

# Small things make a big difference



## Room For Improvement

“God is in the details,” mused Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969), one of the 20th century’s most significant architects.

Ludwig, whose father was a master stonemason, found beauty in material detail, and instilled that inspiration into structures like the Seagram Building in New York and the Dominion Centre in Toronto — each a timeless design that, to this day, inspires creatives everywhere to remain mindful of ‘the small stuff’.

Door handles, for example, or drawer pulls, light switches and plug sockets are often overlooked. If spec’d up, however, they can embolden an entire scheme in terms of colour, style and tactility.

So don’t skip — create design cohesion by choosing handles, cupboard and drawer pulls that match or compliment switch plates and plug sockets. Check out the range of

hyper stylish switches at [www.busterrandpunch.com](http://www.busterrandpunch.com) and prepare for serious turn on.

From an exterior perspective, telegraph great first impressions by spec’ing up your street number or name sign, and match its style and finish to the aesthetics of your outdoor lighting and mailbox.

Sol Pixie Dust (via Etsy) merchant the market’s best choices. The trick is to give each zone a thread that strings everything together — this is where all the small things come in to play to provide connectivity. Attention such as this is a perfect finishing touch, and the whispered sign of professional planning.

Similarly, customizing bathrooms is thoroughly rewarding — it’s here, after all, we spend time chasing relaxation. Forget ‘douse and dash’ or ‘wet it and forget it’ — these days bathrooms are all about spa like indulgence where soothing elements and schematic continuity are everything.

So, without further ado, cue those coordinated faucets, door handles and towel rails. Aye, it’s all about the smaller details that paint a bigger picture.

The Rubinet Faucet Company, right

here in Toronto ([www.rubinet.com](http://www.rubinet.com)) have long since been our go to for bathroom, bar and kitchen fittings.

They manufacture a roster of beautiful items that can be colour coded in myriad finishes from antique brass and polished nickel, right through to dramatic black and sexy red, and every colour — and tone — in between. And now they’re taking everything one step further...

The revered company recently expanded its hardware collection to include shower door hinges and handles, each of which can be tailored to deliver a singular vision across your bathroom.

There’s no longer any reason to endure standard chrome shower hinges, for example, having specified rose gold, copper or brass faucets. Taking that thinking even further, Rubinet have expanded to kitchen handles and appliance pulls, designed to help take home personalisation to the next level.

Illustrated today is a super dreamy bathroom update, detailed with a ‘Flemish’ single hole faucet by Rubinet, and further coordinated by the company’s 4” handle pull.

Each specified in a warm ‘Gold’



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finish, the resulting vibe is cosily atmospheric, especially as played against the rich graphite tones of the bathroom vanity unit.

Detailing such as everything discussed in today’s epistle makes our professional life simpler, and avoids nervous twitching (pertaining to what might previously have been mismatched finishes) as we walk clients through their newly transformed abodes.

Thank you, Rubinet, for on going ‘small’ counsel, and thank you Mies van der Rohe for early lessons in the appreciation of detail!

With real estate fluctuations caus-

ing many Canadians to remain in, rather than move out of, their homes, now would appear the perfect time to lavish and personalise with all the little stuff that bolster the bliss factor.

Doing this won’t simply consolidate home value, it’ll optimise daily ‘return’ as you navigate detailed spaces that bring out the best in you and your family. Now doesn’t that sound like an investment that’ll reap rewards?

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# Top shelf: Tips for choosing and styling shelves

**DIANA BASTONE**

Special to Postmedia Network

Do your empty shelves have you feeling ... unfulfilled? Does the design and decorating seem daunting? You’re not alone.

When it comes to our homes, many mistakenly “shelf” their shelves in favour of more exciting design additions, like furniture and tech toys. But the truth is, the right shelving can enhance a home’s function and its style.

Despite their primary purpose of storage and organization, shelves are much more than just functional pieces of furniture; they are also powerful design elements that can transform the look and feel of your home.

Whether you opt for open shelving to showcase your favourite items, or custom-built shelves to maximize the corners and crannies, your choices can significantly impact your home’s overall aesthetic.

Before you can start styling, ensure you have the right shelves for your space. Consider the following factors:

**FUNCTIONALITY:** Assess the purpose of the shelves. Are they primarily for storage, display or a combination of both? If storage is a priority, consider closed cabinets or a mix of open and closed shelving to hide clutter while showcasing your favorite pieces. Also consider your own organizational style. If you’re messy, closed shelving might be the more practical option.

**SPACE AND SCALE:** Measure the available space where the shelves will be installed to ensure a proper fit. Pay attention to the scale of the room. In smaller spaces, floating shelves can create the illusion of more space, while larger rooms can accommodate substantial bookshelves or custom-built units.

**MATERIAL AND STYLE:** Choose materials that complement your existing decor. Wood adds warmth, while metal or glass can lend to a more modern look. Also consider the style of your home — whether it’s contemporary, traditional, or eclectic — and select shelves that align overall with that aesthetic.



Despite their primary purpose of storage and organization, shelves are much more than just functional pieces of furniture, they need to be visually

**OPEN SHELVING:** Open shelving is popular for its ability to create an airy and visually appealing display, while keeping certain items easily on hand. Just remember that with this design choice, curation is key.

**CUSTOM SHELVING:** Custom shelving allows you to maximize space and tailor the design to your specific needs.

Here are some tips for creating custom shelves:

**BUILT-IN VERSATILITY:** Design built-in shelves that cater to the unique features of your home, such as alcoves or corners. Incorporate a mix of open and closed storage to maintain a balance between showcasing items and hiding clutter.

**MULTI-FUNCTIONAL DESIGN:**

Integrate shelves with additional features like built-in desks, entertainment centers, or seating to maximize functionality. Ensure that your custom shelves are proportionate to the room and serve a dual purpose without overwhelming the space.

Now that you have the right shelves in place, some thoughtful accessorizing will finish the look. Start with a cohesive colour palette for the items you’ll be displaying.

This creates a unified and visually pleasing look. Introduce pops of colour or bold black accents through decorative items like vases, books and artwork to create visual interest.

Your accessories should incorporate a variety of textures, such as ceramics, woven baskets and metal-

lic accents, to add depth and appeal.

Experiment with different materials to strike a balance between smooth and rough surfaces for a more dynamic look.

Mix and match items of varying heights, shapes, and textures to add interest and prevent monotony. Achieve balance by distributing items evenly on each shelf.

Consider symmetry in terms of both placement and visual weight. Finally, experiment with the arrangement, alternating between vertical and horizontal stacks can create a dynamic and organized appearance.

Choosing and styling shelves is a creative process that allows you to showcase your personality and enhance the overall style and function of your home.

Whether you opt for the openness of floating shelves, the customization of built-ins, or a combination of both, the key lies in thoughtful curation and a keen eye for design.

By carefully selecting the right shelves and accessorizing with colour and texture, you can transform your home into a space that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

**Diana Bastone is principal designer and founder of Diana Bastone Designs, and is known for creating stylish and thoughtfully tailored interiors. Visit [dianabastonedesigns.com](http://dianabastonedesigns.com).**