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Searching high (and low) paid off in this pass-through laundry room, transforming it into a multiuse storage area.

BEFORE



PROBLEMS

- Large washer and dryer stole valuable space in the small room
- Bifold doors disrupted the busy passageway to the garage
- Space for coats and other gear was limited near the family's main entrance

SOLUTION Professional organizer Kathy Jenkins of Come to Order (see bio in "Meet the Pros," page 25), helped homeowners Kelly and Ryan turn one of the busiest areas in their house into a space that functions efficiently and expands available storage near the family's main entrance. The small laundry room—or more accurately a closet in the hallway between the garage and kitchen—needed to act as both a laundry room and a mini mudroom for them and their two daughters.

To create more usable space, Jenkins traded out the side-by-side washer and dryer for a stackable combination that left half the closet available for family storage.

New built-ins that reach from floor to ceiling utilize every inch of the closet—adding plentiful storage for laundry essentials and kids' coats and shoes. Some space near the ceiling is quite high, so Kelly keeps a foldable step stool nearby to make the area easier to access.

"I'm OK with using a stool," Kelly says. "I pushed for the floor-to-the-ceiling storage because I wanted to use every inch." Besides,



"Function has to go along with form. If a project isn't aesthetically pleasing, people will abandon it. I look at [a homeowner's] needs and then make it beautiful and easy to maintain."

—KATHY JENKINS,
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER



THIS PHOTO

A full-size stackable washer and dryer make the most of the small space, allowing for extra storage for laundry supplies and dirty clothes. When not in use, the appliances hide behind a sleek, sliding barn-style door. Overhead, adjustable shelves—wide enough for a standard laundry basket—take advantage of space all the way to the ceiling. Lesser-used items find a home at the highest levels.





1 Clear jars stored on a narrow pullout make it easy to find laundry essentials. **2** An otherwise wasted space becomes an ideal cubby for notebooks and oversize school supplies. **3** Individual cubbies make shoes easy to find under the built-in bench. **4** Die-cut iron-on labels turn retail laundry bins into customized storage space.

she says with a laugh, "Why marry a tall man if you can't put him to work?"

The drop zone portion of the closet features low cubbies to hold shoes, upper cubbies for dirty clothes and seasonal accessories, and a sitting area to pull on boots and coats. Hooks are hung at varying heights to make it easy for the girls to hang up their own things as they grow and take on more responsibility. By hanging hooks on both the back wall and side wall, the family maximizes the use of the small mudroom closet.

The thin space between the cubbies and the stackable washer and dryer contains the element that Kelly considers the biggest aha moment of the entire redo—a vertical pullout cabinet that was originally designed for kitchen use. In the early planning stages, that small area was cast off as dead space, but Jenkins didn't want it to go to waste.

"Kelly needed a place to put laundry detergent," Jenkins says. "Putting it overhead would have been cumbersome. Laundry detergent would've ended up on the bench in the drop zone or on the floor. I wanted her to be able to conceal all that less attractive stuff."

Although the space is incredibly hardworking, it's stylish, too—thanks to durable floral wallpaper teamed with colorful hooks. A single barn-style door can slide to conceal either side of the closet, so it doesn't interfere with the high-traffic walkway.

"This space used to frustrate me at least twice a day. Now I am amazed at the organization this tiny room has given us," Kelly says. "I love how we maximized every single inch for usable storage."

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SPECIAL THANKS

Graham & Brown, Rev-A-Shelf, and Shades of Light



ONE-HOUR CLUTTER CURE

PUT EMPTY WALL SPACE TO WORK

Need more storage in your small laundry room? Look to the walls: Add shelves above a washer and dryer for detergent storage, or hooks to hold hangers of just-washed clothes. Consider adding a bulletin board where you can pin up instructions for washing specific items.



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