12 brilliant small hallway ideas

How to make a big impression with a tiny entrance...

BY RACHEL EDWARDS PUBLISHED: 03 OCTOBER 2024

Brent Darby, Farrow & Ball

Hallways set the tone for our arrivals and departures, but they are often small and uninviting, neglected in favour of those rooms we use most often.

Their size can be a great advantage of course – without much furniture to worry about or layout to reconsider, decorating a hallway can be the work of days, not weeks or months.

As with any small space, the difficulty lies in finding a balance between practical considerations like storage, light and flow, and your decorating fantasies.

"To make the most of a small hallway, it's essential to focus on both functionality and style," Claire Garner, director of **Claire** Garner Interiors tells *Country Living*.

"Built-in storage solutions, such as slimline cabinets or shelves, can maximise space without overwhelming the area. Incorporating mirrors can enhance natural light and create an illusion of more space, making the hallway feel larger and more inviting. Good lighting is also crucial; consider wall-mounted fixtures or pendant lights to brighten the space and add a touch of sophistication."

Here we look at 12 brilliant small hallways, and the decorating tricks they employ to create a warmer welcome.

Brent Darby

1

Hybrid hallways

Some tiny homes can't afford to syphon off hallway space and instead create a hybrid hallway/living area that greets you as soon as you walk in. If you have space under the stairs in this instance, it can become a hallway nook with the usual wall hooks, side table or umbrella stand, albeit in a miniaturised format.

Catherine Gratwicke

2

Runners

In this tiny hallway, a runner is laid horizontally to connect the two rooms like a little bridge over the stone floor. Runners are particularly useful wherever flooring is cold – flagstones are brilliantly durable, but so chilly to step onto in socks.

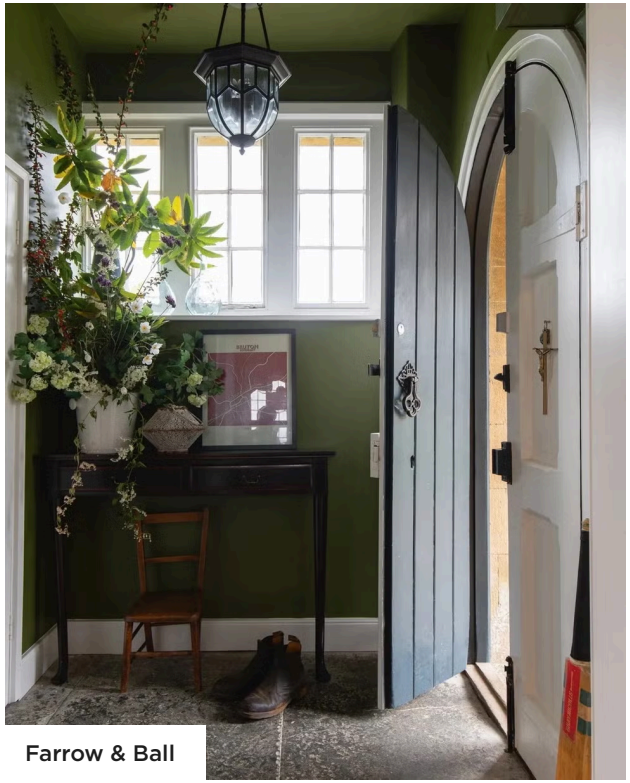
Brent Darby

3

Storage

You can never have enough storage in a small hallway. "Multi-functional furniture like benches with hidden storage compartments are excellent for keeping shoes and accessories neatly out of sight while providing a convenient seating option," says Claire. If all those practical considerations leave you without room for decoration, colourful floor tiles will do the job.

Pictured: Country Living Starry Skies Peony Blush Tile at Homebase



Farrow & Ball

4

Intense colour

You can get away with intense colours in a small hallway as it's a transitional space that you only ever pass through. This rich olive green creates a neat transition from outside in, and note too that the colour is taken up onto the ceiling for a totally enveloping effect.

Pictured: Walls painted in Bancha No.298 at Farrow & Ball

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5

Recruiting light

Brighten gloomy hallways with internal windows or glazed doors that recruit light from adjacent spaces. Carrying your flooring through to adjoining rooms imparts a sense of flow, so your hallway will feel more integrated into your main living areas.

Pictured: Interior designed by Claire Garner Interiors

Brent Darby

6

Punchy colour

This hallway employs a similar design device with its internal windows, but uses the stream of natural light to lift its punchy reds and purples.

Also, don't forget to take inspiration from the 6 paint colours that make a small room look bigger.

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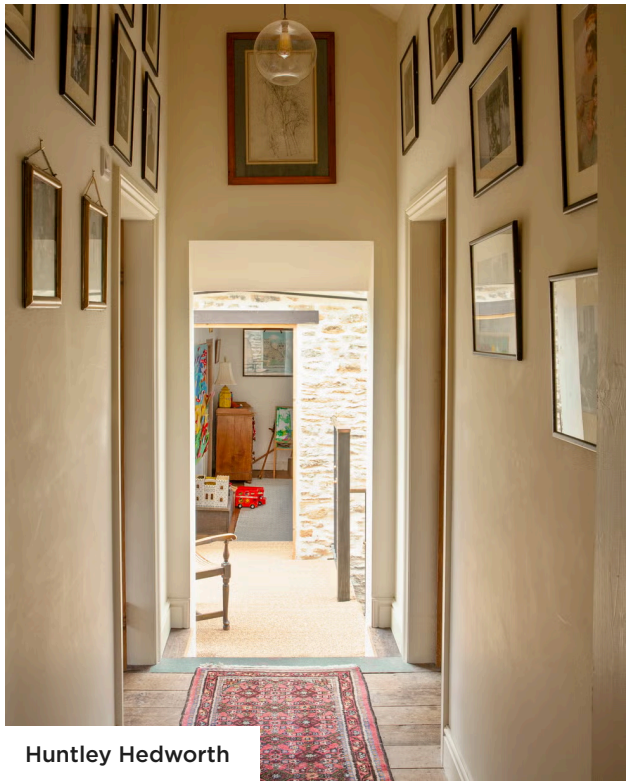


Huntley Hedworth

7

Gallery wall

A gallery wall a natural choice for a narrow hallway, and you can be adventurous with your selection without worrying about matching your colours or frames to a lot of furniture. Maps, photographs and quilts are nice alternatives to traditional wall art.

Read more: **Alternatives to art: clever and creative ways to fill empty walls**

Robin Quarrelle Photography

8

Flooring

"The best flooring choice for a narrow hallway depends largely on the property's style and décor. If the space lacks natural light, lighter-toned oak flooring is an excellent option to brighten the area and create a more open feel. Opting for wide, extra long planks can further enhance the sense of space by reducing the number of visible joints, making the hallway feel less confined," Ian Tomlinson, MD of Chaunceys Timber Flooring tells us.

Pictured: Bristol Tectonic® Oak in Buttered Toast at Chaunceys Timber Flooring, interiors designed by House Nine

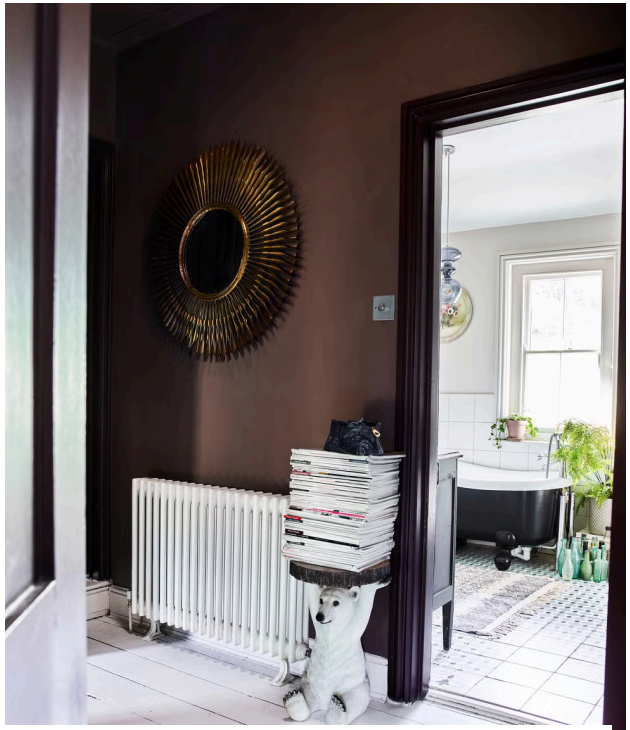
Photography Brent Darby, production Ben Kendrick

9

Bright white

Whites brighten more than any other colour, but there is a risk of stripping a hallway of warmth or character if you use a pure white. Wood is the counterbalance here because it tempers the harshness and intensity of colour. Wall panelling will have the same effect in lieu of floorboards or wooden doors.

Tour the rest of this restored cottage in Buckinghamshire here.



Photography Polly Wreford, Styling Ben Kendrick

10

Moody hues

Conventional decorating wisdom might have this light-starved hallway doused in those brightening whites. But this homeowner leans into its moodiness with deep aubergines and browns.

Inspired? Tour the rest of this colourful Edwardian home in Sussex.

Miranda Gardiner

11

Curtains

In a narrow hallway, curtains can replace cupboard or connecting doors that open inwards. It's quite attractive if you're a bit relaxed with your measurements and let the fabric pool on the floor.

Trove by Studio Duggan

12

Contain decoration

There is an argument for containing decoration to a single spot to free up the rest of your hallway. A console is the natural centre of gravity here – take your decoration up to the ceiling in the form of an XL print – and it doubles as a convenient placeholder for keys and parcels.

Pictured: Avalon Console and Oblong Tray, both at TROVE by Studio Duggan

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