

clean slate

This bachelor pad makeover ticks all the boxes, thanks to the owner's interior designer friend



WORDS JACLYN FONTANELLA
STYLING JILLIAN DINKEL
PHOTOGRAPHY HANNAH BLACKMORE



cheat sheet

Who lives here: Steven Reid, a creative director.

Style of home: A modern two-bedroom apartment in Manly, Sydney.

 The renovation took nine months, and the cost of a new kitchen and deck,  joinery, furniture and appliances came to \$75k.

ARTWORK: (OPPOSITE, LEFT) THE SICILIAN BY HAROLD LANE, (CENTRE) SARAH WRIGHT



bright idea

Simple yet shapely wall sconces by Cedar & Moss highlight the art of display demonstrated by Steven below, which gives the space instant character.

ENTRY (opposite) A Middle Of Nowhere mirror above a rustic bench from Stone Pony reflects the kitchen in Steven's updated home. **DINING AREA** The vintage dining setting of leather-and-chrome chairs with a military-style table is softened by a pair of sheepskin throws from Sourceress The Store. Reclaimed timber shelves fit neatly into the wall nook, allowing Steven to curate vignettes with artworks.



After renting in Manly for years, first-time homeowner Steven Reid couldn't wait to put down roots. He had spent more than two years scouring Sydney's Northern Beaches market before finding a run-down two-bedroom apartment in Queenscliff. Despite its shortcomings, Steven saw potential in the light-filled living area and spacious ivy-covered deck. He instantly knew it could be something special.

After coming out on top at auction, Steven knew he needed a strong style vision, which brought him to enlist the services of interior designer and friend Jillian Dinkel.

Steven, why did you engage an interior designer? I had ideas about how I wanted the space to feel, but wasn't able to translate that into reality on my own. I especially needed help maximising the space and the storage potential in the apartment. I wanted a dramatic transformation of what was a badly executed and planned unit into something special that I could be proud of. I'm drawn to natural materials, such as leather, stone and wood, so incorporating these elements in the apartment was a non-negotiable.

JILLIAN: With only 70 square metres of internal space, the unit was small with almost no storage – and the storage that did exist was impractical and unattractive. My priority was to make smart choices to maximise the function of the space with the budget we had.



ENTRY (left) Interior designer Jillian Dinkel steps into a welcoming space, highlighted by a rug from Tigmi Trading. An *ABBA: The Movie* poster and a Richard Bailey print on the floor showcase the retro sophistication of this home. **LIVING AREA (above)** A mix of textures creates interest with a MCM House sofa, a table from Asian Tide and a rug from Love Moroccan Rugs where regular visitor Bruce the French bulldog sits. A Ficus tree brings nature indoors.

ARTWORK: PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVEN REID

TIMELINE

2016

March Steven buys the unit and engages interior designer, Jillian Dinkel. **April** Design and planning begins, including custom joinery. A budget-friendly kitchen update is planned.

July Existing landscaping is cleared to make room for the new deck, and the new sofa arrives. **September** Kitchen is demolished and new black cabinetry, benchtops and

appliances are installed. Brass handles and a fresh coat of white paint dress up the existing upper joinery. **October** Custom lighting fixtures made in America arrive and are installed after

the existing oyster lights are removed. **November** Existing joinery is demolished and new wardrobe joinery is built. The new wardrobe allows for ample storage

and a small home office. **December** Deck is extended with built-in seating, new lighting and custom all-weather cushions just in time for the summer holidays.



DECK (left) A ponytail palm in a Pop & Scott pot from The Plant Room ties the white-painted deck with the lattice fence. **ENTRY (below)** As soon as you open the front door, this vignette greets you. “The entry table was topped with spare kitchen benchtop material, Quantum Quartz surface in Statuario Quartz,” says interior designer Jillian. The cabinet also features MadeMeasure leather pulls. **KITCHEN (opposite)** Joiner Iain Archer crafted cabinets finished in Dulux Klavier for this cooking zone while the wall cabinets were updated with Anthropologie handles. A window frame painted in black by Steven allows the view to pop.



Jillian, in Steven’s words the kitchen was “so ugly!” What was your game plan for addressing the space? I wanted a minimal yet bold look. The kitchen is the first thing you see when you walk in the door – it had to make a good first impression. The result is a ‘tuxedo kitchen’ with dark lower cabinetry and bright white wall cabinets. We concealed the washing machine and faux-integrated the dishwasher with a face panel to give the space clean lines.

STEVEN: Before the renovation, with all the appliances on display, it was a terrible first look. But I wanted something unique. I needed the kitchen to be a showcase element.

Steven, how do you feel about the result? Does the size of the cooking zone feel limiting at all? The kitchen is my favourite room! I’m so glad I spent a little extra money to make it right. It’s as small as a kitchen can be, but I don’t go in there and think, ‘small space, I’m stressed out’. Everything is set out nicely and there’s enough space to work around the cooktop. It’s perfect.

JILLIAN: For a small kitchen, there is a lot of storage. Everything can be put away and kept off the benchtop, which is absolutely key for maximising limited workspace!

Steven, storage space is a vital theme with this remodel. What led you to choose an open, exposed wardrobe? The idea of an open closet really appealed to me. I like everything to have its place. At this point in my life, I’ve whittled my belongings down to just the essentials. Minimalism really suits me.

JILLIAN: Exposing your wardrobe can be a challenge, so as a safeguard, I included lots of shelf space concealed behind doors, as well as a column of drawers to avoid a cluttered look. All the storage was meticulously planned to accommodate everything Steven has and the way he uses the spaces.

Jillian, the apartment has a killer deck. How important was it to get this space right? The deck had such untapped potential. The existing garden was overgrown and limited the light that could filter through into the apartment, and the seating area was oddly shaped. We did a complete overhaul, and now it is just waiting for Steven to host a housewarming party! **10**

For info on Jillian’s work, visit jilliandinkel.com. Contact Sam Ford of SCF Handyman Services at scfhandyman.com.au. The joiner on this project was Iain Archer, email iain@bullseyepropertyservices.com.au.

ARTWORK (RIGHT) PHOTOGRAPH BY BENNY HORNE FOR VOGUE AUSTRALIA
PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION





1. 'Evil Eye' Vintage Boujad rug, \$1750, Tigmi Trading, tigmitrading.com. 2. Universo Positivo bedside, \$525, GlobeWest, globevest.com.au. 3. 'Tilt Cone' sconce, US\$199, Cedar & Moss, cedarandmoss.com. 4. Oyoy 'Pif Paf Puf' double hanging planter, \$198, Designstuff, designstuff.com.au. 5. 'Banjo' occasional sofa, \$4900, MCM House, mcmhouse.com.



- 1. Entry
- 2. Kitchen/laundry
- 3. Dining area
- 4. Outdoor shower
- 5. Deck
- 6. Living area
- 7. Master bedroom
- 8. Guest bedroom
- 9. Bathroom



ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: NATALIE JOHNSON - SUSTAINABLY SOURCED FINGER CORAL - SOURCESS THE STORE. SOURCESSTHESTORE.COM.AU

MASTER BEDROOM (opposite, top) A bed dressed in In Bed linen and topped with a Pony Rider throw brings a hit of colour and comfy texture. The clean lines of the Universo Positivo bedside from GlobeWest tie in neatly with the custom-made wardrobe (inset). Featuring a mix of closed and open storage, this bespoke solution also features a study nook. **DECK** Cowhide cushions from St. Agni and a side table from West Elm lend luxe style to this stepped deck space, crafted by Sam Ford of SCF Handyman Services. Custom bench cushions in weather-proof Sunbrella 'Canvas Granite' fabric provide a soft landing.

lessons learnt

“LOOKING BACK, I WISH I'D ENGAGED A LANDSCAPER TO ASSESS MY OPTIONS”

STEVEN REID, OWNER

“As the ivy vine was warping and splitting the fence, we had to transplant the roots. Though great care was taken by our joiner, the ivy didn't survive. It was devastating, as this was one of the first things I fell in love with on the property.”

Biggest saving? “I am very detail-oriented, so I did all the painting in the apartment and on the deck myself. I also made and repurposed most of the art as well.”