



Design your life to include more money, health and happiness with less stuff, space and energy.



David Friedlander, Jan 31, 2013

8 Tips for Making Your Own Micro Apartment

With all the hoopla around the adAPT NYC competition (<http://lifeedited/tag/adapt-nyc>) and other micro-apartments (<http://lifeedited.com/tag/microapartments>) around the country, it's clear there's a demand for smart, small apartments. In fact, people write us daily asking if we have apartments available to rent or buy.

While LifeEdited is working with development teams to get you your micro-apartments with the greatest haste (be sure to sign up for our list), many of the developments are years away. This leaves the question: What do I do now if I want a micro-apartment?

If you're interested in living in a micro-apartment—either converting your existing place or starting fresh—here are some suggestions we think are critical to living a big life in a small apartment.

1. Pick a good address. We think small spaces work best when you use your city or town as your living room. With amenities like restaurants, entertainment and parks at arm's length, a good address will provide a living room you actually want to hang out in. Central locations are more walkable and have better public transport, allowing you to live car-free or get by with a car-share. Check out Walkscore.com to see how a neighborhood stacks up in terms of walkability and amenities. Yes, a good location will cost more, but you can save money by being car free and choosing a smaller apartment.
2. Size matters. While there is no magic number for square footage, the micro-

- apartment designation is about 250-400 sq ft for singles; 300-600 for couples; 500 + for families (separate rooms are generally a good idea for a peaceable family). In most cities and towns, there are plenty of apartments these sizes.
3. Get in good shape. In general, square and rectangular spaces are ideal. They feel bigger than odd-shaped spaces and are easier for fitting modular furniture.
 4. Get a Murphy Bed. It's the single easiest way of creating space without sacrificing function. A queen size bed is about 35 sq ft.—i.e. 10% of a 350 sq ft space; a 10% used exclusively while unconscious. We use the Swing sofa/bed by Resource Furniture; the sofa on the frontside provides even more space-saving as most Murphy beds have unused front sides. Starting at over \$10K, the Swing is not for everyone. Resource Furniture has many less expensive models and there are a number of decent Murphy beds that can be purchased for around \$3K. We were recently turned onto Murphy Bed Center, who has models starting at \$1699. If you're a DIY type, build your own for \$275.
 5. Get high...with storage. Almost all of the adAPT NYC submissions included floor-to-ceiling storage. Having high storage utilizes unused vertical space and frees up floor space, making an apartment seem larger. On the high end, Resource Furniture offers modular storage units to fit with their furniture. On the low-end, the IKEA Pax system can be had for less than \$1K and is almost 8' high.
 6. One table is enough. A while back we looked at tables that serve as both coffee and dining tables. While these table are a little on the pricey side, only needing one table frees up quite a bit of floor space and provides two important surfaces.
 7. Sit and stow. Having chairs available for guests is important, but when we're home alone or with our partners, we only need one or two chairs out at a time. The rest of the time, extra chairs just take up space, which is not a luxury the micro-apartment dweller can afford. If you don't know what chair to get, here are 10 folding chairs to fit almost any budget.
 8. Get a comfy couch. A micro-apartment requires that every object be highly useable. While that stiff, low profile couch might take up little space and look super cool, if it's not comfy, you're not going to want to sit in it. Get a comfortable couch you'll want to sit in day-in-day-out. If it's big enough to sleep guests, all the better.

Anything we missed? Let us know in our comments section.



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- The Yankees/Red Sox Rivalry of Micro Apartments
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Susan R • a month ago

Many of the products mentioned are quite expensive for those who live on less, but I have found a multiple purpose table that I will be buying. It is called the 3 Style Table, produced by David Koch. It is a table which can be switched to a cocktail table, then to a dining table, and then to a simple desk. He has developed some specialized joining techniques that make it a quick'change artist. No tools required.

I will be ordering one with a slightly more expensive veneered top. The basic cost is around \$500! So, search for this product! I have plans to use it currently in my somewhat finished basement which is a also an area I use for work and entertaining, so the 3 Style Table will work very well.

Susan R

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Basetta • a month ago

Hey the link adAPT NYC competition is not working. :)

0 ^ ▮ ▾ • Reply • Share ›

David Friedlander → Basetta • a month ago
fixed. thanks.

0 ^ ▮ ▾ • Reply • Share ›

Paul • a month ago

I'm in London, UK and looking to get a queen size murphy bed installed. Anyone got any recommendations for companies that install them? (the links on here are American)

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David Friedlander → Paul • a month ago
you might also check out clei www.clei.co.uk
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RealEnglish → Paul • a month ago
Hi Paul,

I live in London too and share a one bedroom. So I needed a wall bed for my living room. I ended up purchasing a double wall bed last June from <http://www.wallbedking.co.uk/w...> and I'm really pleased I did. The quality is excellent - very sturdy even for my deep Tempur mattress. I paid for installation and the husband and wife team that came were very efficient and friendly. These wall beds can be screwed into the floor or the wall (I chose the floor). Amazing value for money too. Go for it!

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