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## How to Create a Home Bar That Will Dazzle Your Guests

All it takes is a tiny space - a niche, a shallow closet or even a cabinet - to make a cocktail bar that's a thing of beauty. Here's how.

By Tim McKeough

The pleasures of visiting a cocktail bar extend well beyond the libations. It's just as much about the company, the atmosphere, all the accouterments. At home, a thoughtfully designed bar can create a similar feeling and serve as a special place for after-work drinks and celebrations with family and friends.

"A home bar is just really festive, collective and inviting," said [Andrew Suvalsky](#), an interior designer based in New York. "When you set up a bar, it shows that you care about entertaining and helping people have an experience."



*You don't need a lot of space to create a striking home bar: In one Manhattan apartment, Andrew Suvalsky installed a bar cabinet in a shallow niche. Costas Picadas*

## Find the Right Space

A built-in home bar doesn't need to be huge. Sure, if you have a basement, you might be able to build one that resembles a full-size English pub. But smaller is often better. Tucking a statement-making bar into an unused niche or closet, or adding it to a small hallway or kitchen pantry, can deliver compelling results.

In one Manhattan apartment, Mr. Suvalsky added the functions of a bar into a pair of nooks in the living room that he lined in brass and marble.

## Plan for Display

Cocktail glasses, champagne flutes, ice buckets, bottles and bar implements are often things of beauty. To show them off, include open shelves, upper cabinets with glass or metal-mesh fronts, and handsome trays that can hold the various items on the counter.

"Amassing a lot of different glass and putting it in an open-front cabinet, or a glass cabinet, almost always looks really special," Mr. Suvalsky said, regardless of whether the pieces are fine crystal or budget glassware.

## Dim the Lights

There's a good reason that most cocktail bars keep the lights low: It creates a soothing atmosphere that makes people and objects look their best.

If your space doesn't have electrical boxes in the right place for hard-wired fixtures, a plug-in sconce or table lamp can work just as well.

LED bulbs should offer a warm-white color temperature of about 2,700 Kelvin rather than daylight-mimicking 5,000 Kelvin, and it's preferable to have your fixtures on dimmers, so you can adjust the light throughout the day.

## Consider Plumbing and Appliances

A home bar doesn't have to be equipped with a faucet and sink or have appliances like a wine cooler and ice maker. But depending on your habits and budget, they can add to the experience.