

PERSONALITY-PACKED HOMES FROM HEBER TO HUNTSVILLE

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Designer
Gregg Hodson

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Designer Gregg Hodson lives big in his small, city-center condominium.

The art of downsizing

W *Having traded in his spacious hillside house for a small condo, Designer **GREGG HODSON** proves a home doesn't need big size to live large.*

BY BRAD MEE PHOTOS BY SCOT ZIMMERMAN

HOEVER SAID THAT the best things come in small packages could have been describing designer Gregg Hodson's new digs. Having downsized from a spacious 3,300-square-foot hillside house to a mere 1,171-square-foot city-center condo in Salt Lake, Hodson confirms that bigger doesn't necessarily mean better.

"That house was too large for me," the designer says, describing his former Olympus Cove residence. "It was a great investment, and I was swooned by it." But as Hodson discovered after remodeling the dwelling and living in it for a number of years, it was more than he needed or wanted. "I felt overwhelmed by it and reevaluated how I wanted to spend my time. I didn't feel like using all my down time keeping the place up."





*NEW
CONDO*

WHAT HE DID
A stylish galley kitchen replaces Hodson's large open kitchen from his previous home. "I think an open kitchen in a small condo resembles an apartment. I wanted something separated from the rest of the living area," he says.



*OLD
HOUSE*





WHAT HE DID

Hodson divided the condo's main living area into five functional areas: the entry, main dining, living room, window-side dining and casual sitting space off the kitchen. Dark-stained floors unite the zones, while area rugs and furniture groupings delineate them.

OLD
HOUSE



NEW
CONDO



As luck would have it, just as Hodson decided to look for a smaller home, a client's condominium that he had gutted and redesigned six years earlier came on the market. What's more, the unit located in Salt Lake's Bonneville Tower had similar interior treatments to his hillside house. "Except for her silk draperies that I immediately removed, everything was pretty much as I wanted it," says Hodson.

"Beautiful woods, warm colors and rich textures... along with clean lines and surfaces devoid of superfluous detail and decoration," described Hodson's Olympus Cove home in the 2007 fall issue of *Utah Style & Design* magazine. The same words aptly characterize his condo, which, like his old house, boasts broad windows filling the interior with light and city views. The obvious difference between the two is space. Because the condo has fewer rooms, tighter dimensions and less storage, Hodson had to perform some strong-armed editing. He eagerly muscled through the task.

"When furnishing a smaller home, you can approach it one of two ways," says Hodson. "Include large, solid pieces

Above, left: Hodson's former hillside home's front door entry. Right: His new home in the Bonneville Tower in SLC.

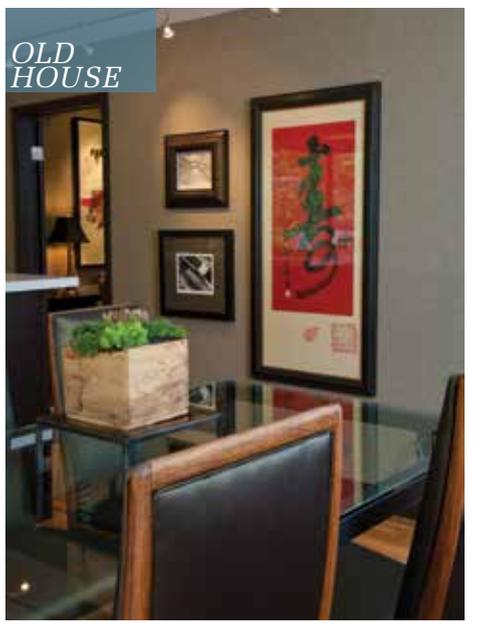


NEW
CONDO

OLD
HOUSE

WHAT HE DID

Hodson reupholstered his dark dining chairs with a light fabric that "pops" against the room's dark walls. Shelves add storage space and a mirror positioned on the back wall attracts light from the living room's broad windows opposite the space.





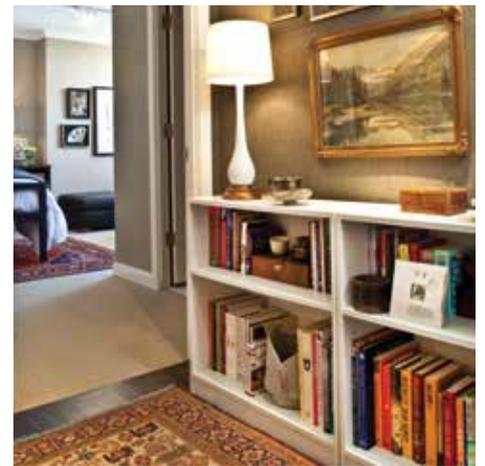
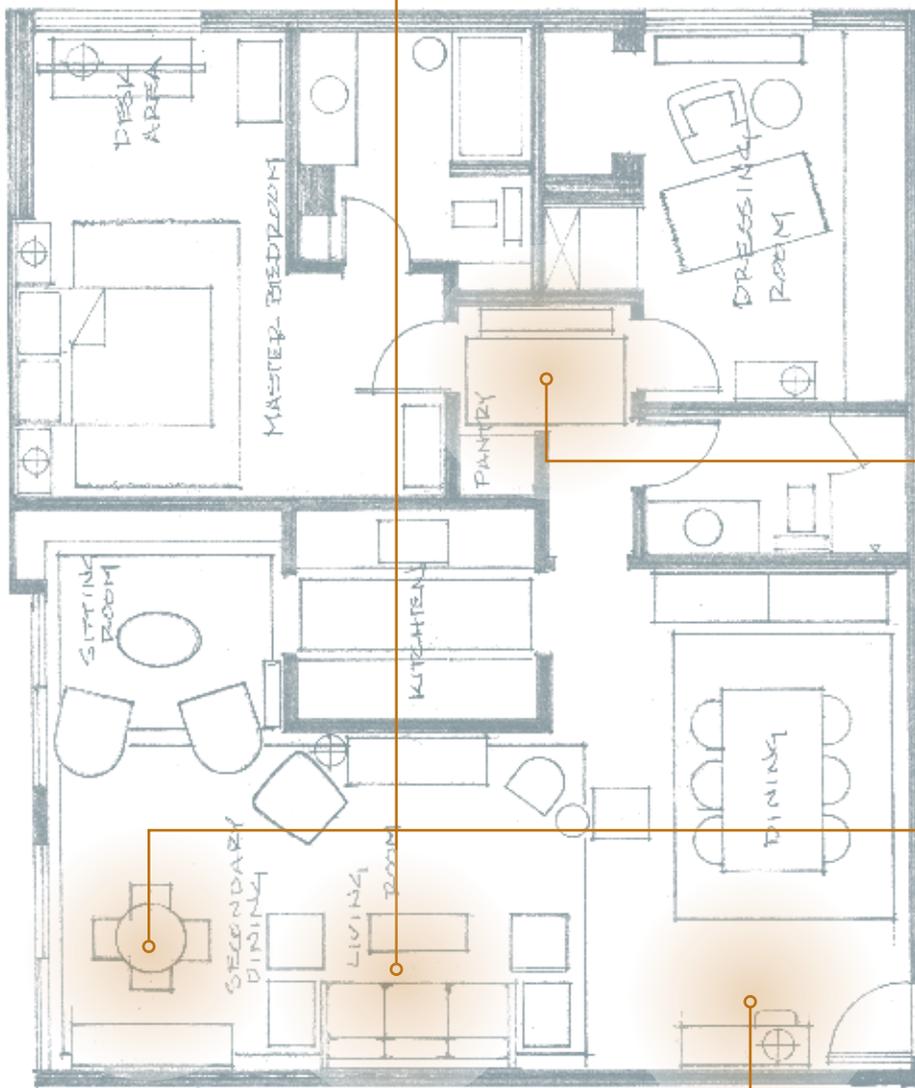
OLD
HOUSE

NEW
CONDO

WHAT HE DID

Hodson uses the intended dining area as a sitting room off the kitchen. He enjoyed a similar room in his previous home. Built-in drawers and shelves provide valuable storage and display space while easy-to-move furnishings offer flexibility.

but fewer of them, or furnish the spaces with scaled down pieces in a greater number.” He chose the latter. The condo’s small, glass-topped coffee table, for example, performs similarly to the behemoth square iron table in the larger home—only using much less space. Small-scaled armchairs, trim chrome lamps, open shelves, grouped accessories and open-legged frames similarly suit the condo’s confined living quarters. Surprisingly, most of the condo’s furnishings—like the entry desk once used as a console—are from Hodson’s large home but are now used differently. Hodson’s strategic use of them and the condo’s spaces made all the difference.



FLOOR PLAN

HODSON's savvy space planning flexes its muscle in every room of the 1,171-square-foot condominium. "I use every square inch of this space," he says.

1. LIVING ROOM

"The key to the living room's spaciousness is a small, narrow cocktail table," says Hodson. The sofa provides visual weight, while art groupings help delineate the area.

2. HALLWAY

A small hallway that runs between the two bedrooms serves as a handsome library and gallery space.

3. WINDOW FRONT

A much-used bistro table and shelves-turned-bar claim the prized living area near the view-laden windows. This serves as Hodson's casual dining spot.

4. ENTRY

A console table-turned desk helps define the home's entry area. The wooden chest contains Hodson's CD collection.

WHAT HE DID
Hodson created inset storage shelves in an empty bathroom wall and brightened the feature with lighting and glass shelves. His previous bathroom relied on expansive, under-vanity space for storage.



OLD HOUSE



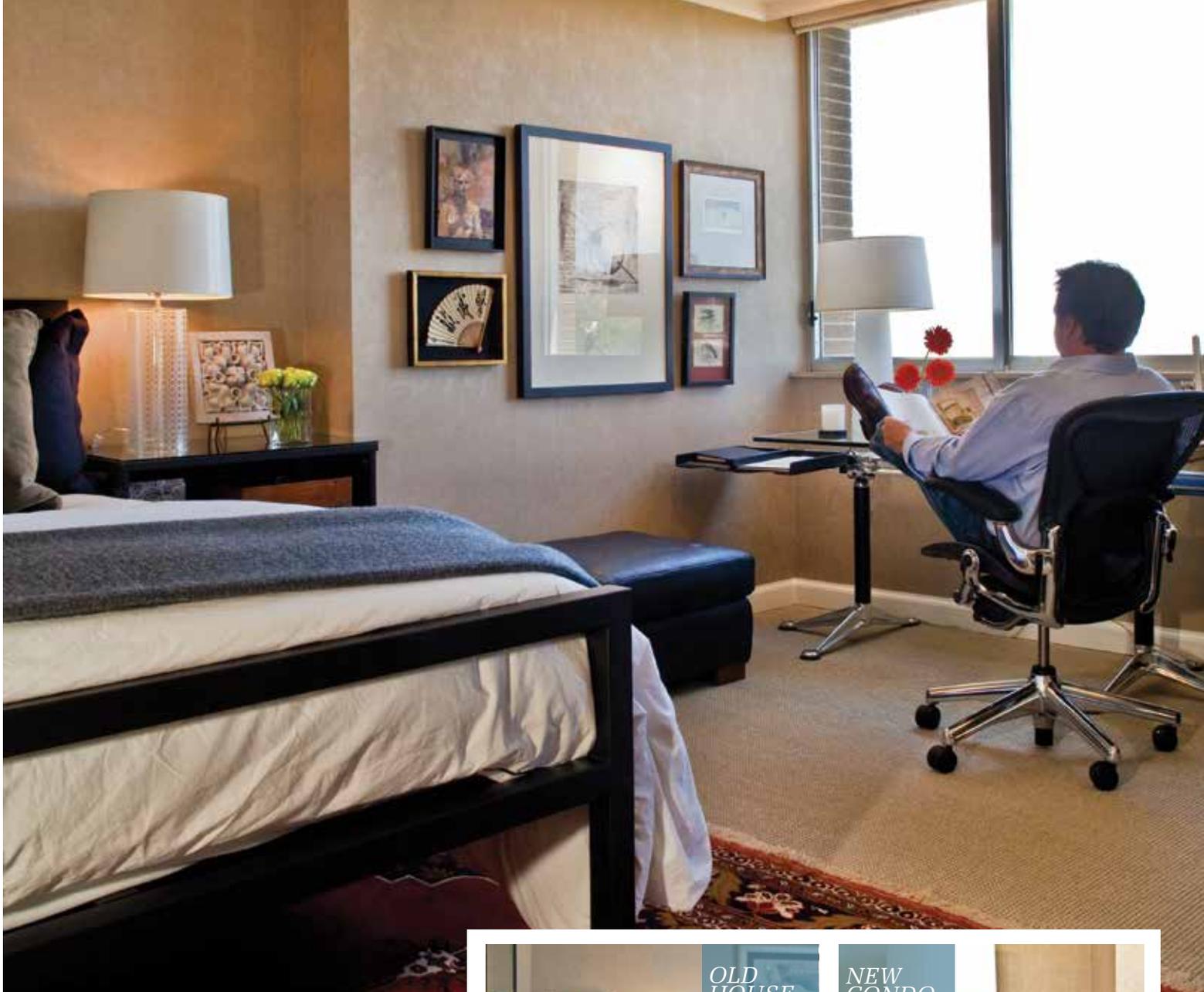
NEW CONDO



BEFORE MAKING THE MOVE

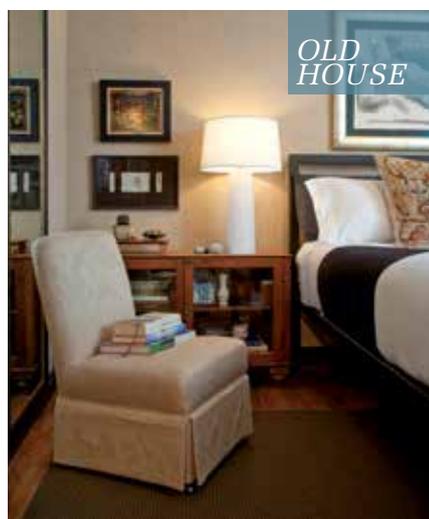
Hodson's advice for drama-free downsizing

- + Thoughtfully consider how you live in the larger home. By recognizing where and how you spend your time there, your needs in a new home will become more apparent to you. Also inventory the home's features that are important to you. This will help you evaluate each potential small home purchase.
- + Define your ideal floor plan and prioritize your wish-list features. Do you want an open kitchen and floor plan? Do you favor lofty ceilings over more intimate, lower ones? Is a dining room necessary? Because you will likely have to make trade-offs in smaller homes, know what you want and what's most important to you.
- + Determine what furnishings you love and want to keep. But don't be too over-zealous. If in doubt, save the piece. You may be able to use it in the new space and can always get rid of it later.
- + Recognize the possible need to change styles. If your larger home is filled with oversized European-style armoires, roll-armed sofas and aircraft carrier-sized coffee tables, you will likely need to make a change to more streamlined pieces.
- + Keep key storage pieces. From trunks to shelves and tables with drawers, furnishings that feature functional storage are invaluable in tight living quarters.
- + Inventory each piece of furniture you keep, take its picture and note its dimensions. Keep this information in one file. This may be very useful when you are strategizing floor plans and design around pieces that end up in storage during the selling and moving process.



"I determined how I would use each space 80-percent of the time and designed around that function," he says. In the hillside home, he spent time in a sitting room adjacent to the kitchen, so he now enjoys a similar space in the condo. "Most of my neighbors use this space as a dining area, but I like having the TV, shelves and reading chairs near the windows and kitchen." Hodson also transformed the condo's guest room into a closet-rich dressing room, leaving more living space in the master bedroom. "Why have a second bedroom for infrequent guests when I can put them up at a nearby hotel?" The designer also realized he never really needed his former large living, dining and lower level rooms. "I envisioned throwing big parties and family get-togethers there. Instead, I ended up hosting more intimate gatherings. So why have all the space?"

Hodson makes the idea of making a big move to a smaller home sound intriguing. "This move was very liberating and proved to me how much I really don't need," he says. He warns that to make every inch count, you have to be open-minded. "Don't put labels on spaces and lock yourself into how you will use them. They should change as you do." **USD**



OLD HOUSE



NEW CONDO

WHAT HE DID
By eliminating closets from the master bedroom and moving them to a second bedroom-turned-dressing room, Hodson created room for both a sleeping area and spacious study in the master. Savvy furniture selections enlarge the condo throughout. Here, a small, wall-mounted shelf unit replaces a large glass-front cabinet that had previously served as the nightstand.