

MULTIPURPOSE *Magic*

A designer reveals how to create double-duty rooms that use your small space to its fullest potential.

By Hannah Hagen
Styling by Ana Donohue
Photography by Michael J. Lee

Step Inside

- WHAT: 3 bedroom, 1 ½ bathroom home
- WHERE: Belmont, Massachusetts
- SIZE: 1,700 square feet

"CREATE ZONES. This can be done in a multitude of ways with art, rugs and lighting," designer Ana Donohue says. Here, an area rug outlines the living room and allows the dining area to have its own space.



USE ART AND COLOR TO CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR SPACES.

"Hanging art in unusual places can create height and depth," Ana says. Notice how the art and the rich, textured wallcovering divides the sleeping area from the rest of this bedroom.

"By adding large-scale furniture, pattern and texture, you will create depth, interest and the feeling of more space."

One of the most common misconceptions people have when decorating small rooms is that they must contain small furnishings. But, designer Ana Donohue believes in quite the opposite. Her company, Ana Donohue Interiors, helps homeowners maximize the spaces they have for beautiful results. Here, she shares her tips for how you can do it in your own home.

This three bedroom, 1,700-square-foot home in Massachusetts proves that one room does not have to be limited to one purpose. A bedroom can function as both an office and nighttime retreat; a living room can provide both comfortable seating and stylish dining—the trick is to maximize each space.

When decorating this home, Ana opted for bigger pieces of furniture and artwork, but kept other details simple and minimal. This way, the main focus of each room clearly identifies the room's purpose. When there is no physical separation of walls from one room to another, it's important to create visual separation. A rug is a subtle way to communicate where one area begins and the other ends; wallpaper also provides a noticeable signal that creates a focal point.

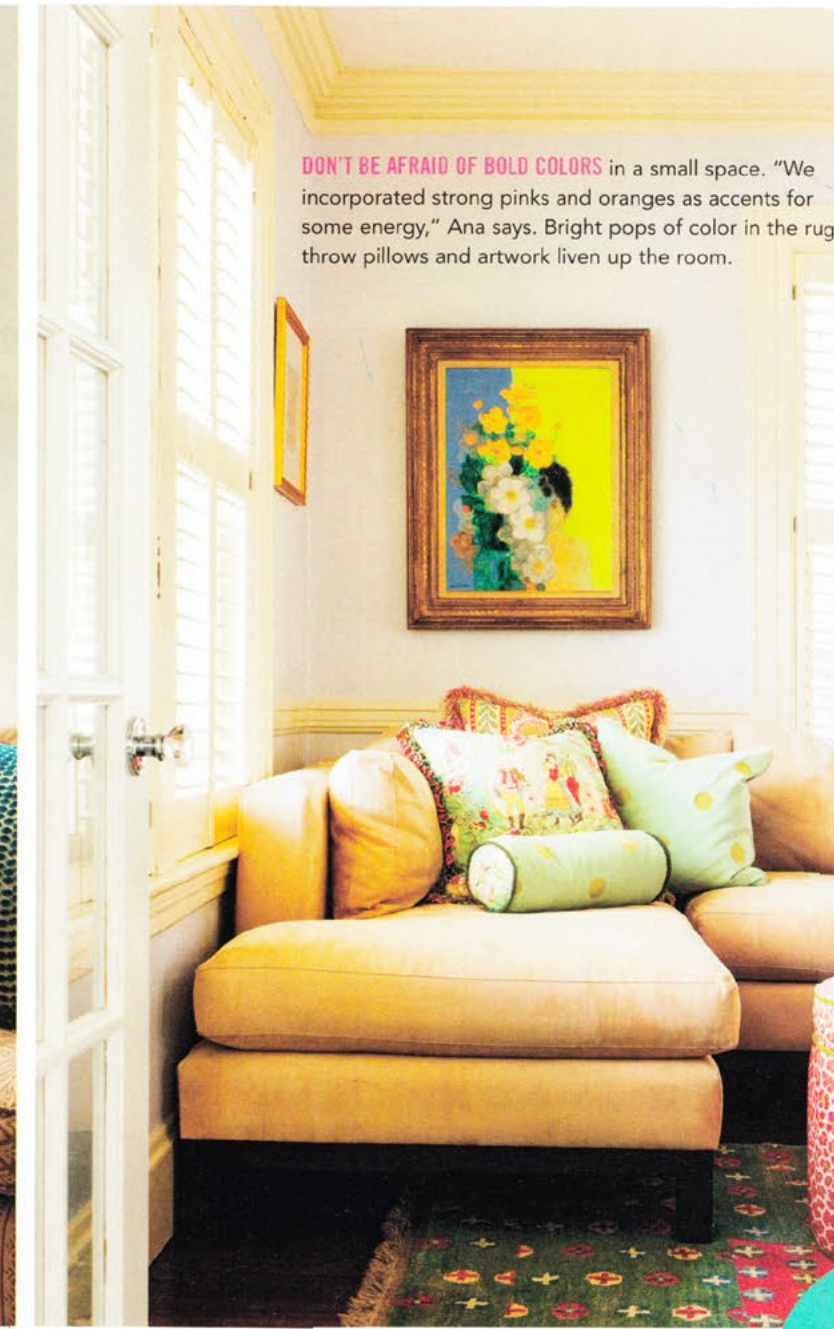


A large sectional fills the corner of this small seating area, but does not overcrowd the space. A bold color and print on the ottoman adds a fun, fresh feel to the room. "By adding large-scale furniture, pattern and texture, you will create depth, interest and the feeling of more space," Ana says.

"THE GHOST CHAIRS WERE INTENTIONAL for a variety of reasons," Ana says. "First, to add a fun contemporary element in a somewhat traditional setting and second, the alcove area needed to feel open and inviting."



DON'T BE AFRAID OF BOLD COLORS in a small space. "We incorporated strong pinks and oranges as accents for some energy," Ana says. Bright pops of color in the rug, throw pillows and artwork liven up the room.



What's Your Style?

Designer Ana Donohue's tips for seamlessly blending two different styles into a look all your own.

- 1 Best of Both Worlds:** Ana's designs typically involve contemporary and traditional pieces mixed together. "Combining contemporary and traditional is all about taking chances and knowing how to balance the pieces. Interiors I design will always have a mix," Ana says. If you love two different styles, combine the elements you love from both of them.
- 2 Mix and Match:** "If I know the interiors will be mainly traditional, I will always push for contemporary art. If I am designing a contemporary home, I push for a warmer, softer color scheme with a mix of natural organic wood tones to create warmth. All design needs a bit of a mix for interest: upholstery, wood varieties, metal and glass," she says.
- 3 Timeless Style:** "I never want an interior to show its age in five or even 10 years. Create longevity by mixing the elements so the room always feels current," Ana says. Stick to basic, lasting furniture that won't go out of style and use trendier pieces for accents, which can easily be switched out later on as your style continues to evolve.

"Creating one or two focal moments in a small space will create the illusion of a larger space," Ana says. Ana also suggests bright colors to draw attention to certain areas. Pink, coral and sea blues infuse a refreshing brightness that opens up this home. To avoid overwhelming a room with bold color, use it in small doses. Throw pillows, artwork, chairs and curtains are great places to instill subtle pops of color.

"Small-scale furniture will only accentuate what you already know—the room is small," Ana says. Don't be afraid of large furniture and bright colors. When used well, these elements are key to maximizing what little space is available. Create a purpose for each space and don't be afraid to dream big.

See Sources, page 128.

For more information on Ana Donohue, visit anadonohue-interiors.com.

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