

## How Do I Tackle Clutter?

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Q. I have a small bathroom and end up storing my toiletries on the edge of the tub. How do I tackle the clutter?



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*A clean, uncluttered bathroom, with toiletries neatly stowed, helps entice buyers. There are many ways to create storage space if you don't have it.*

A. You're right to be concerned about a bathroom littered with bottles of shampoo, conditioner and shower gel. "A cluttered bathroom can easily kill a deal," said **Peggy Dahan**, an associate real estate broker at the **Siderow Organization** in Manhattan. "If buyers walk into a bathroom and see bottles all over the tub, they're going to think their own stuff won't fit."

Ms. Dahan, who has helped some of her clients tidy up their bathrooms before showings, said that sellers need to put away, throw out or conceal toiletries before showing their homes. Ideally, she said, you should aim for no more than one bottle of shampoo, one bottle of conditioner and one bar of soap left out in the open.

For a quick, temporary fix, you could buy a storage basket to stow beneath a pedestal sink. "You can throw all the stuff you don't need in that basket, and then put a nice fluffy towel over the top," she said. "It looks clean, and all the junk is covered."

If you want a longer-term solution, there are many ways to create storage space in even the smallest of bathrooms, said Ben Herzog, an architect in Brooklyn. If you're open to undertaking some construction work, you could try to get some space between studs to recess a medicine cabinet, he said, suggesting cabinets made by companies like [Robern](#) or [Century Bathworks](#). It's an appealing solution, he said, because it takes advantage of unused space inside the wall cavity. Most people mount mirrored medicine cabinets directly above a sink, but you could install a recessed or even a surface-mounted medicine cabinet above the toilet as well. "The space over the toilet is usually a neglected spot," Mr. Herzog said. "You could add a second medicine cabinet there, but do it with a painted surface rather than mirror."

If you plan to renovate the walls around your bathtub, you could also add a niche between studs in a tiled wall to hold toiletries. If you don't want to retile the walls, you could install surface-mounted shower brackets to hold storage accessories.

“Wire corner baskets are great,” Mr. Herzog said, adding that he likes the [Hotelier](#) and [Splashables](#) basket collections from Ginger. “You just mount them through the grout lines,” he said, using screws.

Mr. Herzog offered this advice on installation: Make sure you mount a medicine cabinet properly — to studs, not drywall. “If you start putting a lot of things in there,” he said, “you don’t want it falling off the wall.”