

Show off your love of books

Even in the digital age, a well-designed library space has its merits



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There was a time, a few years back in around 2010 when e-book sales soared and my old friend the paperback began fearing his imminent demise.

I saw the impact on my client's design choices opting for fewer bookcases, proclaiming they simply won't need a proper library in a few years.

I chose to quietly push down the panic that crept in telling myself the trend

would equalize and find it's level point as they always do when the dust settles. As the studies began rolling out, we discovered that comprehension was lower in the e-book format.

We tend to speed-read the digital copy, causing our eyes to dart around the page, not to mention the distractions by message pings and addition of animated graphics.

All this adds up to a less

satisfying read and good news for paperbacks as the sales began to make a comeback.

I'm still going to choose my Kindle as a carry-on instead of lugging six hard covered books on holiday. But my bedside will always house a collection of good, old-fashioned paper and pulp books.

Whether you fancy the more traditional approach with a dedicated home library or just need an innovative way to carve a few square feet for your old friends, here are three ways I've brought the love of books back into my client's homes.

Traditional library

There is little more quintessential library than a rich dark

room, walls lined with wood shelves, chock full in organized chaos. As our lifestyles evolve and old formalities like separate living and family rooms become less of a need, many clients now opt to create a sort of double-duty library sitting room.

Consider wrapping the bookcase up and over a sofa maximizing storage and creating instant cozy. Leave sections open for a display of your prized titles, or a shelf set up with an informal bar for an evening 'dram' as you read by the fire.

Opt for a palette with more traditional hues like navy, deep greens and rich dark leathers for an instant traditional infusion.

Integrated contemporary

With open concept plans

becoming more and more commonplace, we need to find ways of incorporating all of our previously dedicated rooms together with a semblance of integration.

Opt for one focal point like a fireplace, enhanced by working double duty display and book storage around it. To keep the space more airy, run the visually weighty books low along a bench which allows more negative space at eye level with a combination of books and display of collectables.

Teeny tiny footprint

Affordability, ease of maintenance and the bonus of shared amenities are all massively appealing reasons to live small. This sort

of forced trend has been met with the need for solutions to allow our lives to fit without compromise.

I encourage clients to bring along their big ideas so we can find tiny solutions that keep their individuality well-fed.

Approach small spaces like a city planner looks at urban real estate. Build up! Opt for narrow shelves that run floor to ceiling, or my favorite, the invisible book tower that allows the books themselves to take center stage.

— *Celebrity designer*
Melissa Davis is well-known for her appearances and creative work on several HGTV shows. For more information, visit www.melissadavis.com



Approach small spaces like a city planner looks at urban real estate, that is, build up. Here, an invisible tower allows books to take centre stage.



There is little more quintessentially 'library' than a rich, dark room lined with wood shelves and chock full of organized chaos.



To keep the space airy, run a row of heavier books along a lower bench and display a combination of books and collectibles on the other shelves.