

THE Clutter POLICE

Disappearing under piles of paper? Can't find anything in the kitchen? We asked experts Candice Koller of Candice Woodward Interiors and Isabelle de Grandpre of Neat Freak for advice on taming the messiest rooms in the house

PROBLEM AREAS: kitchens, bedrooms and TV rooms, says interior designer Candice Koller of Candice Woodward Interiors

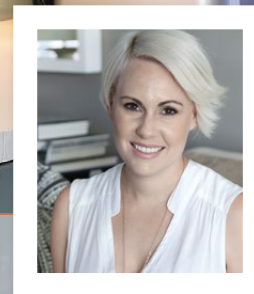
KITCHENS

The biggest mistakes:

Displaying appliances like the microwave or toaster as well as cluttering the counters. Another one is overstuffed drawers.

Solution:

- Hide your small appliances behind a roller shutter door.
- Pack everything in cupboards so that you can keep counters clear. If there isn't enough space get rid of unused items.
- You don't need to make big changes; something as small as a spice rack, a big jug for all your wooden spoons or a small kitchen island on wheels can alleviate clutter and look good.
- Use glass cabinets or open shelves to store crockery you use every day and really special pieces.



COMPILED BY LISA VAN DER KNAAP AND CANDICE BOTHA PHOTOGRAPHS
ELMARIE KNAPTON, SALLY CHANCE, TIMES MEDIA AND SUPPLIED



BEDROOMS

The biggest mistakes:

Opting for small bedside tables when the room can accommodate larger ones and trying to fit everything into a small linen cupboard.

Solution:

- Use a large chest of drawers as a bedside table. This lets you store extra clothing to free up space in your built-in cupboard.
- Keep stackable plastic boxes at the bottom of your cupboard for the linen that you seldom use, but choose prettier containers for items that you need access to often – especially if they're on display.
- In small rooms, mount shelves in the corners which are often dead spaces.



TV ROOMS

The biggest mistakes:

Displaying too many photos and accessories and not having a designated place for books and magazines.

Solution:

- Collect the best of your framed photographs and hang them on a wall in a group. This makes a fantastic focal point and a wonderful conversation starter.
- Use baskets and have a trunk or toy box as a coffee table so that it can be used as an additional storage space. Have a shelf unit custom made for storing and displaying items.
- For my home, I designed a low unit with a sliding door (pictured above) behind which are files, wrapping paper and anything else that needs to be hidden away. There's space for books and kids' toys are kept in easily accessible baskets. ▷