



the ultimate utility room

This hardworking headquarters has everything a family needs to stay organized.

Talk about multitasking! This utility room—originally an enclosed porch—combines a laundry, bath, mudroom, and family communication station in calm, collected style.

Laundry facilities are packed into a corridor that's less than 6 feet wide, creating a step-saving area for washday. Smart accessories let you tackle soiled clothes as soon as they come through the back door. Open shelves hold supplies in plain view so there's no question where to find stain remover or detergents. Capping the washer and dryer with a solid-surfacing countertop creates a convenient place for folding. A rod stretches across its expanse, supplying hanging space for freshly ironed clothes. The uppermost cabinets accommodate a host of fix-it supplies, batteries, and bulk-shopping extras.

A pretty but practical bath is a few steps beyond the laundry area. Offering privacy thanks to a space-saving pocket door, the room boasts personal storage in a built-in cabinet, a custom

vanity, and an optimized medicine cabinet. Even the dog claims bathing privileges here, with a handheld sprayer in the shower and a caddy dedicated to shampoos and brushes.

Every busy family benefits from a definitive grab-and-go spot for coats, backpacks, library books, and sports equipment. The area just inside the back door acts as a mudroom with a trio of lockers. Compartments offer easy-access, open shelves for shoes and multiple hooks for each child. Off-season accessories can be hidden in upper closed cabinets.

On a scrap of open wall by the back door, paperwork organizers and sanity-saving calendars keep family members on schedule. Attached directly to beaded-board panels, these off-the-rack accessories make smart use of untapped space.

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THIS PHOTO: At the end of a corridor, laundry appliances are topped by a handy counter. Shelves on either side stow a bevy of cleaning and household necessities, all neatly stashed in baskets and canisters. **OPPOSITE:** Vintage-style glass jars decant oversize laundry cleaners into more manageable containers. Chalkboard labels amplify the nostalgic vibe.

work spaces



A portable plastic emergency kit, above, holds extra batteries, flashlights, candles, matches, and first aid supplies.

Mending supplies and stain treatments, above right, are within reach in clear and woven containers. An iron rests below on a heat-resistant silicone pad.

A foldable heatproof pad, right, eliminates the need for a space-hogging ironing board, making room for other items in this compact laundry.

Nonslip hangers, opposite, keep laundered shirts and slacks wrinkle free while awaiting transfer to bedroom closets. The tension rod is also a handy spot to air-dry delicate items that don't go in the dryer.



A tiered drying rack can hang from this rod. It collapses flat for easy storage.



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A pocket door, above, links bath to laundry. It affords privacy while saving space.



A tall built-in linen closet, right, is loaded with practical necessities, including toiletries for houseguests, cleaning supplies, and hair accessories, all obscured behind a frosted-glass door. The bottom drawer stores picnic blankets, umbrellas, water bottles, and other bulky items.

A retractable clothesline, right, mounts between shower walls to drip-dry wet bathing suits and towels.

Plastic drawer dividers, far right, separate clean socks and underwear by kid in a deep drawer alongside the shower.





A quick-dry metal basket, left, groups dog-washing supplies. A slender, handheld sprayer makes quick work of rinsing Fido.

An unassuming custom vanity, below, resembles classic furniture but packs a major storage punch.

A smartly designed cleaning caddy, right, hugs tall cleaning supply bottles. It slips inside a plastic bucket that's easy to tote from room to room.

A U-shape drawer, below right, curves around plumbing beneath the sink, putting oft-wasted space to maximum use.



A shallow organizer clusters manicure supplies on a medicine cabinet shelf.

Cabinets designed to resemble lockers, right, cater to each child with a trio of hooks for hanging coats, backpacks, and bike helmets. A slightly deeper lower section creates a narrow ledge that functions as a practical perch when pulling off boots. Double-height shoe shelves are lined with wipe-clean laminate paper.

A command center, opposite left, hangs on the wall near the back door. Magnetic metal file pockets organize each child's homework and permission slips, while clipboards hold the month's schedules. All elements are affixed with removable sticky strips so the pieces can be replaced and reconfigured as needs change.

A magnetic strip, opposite right, gathers keys. Invitations, bills, and important mail are contained in an adults-only wall pocket. A miniature mesh bin holds small pads of paper and pens for jotting quick notes and errand lists on the way out the door.





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in the zone

Detailed planning and clever use of space maximize the usefulness of this porch-turned-utility room.

1 LAUNDER A single wall houses everything needed to sort, wash, dry, iron, fold, and hang laundry. Smart accessories, such as a foldable ironing pad and a collapsible drying rack, save space.

2 BATHE An integral part of the multipurpose room yet closed off by its own door, this bath is the preferred cleanup zone for kids and pets.

3 PREPARE Emergency kits, picnic gear, and mending supplies are sorted into baskets, canisters, and bins. Labels ensure family members can find what they need quickly and easily.

4 DROP Whether heading out or returning home, kids know exactly where coats, shoes, umbrellas, and sunscreen belong, making frantic forays for lost mittens an annoyance of the past.

