

cheat sheet

Who lives here: Dan, her husband Paul and their daughter.

Style of home: A diminutive, 75-square-metre apartment in a heritage-listed former commercial office building in inner-city Melbourne. Many of the building's original features still remain, such as the sash windows located on three of the four perimeter walls, and the wide baltic pine floorboards.



The renovation was completed in three months in 2012, with a "modest"



budget, according to architect Clare Cousins.

1 sleep tight Faced with the need to create a sleeping space for their daughter, and inspired by compact Japanese homes, owners Dan and Paul opted for two 'micro' bedrooms created out of the existing bedroom, with the help of architect Clare Cousins. The couple's sleeping nook is now a raised platform, cocooned in plywood cabinetry, that just fits a queen bed. "The nook is like sleeping in a cosy caravan," says Dan. Their daughter's bedroom sits just behind this nook. The screens echo the Japanese inspiration. **Tip: Look for potential storage nooks - the alcove with shelves in the living area is ideal for books and personal displays.**

HIP TO BE square

Rather than move to accommodate their growing family, a couple cleverly reconfigures their one-bedroom inner-Melbourne apartment to suit their changing lifestyle

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2 straight to work A compact workstation is built into a nook below the mezzanine. "Throughout the home, storage has been carefully considered to allow everyone enough room for the essentials," says architect Clare Cousins. Just wide enough to fit a chair and a laptop, this nook is a handy spot for checking emails, paying bills and storing paperwork. **Tip: Add a dose of personality and brighten up a neutral, contemporary palette with coloured shelves.**

3 gold rush The existing bathroom layout stayed to avoid costly plumbing changes. "Most materials and fittings were chosen to be cost effective, such as these inexpensive white tiles, which were bought in varying sizes then laid creatively on the walls," says Clare. "However, Dan and Paul chose to splurge on terrazzo floor tiles and also had the tapware electroplated in brass for a bit of bling." **Tip: Take the opportunity to turn plumbing into an eye-catching style statement if it has to be on show.**

4 pretty in pink A set of sliding doors neatly screens off the master bedroom when needed; when left open though, the sense of space in the apartment increases. "After it was decided to paint the doors in three shades, the choice of colour came about quite organically," says Clare. "The peach and salmon colours really complement the plywood." **Tip: Give an entry impact with a bold makeover using tones in the same colour family.**



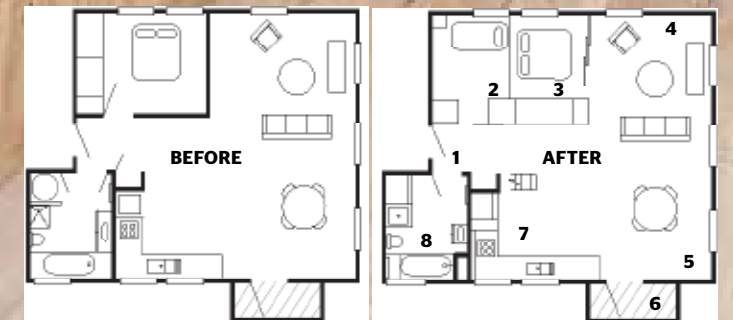
5 good grain Plywood joinery separates the bedrooms from the living area. Open shelving, hanging space and deep drawers cater for books, clothing and personal displays. The existing mezzanine was impractical. "Paul and Dan had to lift each other up on their shoulders to access it - so we added a fixed ladder, and now it's additional storage that sits outside the bathroom," says Clare. **Tip: Choose a round dining table if you have a petite space.**

“The most challenging aspect was squeezing two sleeping spaces into the same area as the original single bedroom” CLARE COUSINS, ARCHITECT

6 keep it simple

The bank of concealed storage forms a streamlined, minimalist look that doesn't lack warmth, due to the plywood's interesting texture. “We love the tonal palette. The space was really heavy when we first moved in - dark walls, benches and floors. We wanted to lighten it up and create a more natural and airy environment,” says Dan. The dining table by Artek from Anibou is in a pale wood that also matches the lime-washed Baltic pine floors. The dining chairs were found at Camberwell Market.

Tip: In an open-plan space, defining zones creates intimate areas, while giving the home a sense of flow.



- 1. Entry
- 2. Child's bedroom
- 3. Master bedroom
- 4. Living area
- 5. Dining area
- 6. Balcony
- 7. Kitchen
- 8. Bath/laundry

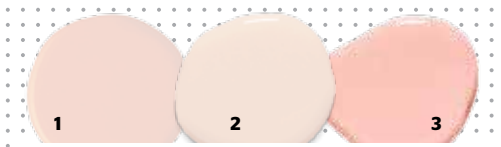


8 charming character A home that's layered with both old and new pieces will always have personality and be a true reflection of its owners. Here, Dan and Paul instructed Clare to create space for a vintage teak sideboard that was a gift from their family. Styled with simple, graphic artwork and sculptures from Field Experiments and a vintage-style radio from Tivoli, it's in keeping with the minimalist feel of the rest of the apartment. The Eames moulded plywood chair adds a pop of colour to the pale scheme.
Tip: Work with your design professional to ensure that the pieces you love and already own can be seamlessly incorporated into your home post renovation.

9 room to grow "This is my favourite feature of the apartment," says Clare of the daughter's sleeping space that's just behind the parents' zone. "When dividing the bedroom into two, the size of this room - just two metres wide - was determined by the length of a single bed. While it's miniature in scale, it functions perfectly with room for sleeping, playing and storage, and the large window floods the little space with natural light." A testament to the vision for the room, Dan and Paul have commissioned Clare to design a bunk bed to replace the cot as their daughter outgrows it.
Tip: Built-ins don't have to just house clothes - enlist the help of a clever cabinetmaker who will help you maximise every spare square of space for storage.



10 new heights Thanks to high ceilings and natural light, the apartment has the lofty feeling of a larger space. "The sleeping nook is our favourite part of our home and it's wonderfully connected to the rest of the house," says Dan. "In the day it has become a play space for our daughter, and at night, I can lie in bed and chat with Paul in the lounge."
Tip: Introducing a raised area marks out a zone without closing it off. 
 For more of Clare's work, visit clarecousins.com.au.



PAINT PALETTE 1. & 2. 'Clean & Protect' interior low sheen paint in Breadcrumb Trail and Kirsten Pink, \$55.50/4L, British Paints, 132 525. **3.** 'Interior Expressions' low sheen paint in Sugared Peach, \$38.95/litre, Haymes Paint, 1800 033 431.

ARTWORKS (OPPOSITE): COLLABORATION BETWEEN FIELD EXPERIMENTS AND KETUT ARYA, FIELD-EXPERIMENTS.COM. PAINT PALETTE: PRODUCT SOURCING: JOSEPH GARDNER, PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION