



**THE SMALL BEDROOM
BY HEIDI SOLOMON**

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES RANSOOME; STYLING: BETH WICKHIRE

After the birth of his twin siblings less than two years ago, teenager Tom Mullaney's bedroom was relocated to the renovated basement of his family's Needham, Massachusetts, home. His small room measures about 9' x 10' and has a 7' ceiling. With clothing spilling from the closet, tangled power cords spread across the floor and dirty laundry stuffed into a corner, Tom's bedroom definitely needed organizing.

THE MISSION:

Karen Fondo, Tom's mother, has her hands full with two teenagers and toddler twins. Since Tom, a high school senior, will be going off to college soon, Karen wanted to get him used to caring for his own surroundings. She decided to reorganize her son's bedroom so it would be easier for him to maintain. Tom was game to the plan, so long as he didn't have to invest much time in the project and his needs were taken into account.

Karen began by analyzing Tom's activities to determine the room's primary functions and the changes needed. The most important activities to Tom were playing video games and watching movies in his room. From Karen's perspective, it was important to contain the multitude of electrical cords, protect the costly game-related paraphernalia and keep all small gaming accessories safe from curious little hands. She also wanted to provide a quiet spot where her eldest child could unwind and escape from the activity of the house.

FIRST STEPS:

Since space was limited, Karen moved Tom's computer desk into an adjacent recreational

room. The remaining furniture was rearranged: The bed moved against one wall, the dresser along another, and the TV and stand went against a third. The new layout created a better spatial balance between the amount of furniture and the amount of free space. In any small room, placing one piece of furniture against each wall makes the room feel less overwhelming. Karen also removed Tom's large television (which doubled as a monitor for his computer and screen for his assorted media devices) and purchased a smaller one that her son will be able to take with him to college.

***A key to organizing
is creating consistent
locations for important or
regularly used items.***

SECOND STEPS:

With the furniture rearranged, Karen realized that Tom didn't have anywhere to store the electronic cords and other gaming equipment. At IKEA she found a night stand and a TV stand with shelf space. Both items coordinated with the room's existing IKEA dresser.

These new furniture pieces gave Tom additional drawer and shelf space for gaming consoles, hand controllers, games and other media accessories. To conceal the games and related items, Karen purchased lidded boxes from Target that fit snugly on the lower shelf of the new TV stand. The boxes were an ideal choice because they could be labeled easily, were inexpensive, and came in a multitude of colors, including red, Tom's



favorite. The boxes also help keep the games and DVDs near the consoles, which reduces the chance they'll be scattered around the room or shoved into a drawer or the closet when the cleaning ladies arrive.

THIRD STEPS:

The bedroom's closet was a source of deep frustration for Karen and Tom. When the closet was constructed, the builder miscalculated the depth measurements. This made the closet too shallow for standard-sized hangers. As a result, the closet door couldn't close when items were hanging.