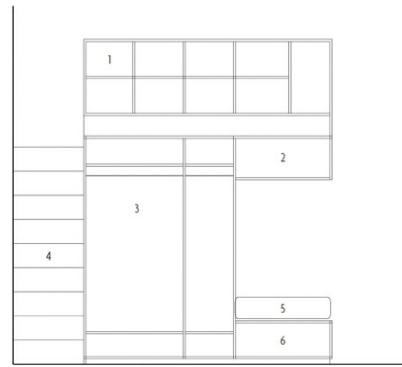
Box: desk side

1. Fixed panel
2. Projector cabinet
3. Bookshelves
4. Desk
5. Storage
6. Sofa bed
7. Drawer
8. Base



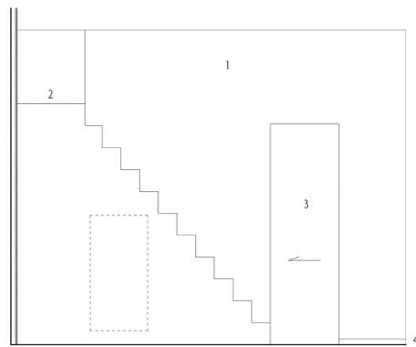
Box: bathroom interior

1. Sliding panels (x3)
2. Shelves
3. Wood floor assembly
4. Shower
5. Mirror
6. Washing machine



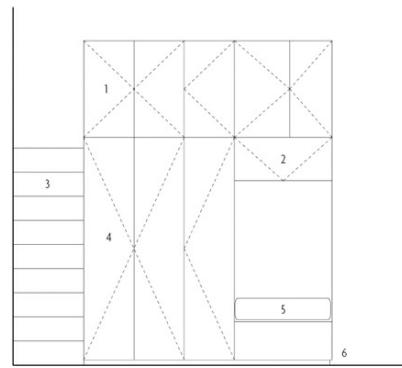
Box: kitchen side, interior

1. Closet and shelves
2. Closet and shelves
3. Closet
4. Staircase
5. Sofa bed
6. Drawer



Box: bathroom exterior wall

1. Parapet
2. Wood floor assembly
3. Sliding door
4. Base



Box: kitchen side

1. Wood paneling
2. Projector cabinet
3. Staircase
4. Wood paneling
5. Sofa bed
6. Base

The Arch

460 sq ft

Designer: Clifton Leung Design Workshop

Location: Hong Kong (SAR), China

Photographer: © Red Dog

The remodel of this apartment in Hong Kong is a study in planning for small spaces. As a starting point, the interior was completely gutted in order to start with a clean slate and satisfy the client's requirements. The reconfiguration of the apartment achieved an increase in natural light and a more voluminous interior by avoiding partitions and maximizing the ceiling height.

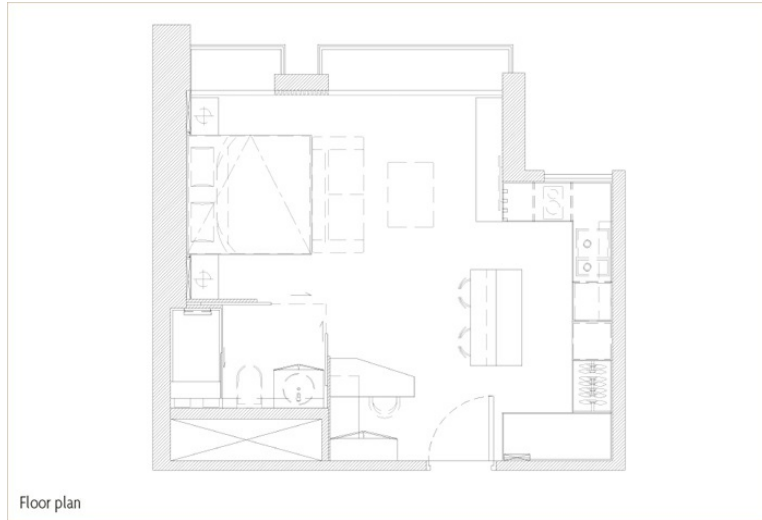




041

In open-plan spaces, a ceiling treatment can be an effective way of demarcating the area directly below. Consider dropped ceilings above particular areas, in conjunction with appropriate lighting.





A mirrored ceiling over the bed puts a focus on this area. It amplifies the space and reflects light.

042

Understand different lighting types and the purpose each one serves to create the appropriate setting. Ambient lighting should be combined with task lighting in functional areas like kitchens.





043

Customize your furniture to give your home a personal touch: adapt it to your particular needs and to the available space.







Conveniently placed against a duct chase, the bathroom is enclosed by two sliding glass panels that meet at a right angle.

Closet House

474 sq ft

Designer: Consexto

Location: Matosinhos, Portugal

Photographer: © Amândio Neto

The optimal use of space coupled with automation technology transforms a tiny space into a functional home. It's composed of five spaces, two of which can be transformed by means of a movable cabinet. The side of the cabinet facing the bedroom is a closet. The side facing the living area has a fold-out table, a minibar and an entertainment center.





044

Before you order a bespoke closet, think about what you are going to store in it and how you are going to use it. The right configuration can increase the storage space.





045

Freestanding furniture tends to be inconvenient in small spaces. Limit the number of these items to make circulation around the space easy. This will increase the sense of amplitude.





046

You may want to keep appliances and other utilitarian devices out of sight, in cabinets fitted with electrical outlets, to keep surfaces clear.







All electronic devices, network solutions and lighting in this small apartment are efficiently controlled by a sophisticated home automation system that

allows remote control from computers and mobile devices.

Chou's Apartment

484 sq ft

Architect: Chrystalline Architect

Location: Jakarta, Indonesia

Photographer: © William Sebastian

This remodel of a small studio apartment required a design that would optimize the space. Special attention was paid to adapting the apartment to the lifestyle of the occupant, a businessman often on the road. Solutions included the use of transparent partitions to open up the space and the construction of versatile built-in furniture.

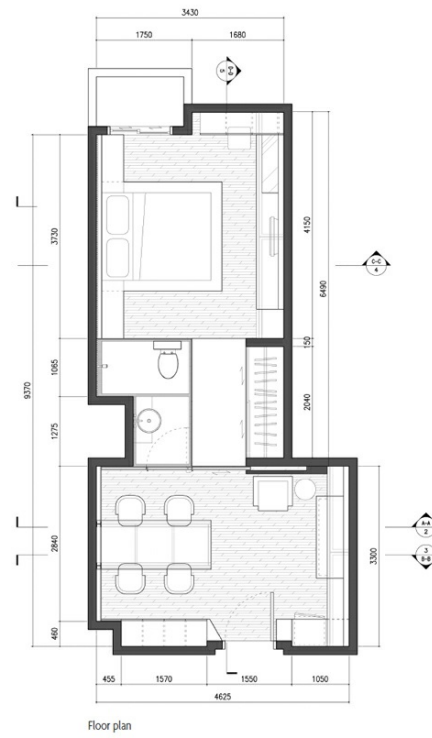
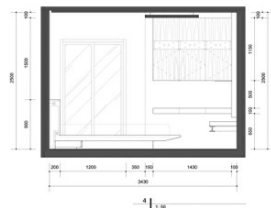
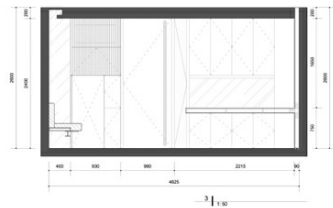
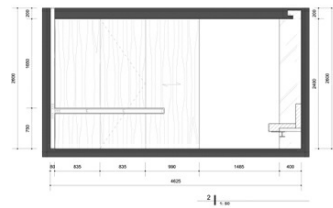




047

Cove lighting has the effect of expanding a space and lifting a ceiling. As this type of lighting is only used to create a soft and comfortable atmosphere, it is important to complement it with accent and task lighting.





048

Camouflaged doors provide discreet access to an adjacent room. They maintain the continuity of a wall and create a space as simple and unified as possible.



049

Cove lighting can emphasize special interior design details, such as unusual dropped ceilings and printed glass partitions that produce a floating effect.





“Der Ufögel” House

484 sq ft

Architects: Architekturbüro Jungmann & Aberjung Design Agency

Location: Nußdorf-Debant, Lienz, Austria

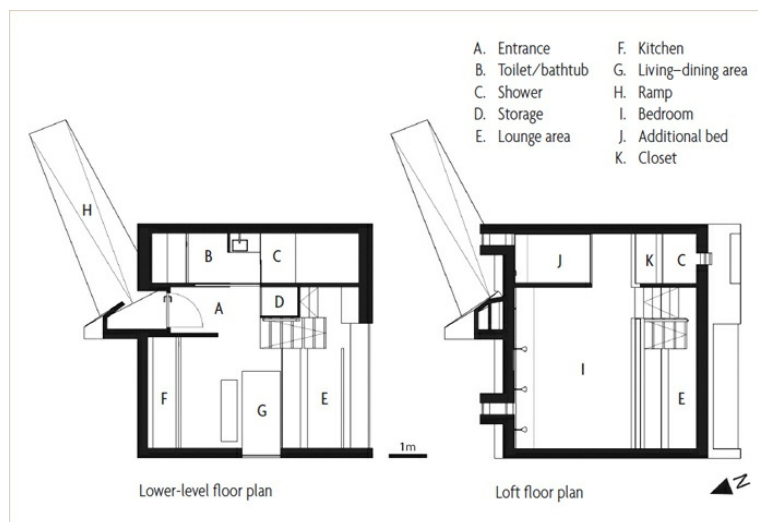
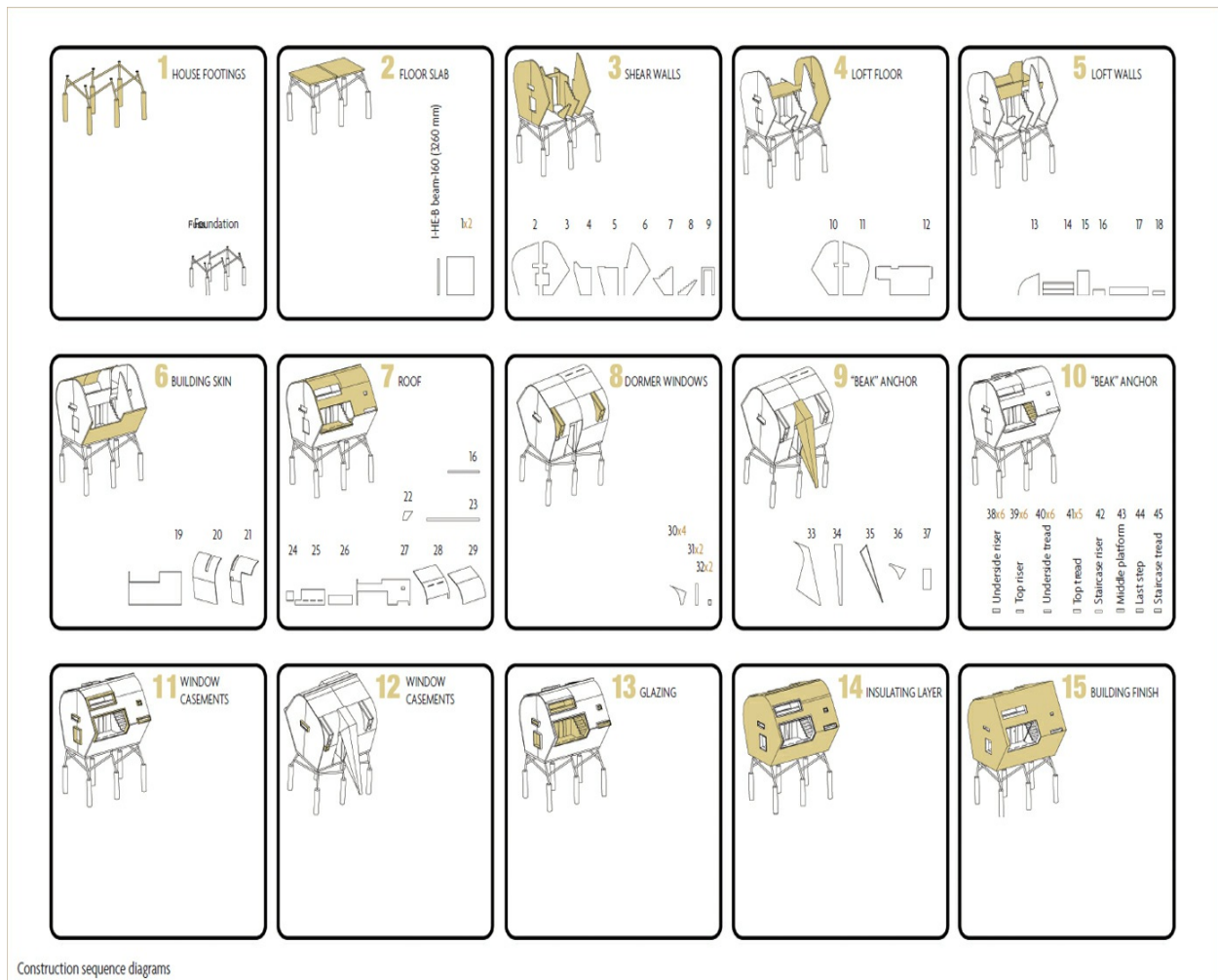
Photographer: © DI Lukas Jungmann

Built on stilts and with a shape that reminds one of a large bird, this house doesn't go unnoticed. The interior reveals a multifunctional living space with a sleeping loft. It is efficiently equipped with a kitchen, a bathroom and a furnace. Large windows on various surfaces open the interior to the dramatic alpine landscape, enhancing the feeling of amplitude.







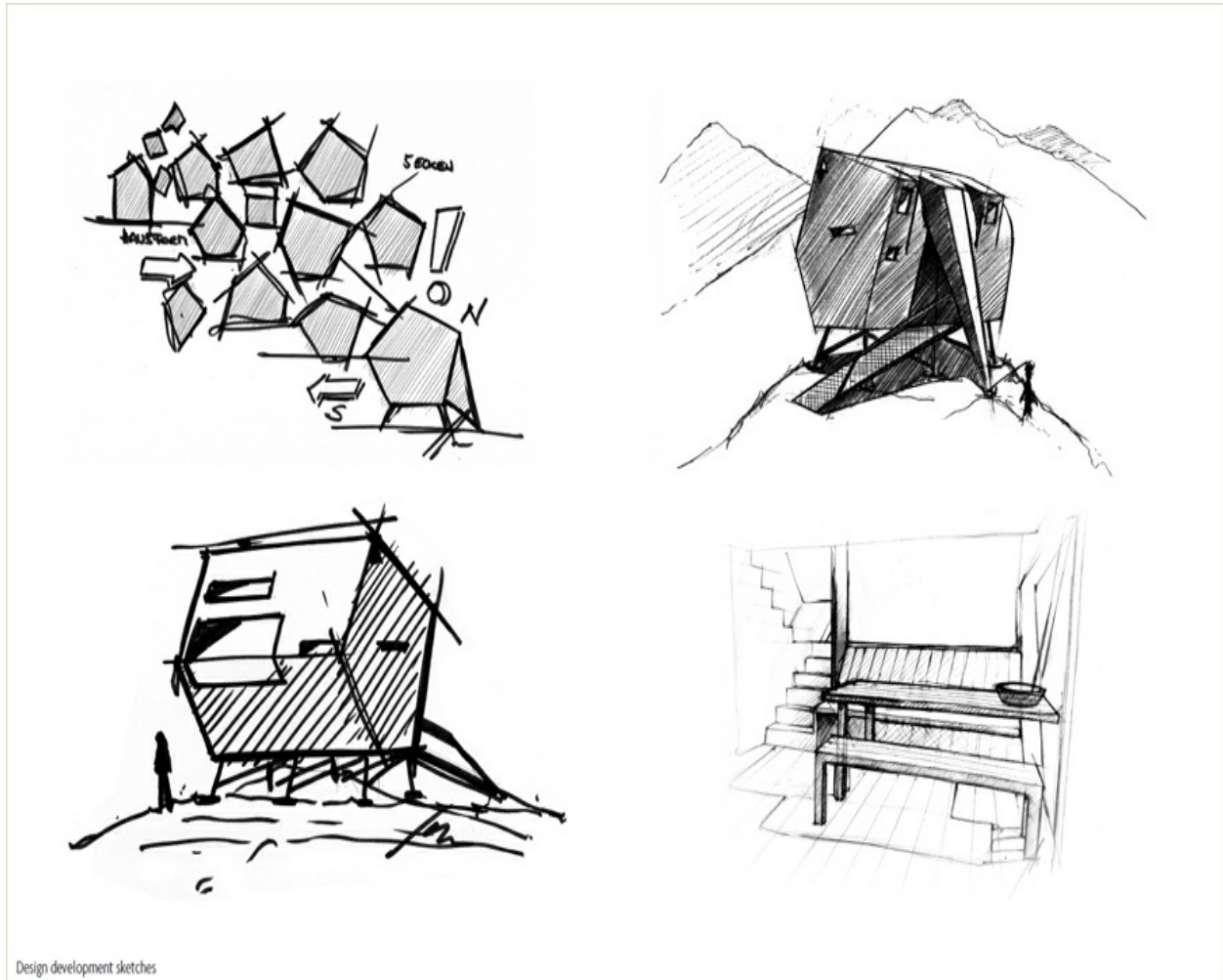


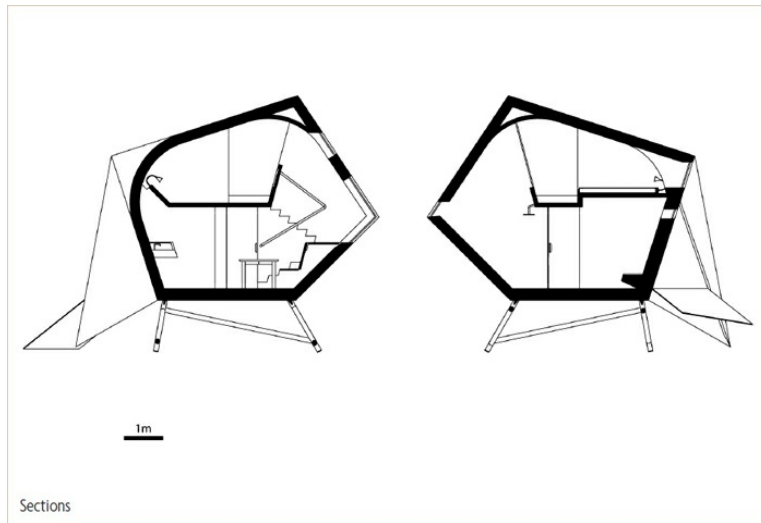
This 484-square-foot multifunctional living space, comfortably equipped with a kitchen and a bathroom, offers both openness and security. Stripping

away the superfluous, Ufogel embodies adaptability.

050

Adaptable interiors are key for putting every square foot of an interior space to good use. This is a common trait of small open spaces, enabling endless flexibility of spatial and functional aspects.







The interior surfaces morph from floor to bench or steps. The use of the same material throughout enhances the continuity from one plane to another.



051

Light and brightly colored surfaces are reflective, making a space feel open and airy. It is critical to find the balance between color and amount of light to avoid uncomfortable glare.





052

Where privacy isn't an issue, glass partitions are a wonderful idea to separate a bedroom from an en-suite bathroom. This allows decoration based on continuity, which makes the room look spacious.





053

Go easy on the decoration in a small space where finishes are attractive and can shine on their own.







House 12.20

484 sq ft

Architect: Alex Nogueira Arquiteto

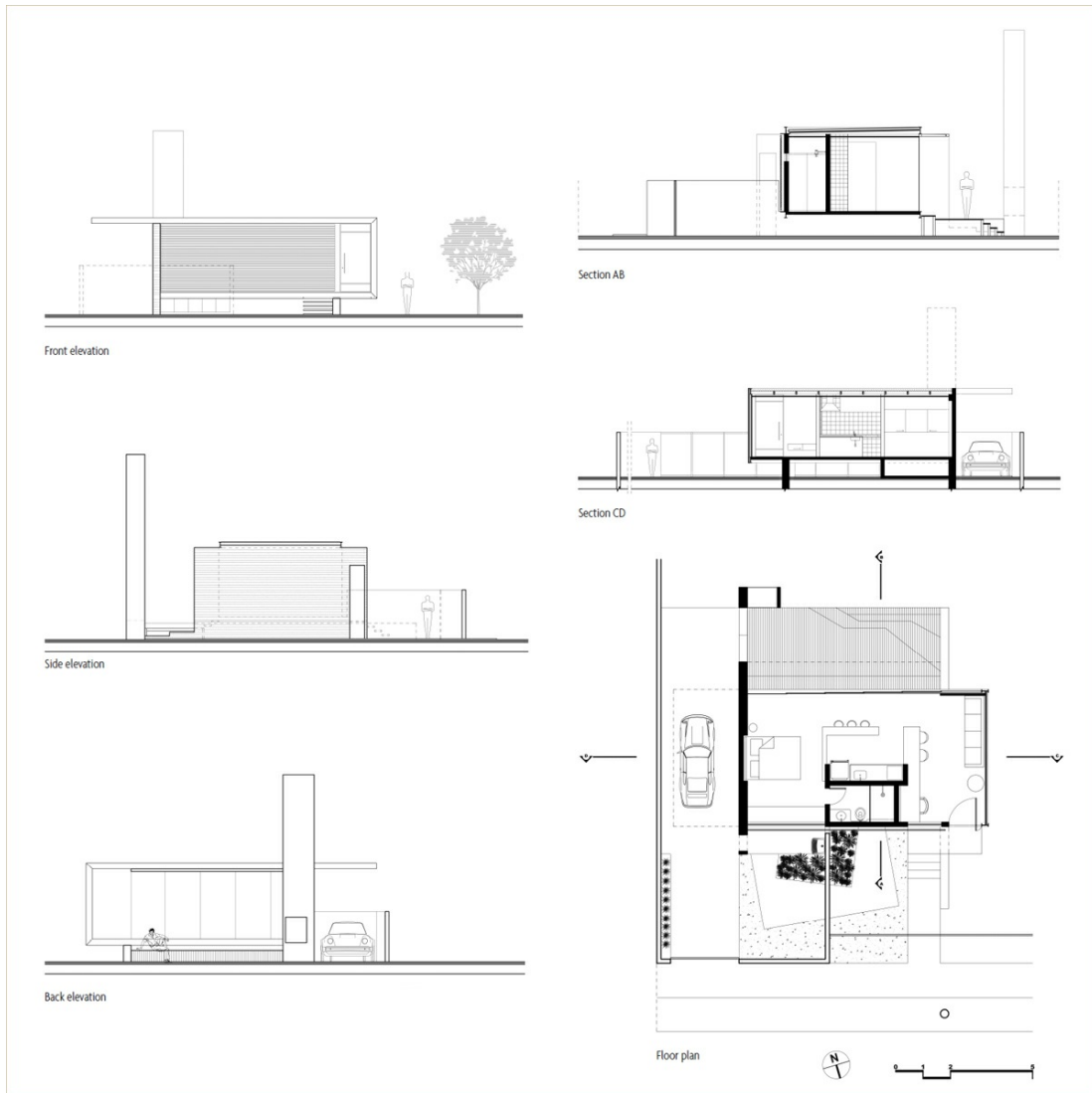
Location: Campo Grande, Brazil

Photographer: © André Barbosa

In this 30-foot-long by 16-foot-wide space, the orthogonality and rigidity of the architectural environment contrast with the light and stripped atmosphere brought by the colors, the furniture, some of the finishes and the generous opening that faces the garden. The large sliding glass door and the deck draw the exterior into the interior, and vice versa.







054

Sliding glass walls are the epitome of indoor-outdoor living. Make them all disappear so that a small interior and an outdoor space read as one large area.



House C

484 sq ft

Architect: Francesco Librizzi Studio

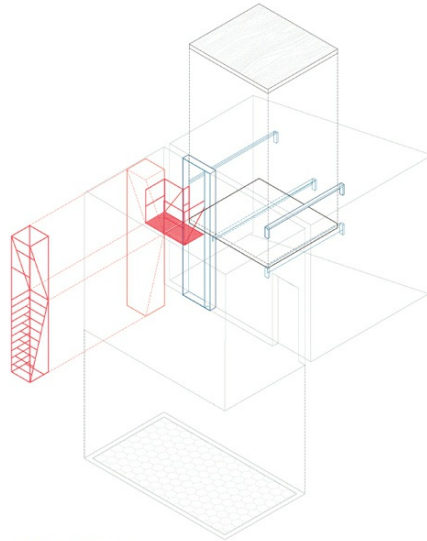
Location: Milano, Italy

Photographer: © Giovanna Silva

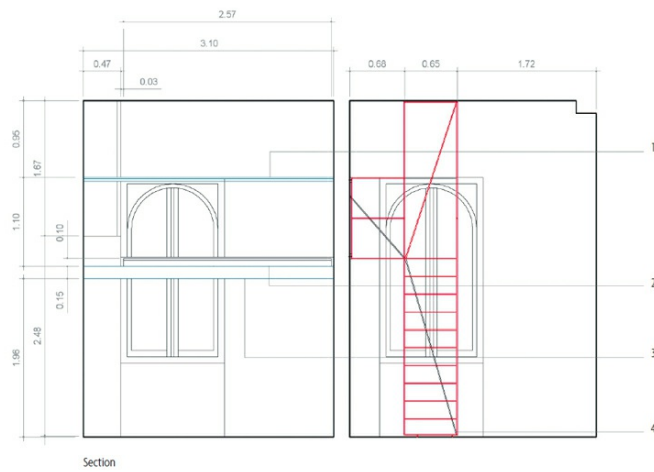
An existing apartment with two rooms and a bathroom is characterized by a small floor area in comparison to its high ceiling. This was the starting point of a powerful remodel. An added loft acts as a new layer in the almost untouched shell, reinforcing the original identity of the apartment.







Exploded axonometric view





A ladder made of welded steel rods adds a minimalist touch to the apartment. The designers chose this simple, yet striking design to adapt this early 1900s apartment to a new use.







The remodel included the upgrade of the kitchen and bathroom. A minimalist design approach was chosen so as not to obscure the original identity of the apartment.

The White Retreat

484 sq ft

Architect: Colombo and Serboli Architecture

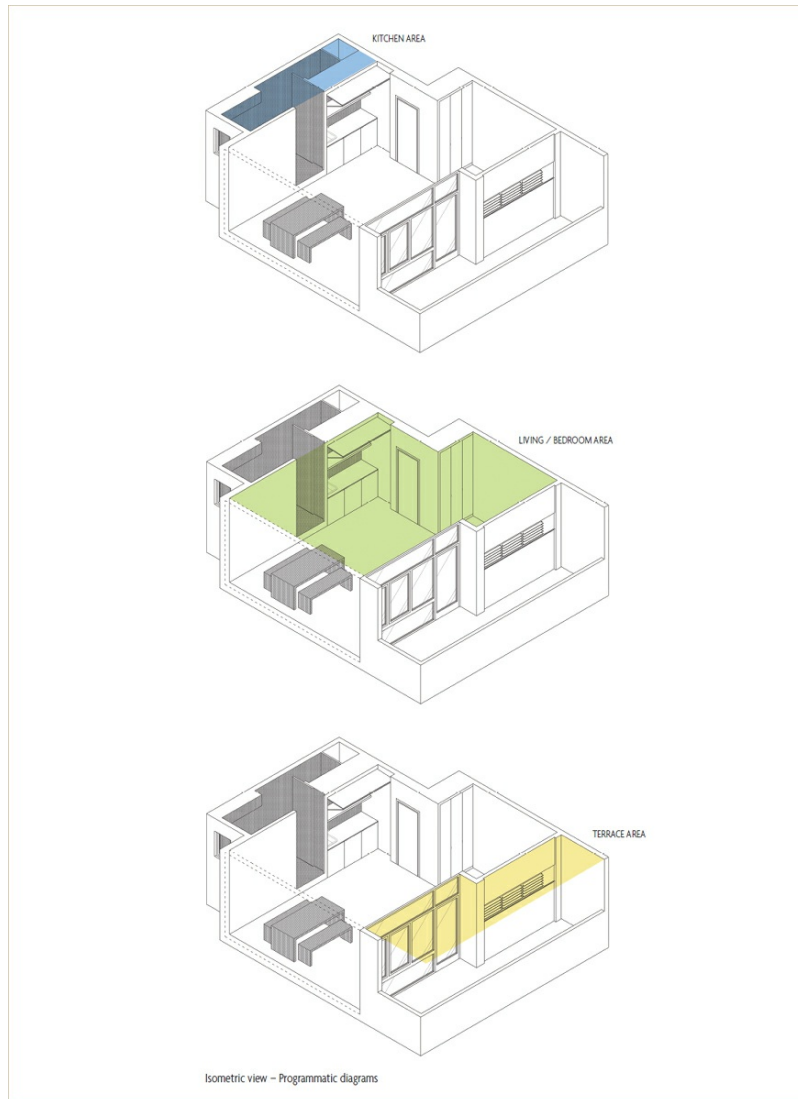
Location: Sitges, Spain

Photographer: © Roberto Ruiz

When the owner of this apartment in a small coastal village of Spain hired architects to remodel it, he envisioned a peaceful place for introspection, flooded with light. An extremely reduced budget asked for simple, inexpensive solutions. The result is a completely secluded place, facing only an interior courtyard. The lack of views is compensated for by silence and light.







The space is composed of three blocks: the bathroom/kitchen, the living room/bedroom and the terrace. The last two are very permeable, only divided by a large window in the living area.

056

Continuous flooring softens the transition between interior and exterior spaces. A roof can be extended out with a canopy to create a protected outdoor space.







057

It is the color rather than the size of the tile you use in your bathroom that makes it look larger or smaller. However, floor-to-ceiling tiling can visually expand a small bathroom.





Camelia Cottage

538 sq ft

Architect: 4site Architecture

Location: Carlton North, Melbourne, Australia

Photographer: © Kevin Hui

Suburban terrace houses usually consist of a layering of various add-ons from various points in time. This very low-budget project minimized the work that needed to be done by keeping the existing bathroom addition. The design consists of the reorganization of the space to create a more usable and comfortable environment, while producing a visually striking effect.







The colorful joinery wall is the key element that visually connects the interior with the exterior, which are only separated by bifold glass doors.

058

Wall-hung, under-counter cabinets are ideal for small kitchens. Lifted off the floor, they have a less bulky appearance than floor-standing cabinets.



059

Not only do raised floors separate different functions, but they can also conceal ingenious storage systems.





Architect's Loft

550 sq ft

Architect: PorterFanna Architecture

Location: Brooklyn, NY, USA

Photographer: © L. J. Porter

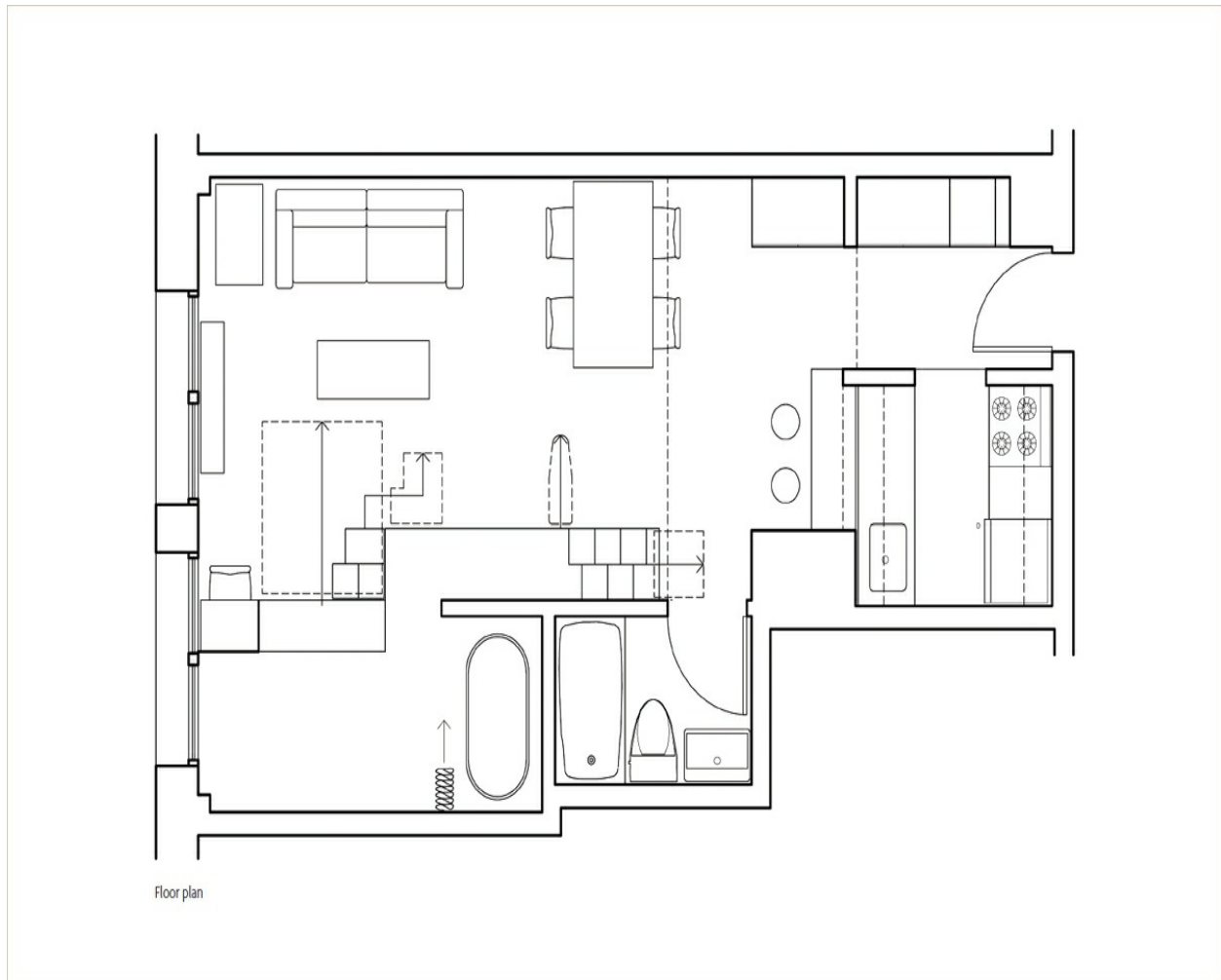
This 550-square-foot loft is located on an upper floor of the former St. John's University Law School in downtown Brooklyn, which was converted into apartments in the 1980s. It has a full wall of windows and 12-foot-high ceilings, which flood the space with sunlight. Creative use of lighting and custom-designed cabinetry create a space that feels larger than it is.







The loftiness of the space is used to its fullest. This allowed for the creation of separate living, dining, working and sleeping areas that are nonetheless visually connected to one another.



A storage area above the kitchen was converted to a sleeping area. An alternating-tread staircase that doubles as a bookcase provides access to this area.

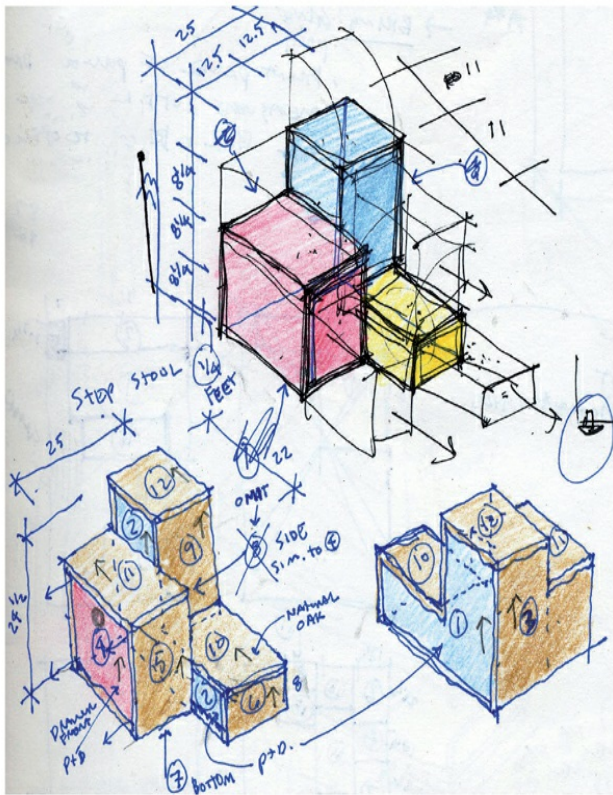
060

A corner with a few simple pieces of furniture feels spacious and airy. It compensates for another part of the space where multifunctional customized furniture is concentrated.

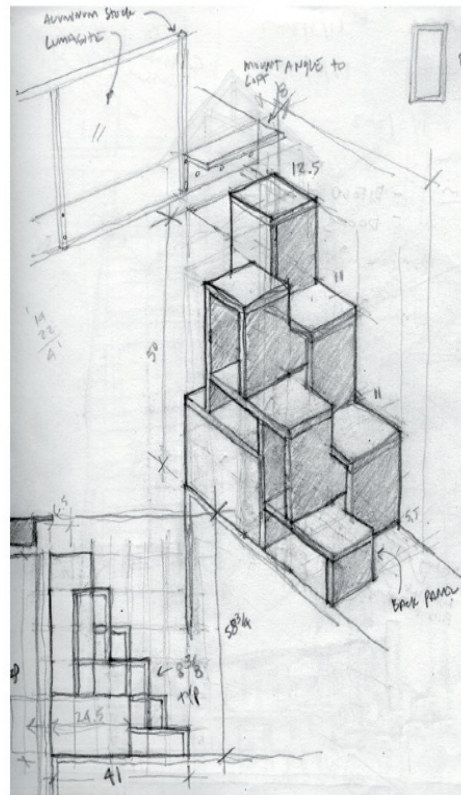


061

Creative design solutions can be integrated into the plans to maximize living space and reduce clutter. Everything has its place, even in a small home!



Toy box sketch



Staircase cabinet sketch



A colorful box of movable steps and drawers doubles as a toy box. When pulled out completely, it reveals a large, long-term storage area under the

deck.

Home Office in Zagreb

570 sq ft

Architect: Sandra Meštrović

Location: Mallinova Ulica, Zagreb, Croatia

Photographer: © Tomislav Marić

The living and working space of architect Sandra Meštrović is a completely refurbished apartment located in a 1930s building. The living area satisfies the practical needs of domestic and working life. The plan of the apartment is long and narrow, with a bay that is large enough for a bedroom and a bathroom.







With no doors separating the different spaces and with an opening between the living area and the kitchen, a visual connection is established between the two ends of the apartment.

Light paint colors and good illumination are key to making a kitchen a comfortable and functional room. Don't let too many utensils and appliances take over the work surfaces.



Put a corridor to good use with open shelves along one wall. In this case, the shelves are opposite a graphite volume containing the bathroom, following the concept of “a box within a box.”



Floor plan

064

Consider using a palette of the same color range throughout, preferably light, to create a bright and airy feel. Keep in mind that using different floor, walls and ceiling colors can be overwhelming.





Laneway House 1

580 sq ft

Architect: Lanefab Design/Build

Location: Vancouver, BC, Canada

Photographer: © Colin Perry

Laneway housing is an increasingly popular type of residential construction on the west coast of Canada, especially in the Vancouver metropolitan area. It originated as part of a program aimed to increase urban density while keeping the small-neighborhood feel. Averaging 550 square feet, laneway houses are required to be built in the back of a traditional lot, where garages are usually built. This 580-square-foot house also incorporates several green features, such as a rainwater collection system, highly insulated walls and triple-glazed windows.

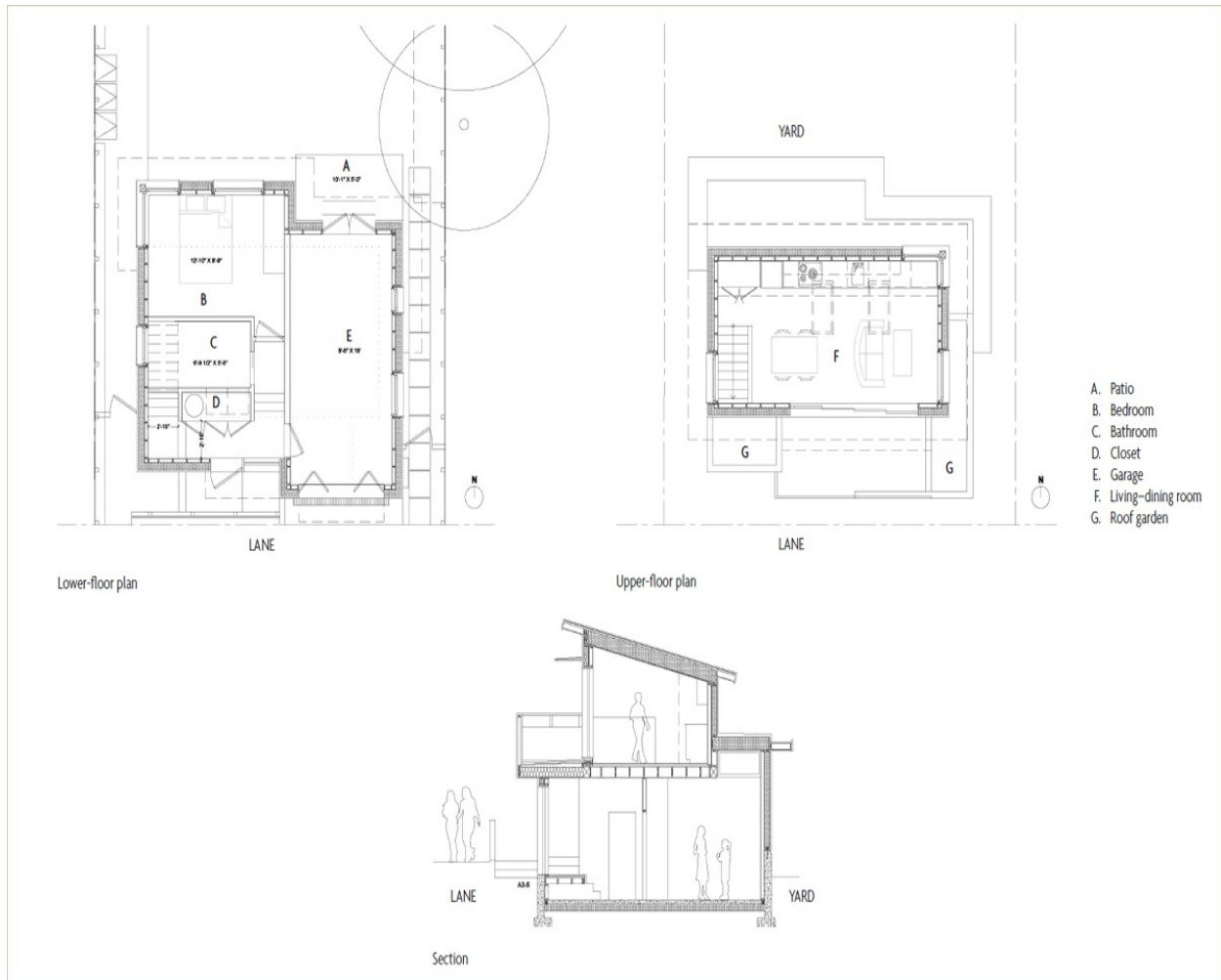






The main living area, located on the upper floor, is brightened by large sliding doors that open onto a terrace. Two skylights above the kitchen area balance out the light, thus avoiding a harsh lighting contrast.

Scale and proportion are important aspects to take into consideration when furnishing a space. Choose your furniture and accessories according to the size of the room where you want to put them.



066

White walls, clean lines and a well-thought-out placement of openings and lighting work together to create rooms.





Apartment 1001

592 sq ft

Architect: Keiji Ashizawa Design

Location: Tokyo, Japan

Photographer: © Takumi Ota

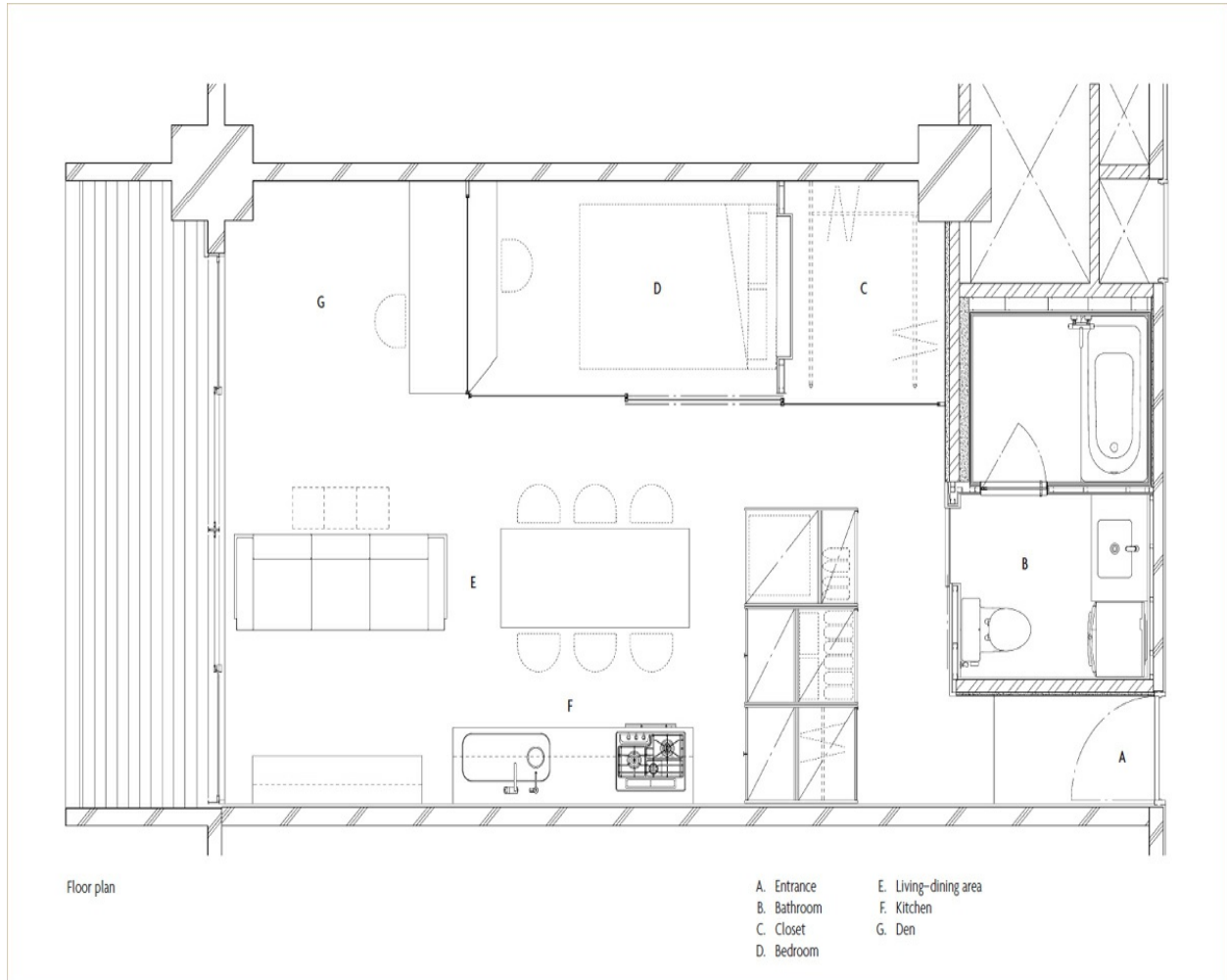
Designed for two music and wine lovers, 1001 is a newly renovated 592-square-foot apartment in Tokyo. The plan for the apartment called for a cozy “hotel room.” It had to have lots of storage space for large collections of comics, CDs and books. The project also involved the design of furniture, screens, doors and kitchen cabinetry. Consistent color, material and form create a unified interior.







A clear distribution of space combined with a good design concept is key for the creation of a comfortable and efficient small place. Unnecessary decoration should be avoided.





Sleek new elements such as the steel-and-glass partitions, the dark-blue satin finish of the cabinetry and the wood flooring stand out against the rough concrete finish and exposed ducts.

068

Translucent partitions accompanied by strategically placed lighting add depth to a small room, creating the illusion of a larger place.



Transforming your bathroom into a wellness sanctuary can be as easy as using calming colors and dim light. If space allows, keep appliances separate.



House in Puigvert

592 sq ft

Architect: Sauquet Arquitectes i Associats

Location: Castellar del Vallès, Catalonia, Spain

Photographer: © STARP estudi

An old stable with a single central pillar was transformed into a habitable space. After a thorough restoration of the shell, the interior was subdivided to fit the spatial needs. The design uses dividing walls that end short of the ceiling, making a clear distinction between existing and new construction.









Hand drawn, colored interior perspective

With the interior space having been completely gutted, the central pillar of the former stable is used as an articulation point for the organization of the

different areas.

070

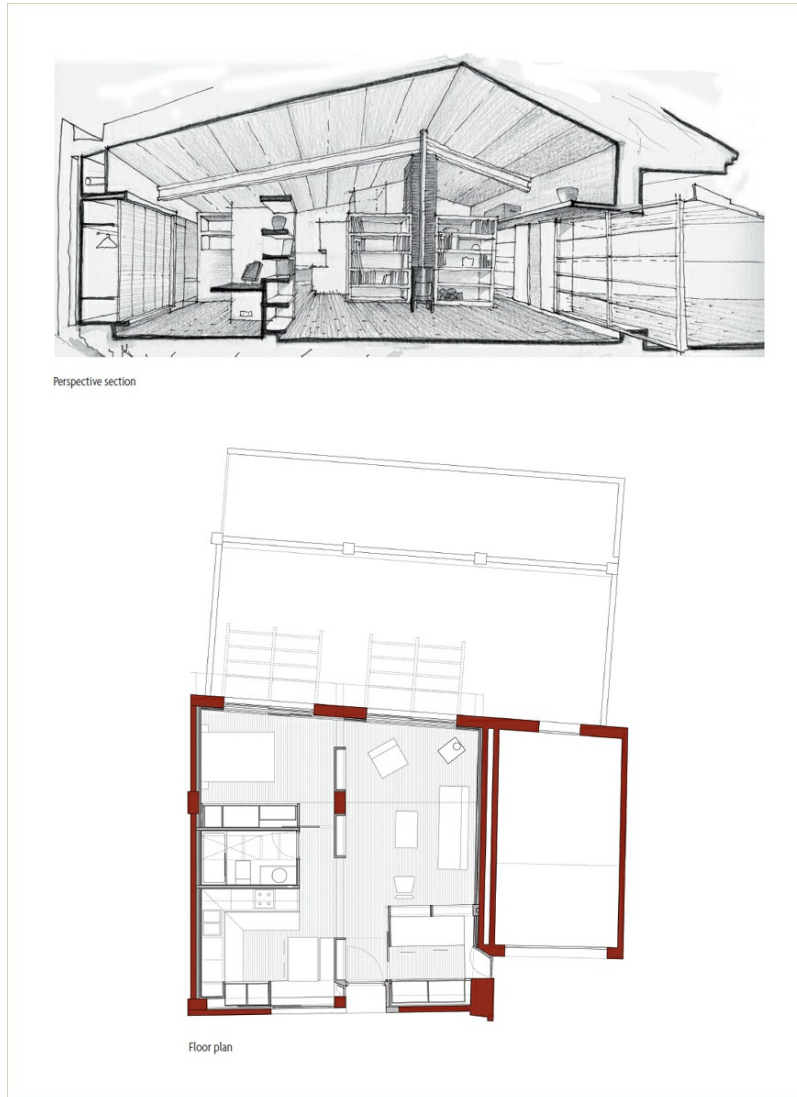
Open-plan homes come with obvious benefits, such as good natural lighting and ventilation. Open shelves and low walls satisfy separation needs but don't block the flow of light or air.





071

One common way to organize an existing open-plan home is by using furniture as room dividers. Privacy issues can be overcome with clever solutions, such as sliding panels.







Even the bathroom, the only enclosed room in the house, enjoys abundant light by means of a skylight.



Hand-drawn, colored elevation and interior perspectives



Loft Space

603 sq ft

Architect: Craft Design

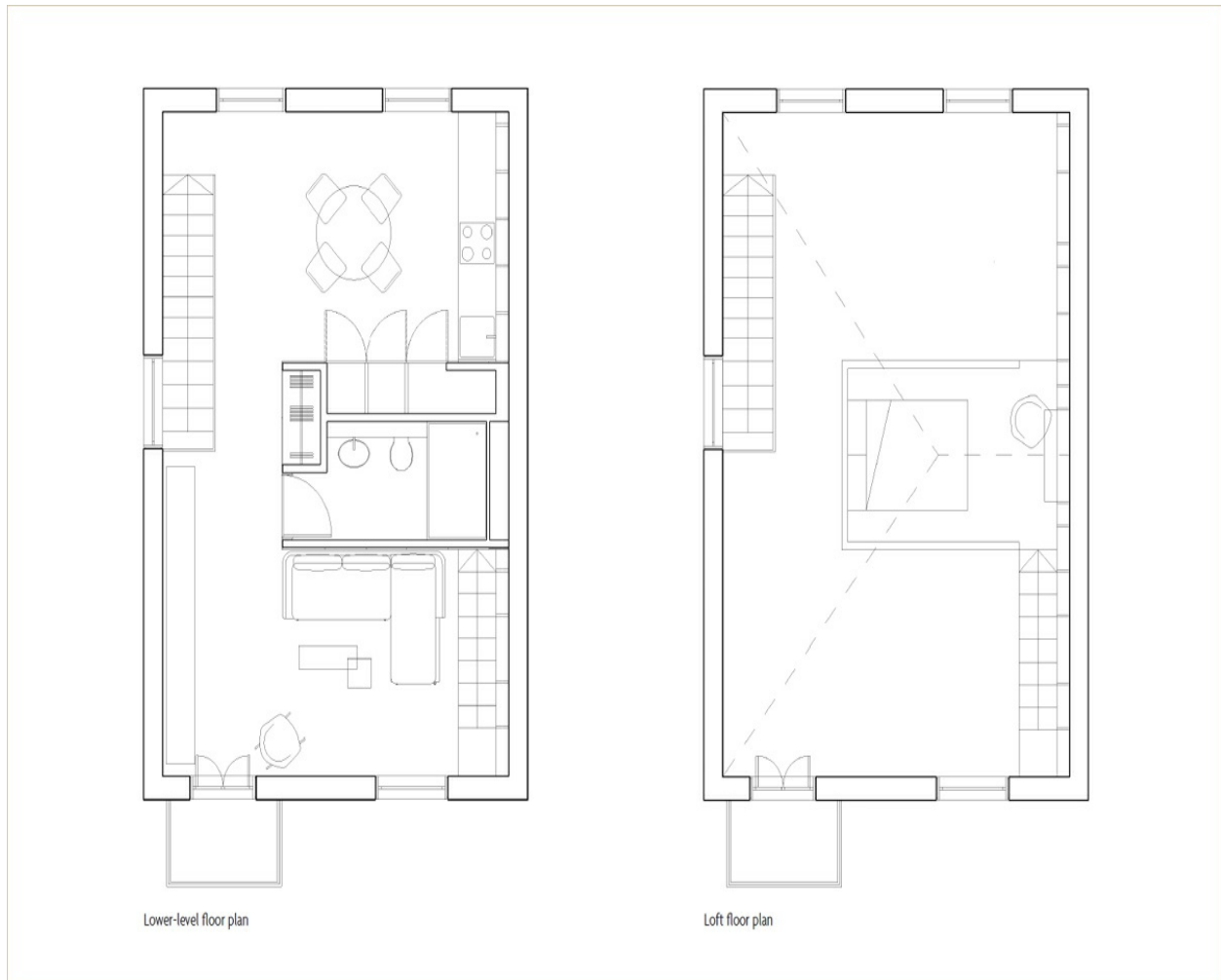
Location: Camden, London, UK

Photographer: © Armando Elias

This small attic space, which used to be an open-plan office, was converted into a bespoke and innovative environment that efficiently responds to the demands of the occupant's lifestyle. This was achieved by inserting a volume that divides the space into various areas of different uses and contains the bathroom and storage space.







The plan called for the optimal use of the space, while keeping a simple and efficient layout.



The staircaise leading to the loft is cleverly integrated into the box. Its simple design doesn't upstage the occupant's collection of objects and books.

072

A kitchen along just one wall is an excellent, budget-friendly solution for homes where space is at an absolute premium.





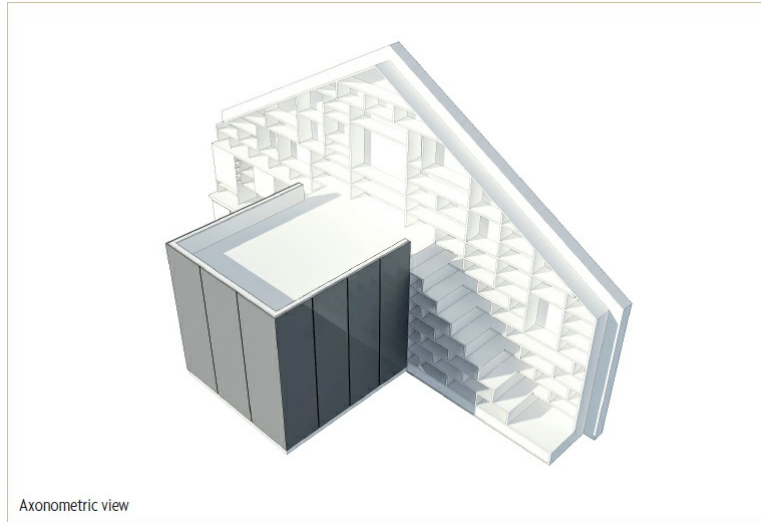


073

In spaces with high ceilings, lofts can solve space issues, but to comply with building regulations, they need to offer adequate headroom and load-bearing capacity.







The attic's 15-foot-high walls are fully lined with shelves. The height allows for a loft accommodating a sleeping area and a home office.

Open Studio Apartment

624 sq ft

Designer: FILD

Location: Kiev, Ukraine

Photographer: © FILD

This open-plan studio was initially a two-room apartment. The new layout includes an open kitchen and a separate dressing room and bathroom. The design integrates the simplicity of the plan with clever lighting, storage and decorating ideas to turn this studio into a comfortable, inviting home.

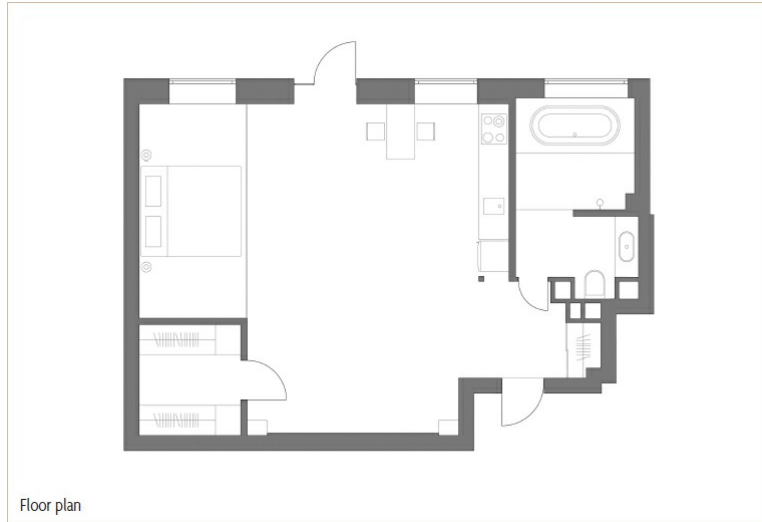




074

A small space challenges you to provide utility with every square foot. Raise the floor to separate different areas, and use the underside of the raised floor for additional storage.





075

With the wet area of the bathroom separated, the dry area can benefit from greater design opportunities, especially when it comes to finishes.





Columbus Circle Studio Apartment

650 sq ft

Designers: Studio Bichara and Minimal USA

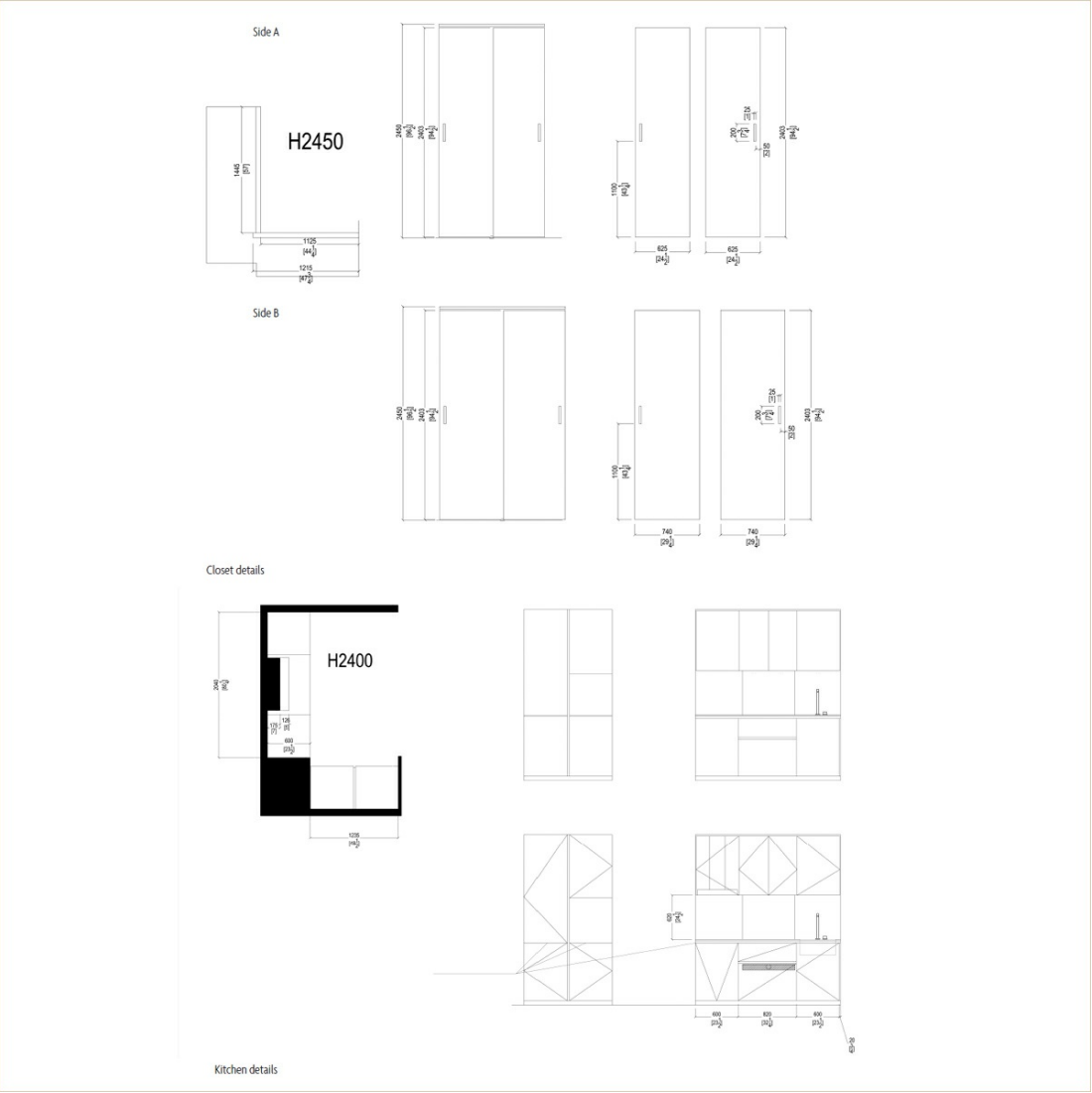
Location: New York, NY, USA

Photographer: © Federica Carlet

Minimal USA and Studio Bichara teamed up to develop a design for a studio in Columbus Circle. The design of a 27-square-foot kitchen and 16-square-foot wardrobe for this studio proves that luxury doesn't belong exclusively to big spaces.







076

Reflective materials such as ceramic tile and stainless steel amplify light effects. This is especially effective in a kitchen, where good lighting is critical.









The closet doors in glossy white lacquer create a mirror effect that confers amplitude on the room. They slide, creating a play of light that gives depth to the small area leading to the bathroom.

077

Use a low-contrast color scheme in a small space so it doesn't feel claustrophobic. To confer a feeling of airiness on a room, use reflective and transparent materials such as polished stone and glass.



Lake Cottage

670 sq ft

Architect: UUFie

Location: Bolsover, ON, Canada

Photographer: © Naho Kubota, Uufie

This lake cottage reinterprets the tree house. It was designed as a two-story, multiuse space for a large family. A deep cut in the building creates an overhang that protects the outdoor space. Clad with mirrored glass, this sheltered space reflects the forest surroundings, blurring the distinction between construction and nature. The close connection with the natural environment continues in the interior.

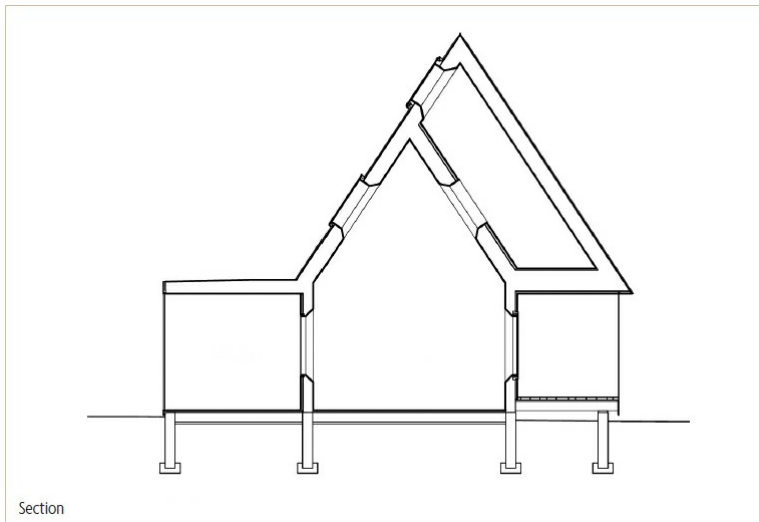


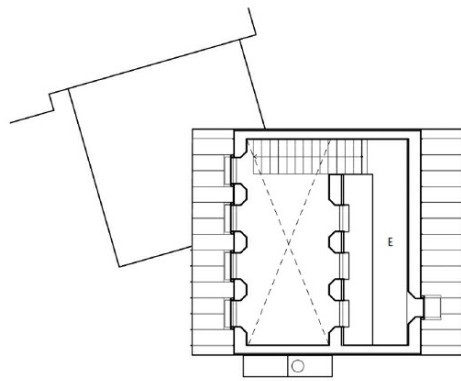


078

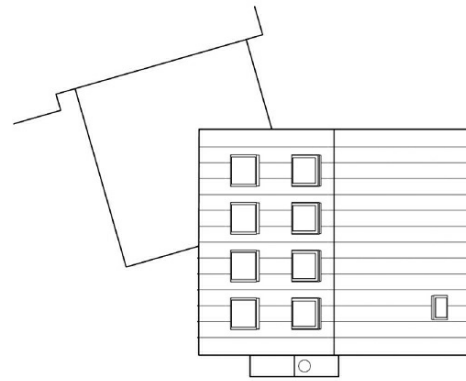
Mirrors expand and reflect light. You can transform a small room into a larger and brighter space by using illusion wisely.



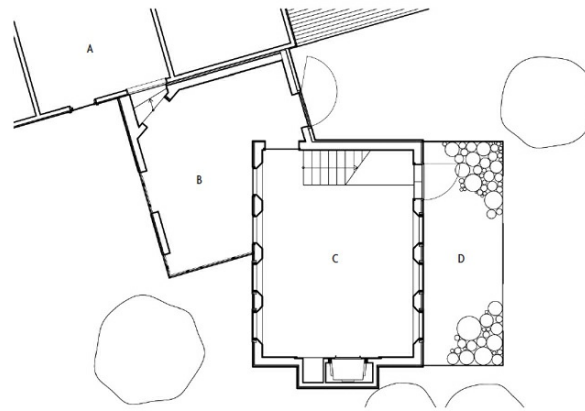




Second-floor plan



Roof plan



Ground-floor plan

- A. Existing structure
- B. Dining area
- C. Living area
- D. Terrace
- E. Loft





079

Cutting holes in walls visually connects different spaces and creates a sense of continuity. These openings can also serve to improve light distribution.





The abstract nature of the interior allows the imagination to fly. Domestic spaces can become playrooms at a moment's notice.





The attic was mainly conceived of as a sleeping area. With the shingle-clad wall creating the illusion of the outdoors, the attic is also a place for meditation.



Maison Carlos Ortega

670 sq ft

Architect: ROW Studio

Location: Mexico City, Mexico

Photographer: © Jorge Silva

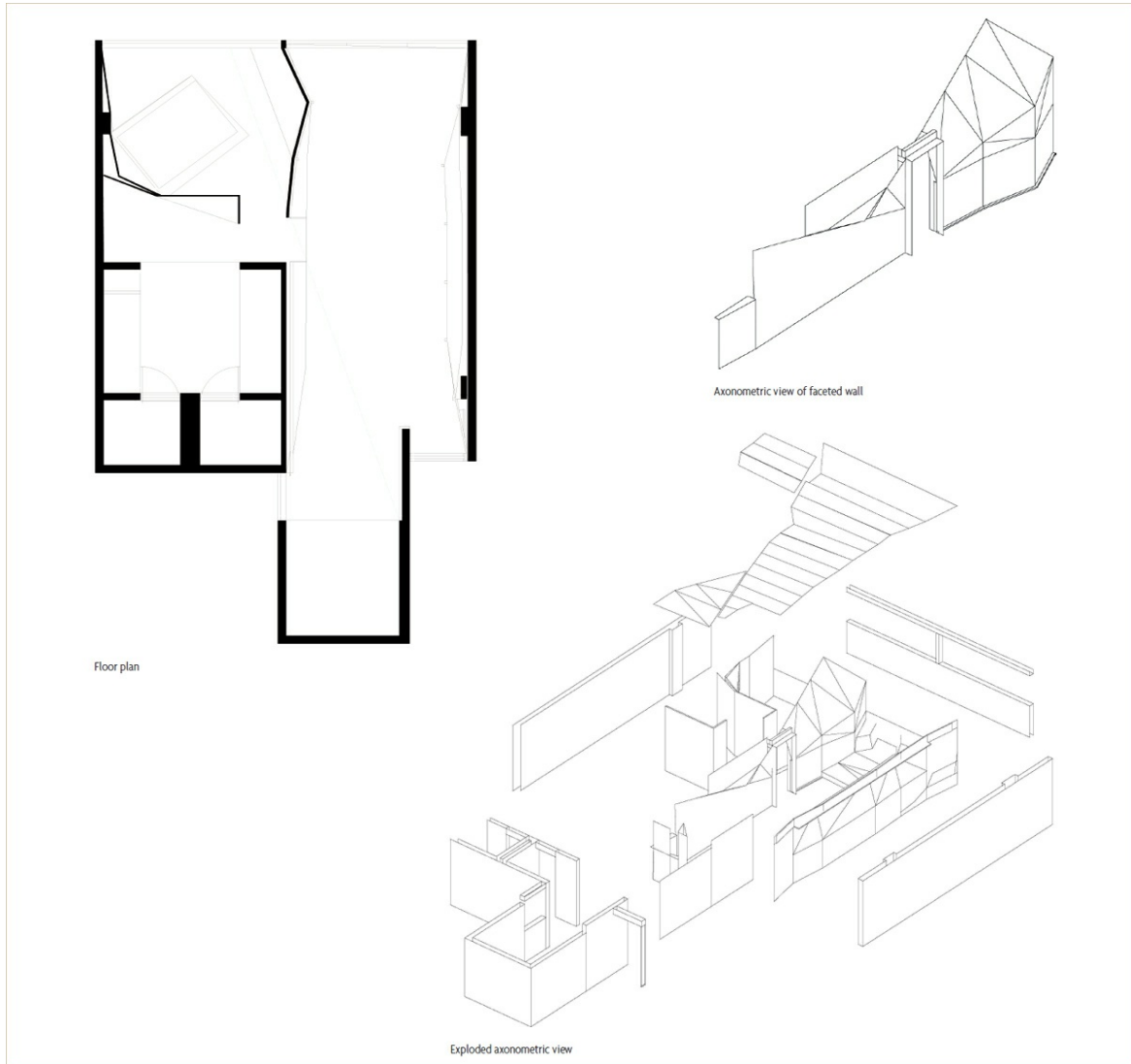
This conversion of an existing space into an apartment and showroom for fashion designer Carlos Ortega created a clear distinction between public and private areas. The public areas serve both as living room and as showroom for the client's label. The private areas are mainly used for the storage of the designer's own clothes and creations, and as dressing rooms for the designer's clientele.







The two areas are separated by a faceted wall spanning from the kitchen to the bedroom on a diagonal axis. A second wall with the same characteristics crosses the first. It provides ample shelving space.





The remodel was done in oriented strand board (OSB) panels, with some details tinted in different colors. These tinted sections follow different color sequences: from yellow to white, yellow to red, and black to white.

Create the walk-in closet that best suits your needs, but also make it a space you enjoy going into. Turn it into a personal space that expresses your personality, just like any other room in your home.



081

Oriented strand board makes a very cool and cheap finish. Applied to one or more surfaces of a small space and to furniture, it adds visual interest.





House in Shimomaruko

678 sq ft

Architect: Atelier HAKO Architects

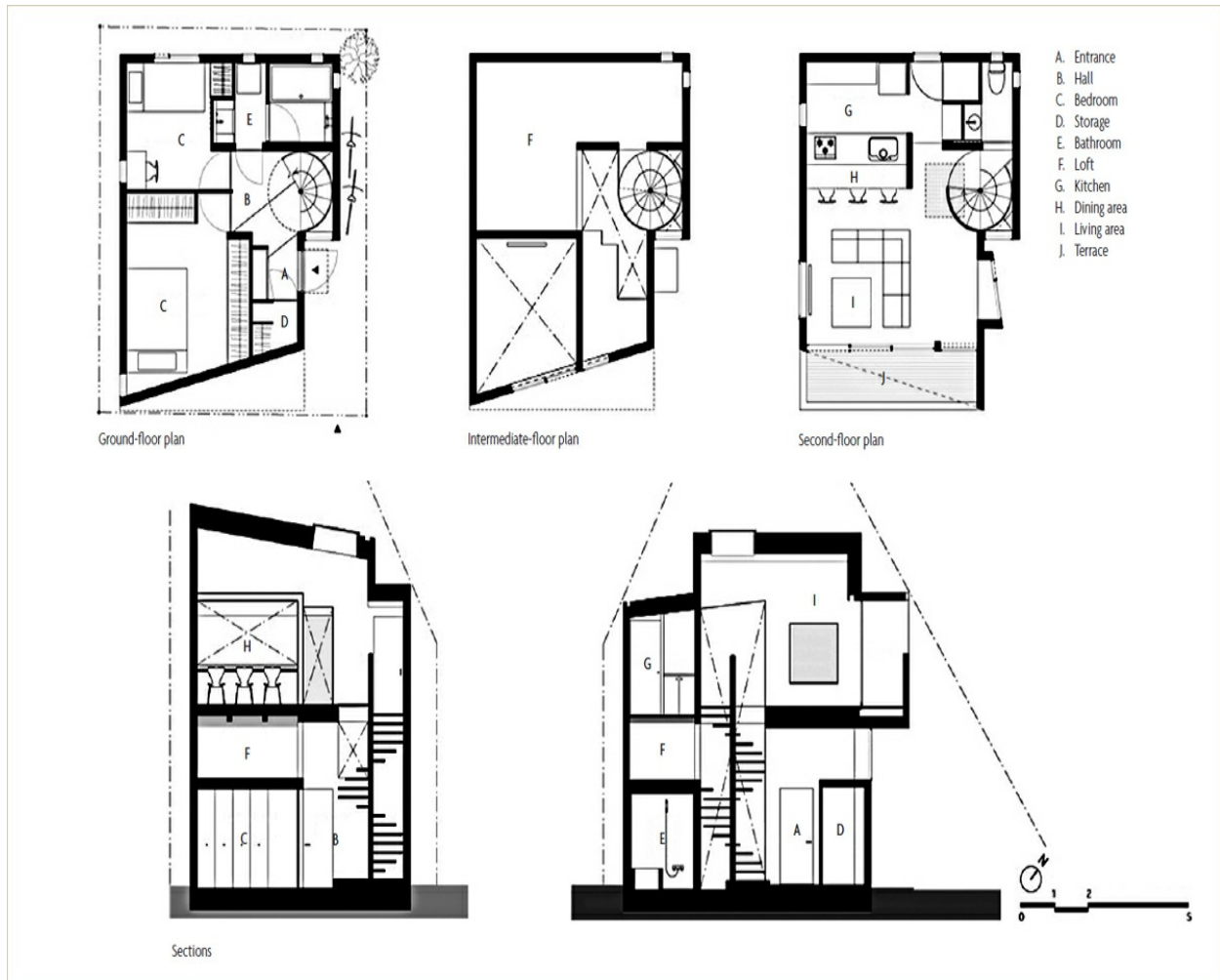
Location: Oota, Tokyo, Japan

Photographer: © Atelier HAKO Architects, Atelier Flor

This house, which faces a narrow alley, is a response to the strict Japanese building regulations that limit building density in an attempt to maintain urban character. Most important, the rules ensure that light and air penetrate into a building. Small plots leave little option but to construct vertically within a very small footprint.







The split-level design of the house has the effect of visually enlarging the rooms. Open spaces around the staircase intensify this effect and promote fluid circulation.



The house evolves upward from the more private rooms to the more public.

082

Skylights let light into spaces where windows aren't possible. Placed above an open staircase, a skylight provides lots of light that reaches as far down as the staircase goes.



083

Make a room more dynamic and less confined by connecting it with an atrium or an open staircase.







The top floor benefits from abundant light. A southeastern orientation opens the living–dining area to the outdoors.



House in Nada

681 sq ft

Architect: Fujiwarramuro Architects

Location: Kobe, Japan

Photographer: © Yano Toshiyuki

This house is located in the heart of the city of Kobe. The site, flanked by existing houses, is so small that one might walk by without even noticing it. Despite the limitations of the site, the program had to satisfy the needs of a family of four. Fortunately, the building regulations allowed for a tall construction.





084

Consider a floor made of spaced-out wood slats to bring light to a dark space and make it less confined. Light filters through the floor, just like it would through a screen.











Shelves on the atrium wall from the ground floor to the third level accentuate the verticality of the building and create a greater sense of space.



085

High ceilings allow for the construction of a loft, which makes up for the shortage of storage space that usually comes with a small house.









A bunk bed divides the children's spaces: one room has the lower bed, the other has the upper bed.

Top Billing Dream Home

699 sq ft

Architect: Antoni Associates

Location: Cape Town, South Africa

Photographer: © Adam Letch

The spatial constrictions of this existing duplex apartment influenced the design process, which highlights clever functionality. Spaces double up in function wherever possible. Conceptually, the design consists of a light living area with a dark bedroom loft cantilevered overhead.







Angular motifs were introduced to break up the boxy appearance of the apartment and add visual interest. Dark wood flooring brings in warmth, while concealed LED lighting adds depth to the space.



The lower floor features a continuous spatial flow between the kitchen, the living room and the balcony, with uninterrupted views of Cape Town. The kitchen is cleverly tucked under the staircase.

086

Span a bridge along one tall wall to provide access to the uppermost shelves of a floor-to-ceiling wall library. This will expand the floor area of your home and make the most of a double-height space.



087

Light colors reflect light. This helps make a room feel larger than it actually is. Using dark colors in an adjacent room farther away from a light source emphasizes this effect.





Due to the small size of the apartment, the designers combined the master dressing room and the en-suite bathroom, resulting in a sophisticated

sanctuary for bathing and dressing.

Blank

753 sq ft

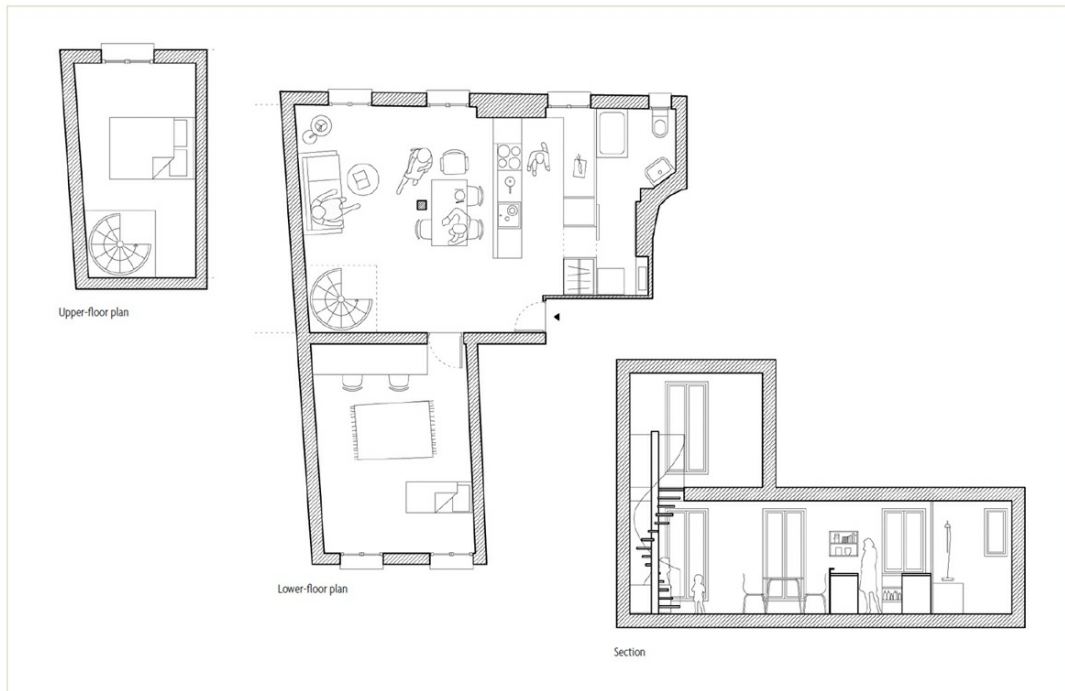
Architect: Septembre Architecture

Location: Paris, France

Photographer: © David Foessel

An existing 753-square-foot apartment was renovated to accommodate a family of four. The removal of some of the partition walls created a larger living area, while an open kitchen became the main feature of the space.





The removal of the walls to make a large and comfortable living area left

behind an unexpected load-bearing post that was eventually integrated into the design.

088

Removing nonbearing walls to create larger spaces is much easier and less costly than removing load-bearing walls, which requires hiring a structural engineer.



402

Convertible Courtyards House

753 sq ft

Architect: Christopher Megowan Design

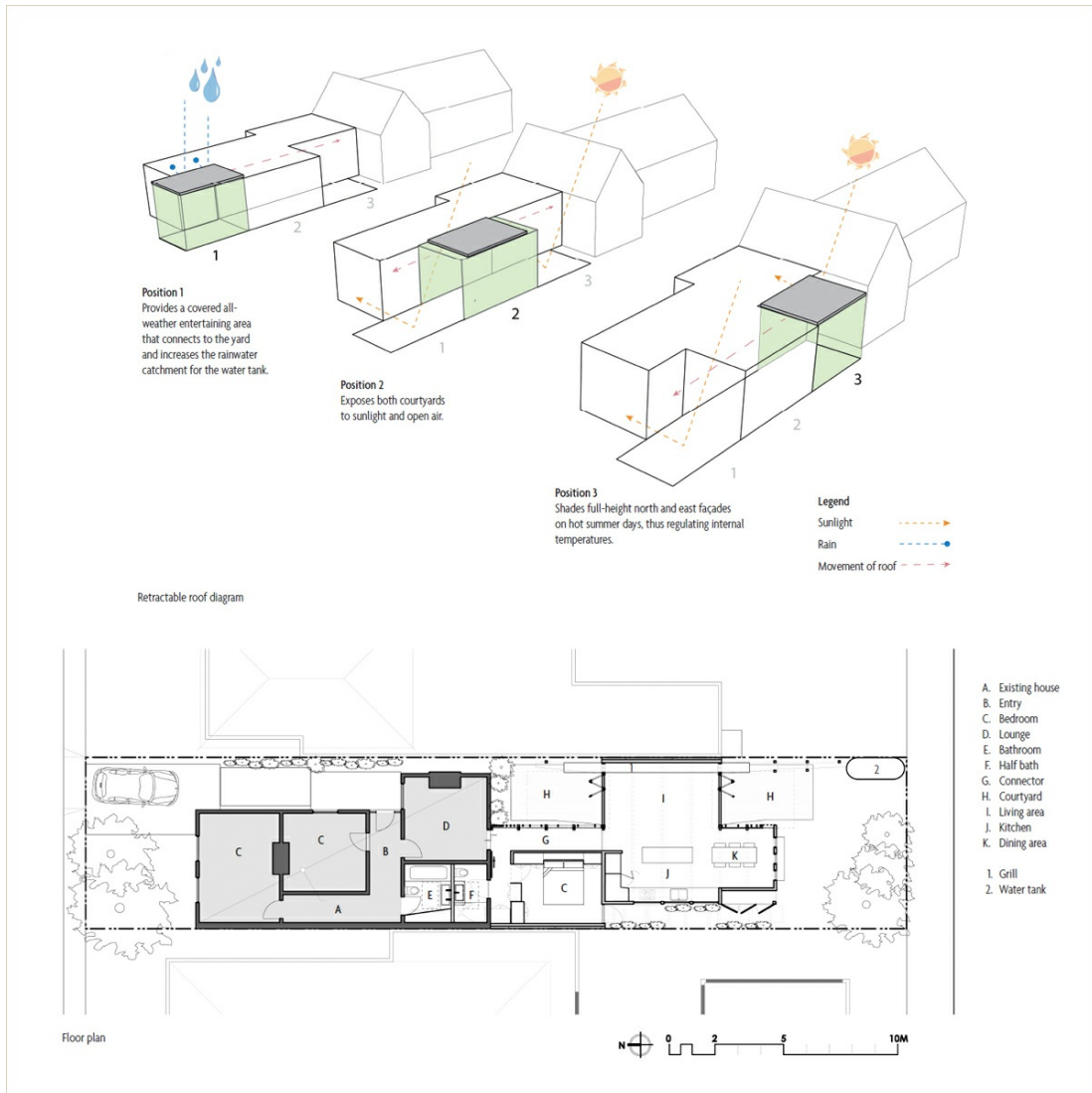
Location: Prahran, Victoria, Australia

Photographer: © Nils Koenning

This project added a kitchen, living area, dining area, master bedroom, ensuite bathroom and two decks to this previously overlooked yet charming weatherboard cottage. A central courtyard was created between the weatherboard and modern extension in order to flood the open kitchen and living and dining areas with natural light.











A glazed connector runs along the central courtyard. A second courtyard straddles the south-oriented living room and allows access to the rear vegetable garden.





089

Enjoy unrestricted views of your garden or terrace and expand your living space to the outdoors by means of sliding or bifolding glass doors.



410

The Woven Nest

764 sq ft

Architect: Atmos Studio

Location: London, United Kingdom

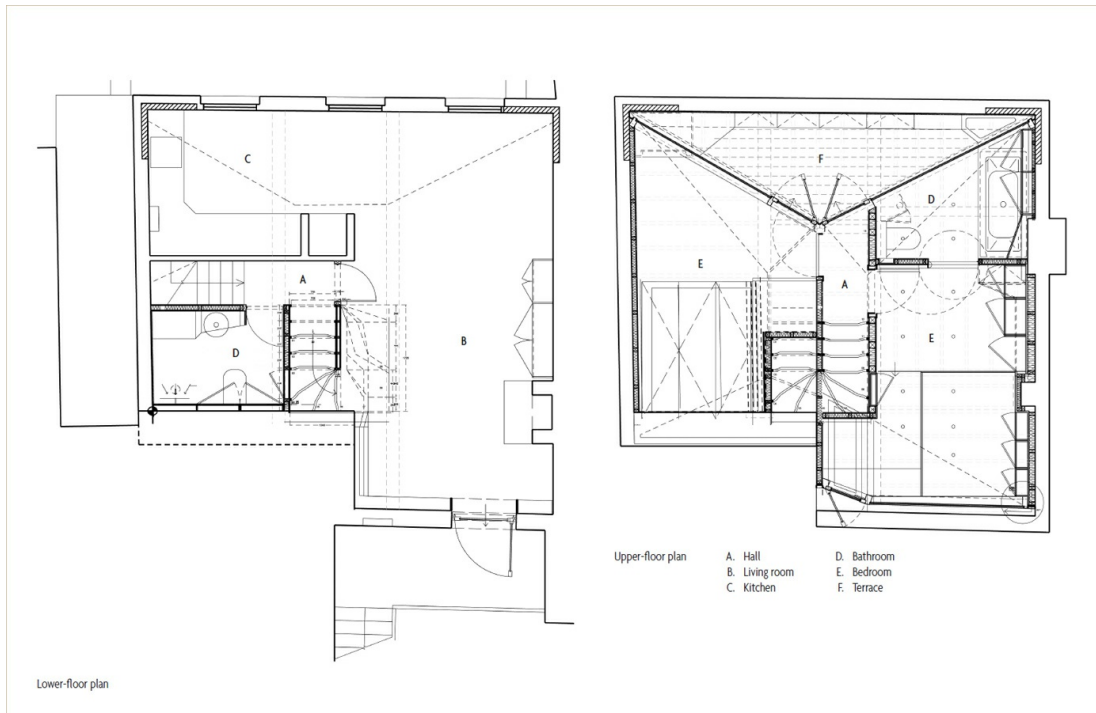
Photographer: © Atmos Studio, Christoph Bolten

This home for an actress and musician is carefully slotted between buildings and sight lines. Planning constraints generated a complex series of intertwining spaces enlivened by light and interconnectivity. The project's palette expresses the client's interest in Japanese economy, restraint and invention, providing a sense of surprising spaciousness within tight confines.





A single curl of complex built-in furniture, bridging inside and outside, both closed and open in its careful compaction and alignment, unifies the house.



The recessed angled glass walls with doors open up to a small but convenient terrace. The doors from the hall and bedroom fold together neatly.

090

Keep your kitchen counters clutter-free by adding a shallow shelf between the countertop and upper cabinets.



091

Spaces from adjacent rooms are borrowed and traded, with each room offering a panoply of different views.





092

Reflection and transparency double and quadruple the views and encourage visual exploration, while the continuity of the built-in furniture provides a sense of elongation.



GT House

786 sq ft

Architect: Studio Guilherme Torres

Location: Londrina, Brazil

Photographer: © Roberto Wagner

Architect Guilherme Torres wanted his own small studio apartment to look industrial and experimental. The concrete table immediately draws attention: it's large and heavy in a small space. But most important, the permanent quality of this material contrasts with the versatility of the piece of furniture. It is used for working, eating and displaying.





093

Scale is important when dealing with small spaces. Avoid tall pieces of furniture, as they can make a room feel cramped. Low furniture, on the other hand, can visually expand the space and lift up the ceiling.



094

A small space doesn't have to be filled with low-profile furniture. Choose a few interesting pieces that will help set the style and organize the space.



095

Build your decoration around a limited color palette. You can apply this rule to walls, floor, ceiling, furniture and accessories. You can choose an accent color to create focal points.



Kiosk

796 sq ft

Architect: Septembre Architecture

Location: Paris, France

Photographer: © David Foessel

The refurbishment of this apartment involved a complete layout reconfiguration to make it less compartmentalized. The result was stunning. Not only did the design make the most of the limited space, but it also added character. Emphasis was put on making the living area as spacious as possible. Taking center stage, the kitchen organizes the different functions of the apartment, creating a sense of entry.

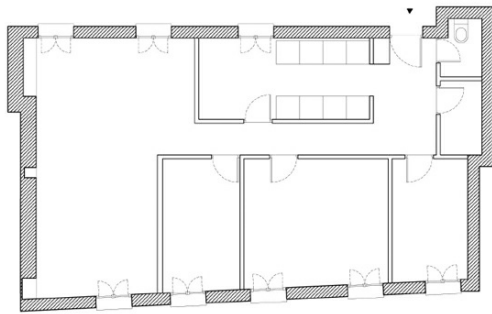




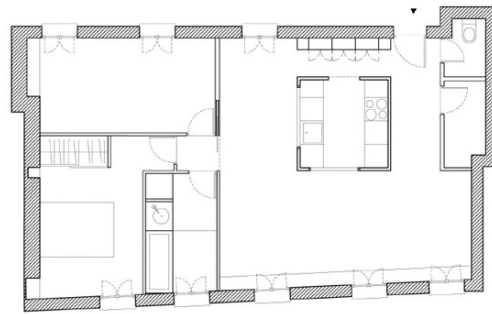
096

Turn your kitchen into a focal point of your living area. Completely open or semi-enclosed, the kitchen can be a place of social interaction where the cook can participate in the conversation.

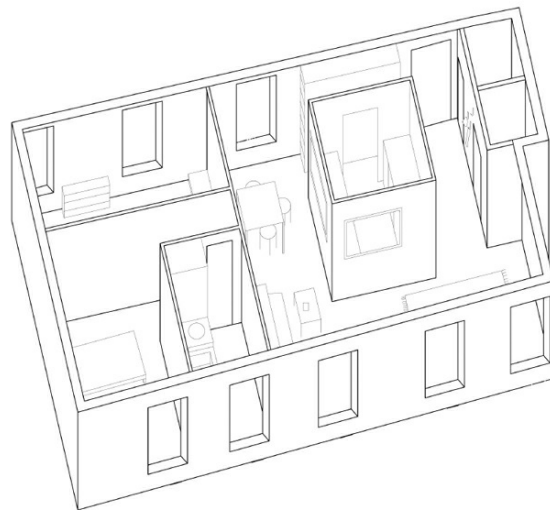




Existing floor plan



New floor plan



Axonometric view

097

Enhance your bathroom and add value to your home by upgrading fixtures and finishes, adding storage, and improving lighting.



House in Konan

800 sq ft

Architect: Coo Planning

Location: Konan, Japan

Photography: Yuko Tada, Coo Planning

This residence was designed for a couple with children. Despite its small size, the house is smartly laid out on four levels, and manages to fit all the living space the couple needs, including a garage, a deck and a study loft above the kitchen. The simple yet strong design fosters openness by means of a split-level layout that takes advantage of the tall ceiling.





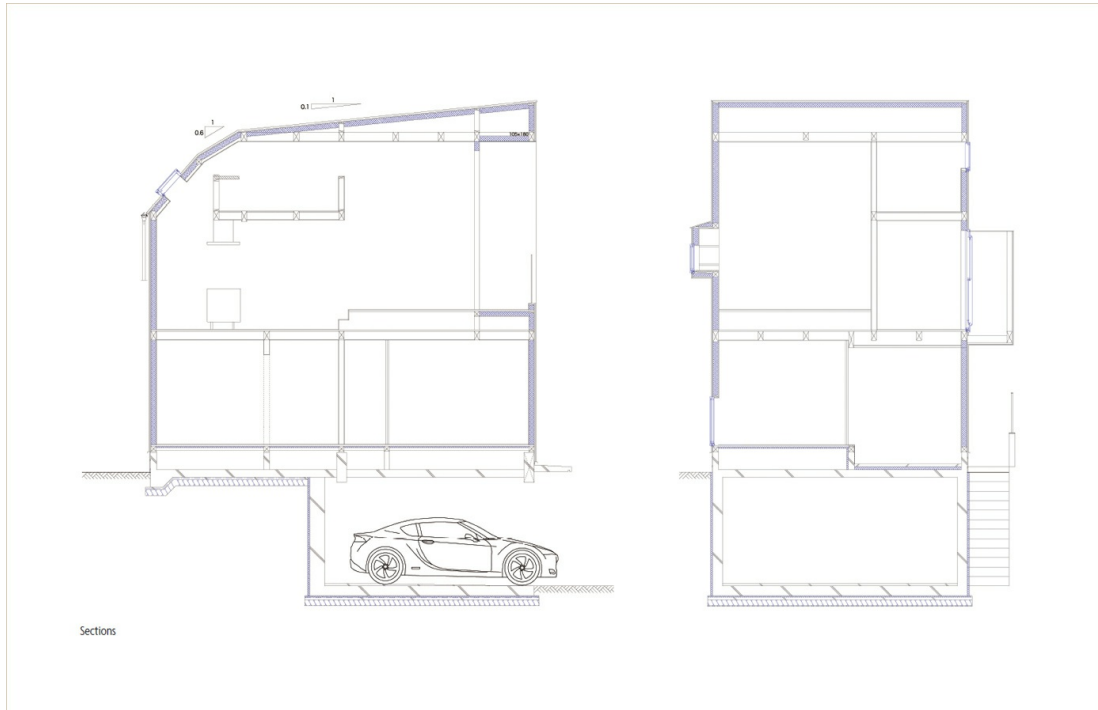
The home's entrance, a tatami room, a bathroom and a bedroom are on the

floor directly above the garage. The third floor is the family's communal area, with an open kitchen and living room.



098

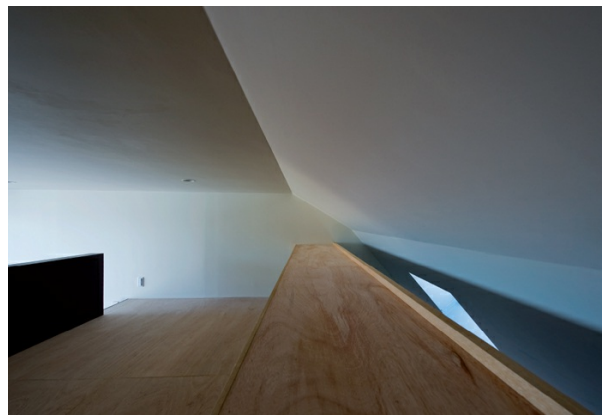
An open plan is ideal in rectangular spaces with windows on either or both short walls. This layout helps brighten up the middle of the space with even light throughout.



099

Open-riser staircases let the surrounding space breathe through them. This is why they are particularly well suited for small spaces. Their almost weightless appearance creates a smooth transition between levels.





The available floor area is a determining factor when you are deciding between a regular staircase and a ladder. What you'll use the upper floor for and how often you'll use it will influence your decision.



Inhabitable Sculpture

807 sq ft

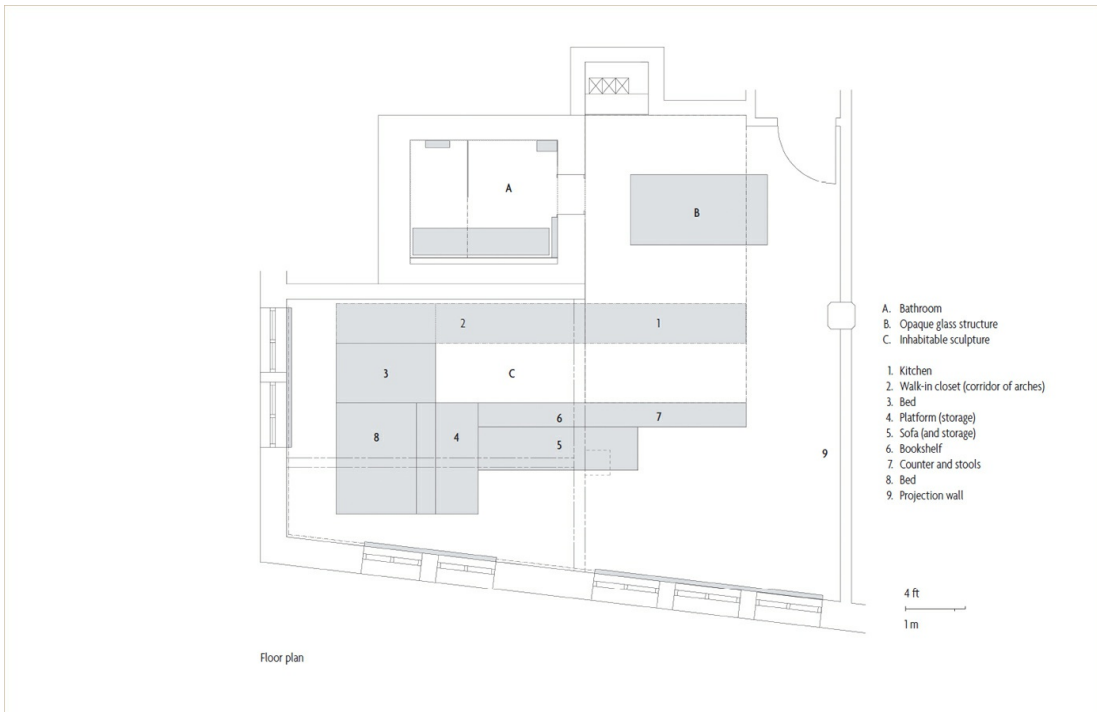
Architect: Jean-Maxime Labrecque, Architecte

Location: Montreal, QB, Canada

Photographer: © Frédéric Bouchard

Two conditions were established by the client at the beginning of this project: “a space that people will find cold” and “living in a gallery.” In response to these requirements, the existing space was stripped down to its original industrial concrete walls, floors and ceilings. Then a multifunctional piece of furniture made of raw aluminum, inspired by Donald Judd’s work, was installed.







The aluminum cabinet is composed of modules and fulfills all the dwelling's functions: bed, walk-in closet, bookshelf, sofa, counter, stools, kitchen and storage.





Two other elements complement the main area's aluminum cabinet: an opaque glass structure contains appliances, storage and a water heater, and an old concrete vault houses the bathroom.

Outfit your closet to maximize space, whether it is a reach-in or a walk-in. Every closet needs smart solutions to ensure that everything has a designated spot.





Cherry Crest

812 sq ft

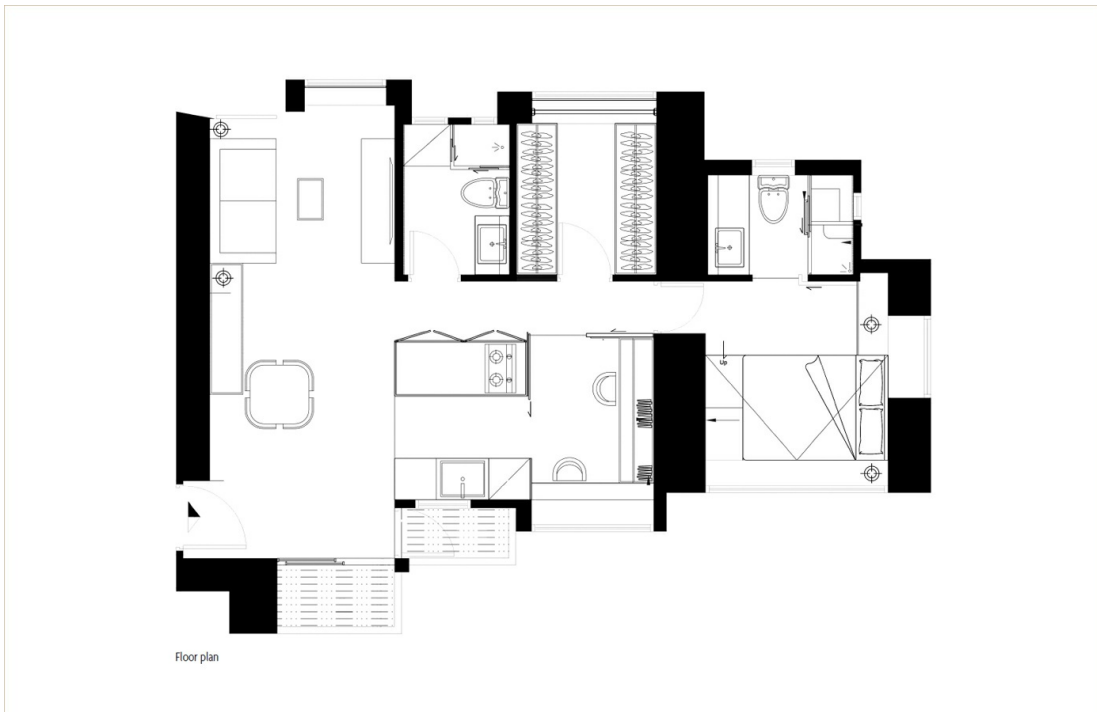
Designer: Clifton Leung Design Workshop

Location: Hong Kong (SAR), China

Photographer: © Red Dog

The design of this apartment is aimed toward maximizing the limited space without putting comfort and spaciousness at stake. The uniqueness of this design rests on a careful selection of compact furnishings and equipment. A palette of neutral colors and a good use of natural and artificial lighting were key to achieving the desired atmosphere.





The living room and the kitchen share an open space, which is further

extended by a small balcony that is only large enough for two chairs but offers spectacular views.

Low furniture is best suited for small rooms with low ceilings. It's all about scale. For instance, a large, bulky armoire generally looks awkward in a small room.



To separate two areas that share the same open space without hindering lines or losing airy appeal, use glass partitions or glass sliding doors.



Minimize wall partitions as much as possible. Instead, use movable screens, glass dividers or sliding panels to separate different areas. These elements allow for a more flexible space configuration.





The bedroom and the bathroom are conveniently separated by sliding doors. The use of sliding doors is a space-saving solution throughout the apartment.

105

Transform a spare room into a dressing room or walk-in closet. This will allow you to clear up your bedroom, make it more spacious and turn it into a retreat for relaxation.



454



Boathouse

829 sq ft

Architect: TYIN tegnestue Architects

Location: More og Romsdal, Norway

Photographer: © Pasi Aalto

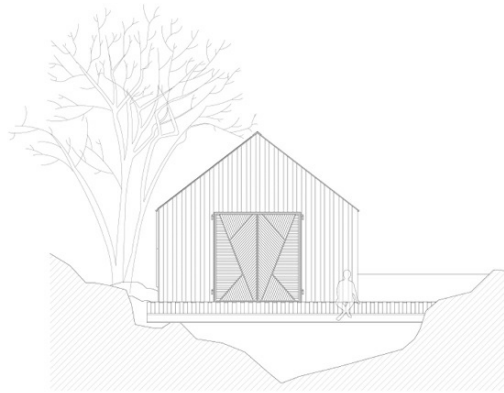
Traditionally, boathouses in Norway's coastal regions were used for storing boats and fishing gear. But today, many of them are being converted into summer homes. This particular boathouse had deteriorated. The owner decided to tear it down and rebuild it. The simplicity of the old structure, the stunning location and the honest use of materials inspired the design.



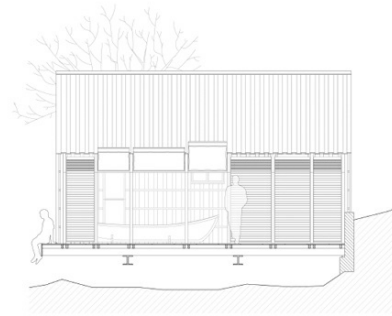


Corrugated fiberglass panels are great for exterior siding. They can also be used as inexpensive, decorative interior partitions. The effect produced is similar to that of a shoji screen.

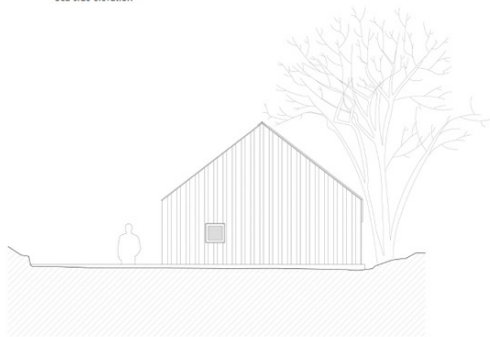




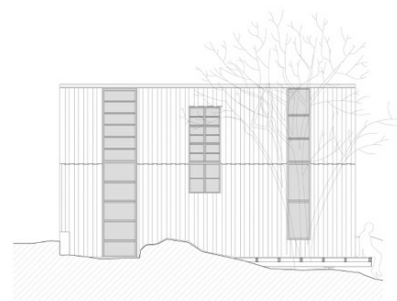
Sea-side elevation



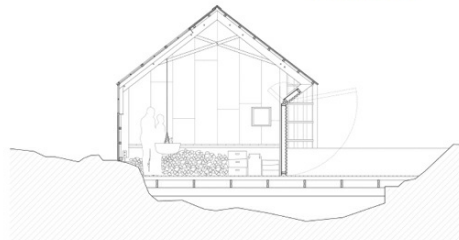
Deck-side elevation



Farmhouse-side elevation



Mountain-side elevation



Section



The remoteness of the location made the reuse of materials a key element of the new design. Some of the interior surfaces are clad in reclaimed materials.





Swing-up doors have a double use: they allow interior activities to easily spill outdoors, and they provide sun protection.



Niu House

829 sq ft

Architect: Yoshihiro Yamamoto Architects Atelier

Location: Ikoma City, Nara, Japan

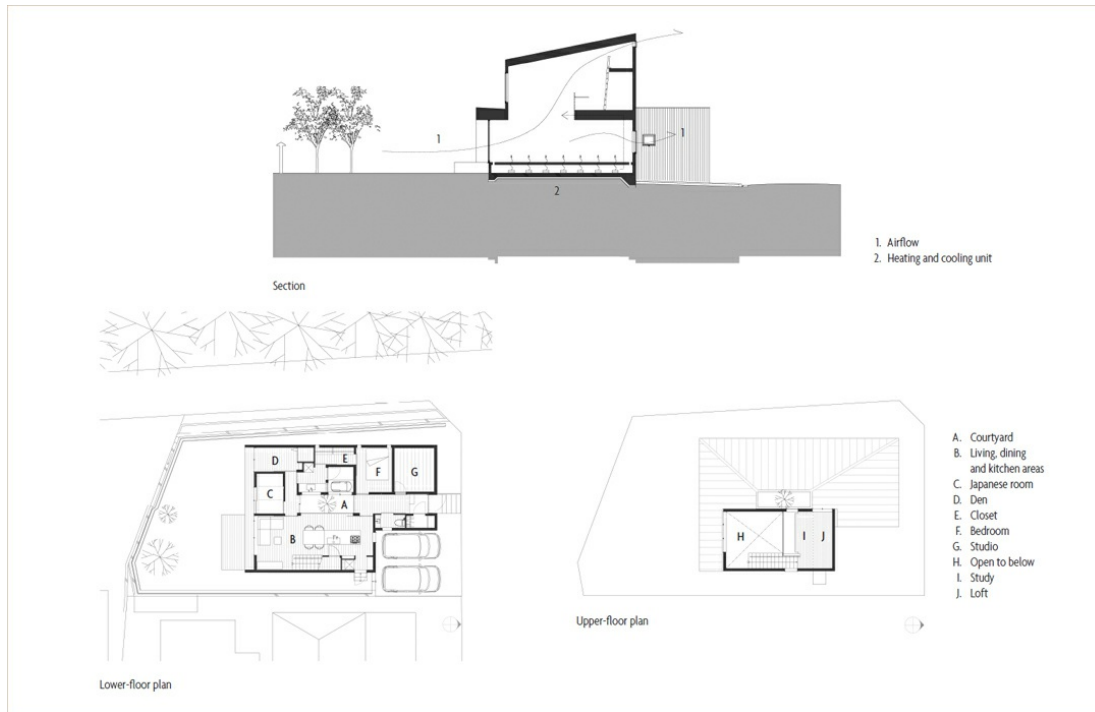
Photographer: © Yohei Sasakura

Sandwiched between look-alike prefabricated and traditional Japanese homes, this modern residence was designed for a young couple. Two volumes, one white and the other black, formally differentiate the functions of the house. The two volumes intersect, generating a small courtyard in the center that brings light to the surrounding spaces.





You can make a small space airy by choosing minimal architectural details. Furniture should be simple, with little ornament. Keep the color palette to a maximum of two shades and an accent color.







The shape and location of windows can dramatically change the perception of a space, more so if the space is small: for instance, a horizontal window visually elongates the space.



110

Centrally located, a courtyard can be a feature around which the plan of a house is organized. It also compensates for the limited dimensions of a space.



472

Mendocino County House

840 sq ft

Architect: Cathy Schwabe Architecture

Location: Gualala, CA, USA

Photographer: © David Wakely Photography

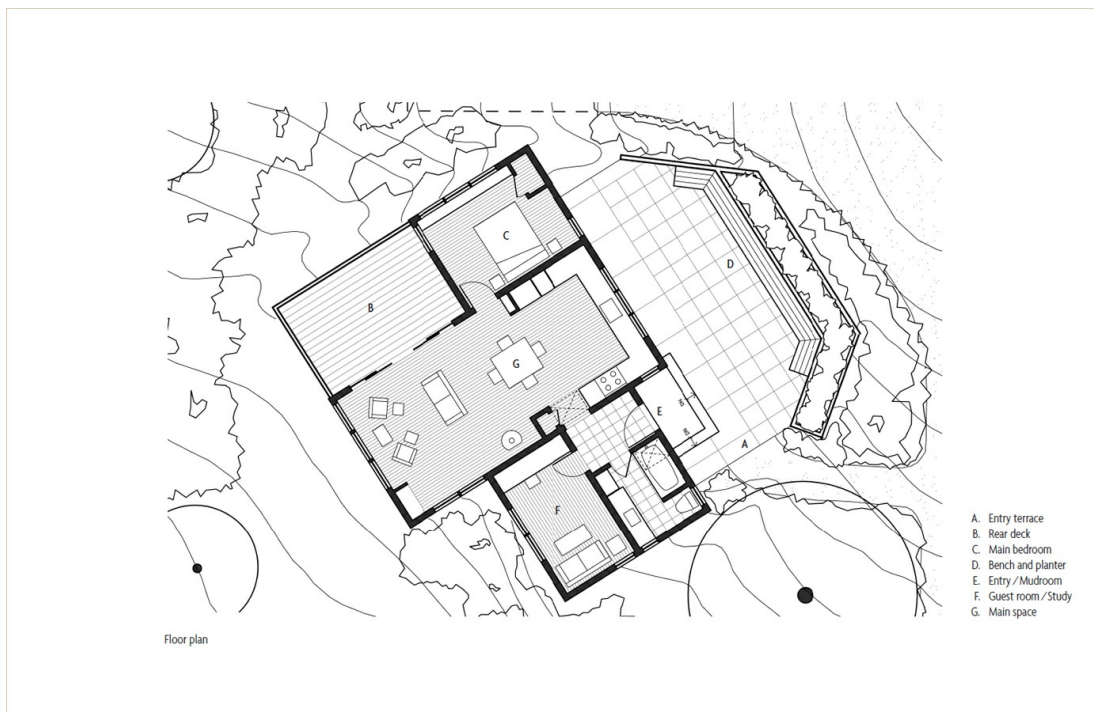
Designed as a weekend getaway, this compact two-bedroom cottage was built on a challenging site that determined its size and orientation. The site is steep, and as the neighboring houses are likely candidates for expansion, the orientation and placement of the openings needed be chosen to ensure permanent privacy and open views.







The cottage has an intimate feel with a sense of privacy, which makes it a wonderful retreat for a couple. At the same time, the unexpected feeling of spaciousness makes it comfortable enough for groups.



Small spaces should combine functions to the greatest extent possible, and dedicated circulation space should be kept to a minimum.





The height of the repeated simple volume of each room, a one-way sloped cathedral ceiling and openings on multiple sides make the rooms seem larger than they are.

Built-in cabinets, used wherever possible, decrease the need for additional furniture and require less floor area.



House for Two Couples

861 sq ft

Architect: Cabana Arquitetos

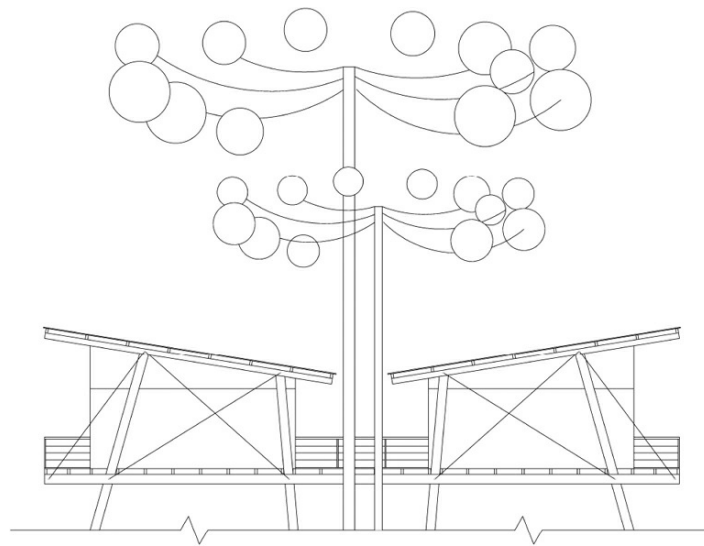
Location: Campos do Jordão, São Paulo, Brazil

Photographer: © Andre Eisenlohr

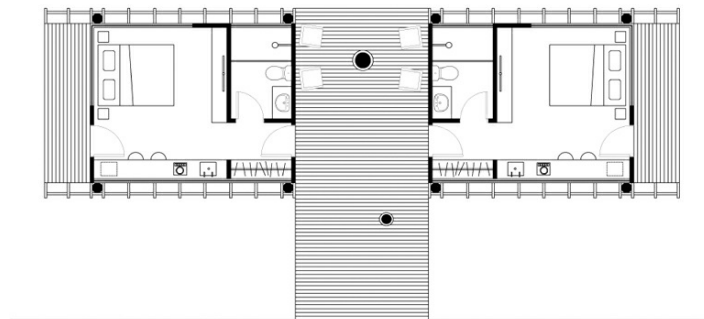
Implanted among trees, the construction is camouflaged by nature's surroundings so as not to be hidden from view. The house design consists of two modules, 270 square feet each, mounted on a deck of 321 square feet. The modules, which are separated by two Chilean pines, are each equipped with a bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom. The scale of the plan was reduced, allowing the smallest area possible.







Section



Floor plan



The house has an eye-catching roofline with two shed roofs. The overall design is geometric, but it fits well among the trees, thanks to its construction entirely of wood.

Balconies may be just small extensions, but their effect on the interior space is big; they are a valuable asset for tiny spaces.



You can focus on the materials and colors of a small interior if you keep furnishings and decorations to a minimum. The sparse built-in furniture and rough finishes give this space a monastic atmosphere.





Russian River Studio

864 sq ft

Architect: Cathy Schwabe Architecture

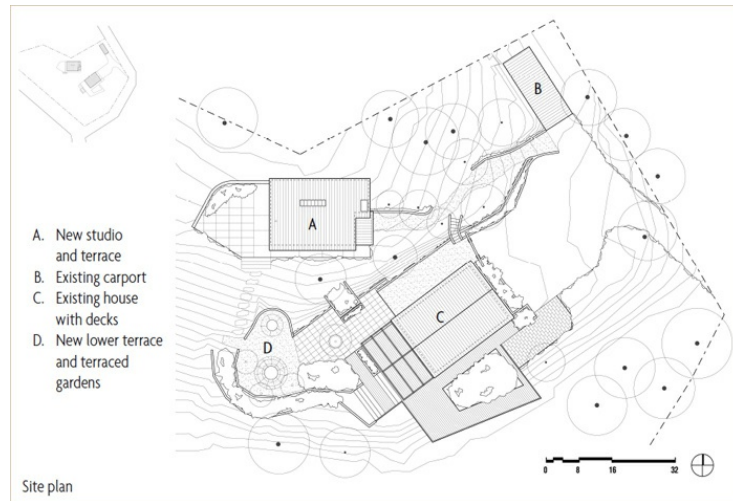
Location: Forestville, CA, USA

Photographer: © David Wakely Photography

This studio was built as an addition to an existing log cabin. Its layout is simple: a narrow spine of enclosed spaces under a storage loft and a large, rectangular, light-filled main room. This rectangle expands to include an area with a desk behind sliding panels and a sitting area in another corner that can also be used for sleeping.

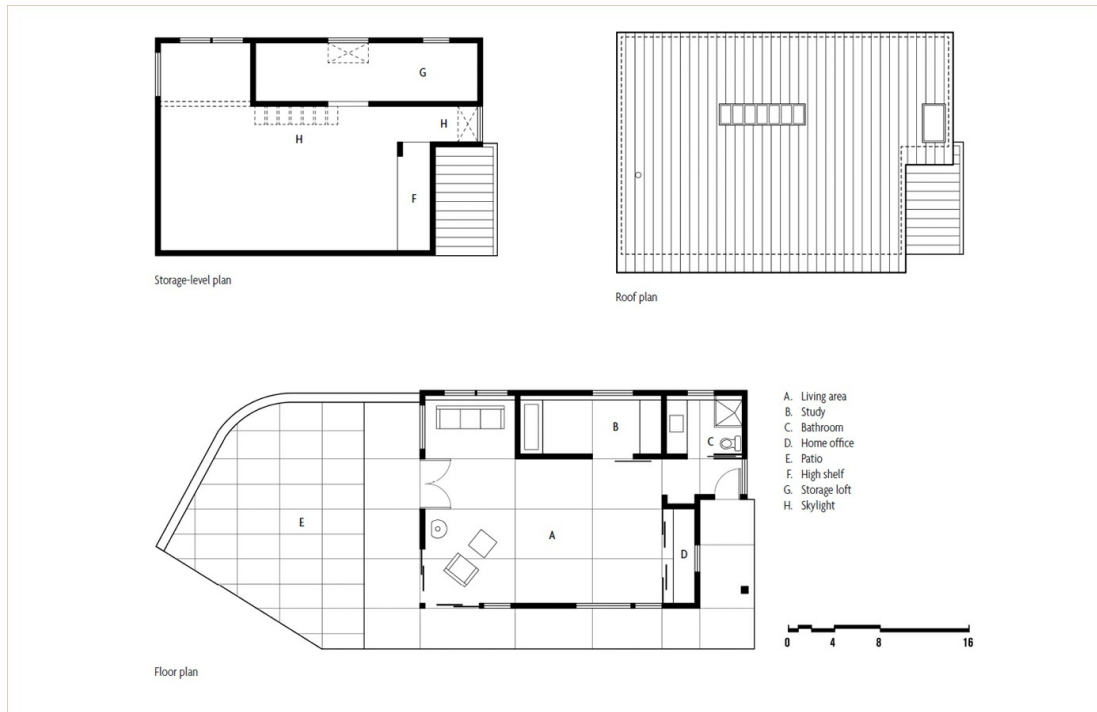






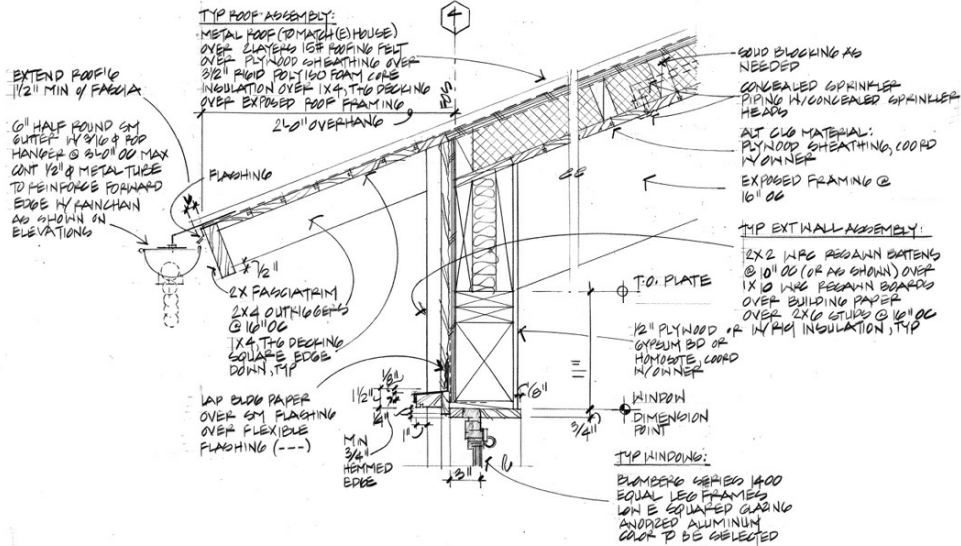
The small studio, which opens onto a setting of terraces and stepped stone walls, acts as both an extension of the main dwelling and a separate building in the landscape.

High ceilings help a space feel airy. Even better, windows at different heights on two or more walls of a room distribute the light evenly, avoiding dark corners.

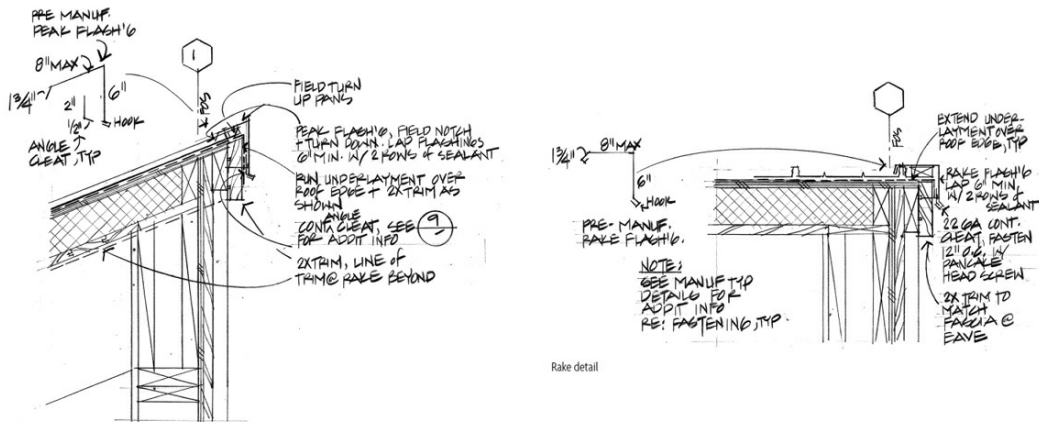








Eave and typical window-head details



Rake detail

Roof peak detail

Combining a comfortable living area with an efficient home office is a challenge. A wall-mounted desktop and shelves concealed behind sliding doors make a perfect incognito workspace.



Case

870 sq ft

Architect: Jun Igarashi Architects

Location: Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan

Photographer: © Daici Ano

This house's footprint was determined by setbacks from the street and adjacent buildings, regulated by city planning laws. But this didn't get in the way of creating a spacious dwelling. Two winding steel staircases connect the various levels, all open under a 23-foot-high ceiling.





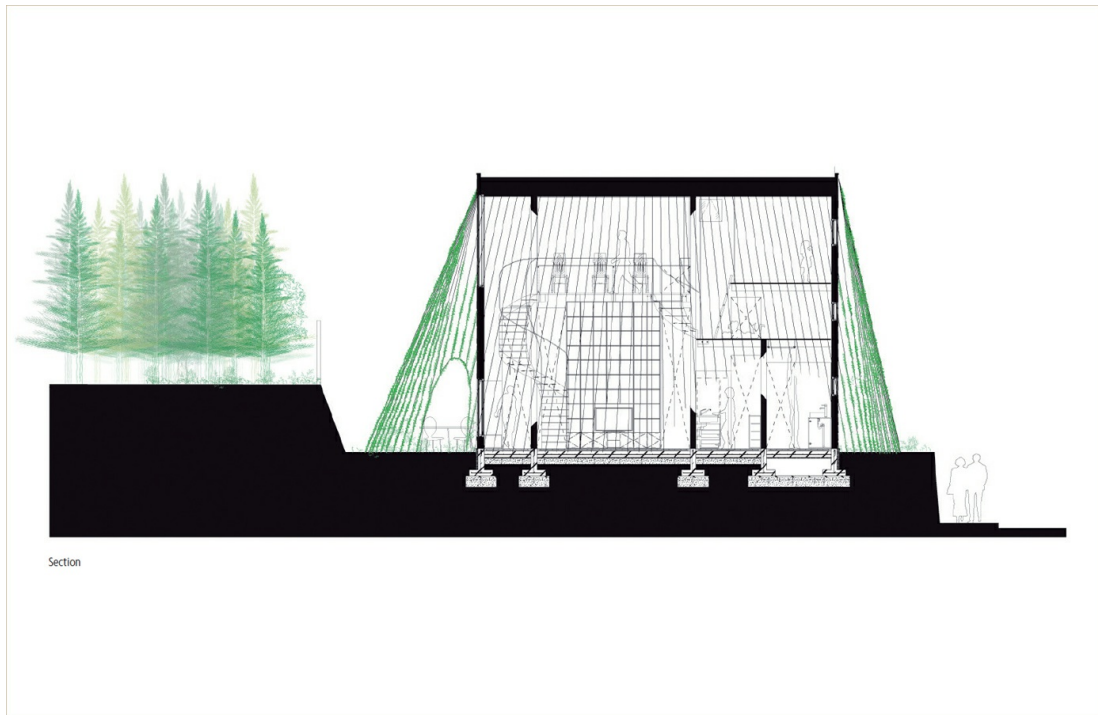
117

Connect adjacent spaces visually by means of openings. By doing this, you'll add depth and visual interest to a space. Light is an important design component that enhances this effect.



500





The driving concept of this house's design is connectivity. One level leads effortlessly to the next by means of simple spiral staircases. A story-spanning bookcase enhances the verticality of the space.

The lack of art on the walls and the limited color and material selection direct the attention to the architectural qualities of the house. These design decisions contributed to the creation of an airy atmosphere.



Where privacy is necessary, such as in the bathroom on the ground floor, curved walls are an unconventional but creative solution. They express the idea of flexibility and movement.







Open-riser staircases are perhaps the least obstructive design. Their appearance is generally weightless. This quality makes them an excellent choice for small spaces.





Victorian Workers Cottage Addition

871 sq ft

Architect: Danny Broe Architect

Location: Enmore, West Sydney, Australia

Photographer: © Karina Illovska

The house is a Victorian semidetached single-level cottage. While the front has beautiful rooms, the back was a series of small and oddly arranged rooms that had no relationship to the backyard. The back half of the cottage was demolished to make room for a more space-efficient layout and to establish a connection with the backyard.







The most prominent feature of the new design is the bay window at the back of the cottage. It provides a threshold between the interior space and the backyard. Rather than just an access, it is also an informal place to relax.

Use light colors to make walls recede and vibrant colors to create focal points. Paint large, bulky elements with different colors to reduce their scale and adapt them better to the proportions of a small space.



Paint floor-to-ceiling surfaces to give the illusion of space and height. You can create a more dynamic result by painting various surfaces to different heights.



Stacked Cabin

880 sq ft

Architect: Johnsen Schmalig Architects

Location: Muscoda, WI, USA

Photographer: © John J. Macaulay

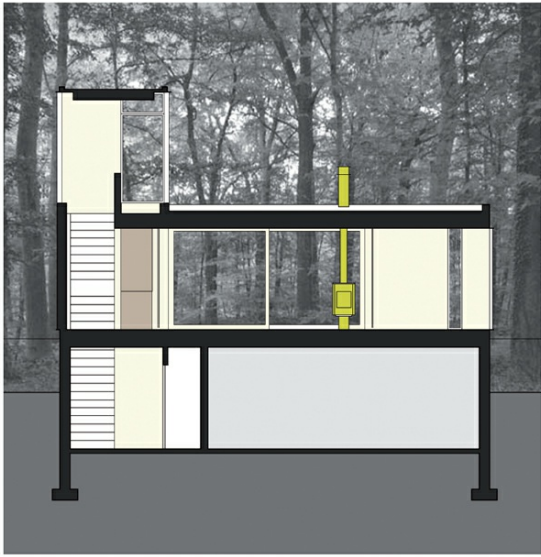
This cabin for a young family sits at the end of an old logging road that hugs the edge of a small clearing. The tight budget required a rigorously simple structure. The configuration of the traditional cabin compound, including an open-plan longhouse with communal living spaces, an outhouse and a freestanding toolshed, was reorganized vertically in order to minimize the building's footprint and take advantage of the sloped site.







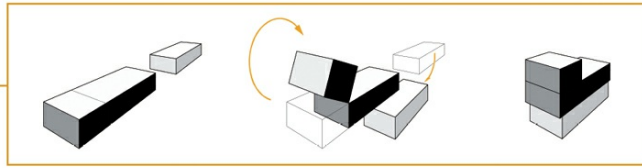
The cabin is made of readily available materials used in the region's farmstead architecture. On the outside are exposed concrete, cedar, anodized metal and cementitious plaster.



Sections

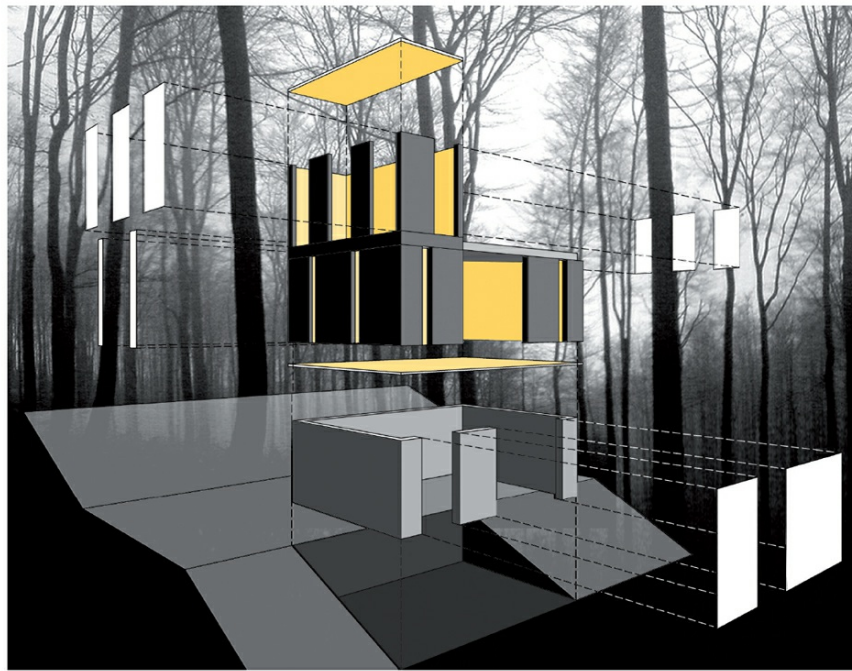


Volumetric morphology diagram





In the interior, the two main levels have tinted polished concrete floors that provide durable surfaces, and built-in cabinets painted white.



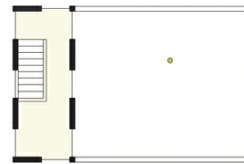
Exploded axonometric view



Lower-floor plan



Intermediate-floor plan



Top-floor plan

Floor-to-ceiling curtains are a practical and affordable solution that provide sleeping areas with privacy and screen the kitchen off when it is not in use.





Apartment 701

926 sq ft

Architect: Keiji Ashizawa Design

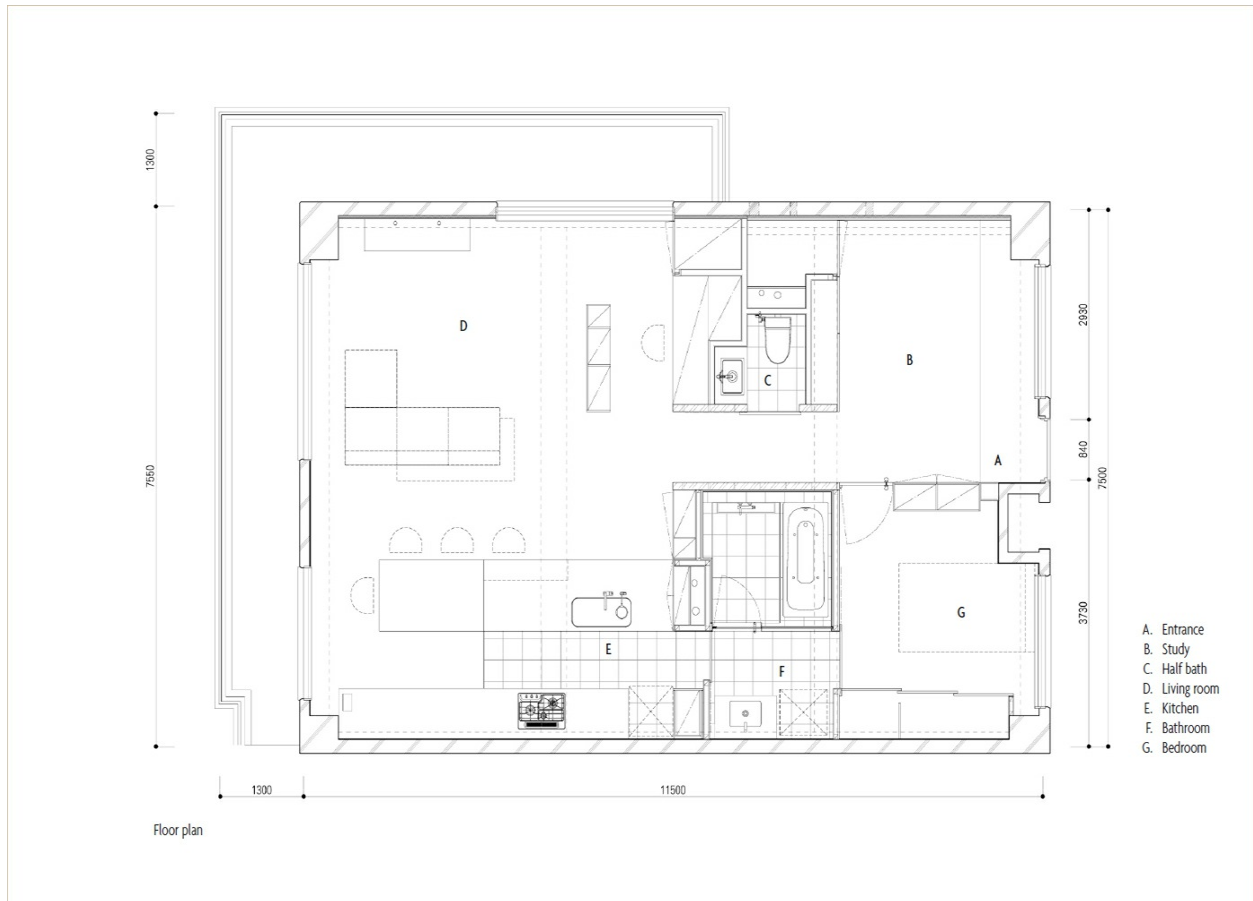
Location: Tokyo, Japan

Photographer: © Takumi Ota

Apartment 701 is a renovation project that focused on the occupant's lifestyle. His interest in entertaining and cooking led Keiji Ashizawa Design to create a home where the kitchen, with adjoining dinner counter, takes center stage. Sitting at the counter, guests can follow the cooking preparations, just like in Japanese Teppanyaki-style dining.







The bedroom is enclosed in a large container just short of the ceiling's concrete beams. The container generates a narrow passage between the social and the private spaces.

Use shelf units and sideboards in lieu of floor-to-ceiling partitions to separate different areas. They improve the openness of the small space and provide much-needed storage space.





125

Open shelves can add character to your kitchen. But there are some drawbacks: there is nowhere to hide your not-so-attractive kitchenware, and it's a constant battle to keep dust and grime off.



126

High ceilings or abundant natural light are the conditions under which you can enjoy the dramatic effect that black walls produce. Everything else in the space must be chosen to enhance this effect.







127

In rooms with bare hard surfaces where sound waves bounce between walls, ceiling and floor, bring in area rugs and curtains to mitigate the flutter echo. In the bedroom, throw in lots of pillows.



128

Efficient storage solutions are needed in bathrooms where space is often sparse but accessories are plentiful. Upgrade your bathroom with stylish cabinets that provide both open and concealed storage.





The recessed cabinet with a mirrored sliding door combines with the stainless-steel shower fittings and drain to bring a little brightness to this dark but sophisticated small bathroom.

Dwelling Gelukstraat

956 sq ft

Architect: Dierendonckblancke Architecten

Location: Ghent, Belgium

Photographer: © Filip Dujardin

Located on a narrow, irregular site in the center of Ghent, Belgium, this tiny dwelling was built as an extension to an existing house. Despite the restrictions of the site and the small budget, the new building makes quite an impression. Sandwiched between two traditional buildings and painted dark gray, it stands three floors tall and makes the most of every square foot.









On the ground floor, an atelier is connected to the existing house through a small courtyard. The living area is located on the second floor. A bedroom, a bathroom and an office occupy the upper floor.

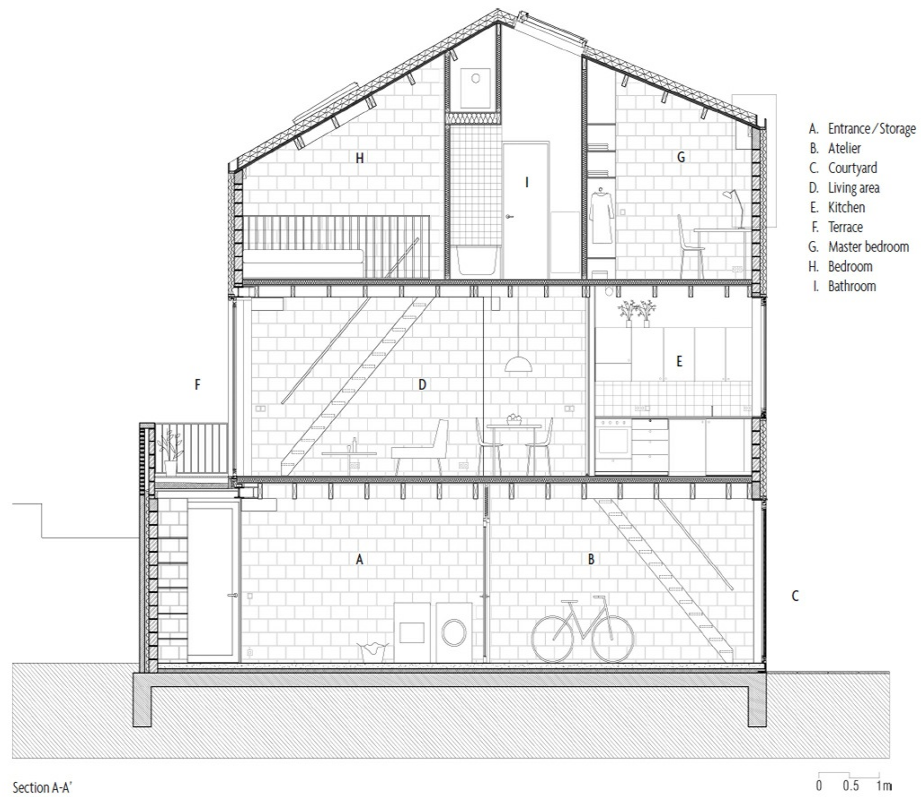


A staircase at the entrance leads to the kitchen on the second floor. While the kitchen has views of the street, the living room faces the courtyard at the back of the house.

129

Leave the floor joists exposed to make a space look taller and to provide it with a rough industrial look. To strengthen this effect, and to gain a few inches of floor space, use only paint to finish concrete walls.





130

Bare walls and exposed floor joists revealing the structural skeleton of a building add dimension to a space, while facilitating a conceptual narrative.





Casas Reias

957 sq ft

Architect: Concheiro de Montard, Architects

Location: Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Photographer: © Luís Díaz Díaz

The existing space was fragmented into small, dark rooms. Turning this apartment into a luminous single-space home was a priority. This was achieved by completely gutting the interior and taking advantage of the only two sources of natural light: a glassed-in bay with views over the historic old town, and three small windows in the thick stone walls.





131

Built-in furniture helps clear space, as cumbersome freestanding furniture can be avoided. Built-in furniture can also help connect adjacent rooms. This gives the space depth and visual interest.



132

Use low wall separations where necessary, avoiding floor-to-ceiling partitions. The space will look less confined. This will also improve lighting, as light will be able to reach deeper into the space.





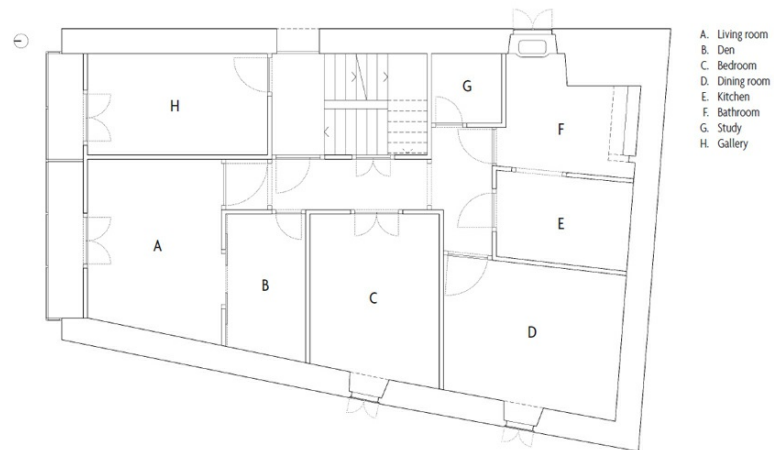


The original colored cement tiles were rearranged to form a long, narrow strip along the one-wall kitchen, defining the area and adding color to the otherwise monochromatic space.





New floor plan



Existing floor plan



The new space is conceived of as a series of spaces with specific characters, all laid out such that one space leads to the next, with no partition or door blocking the continuity.

Laneway House 2

970 sq ft

Architect: Lanefab Design/Build

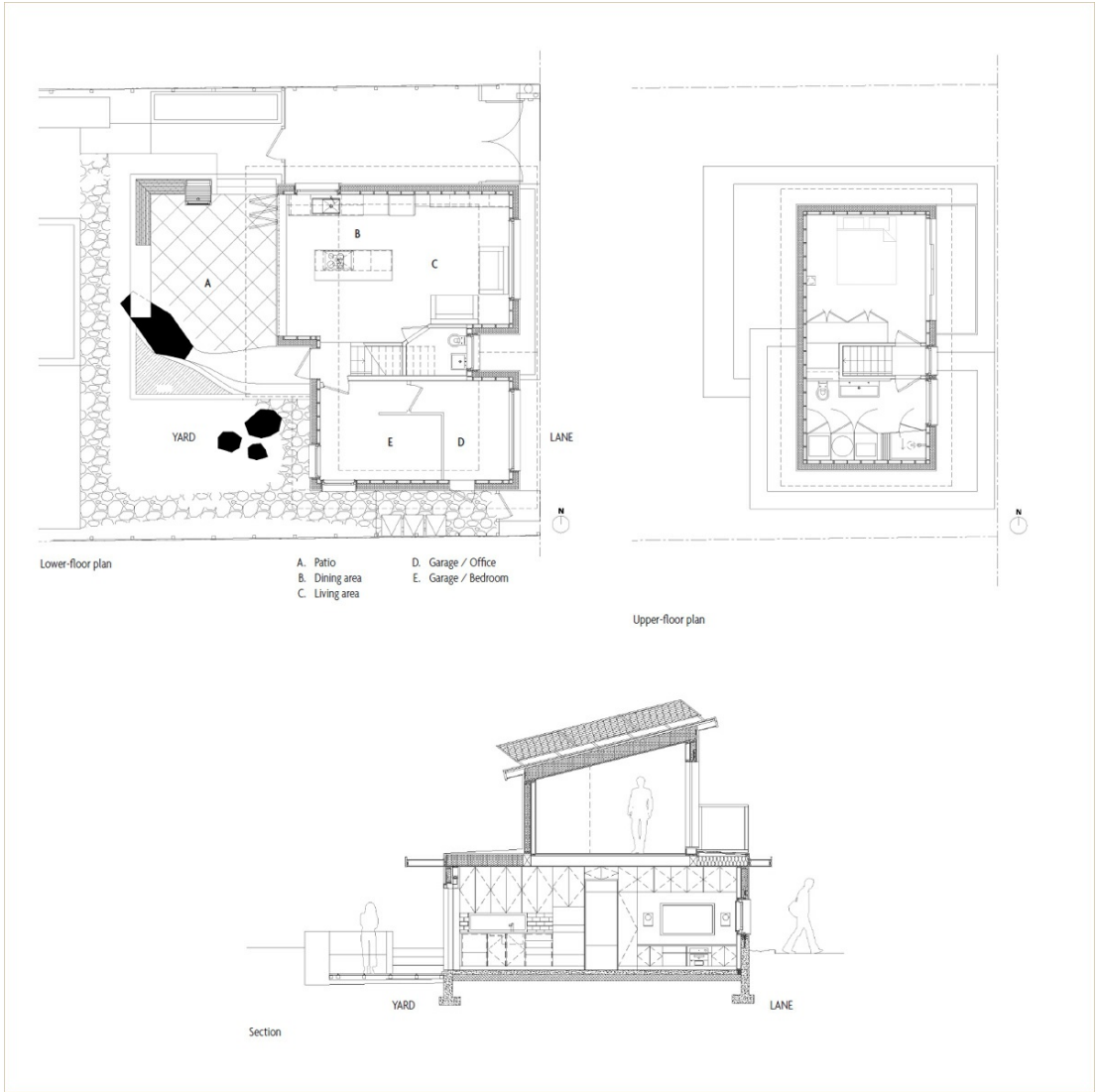
Location: Vancouver, BC, Canada

Photographer: © Colin Perry

Small homes are often solutions born of limited sites, modest budgets or both. This 970-square-foot house is another example of laneway construction, built as part of an initiative to increase the density of Vancouver's metropolitan area.









The ground floor of this small laneway house integrates a living room and an open kitchen with the backyard, which is shared with the main house on the same property.

133

Bifold doors allow you to create the largest possible opening. They are a modern alternative to French doors and sliding doors, which allow only a much smaller opening.



134

An extra-wide sink is perfect for a small bathroom that doesn't have room for a double-sink vanity.





Ao Studio

990 sq ft

Architect: Keiji Ashizawa Design

Location: Saitama, Japan

Photographer: © Takumi Ota

Ao is a renovated apartment for a young working couple. Its layout reflects the lifestyles and personalities of the couple: one a patternmaker, the other a restaurateur, they both work from home and each requires very specific spaces. As part of the program, they requested that the apartment could also be a place to relax and entertain.

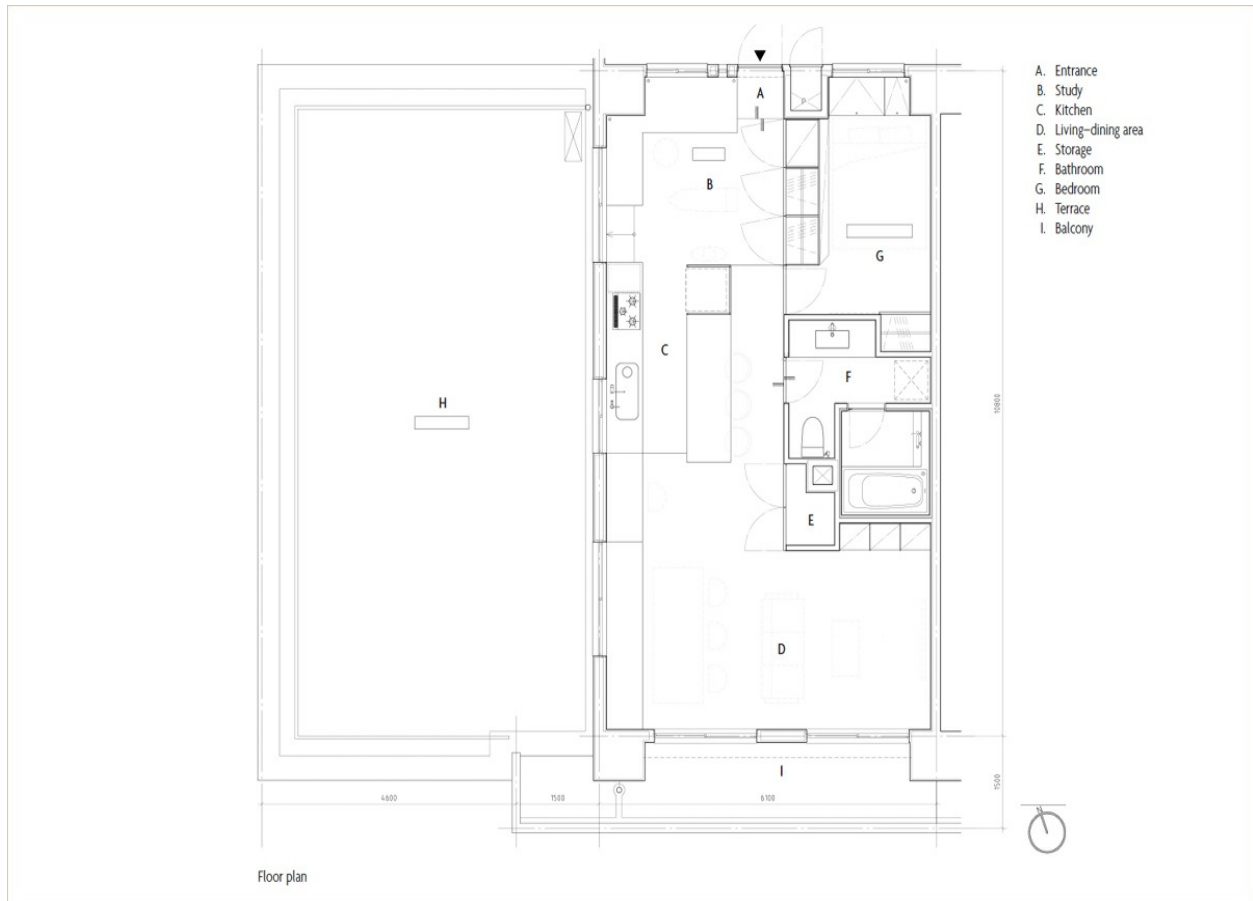




135

Incorporate built-in furniture into the design where possible, to clear the space and enhance the sense of amplitude.





All existing partitions were removed to reveal a light-filled space with various large openings, one of which connects to a terrace almost the size of the apartment.



An open-plan living space with an adjacent work studio is at the center of the new arrangement. The bedroom and bathroom are hidden from sight within a bright blue volume.

Apartment M405

990 sq ft

Architect: StudioCE

Location: Berlin, Germany

Photographer: © Ludger Paffrath

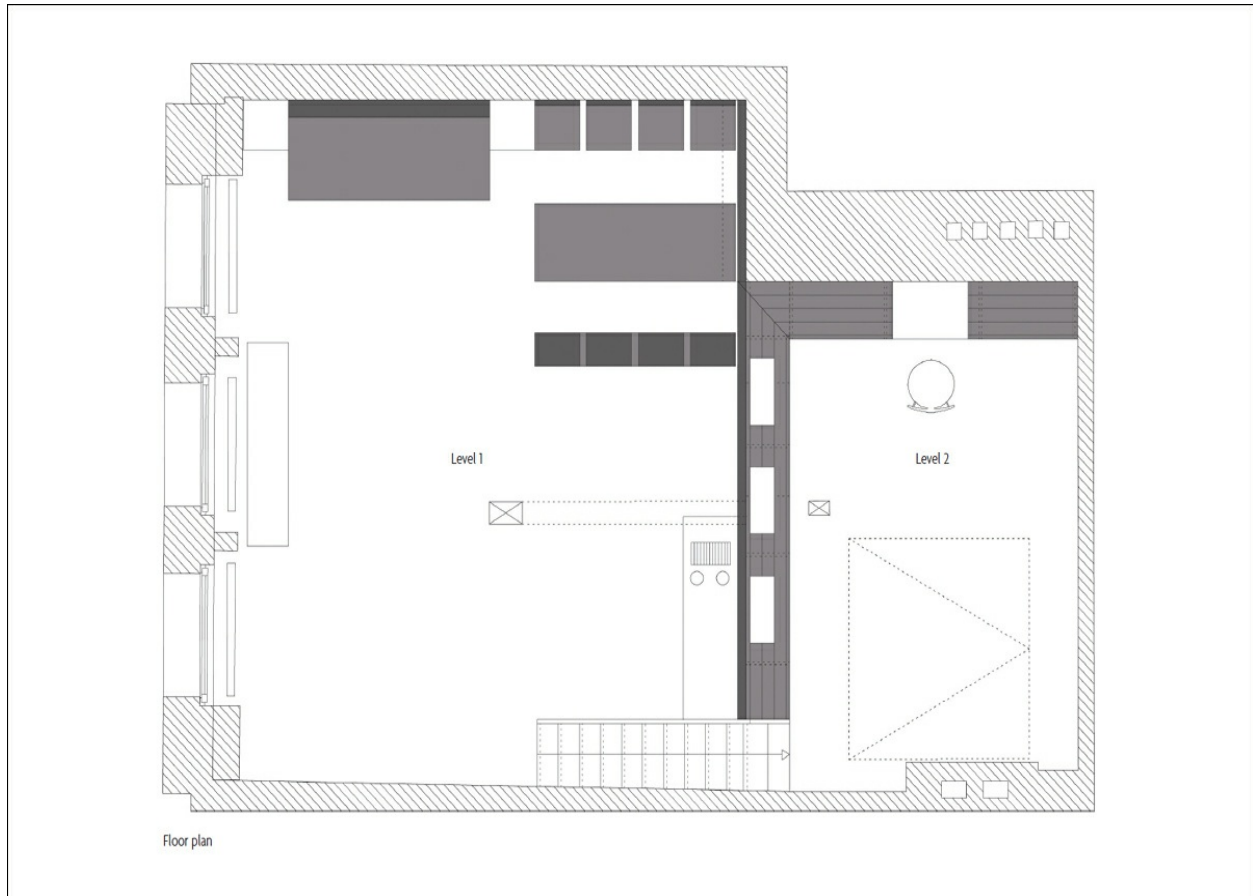
The complete makeover of this apartment resulted in a modern, highly creative space. The main challenge was to remodel it on a small budget. This was achieved by inserting a multifunctional wall that integrates shelving for the kitchen and planter boxes. The wall extends above the floor of the loft. At that level, the wall morphs into a desk, becoming a workspace.





136

When space is tight, create areas that are multifunctional. Not only are multifunctional furnishings smart, but they can also be structurally interesting components of a limited space.



137

Harmonize the disparate elements of an existing space to provide it with unexpected spaciousness.





House in Nishimikuni

990 sq ft

Architect: Arbol Design

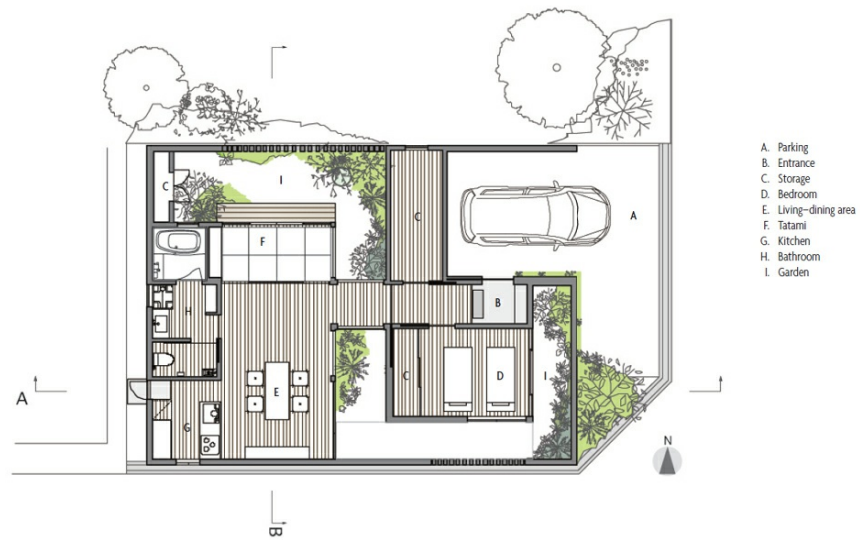
Location: Osaka City, Japan

Photographer: © Yasunori Shimomura

Designed for a retired couple, this house tackles the issue of how to provide privacy in an urban area and still offer a glimpse of the sky. Among the gray high-rises of the Nishimikuni district of Osaka stands a one-story house protected by a wooden fence as tall as the house. The fence keeps the interior of the house out of view from the outside.



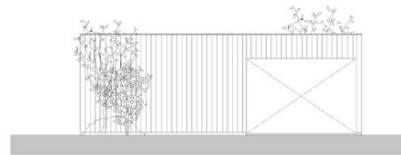




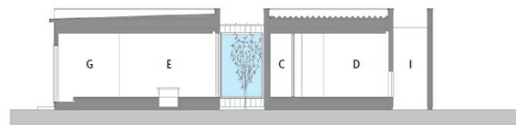
Ground-floor plan



South elevation



East elevation



Section A



Section B



A narrow garden strip meanders between the house and the wooden fence around it. It is an interstitial space that brings a little bit of nature to this small house in a dense urban environment.

138

Patios and courtyards can be as much a part of an integrated house design as any room: they have the advantage of being exterior extensions of a home's interior.





139

You can expand the perception of a space by borrowing materials and finishes from an adjacent area. This is only possible if there is a visual connection between the two spaces.



140

Enhance the architectural character of your home by keeping furnishings and decoration to a minimum. This will simultaneously improve circulation.





141

Long, narrow corridors can be made more interesting by alternating materials. This design solution creates rhythm and helps lead the eye to a particular place.







House in Morina

990 sq ft

Architect: ArchTeam

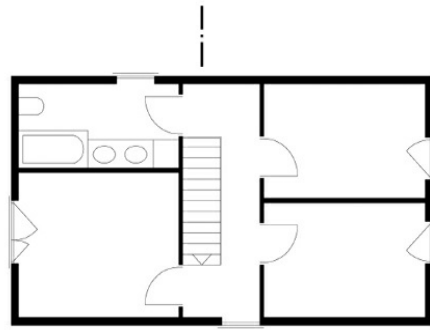
Location: Morina, Czech Republic

Photographer: © Ester Havlova

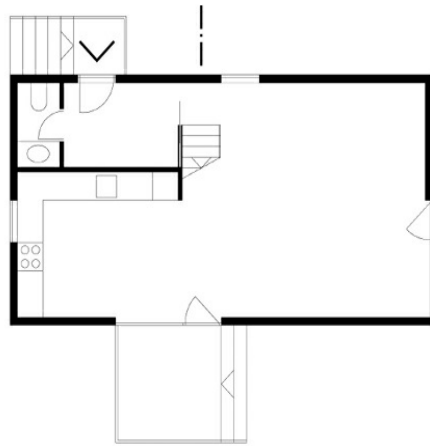
The overall design of this single-story house with an attic was strongly influenced by the traditional architecture of the area. But the sliding translucent shutters give the first indication that this home is anything, but traditional. The interior has an open layout: small, but spacious and inviting.



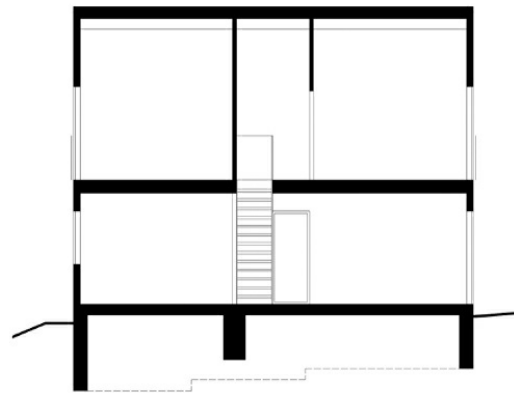




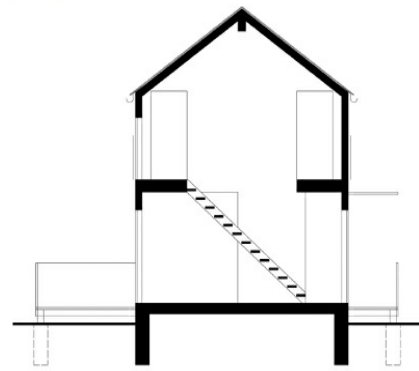
Second-floor plan



Ground-floor plan



Longitudinal section



Cross section



Changes in the position of the shutters and in interior and exterior lighting change the appearance of the façades and the home atmosphere.

142

If you are thinking of opening up a small, confined space by combining various rooms, consult an architect first. The work should be done properly and in accordance with building codes.



143

Small but functional, a bathroom can easily be tucked under the sloped ceiling of an attic space, providing the snug feeling often found in cottage-style homes.



Mini–Loft Apartment in Prague

990 sq ft

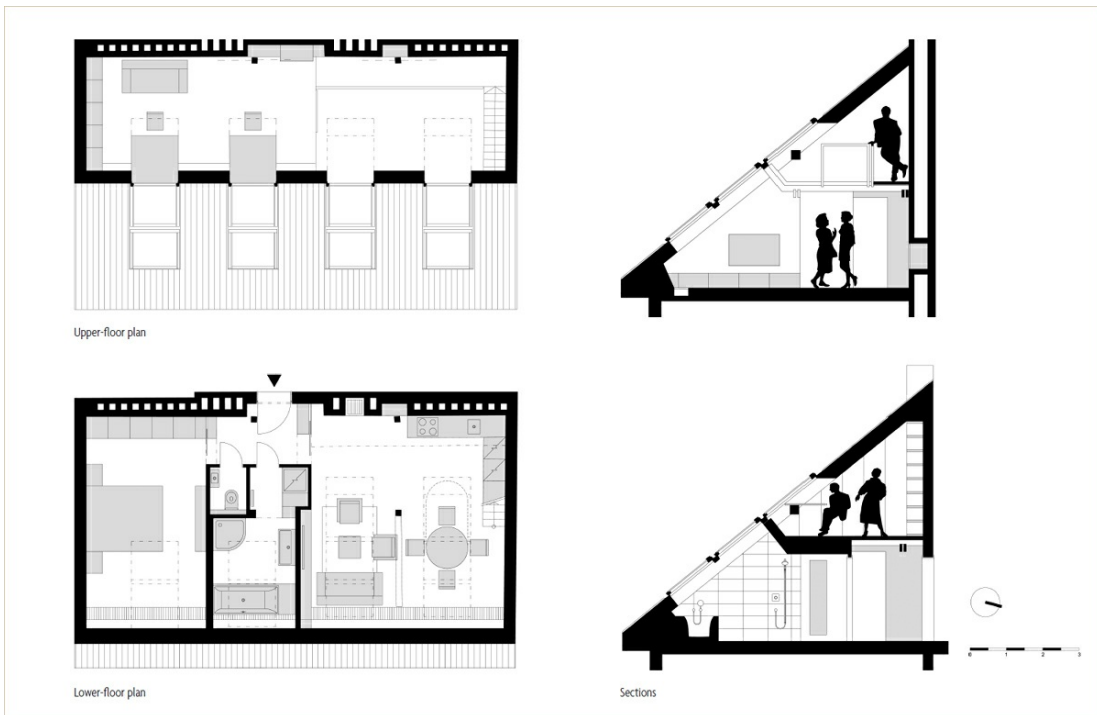
Architect: idhea

Location: Prague, Czech Republic

Photographer: © Filip Slapal

This loft is in the attic of an apartment building built in the 1930s. It was originally used for drying laundry. The concept of the loft arose from two contradictory requirements: an effort toward the most effective use of limited floor space and the creation of a clear, generous space. The loft was therefore planned on two levels.





The loft level is accessed via a staircase and a steel footbridge, which offers views of the double space.

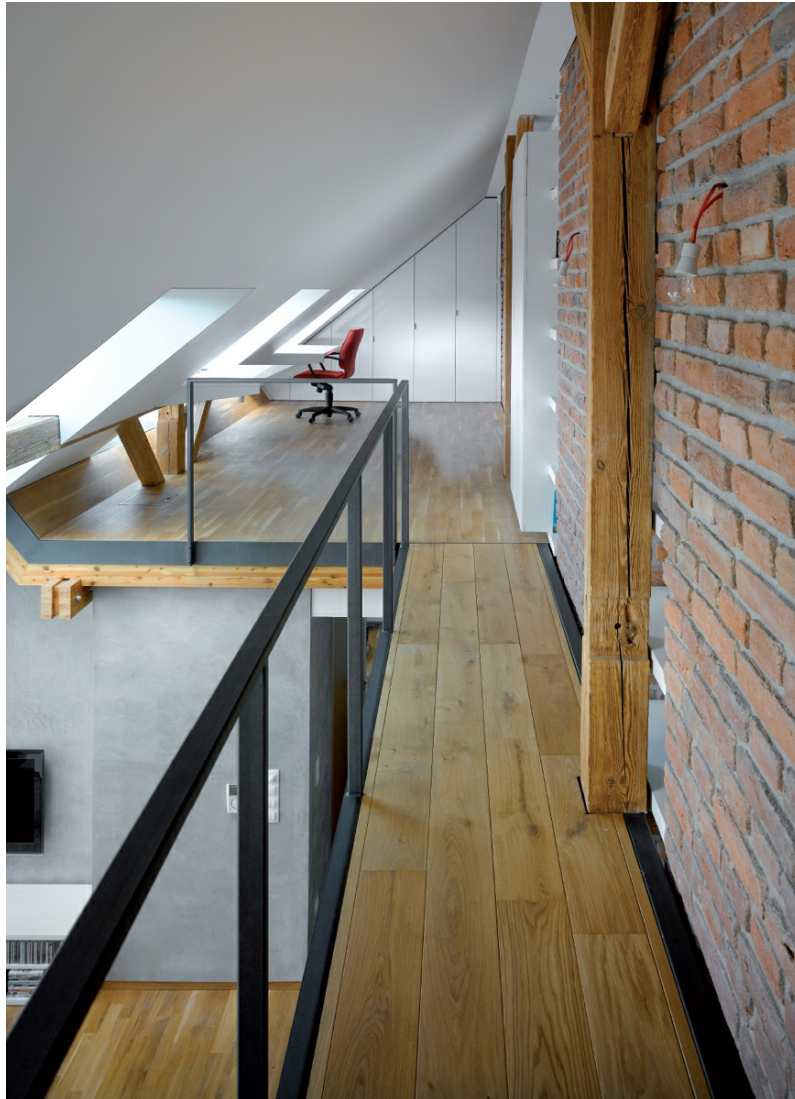
144

Smart storage and clever design details do wonders with small kitchens. Some ideas include choosing pull-out cabinets in lieu of traditional ones or special racks to store plates vertically for better access.



145

Sloped ceilings often come with design challenges. They can certainly make a room feel awkward, but with good planning and appropriate shelving or furniture, you can turn this obstacle into a positive feature.





146

A wall-hung water closet is an ideal solution for small bathrooms, as it can easily be integrated into a design.



147

This bathroom makes smart use of the low ceiling to position the bathtub. The skylight gives an extra few inches of headroom and offers a glimpse of the exterior without causing privacy issues.



Icegrass

1,076 sq ft

Architect: Studioata

Location: Prigelato, Italy

Photographer: © Beppe Giardino

Icegrass is a remodeled mountain hut. Its design emphasizes the difference between existing and new construction. This is achieved by the insertion of three wood-clad blocks that contrast with the existing stone vaulted structure. These volumes efficiently organize the space, separating different areas and providing privacy wherever it is needed.



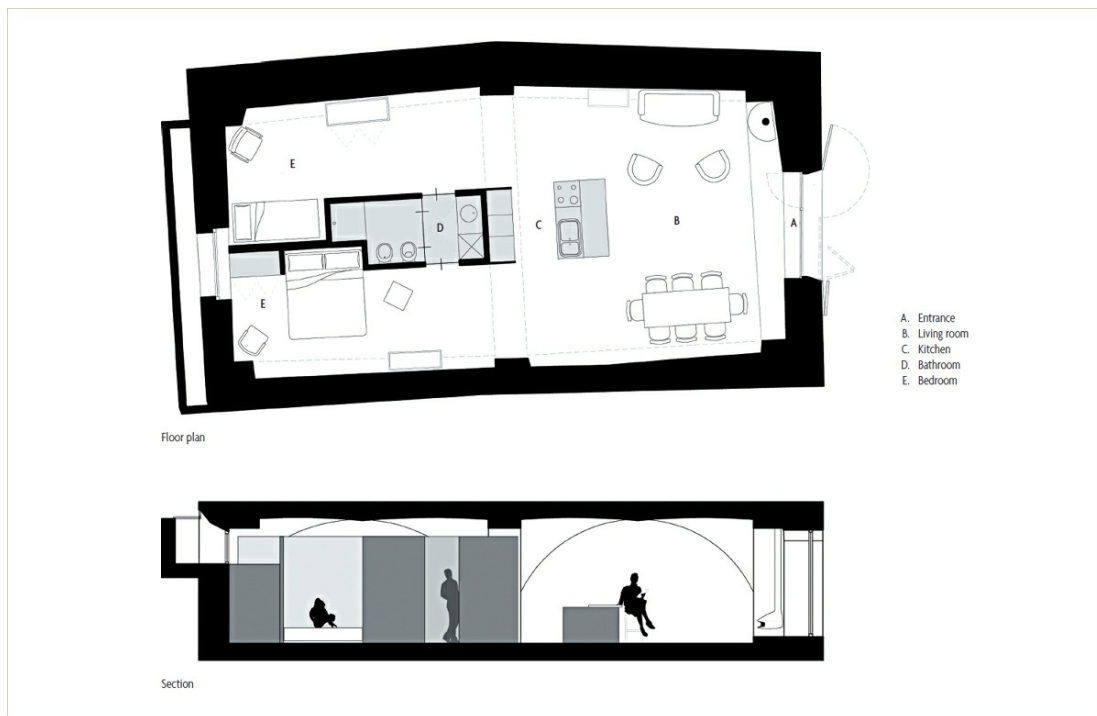
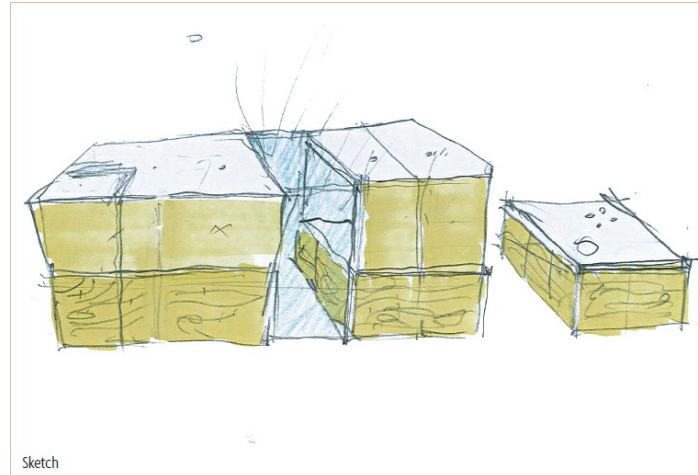




148

Frosted glass adds depth to the space, letting light through while providing privacy. It can be used as a fixed panel or a movable partition to separate different areas.





The tall block in the middle can be connected to the other tall block by the frosted glass doors, or it can be freestanding. These variations change the circulation around the space.





Slim House

1,119 sq ft

Architect: Alma-nac Collaborative Architecture

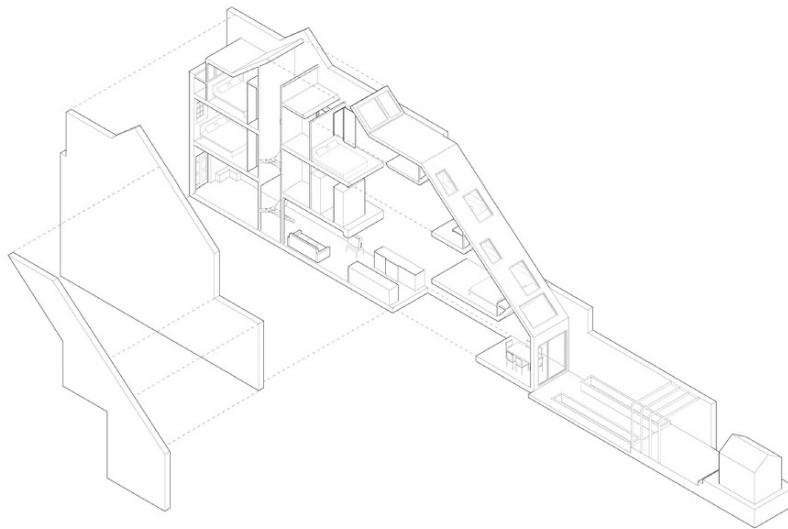
Location: Clapham, London, UK

Photographer: © Richard Chivers

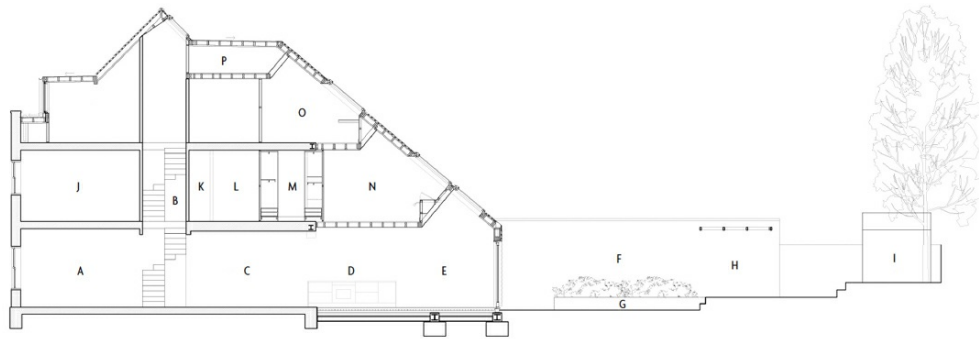
Who would have guessed that this bright London townhouse was once a dark building with limited access to the garden? At just 7 ½ feet, its width was a challenge when it came to remodeling the house. A restricted budget led to a series of original and practical solutions.





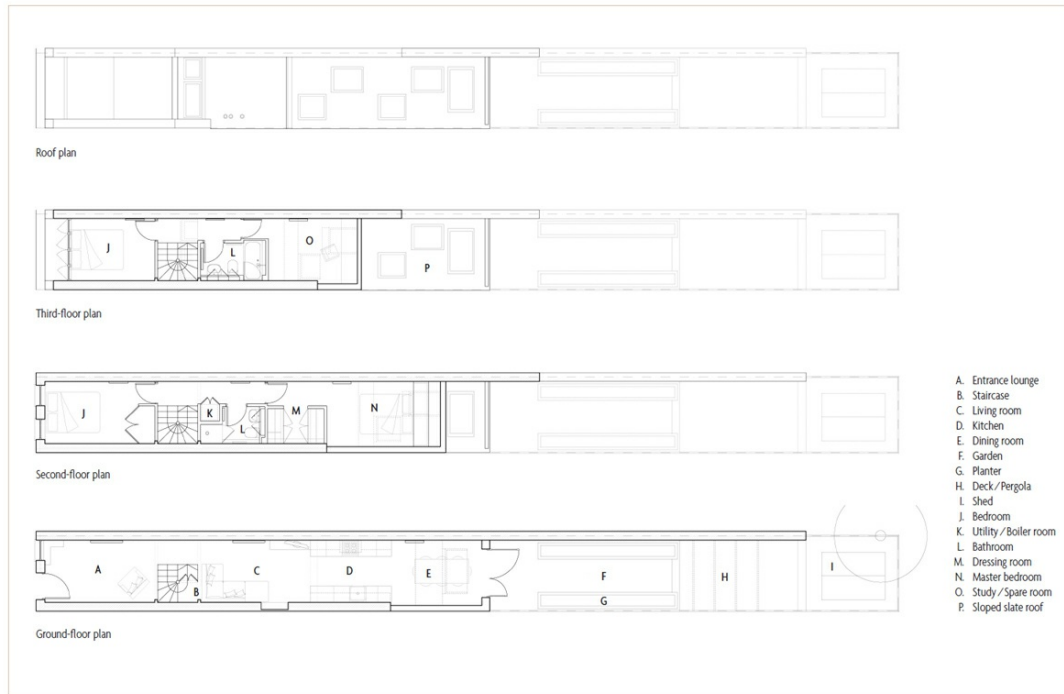


Exploded axonometric view



Section

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| A. Entrance lounge | G. Planter | M. Dressing room |
| B. Staircase | H. Deck/Pergola | N. Master bedroom |
| C. Living room | I. Shed | O. Study/Spare room |
| D. Kitchen | J. Bedroom | P. Loft space |
| E. Dining room | K. Utility/Boiler room | |
| F. Garden | L. Bathroom | |



The neighboring properties had been extended to the full depth of the site. For the townhouse, this option was rejected from the beginning, as it proved problematic in terms of bringing light into the center of the plan.

149

A narrow space can be multipurpose, as long as it's tall and airy. It can make a wonderful breakfast nook and a comfortable place for working, with good lighting and, perhaps, pleasant views.



150

The creation of storage space is always a requirement when dealing with small homes. Storage should not get in the way of a relaxing, comfortable atmosphere.



About the Author

FRANCESC ZAMORA MOLA studied interior architecture in Barcelona and then in San Francisco, where he improved his skills by working for a variety of architecture firms. He is the author of numerous architecture books, including *Star Commercial Spaces* and *150 Best New Apartment Ideas*. He lives in Barcelona.

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