

# New Living Spaces



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著者:

出版者:

出版时间:

装帧:

isbn:9780809423743

There are times when every homeowner feels a little like the old woman who lived in a shoe. Mothers trip over toddlers in cramped kitchens. Party-givers juggle food, drinks and guests between small living and dining rooms. Budding scientists and musicians compete for territory in shared bedrooms.

What these people need is new living space. Most houses contain

a surprising amount of space that can be altered or adapted to a variety of family needs. Attics, garages and basements can be converted into living areas. Porches can be enclosed. Finished interior rooms can be more fully utilized-sometimes by removing walls to open up small rooms, sometimes by installing partitions that divide large rooms for disparate activities.

You can gain extra room in any of these ways, using only a few basic elements. They are standardized and relatively simple. All walls are built-or torn down-in pretty much the same way. Doors and windows come as preassembled units from a mill, ready for installation. And modern ceilings and floors are now made of factory materials specifically designed for amateurs to work with.

Even this amount of simple carpentry is not involved if you turn to „ready-mades"-prefabricated units that are used, often in ways different from their original purpose, to help you create the spaces you need. Standard shelves and cabinets, meant to provide storage, become a wall if set up freestanding to divide a large space (and they still hold books or whatever). Wide sliding or folding doors become a removable partition if hung across a large room-with the doors closed you have two small, private sections or you can conceal a work area, while opening the doors restores the large space when it is needed. It is even possible to expand the house outward with ready-mades. Rows of stock storm doors, set side-by-side and topped if necessary with a prefab aluminum roof, transform an open porch or patio into a room for all weathers.

Simple ready-mades are available at nearly all building-supply dealers. But the same techniques used in installing them apply to the

much more elaborate "systems" sold in department stores and specialty shops. A customized storage unit, fitted to the available space and containing a desk, liquor cabinet, stereo-perhaps even a folding bed-can be permanently anchored employing the basic technique for setting up an inexpensive bookshelf. Folding doors that are faced with mirrors or with vivid decorator materials are hung in exactly the same way as ordinary bifold or accordion doors. Even the dramatic stainless-steel panels pictured on page 112-D are little more than sophisticated cousins of modest wooden bypass doors and are hung in virtually the same manner

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