
Life Edited: Tiny NY Studio Functions like a 1,100-square-foot Space | At Home

By Lyiah M. Alphonse



This 420-square-foot studio has a moveable wall that hides a guest bedroom. (Photo: By Matthew Williams for Life ... People who live in big cities are used to [small spaces](#) -- and to longing for [larger ones](#) . One green-minded entrepreneur may have found the perfect solution: He renovated a 420-square-foot studio [in New York City](#) to function like a 1,100-square apartment.

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"The main idea is to get double, triple, quadruple use from every space," Graham Hill, founder of the sustainable-living-focused media outlet [TreeHugger.com](#) and the design company [Life Edited](#) , told Fair Companies [in a video interview](#) .

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Hill, a trained architect, bought two studios in a 100-year-old tenement building in SoHo in 2009 and 2010 -- a 350-square-foot space for \$280,000, and a 420-square-foot studio for \$287,000, Life Edited Communications Director David Friedlander, told Yahoo! Shine. While camping out in the smaller apartment, he gutted the 420-square-foot studio -- which once housed an entire family for 40 years without a shower or a bathtub -- and, after finding Romanian architecture students Catalin Sandu and Adrian Iancu by holding an international design competition, got to work. The renovation, which cost \$250,000 to \$300,000, was completed in 2012 and Life Edited was born.



When the wall is pushed to one side, the living space is open and airy (and hides a queen-size pull-down bed behind. ... The 420-square-foot space now boasts luxe finishes, a home theater, fold-out furniture, and a moveable wall that houses his desk-in-a-drawer work area and hides a set of drop-down bunk beds for sleepover guests, with a magnetized curtain for privacy. The generously appointed bathroom is clad in light wood and stone, and the compact kitchen is stocked with collapsable gadgets and tools that nestle into one another. Even his dishes do double (or triple) duty.

"This actually works well both for soup and for salad and for entrees, so instead of three different plates you have one," Hill told Fair Companies, taking a wide, flat-bottomed, white bowl out of a cabinet. He keeps three small induction burners stacked in a low drawer -- pull them out, plug them in, and there's his stovetop -- and the pull-out top-loading fridge, freezer, and dishwasher conserve space, power, and water. A combination microwave/convection oven completes the kitchen, and a metal wall over the sink lets him hang small plants in magnetized containers.



A view of the kitchen and bathroom areas. The table tucked under the counter pulls out to seat 10 guests. (Photo: ... The state-of-the-art apartment doesn't come cheap, though. The Goliath table by Ozzio, for example, telescopes out to seat 10 but has a hefty price tag (\$3,950, [according to Life Edited](#)) that puts it beyond the reach of many micro-apartment dwellers. The hardware alone for the storage-space-filled moveable wall cost nearly \$5,000. The queen-size Swing bed by CLEI [retails at around \\$15,000](#) .

"It's a prototype. We're going a little bit over the top," Life Edited's Friedlander told Yahoo! Shine. "We're working on a follow up project currently, and it's really designed to be more cost conscious. We realize that not everyone can afford that, but we're really trying to bring the price down." The company is part of a team competing in New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's [adAPT NYC contest](#) , to design new 275- to 300-square-foot housing units in the city.

The Life Edited apartment is more than just streamlined; it's super-green as well. There are a few solar panels strategically placed outside, providing power for some of the lighting and outlets. An electric composter keeps waste to a minimum in the kitchen. Kicking off your shoes when you come in the door helps keep the tiny place clean, and editing your belongings is key to fitting everything in. (Hill wears merino wool clothing, which needs less maintenance than other fabrics, and says he's considering winnowing his wardrobe down to a single winter coat with a hood so he doesn't need to have a hat.)

"I believe that a simpler life is going to make you happier," Hill told Fair Companies. "I think we live in very overwhelming times. The amount of people we know, the amount of things we do, the amount of social media, the amount of stuff that we own. There's just a lot going on."

"So I think that if you can simplify, focus on less but better across your life, then that'll be a calming thing," he added. "I think this is a happy way to live."

See the convertible apartment in action here:

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