

DESIGNER INSIGHT

Expert advice on how to make the most of even the smallest of laundry and utility spaces

HOW DO YOU BLEND A UTILITY ROOM WITH THE KITCHEN?

Joanna Wood I like utility spaces to be crisp and clean so I nearly always start with white units and tiles, as they usually sit within a reasonable budget and are easy to source. I then like to paint the walls in a strong colour, particularly blue or green. You could try the trick of painting a coloured stripe on to a white wall for a less workaday feel.

Matt Podesta I use economical construction methods in utility rooms, such as lay-on doors instead of in-frame ones. By matching the proportions and the panelling to the kitchen cabinets and using the same or a toning paint, a utility room can blend with the kitchen even if it costs a lot less.

Charlotte Hill-Baldwin If the utility area is separate from the kitchen, you can be braver and bolder with colour at no extra cost. If the rooms adjoin, streamline the look by continuing the kitchen theme, including worktops.

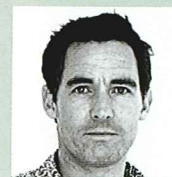


HOW CAN I MAKE A UTILITY ROOM WORK BEST FOR ME?

Charlotte Hill-Baldwin Place the washer near the dryer for easy transfer of clothes (as in this utility room with New England Shutter Company shutters, above). Also handy is a ceiling-mounted clothes airer, which can be hoisted up after use, a large sink with a flat base and a high-necked tap to enable filling buckets. For worktops, wood or tiles are economical.



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WHAT IF THE ROOM IS ON SHOW?

Matt Podesta Your design will be dictated by who sees the space: if it's tucked out of sight, it can be a practical, functional room, but if it is a thoroughfare that guests will be using on the way to and from the garden, you'll need to put more time and, probably, money, into aesthetics. I like to keep as much as possible hidden away in cupboards, as stockpiles of light bulbs and dog food aren't terribly attractive. Also consider the location. If the room leads to the garden you may want it to double as a boot and cloakroom, for example.

"If you have a hanging rack, consider installing a radiator below – a little gentle warmth will help dry clothes quickly."

MATT PODESTA, PODESTA

WHAT CAN I DO IF SPACE IS TIGHT?

Joanna Wood Stack the dryer on to the washing machine (kits are available for this) and make separate shelves for a laundry basket and accessories. If possible, fit your iron and ironing board to the back of door – again, there are special fittings. To utilise dead space above a sink, hang an airing rack from the ceiling. ■



UTILITY ROOMS

A designated space for boots or laundry will keep your home clutter free



2

LIGHT WORK Plenty of natural and electric light is a bonus in this Shaker-style utility room by Plain English, 01449 774028, plainenglishdesign.co.uk.

SEATING PLAN This bench seat with storage below, together with coat pegs and shelf above, offers an efficient way to store outdoor clothes in this utility room designed by Podesta, 01494 677770, podesta.uk.com.



NEAT FIT The utility space at the far end of this streamlined contemporary galley kitchen by Neil Lerner, 020 7433 0705, neillerner.com, includes task lighting that has been fitted for ironing and laundry.

3



DUAL PURPOSE This room not only has storage for footwear, but also a cosy bed for the dog with drawers for doggie paraphernalia. Sisal matting on the base of each pigeonhole helps to protect against mud.