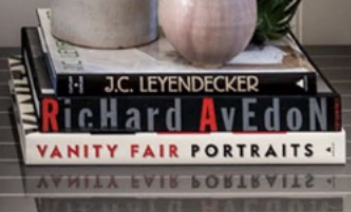


BIG IDEAS

IN A SMALL SPACE

Designer Michael Garvey, known for his sophisticated interiors, happens to be a scrappy **DIY GENIUS** at home. His cozy Brooklyn digs are a showcase of clever solutions that bring a ridiculous amount of elegance for the buck. *Real Simple* popped in for a peek—and for the secrets to Garvey’s 10 most inventive upgrades.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY [Dean Kaufman](#)
PROP STYLING BY [Erin Swift](#)



*Pillow patterns
created with a
Sharpie!*

**PULL
HERE**



*Pillow patterns
created with a
Sharpie!*



**PULL
HERE**

1 | DRAW ON THE FURNITURE

With a Sharpie and a nonslip metal ruler, Garvey added custom graphics to throw pillows (take out the inserts first) and the arms of his \$400 sofa. The silver trim on the lampshade is actually metallic tape, which Garvey also used on the bottom edge of the tabletop in his dining room (page 7).



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**PULL
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2 | ADD ARCHITECTURE See the molding on the walls? It was glued on, nailed in place, and painted to look as if it's been there for a hundred years. "Just go to Lowe's and ask for trimboard. It comes already primed and ready for application," says Garvey, who is also a master of Ikea hacks. He added those old-timey V-grooved doors to the Ikea Expedit (formerly open-shelved) cabinet.

3 | MAKE A PRO-STYLE GALLERY Buy frames with precut mats *first*, then print out favorite images to fill them at whatever size you need. "Look at the wall. It has only two kinds of frames: black frames with white paper mats and silver frames with linen mats," says Garvey. "No matter what you put inside, it feels cohesive." Target and West Elm are Garvey's sources for inexpensive narrow frames like these. He warmed up his arrangement with a dash of Americana: two lanterns that hang on hooks and plug in below. (See page 8 for detailed shopping info.)



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4 | GLAM UP OPEN STORAGE

Take the door off a free-standing cabinet, paint the inside a rich neutral, and add a pretty picture. Garvey used T-pins to hang a computer-art relic from his childhood home. It's a backdrop for a small (as in, not jam-packed) collection of clear objects. "I usually categorize by material," he says, "storing everything white together or everything clear glass. Then if you have a random object that means something to you, it has a home but can be part of something more."



This tactile table is covered in duct tape!

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HERE**

A dining table with a white vase of branches, a mirror, and stools. The table is covered in a patterned surface, and the vase is filled with green branches. A large white sphere hangs above the table. The background shows a kitchen area with a mirror and a door.

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5 | MAX OUT AN ALCOVE Double your decor by butting a tiny table up against a giant mirror. Go big with flowers or branches for a focal point when the space is not in use. Garvey collaged these stools with gaffer's tape (which has a clothlike texture). "Don't try to make the stools look alike," he advises. "The more mismatched and random your tape patterns are, the better." His tabletop here? Covered in layers of *duct tape*. "It creates a really rich finish, and it's just an everyday material. To me it looks like burnished leather." Use long strips of tape to divide the surface into quadrants, then fill in each section with short pieces pointed every which way. "If you mess up, just add more." When you're done, "iron" the edges of the tape with the back of a spoon.



Rays of Mylar tape make an artful 2-D headboard.

**PULL
HERE**



Rays of Mylar tape make an artful 2-D headboard.

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HERE**

6 | CREATE A GILDED CHAMBER

Is your bedroom the size of a closet? Garvey's is, so he flanked the bed with tall Ikea cabinets, which provide storage. Then he drilled holes in the side of each for the wires of his homemade sconces. Mottled metallic wallpaper bounces the light around. It's *Wuthering Heights* meets Studio 54!



*Garvey
made these
sconces
from shelf
brackets.*

**PULL
HERE**



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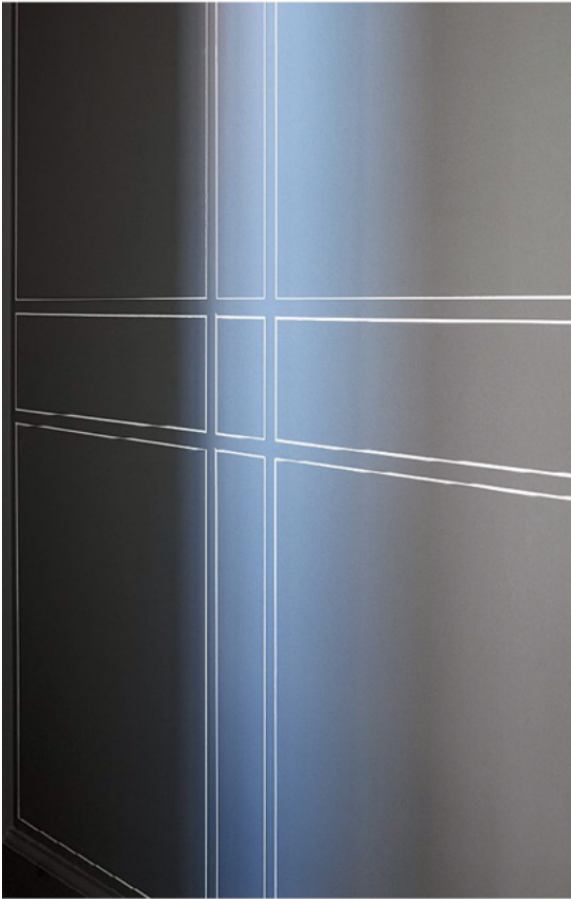
7 | DOUBLE THE CURTAINS In the 120-square-foot dining room, two layers of Ikea linen panels (natural-toned on the glass side, chocolate showing) equal one well-draped drape—luxé and weighty. Garvey used a thick wooden dowel (from Home Depot) in place of a rod, first staining it ebony. Get the full effect with brass rings, brass brackets, and brass endcaps.

8 | FAKE BUILT-INS As in the bedroom, Garvey made the tall cabinets in the dining room (left and right) look as if they had been permanently installed by tucking them into a tight-fitting space and painting them the same color as the walls. He mounted a desk to the wall in between and added trimboard to the cabinet doors so that they echo the walls architecturally.

9 | “UPHOLSTER” A BENCH WITH PILLOWS AND SHOELACES

Backless benches keep a small space from feeling crowded. To soften seating, Garvey bought 14-by-20-inch velvet throw pillows and safety-pinned them together. He anchored the cushions with red shoelaces, wrapped over seams and knotted under the bench. Genius.





PULL FOR
TIP



MICHAEL'S BAG OF TRICKS **HIS FABRIC PEN:** Sharpie fine-point permanent marker in black, \$1.50, at office-supply stores. **✦ HIS METALLIC TRIM:** ¼-inch silver metallic tape (on lampshades), \$3 for two rolls; and ⅛-inch silver metallic ta (on headboard), \$2.80 for two rolls: hobbytape.net. **✦ HIS TRIMBOARD:** Interior primed MDF S45 molding in pattern 1: \$9 for eight feet, lowes.com. **✦ HIS GAFFER'S TAPE:** Gaffer's tape in gray, \$69 for three rolls, homedepot.com. **✦ HIS BEDROOM BULBS:** Sylvania 18669-40T10/IF 130V lightbulbs, \$5 each, elightbulbs.com. **✦ HIS BEDROOM WALLPAPER:** Gold & Grey Iridescent Haze IR22503 wallpaper (similar to shown), \$98 a roll, designyourwall.com. **✦ HIS PAINT PEN:** DecoColor acrylic paint pen in white, \$3.60, uchida.com. **✦ HIS CURTAIN** Ritva panels in medium brown, \$35 a pair; and Aina panels in natural, \$50 a pair: ikea.com.

For more on Michael Garvey, visit his website, michaelgarveyinteriors.com.



**PULL FOR
TIP**

10 | TROMPE L'OEIL PLAIN SURFACES

The hallway has depth, thanks to Garvey's handsome hand-drawn grid, inspired by Swedish subway tile. Garvey mapped out his plan with painter's tape, then used a ruler to keep things in line when he applied his paint pen. The white bathroom cabinet gets its stripes from (even more) gaffer's tape.



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For more on Michael Garvey, visit his website, michaelgarveyinteriors.com.

credits

FIND OUT WHERE TO BUY ITEMS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE.

COVER

Rosenthal Moon White Rim 9½-inch soup bowl, \$36, rosenthalusa-shop.com.

THE REALIST

Page 1: Thank you to Susan Whiteside, vice president of communications for the National Confectioners Association; Lauren Deitsch, research and development specialist at Lake Champlain Chocolates; Kirk Weed, process/quality control/SQF practitioner at Lake Champlain Chocolates; Michael Olsen, manager of La Maison du Chocolat, in New York City; Thierry Muret, executive chef chocolatier at Godiva; and Alexandra Leaf, owner of Chocolate Tours of New York City. Page 7: Thank you to Brent Fewell, senior vice president of environment, health, and safety at United Water; and Carolyn Ha, Pharm.D., director of professional affairs and long-term care at the National Community Pharmacists Association.

15 MINUTES: UPHOLSTERY

Page 1: Stefano chair, \$995, jaysonhome.com. Thank you to Jack Haynes, owner of Jack's Upholstery, Olympia, Washington, and Donna Smallin Kuper, author of *The One-Minute Cleaner*.

BIG IDEAS IN A SMALL SPACE

Page 2: Oil painting by Erin Carney, erincarney.net.

FIVE EASY DINNERS

Page 2: L'Objet Byzanteum dessert plate, \$36, l-objet.com. Page 4: L'Objet Perlee soup plate, \$34, l-objet.com.



Items not credited are either unavailable or the stylist's own.

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