



PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES RANDSON; STYLING: BETH WICKWIRE

### THE SMALL BEDROOM BY HEIDI SOLOMON

**A**fter 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 Fondono, 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.



***In any small room, placing one piece of furniture against each wall makes the room feel less overwhelming.***

To improve the closet's functionality, the door was removed and replaced with a curtain from Target. A curtain rod was installed so the curtain fabric would hang two inches beyond the front of the closet, thus recapturing the space lost by the misconstruction. Using the closet now requires little effort. This simple change has made a world of difference for Tom.

Karen repurposed the original TV stand by placing it at the bottom of the closet for use as low-lying shelves. This maximizes the unused space and prevents Tom from shoving stuff into the closet and letting it land on the floor. Now Tom has a place where his shoes, weights, magazines and books can be neatly stored. By thinking outside the box, Karen saved money and created shelving for her son's closet that can be easily removed if need be.

**THE FINISHED PRODUCT:**

To personalize Tom's room, Karen framed photographs from his recent school trip to China using frames she found in her garage. She hung these pictures alongside a Chinese scroll tapestry that Tom purchased during his travels. This was an important touch. People are more inclined to maintain an environment they connect with and care about.

A key to organizing is creating consistent locations for important or regularly used items. Tom can now quickly find what he wants, and his mother is happy having the clutter controlled. Since Tom has the right furniture and tools to stay organized, keeping his room neat takes little time away from the things he enjoys most. | ◻

*Heidi Solomon is a professional organizer, novice Feng Shui expert and lover of the great outdoors. Her website is [posh-boston.com](http://posh-boston.com).*

See page 89 for "before" pictures of Tom's room.

**BEFORE**

(Real Life, Real Solutions, p.24)



**BEFORE**

(Small Spaces, Big Changes, p.86)



**AFTER**

(Real Life, Real Solutions, p.24)



**AFTER**

(Small Spaces, Big Changes, p.86)



AFTER PHOTOS (LEFT TO RIGHT): JAMIES RANDISON, BARBARA SOPHIE NÄGLE

**BUYER'S GUIDE**  
**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007**

*Some items pictured, but not listed, are from private collections.*

**Real Life Real Solutions:**  
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Low Wood Cutout Headboard, acorn finish, \$249  
 2 foot Chunky Wall Shelf, acorn finish, \$29  
 Bamboo Cotton Pillow Cover, cinnabar, \$24  
 Mouthblown Hurricane, small, \$16  
 Bi-color Linen Window Panel, beet/truffle, 48 x 84 inches, \$59  
 Dark Accacia Entertaining Long Wood Bowl, \$19  
 West Elm, 1-888-922-4119, westelm.com  
 "Mysa Sasong" Four Seasons Quilt, \$59.99  
 "Hedda Rutta" Quilt Cover and Pillowcase, \$29.99  
 "Lots" Mirrors, \$7.99/4-pack  
 "Fado" Table Lamp, \$12.99  
 "Malm" Dresser, medium brown, \$129  
 "Benno" TV stand, medium brown, \$69.99  
 "Ritva" Throw, orange, 51 x 67, \$9.99  
 "Andrea" Cushion, orange/beige, 12 x 20, \$14.99  
 "Ringum" Round Rug, red and orange pictured, \$9.99 each  
 IKEA, ikea.com for locations  
 Invader vinyl wall decals, \$45, Blik Surface Graphics, 866-262-2545, whatisblik.com  
 Accent wall: Benjamin Moore Aura, Caliente, AF-290 in flat, \$54.99

**Suitcase Savy:**  
**/PAGE 42**

Samsonite Silhouette 10 hardside 22" spinner, \$219.99, innovationluggage.com  
 Jute boucle 2'x3' rug in walnut, \$19.99, West Elm, westelm.com  
 "Interlocking Circles" quilt set in coffee, \$300, Martha Stewart Collection, macys.com  
 Red leather luggage tag, \$16, Flight 001, flight001.com  
 "Emma" blue cotton rug, 3'5"x5'5", \$325, madelineweinrib.com  
 Passport cover in espresso, \$29.50, J Crew, jcrew.com  
 Toile luggage tags in brown and blue, \$8 each, Flight 001, flight001.com  
 Leather luggage tag in orange, \$19, Cursive at ABC Carpet and Home, 1-212-473-3000  
 Turquoise luggage tag, \$15, Designer's Guild designersguildus.com

**Festive Feasting:**  
**/PAGE 48**

"Claudette" goblet and wine glass, \$12.95 each, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com  
 Similar wine glasses, "Alfresco goblet", \$9.99,

Gracious Home, gracioushome.com  
 Similar napkins, Sferra Festival linen napkin in Sage, \$10, Gracious Home, gracioushome.com  
 Linen hemstitch ivory tablecloth, \$89.95, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com  
 Green gratin dish, \$40, Emile Henry, Surlatable.com  
 7" green wavy baker, \$19.95, Sur La Table exclusive, surlatable.com  
 "Village Baker" Green Square 10" Baking Dish, \$17.95, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com  
 White "Classic Century Footed Serving Bowl," \$45.95, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com

**Holiday How To:**  
**/PAGE 68**


Green teapot (only available in persimmon, white, aqua), \$39, Middle Kingdom, herbs-teas.com  
 Red/white polka dot, red/gold circles, red/white lace patterned gift wrap, \$4.75 and up per sheet, Paper Presentation, (212) 463-7035  
 All other gift wrap, \$2.75/sheet, Snow and Graham, papermojo.com  
 Red and white striped string, \$35, Bell'occhio, bellochio.com  
 Green seed bowls, vintage, Catherine Holm, ebay.com  
 White Parsons desk, \$299, West Elm, westelm.com  
 Red gift box, \$1.90 each, Paper Presentation, 212-463-7035

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