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# BEAUTY *& brawn*

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How to create a functional and fetching small laundry room

**L**ike other utilitarian areas in the home, the laundry room has evolved in recent years. No longer just a place to wash, dry and fold, the laundry room has taken on new life, becoming a place to indulge in “laundry therapy,” as some people call it. Indeed, something is soothing about freshly laundered linens, soft sheets and crisp collars. Whether you love it or hate it, laundry can’t be avoided, but it can be less of a chore. Here are some of our favourite tips to bring beauty and brawn, for a room you’ll actually look forward to spending time in.

First things first – location. Where you plan your laundry room in the home will affect its style, your lifestyle and your budget, so consult a design professional so you’re aware of the implications of your choices. An upper-level laundry room is a popular option for those who have some room to spare upstairs. It’s brighter than the basement and eliminates the need to lug loads up and down flights of stairs. If you’re adding a brand new laundry room, tying it into the existing plumbing from a nearby bathroom will be cheaper and easier overall. On the other hand, if you’re working with an existing laundry room or you don’t have space to spare on an upper floor, basements offer their own distinct







(and completely functional) benefits. It acts as an out-of-the-way work area, a great buffer zone for machine noise, and less damage in the event of a flood (yes, it happens).

With your laundry room placed, now you can start to think about how you will use it. This room has an important job to do, so start with the appliances. Your washer and dryer are the crux of this space, and you'll quickly find that the right ones can make your day-to-day run that much smoother. Consider drum size in addition to any special features you'd like to have: Top or front-loading, sanitizing, noise level and energy rating, programmable settings... the list goes on.

Storage is another essential element in a high-functioning laundry room. Incorporate a mix of open and closed shelves, which offer a blend of out-of-sight storage (for the messy stuff) as well as easy access and display areas that can enhance function and add visual interest.

My third laundry room must-have is good lighting. Generally speaking, the brighter, the better. Amplify natural light in the room with semi-transparent blinds or sheers on windows and light colours on walls, cabinets and countertops. Also



*tip*

If you're working with limited space, a stacking set is a popular option in condos and smaller homes. Meanwhile, a side-by-side washer and dryer offer a nice, large surface for folding clothes.

be sure to layer in bright ambient lighting and task lighting in key areas, such as above counters, machines, laundry sink and ironing area, as well as accent lighting for all the lovely details.

While function needs to be top of mind in the laundry room, don't discount the importance of the aesthetic details that will bring the space to life. After all, you won't want to spend time in a room that sucks the energy out of you. Add some fun to your laundry room through colour,

pattern and texture. Tile and wallpaper are an excellent way to infuse pops of personality without compromising function or spending a lot. Choose something that makes a statement, be it subtle or bold.

Despite the laundry room's principal role as a workspace, there's still room to play. When planning your laundry room, be mindful of what makes you feel good, and what will make chores more comfortable. Often, it's all about finding that balance between beauty and brawn.

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*Designers Eugenia Triandos and Korina Khamis are Co-Founders at Hibou Design & Co. with more than a decade of experience this Montreal-based multi-disciplinary design firm has become known for creating both stylish and well curated interiors. The firm provides complete bespoke residential design services throughout Canada & North America. [hiboudesignco.com](http://hiboudesignco.com)*