



let's talk... bathrooms

SMALL SPACE **BIG IMPACT!** design tips for the smallest room in the house

You may have heard the expression “the smallest room in the house” used in reference to the bathroom, and it's no wonder. Many people find the idea of outlining a design for their bathroom quite daunting. But just because your bathroom's short on space, doesn't mean it has to be short on style - the key is in the planning, and using small-space tricks that may every square centimetre count...

small space design tricks

❑ Consider using a sliding door for access to the room as this doesn't take up any space whatsoever. Failing that, find out if the door can open outwards of the bathroom.

❑ Lifting toilets and basins off the ground makes the floor area appear larger – and makes cleaning so much easier and faster! Create even more space with compact toilets designed especially for small spaces (they don't jut out as far) and use cisterns which are hidden away in the wall.

❑ These days you are no longer restricted to using a standard rectangular bath, there are many other options available – consider a corner bath, one which is tapered at one end, or perhaps even a bath which may be shorter in length but still deep enough to soak in.

❑ Glass shower cubicles and screens stop the shower and/or bath feeling closed off by allowing light through to all corners of the room.

❑ A single lever mixer tap on the basin (and in the bath/shower for that matter) uses less space than a set of two taps plus the spout and will maintain the sleek, clean look of the room. Alternatively, wall mounted tapware leaves room on the basin for toothbrushes, soap etc.

optical illusions

❑ Smaller tiles or mosaics can make the space feel larger (but be aware of the cleaning time).

❑ Where ceilings are low, consider installing floor-to-ceiling windows to create a feeling of spaciousness and light.



❑ Use roman, roller or venetian blinds or even utilise a frosted glass finish on windows for privacy, and avoid any kind of long, hanging curtain as it will draw the eye downward.

❑ A classic, glossy white tile on the walls will not only create a feeling of space and light, but it is also economical and won't date your bathroom.

❑ Use shiny, reflective surfaces – like the glossy tiles mentioned above – or glass, polished wood and metal-look finishes, which bounce light around the room.

savvy storage – clear that clutter

❑ It can't be said enough – in small rooms all the clutter should be hidden away. Go for the

sleek, modern appearance by building completely unobtrusive, shallow storage cupboards flush against the wall. Use magnetic or 'push and click' fittings for a handle-free finish. Create even more storage by installing a mirrored cabinet on the wall.

❑ Make the most of your floor space by slotting your washbasin into a back shelf, creating a handy ledge to display your bathing goodies.

❑ Remember anything that protrudes into the room has a tendency to shrink the room, so avoid wall shelves or hanging racks.

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**INSIDE
the \$1,000
bathroom
makeover**

THE \$1,000 MAKEOVER

So, your bathroom's looking worn out and out dated, but you can't afford a full scale renovation just at the moment? At Bretts, we have a few ideas for low cost, high impact projects you can tackle yourself for under \$1,000...

painting

Talk about bang for your buck! Just cleaning and painting can totally rejuvenate any room. And the bathroom sees more wear and tear than most rooms in the house, so it's worth doing. Buying the appropriate tools and paint products for a typical bathroom can cost as little as \$70.

COST \$ V'S IMPACT ***

replace or refinish the vanity

The 'vanity area' is often the focal point of many bathrooms and by replacing even just this one fitting, can provide an instant lift to your bathroom. Vanities come in a huge range of styles and sizes, with all design styles catered to. A brand new white vanity unit, complete with polymarble basin can be bought for as little as \$400.

COST \$\$ V'S IMPACT ***

If your budget doesn't extend to a new vanity, simply re-finish the one you have. Paint or varnish for a small project like this isn't likely to cost much and you can use the saved pennies on stylish door handles to bring your vanity up to date.

COST \$ V'S IMPACT **

replace tapware and shower

Discoloured and old style tapware and showers really date a bathroom. A modern single lever mixer tap can be bought for \$100 to spruce up your existing vanity. And a new hand shower fitted to it's own rail is not only practical, is a perfect way to modernize your shower area.

COST \$\$ V'S IMPACT **

install a glass shower screen

Consider replacing your moldy old shower curtain with a glass shower screen for a more open and modern look. A glass shower screen is super stylish and much more effective at keeping water inside the shower area. And even if your shower is above the bath, a short glass screen can be installed.

COST \$\$\$ V'S IMPACT ***

add a mirrored cabinet

Install a new mirrored cabinet to add instant 'sparkle' and provide that extra storage space you're always looking for. These can be purchased for as little as \$195 and are easy to install yourself.

COST \$\$ V'S IMPACT **

Finally, understand that there are things you can't do on this budget. The most important tip is to work with the existing layout where you can. Be aware that moving fittings around will require moving pipe work – and that means you'll need to hire a plumber. The larger fittings also tend to be the higher ticket items, so make these a considered purchase when on a super-cheap budget.

our project: what we did for \$1,000...

- Cleaned and prepared the entire bathroom • Repainted the walls and ceilings •
- Replaced the vanity unit • Replaced the shower • Replaced the bathroom accessories (towel rail, towel ring and toilet roll holder) •
- Re-grouted the tiles • Fitted a combination light and exhaust fan.

Bretts Hardware Windsor ABN 22 009 658 315				
Reg# 1	Drw# 1	Usr RG1	Cust#990035	
Tax Invoice	118535	Slp: KA	Time 14:13	
Date 26/02/09		Ext	Inc.GST	
Item #	Qty	Price	Ex.GST	Inc.GST
31259*	1	5.83		6.41
SUGAR SOAP LIQUID 750ML SELLEY				
G				
52184*	1	3.36	3.70	
TILE SPONGE FOAM LARGE 8X4 WHITE DTA LFS				
84				
33793*	1	.95	1.05	
NORT SHEET BULK D/LUB230X280 P220 CC2683				
13 *50*				
35132*	1	12.00	13.20	
REMOVER MOULD&MILDEW 750ML RTU CHEMTECH				
BC36 *12*				
31009*	1	45.41	49.95	
WATTYL ID SEALER U/COAT LOW VOC 4L 6896				
34313*	1	42.60	46.86	
TAUBMANS NEW E/COAT L/S WTE 19522004 *10				
* 4L				
31020*	1	22.29	24.52	
WATTYL PREMIUM CEILING WHITE 2L				
36018*	1	9.53	10.48	
PAINT BRUSH ROKSET 5PCE SET SOFT TOUCH 5				
155 *12*				
39056*	1	5.41	5.95	
ROLLER KIT & TRAY HOME LINE 230MM *12*				
25001				
30128*	1	1.98	2.18	
MASKING TAPE 24MMX50M (MTR-24) B/WITH				
36				
37391*	2	6.82	15.00	
TILE GROUT FLEX SMTH P/WTE 1.5KG *4* DUN				
LOP 200				
80207*	1	277.27	305.00	
VANITY UNIT BERMUDA 750 RHD*CABINET ONLY				
*				
80193*	1	115.45	127.00	
VANITY UNIT ACRYLIC 750 SQU BOWL 1TH*TOP				
ONLY*				
87262*	1	106.35	116.99	
SHOWER HAND & RAIL GENOA 3 FUNCTION				
182602 *5*				
80409*	1	49.58	54.54	
SCOPE BAS0920-750PS TOWEL RAIL 750MM				
80424*	1	40.49	44.54	
SCOPE BAS0940PS TOWEL RING				
80423*	1	43.07	47.38	
SCOPE BAS0964LPS TOILET ROLL HOLDER				
140372*	1	108.18	119.00	
HEATER LIGHT & FAN COMBO 2 LAMP DUCTED R				
622D1				
Sub-total			993.75	
Total sale			993.75	
Cash			993.75	
Amount of GST included in sale			90.36	
* = GST applicable				
Retain this docket for returns				



SMALL SPACE BIG IMPACT!

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mirror, mirror on the wall

- This is the “light-bouncing” rule in its brightest form – simply hang a large light deflecting mirror.
- A mirror running the entire length of the wall will draw the eye and help to visually enlarge a room.
- While two mirrors installed opposite each other can create the feeling of an ‘infinite’ room.

in the spot light

- Install recessed down lights around the ceiling perimeter to accentuate the outer wall, creating the illusion of space. Waterproof down lights are even available for the shower area. Light fittings installed on either side of a mirror can add to the illusion.
- No windows in the room? Consider replacing part of an outside wall with a glass panel or glass bricks to let light flood through.
- If natural light is a problem but new windows are not an option, consider fitting a skylight – small skylights can be installed relatively cheaply and in just a couple of hours.

colour confidence

- When using “white” paint on bathroom walls, be sure to select an off white colour rather than stark white, if you’re not after a clinical look.
 - Choose a pale and simple colour scheme for your floor and wall finishes and add colour in the towels and accessories.
 - Use pale flooring to make a small floor area appear larger, but keep in mind the cleaning when making your final selection.
 - Visually increase a room’s height by dividing the wall at around chest level and painting a darker shade in the lower area and a lighter shade above.

project planning: whatever the budget

- 1 Start by compiling an idea folder. Put together clippings from magazines, catalogues and anything else you take inspiration from.
- 2 Compose NEED and DESIRE lists. Involve all the stakeholders. If it’s a room used by the whole family, make sure they all have their say. Priorise each item on the list.
- 3 Decide if you will be keeping the existing floor plan or if the area will be reorganised or expanded. Consider expanding the space by adding a “bump-out” or steal space from an adjoining room.
- 4 Seek professional help if it’s going to be a major renovation. Possibilities include architects, general contractors, design/build firms and some bathroom showrooms (like Bretts).
- 5 Create a layout of your design on graph paper. You will probably need to work through several versions, even at this early stage.
- 6 Meet with your design professionals and contractors to discuss your design, probable costs, and potential construction time frames.
- 7 Decide if you’d like to do any of the work yourselves. And how you’ll hire out the remaining work. Will you use one professional who manage the whole project, or will you project manage yourself?
- 8 Set a realistic budget. Every decision you’ve made previously will impact the overall costs. You may need to rework you budget several times to make it all work.
- 9 Once you’ve determined how you’re going to finance your bathroom project, commission your building professionals – and the let the fun begin!



bathroom: starter pack
see in store for details on
bathroom budget busters

the luxury bathroom: tips for designing your perfect retreat

A spacious and stylish bathroom can go a long way towards healing the woes of the day. In designing your perfect bathroom retreat, you're looking to create a full body experience not just the utilitarian "clean" of days past. The success of any bathroom project is based on a fully functional design. Here are our top tips for creating your own personal sanctuary – melding form and function...

the vanity area

There are so many vanity options available it's hard to know where to start. A myriad of different designs; from fluid, organic forms to the more architectural shapes with a harder edge. What is your personal style? Do you prefer a built vanity "unit" or a wall mounted basin with separate storage areas? In a luxury bathroom you may want to consider two separate basins if there are two people using the bathroom. Or perhaps just the one larger basin combined with a longer bench area?

Consider the overall aesthetic of the room you're creating before deciding and discuss the options in detail with your designer and bathroom showroom professional – they'll be able to explain the benefits of each of the different styles.

bathtub – the ultimate place to unwind

There are almost as many bathtub options as vanities these days; with one to suit every size, style and budget. The freestanding bath is a continuing trend, with many people choosing to make a real design statement with what used to be a purely practical product. Remember, while you may choose your bath as feature point first, do make sure you it is the right size and shape for your personal comfort if you like to soak.

shower power

For a truly enjoyable shower experience you'll probably want to start with a larger shower space, or "wet area" than the shower cubicle of the past.

Next consider your shower preference. Do you like a gentle overhead "rain" shower or would a full body shower "massage" be more to your liking? If so, consider installing multiple small showerheads positioned on one or more of the walls within the shower area. Each showerhead will deliver a focused jet of water to target a specific part of the body.

Also think about installing a thermostat mixer which will allow you to pre-set the water temperature,

which will be maintained for the duration of your shower – regardless of water fluctuations in the rest of the house.

storage – out of sight

Probably one of the most important factors in the overall aesthetic of a luxury bathroom is to keep the look clutter free. To do that you're going to need savvy storage solutions. However, for most people the bathroom is actually where you prepare yourself for the day – and that means an array of cosmetics and electrical (shavers, hair dryers) essentials.

Use the help of a designer or storage expert to come up with the perfect plan to store all your necessities. You will probably end up with a combination of hidden shelving and draws based on personal "zoning" of the needs of those who use this particular bathroom.

let there be light

You'll need a combination of general, soft and task lighting. Consider a dimmer on your overhead lighting for when you're relaxing in the bath and brighter incandescent lighting mounted either side

of the mirrored area. And for the truly adventurous there are now even LED lighting options for wet areas and tiles.

If you don't have any (or insufficient) natural light you could even think about installing a sky light or additional window.

colour magic

There are as many different thoughts on colour for your bathroom as there are options available. Whites leaving you feeling fresh and clean. Brights can be energising. And blues and greens can be relaxing. But most professional spas choose warm neutrals as the décor base because these colours are very restful. Be guided by your personal taste and the advice of your design professional.

the finish(ing) touches

The most calming of all visions are those of nature. That's why bringing some of these elements to your bathroom will help create a sense of serenity. In terms of flooring and furniture, think of the warmth of natural timbers and the texture of stone like granite and limestone.

Both timber and stone products are available in an enormous range of colours and textures; and combined, these finishing touches will provide you with your perfect pallet – and a bathroom retreat as individual as you are.

top tip

Talk to the friendly staff at Bretts Architectural to find out how you can get a luxury finish on a tight budget.



sheer luxury: at a very comfortable price