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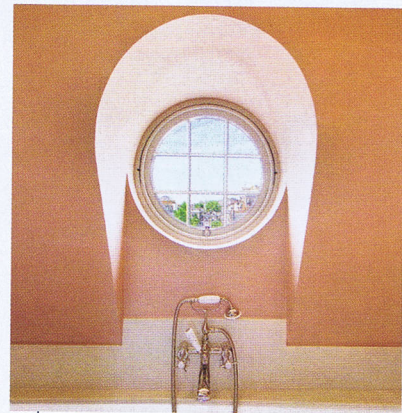
Insight SMART SOLUTIONS

Guided by Sean Cochrane, we offer inventive ways to create more space.



DOUBLE VISION

In this project by architect Symm, 01865 254900, symm.co.uk, the single-storey extension of a Victorian town house was given a roof made of 25mm structural glazing with a central steel support and glass ribs. It is tough enough to be walked on and creates a first-floor terrace above the children's playroom. French windows from the kitchen lead on to the roof where the glass is etched with stars, giving those in the room below a unique night-time view. "As the house has a tiny garden, this extension creates valuable extra outdoor space," says project manager Phil Morton.



IN THE ROUND

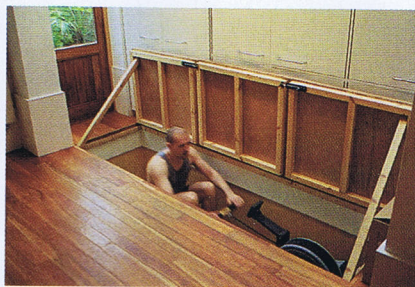
A cleverly constructed window adds drama as well as light to a small room. When a new mansard roof was added to this 1860s house, there was no space for a large dormer window so Mike Fisher of Studio Indigo, 020 7349 1290, studioindigo.co.uk, opted for a circular design. "This works as a visual feature from inside and out, and makes a focal point in a small room."

Limited space does not mean you have to build a new extension. Consult an architect or designer, who can come up with solutions you might not have considered



OPEN VERDICT

"We want more light" is a regular plea from home owners. Here, Philippa Thorp of Thorp Design, 020 7731 6887, thorp.co.uk, replaced a solid wall with glazing, bringing new vistas and depth to an apartment. The glazing, which divides the hall from the living space, is carefully proportioned with a door at either end. Display areas in the hall look as if they are part of the living room and sculpture can be seen in the round. "I had to think in 3D," says Philippa, "as details such as stitching on a chair back are in full view."



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Sports equipment can be a nightmare to store, and few will want it on view all the time. When Hugo Tugman, of Architect Your Home, 0800 849 8505, architect-yourhome.com, added a side-return extension to his Victorian terraced home, he devised this rowing pit. In consultation with a structural engineer, an extra-deep pit was dug while the foundations were laid and lined with concrete. Three trap doors are finished in timber to match the floor. "When you close them, it's completely concealed," says Hugo.



COMPACT WORKSPACE

If you do not have space for a separate study, a foldaway office is ideal. "Tucking office space into a kitchen or family room means you can keep an eye on the children while working," says Mike Fisher of Studio Indigo, 020 7349 1290, studioindigo.co.uk. This office, in the kitchen of an 1860s semi has space-saving bi-fold doors on either side of the desk which slide neatly into cavities, while cupboards house the computer hard drive and printer. "A similar idea could work as a room divider," he says. ■