How to live in small spaces
Home design advice from Terence Conran

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‘Consider the age of your property’

‘If your house is listed or in a conservation area you will be more restricted on the size and design of your extension. Some planning departments prefer a contemporary style rather than a pastiche version of the property, as it will highlight the characteristics of the existing building contrasted next to the crisp lines of the new. An extension with lots of glass, for example, can allow you to see through to the historic fabric of the building. A more modern property is likely to be less affected by stringent planning rules, allowing more freedom to explore spatial arrangements.’

‘People use architects not only for their technical know-how but also for their creative thinking. For the project pictured, we moved the kitchen from the lower ground floor to the ground floor level. By doing this we were able to add a study/bedroom and make a flexible living/dining area that’s better connected to the garden.’

Richard Gill, architect at Paul Archer Design

‘Overlap your interior and exterior spaces’

‘Try to reconfigure and expand existing space by designing a large open-plan area to create a continuous space that is functional and engaging. The 30-degree twist featured in this design allows physical and perceptive overlapping between indoor and outdoor spaces and dramatically improves the amount of natural light in the house. In terms of composition, the kitchen/living area transforms the external landscape, while the garden merges into the house through the frameless glass skylight and open facade. The kitchen stretches into the garden on a trapezoid platform that floats about 40 centimetres above the garden level. To reinforce the continuity and connection, the same floor tiles have been used for both the kitchen/living area and the garden’s platform.

Paul McAneney, managing director at Paul McAneney Architects

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