

TODAY'S EFFICIENT AND COMFORTABLE LAUNDRY ROOMS
TAKE THE DRUDGERY OUT OF DOING THE WASH

Sit and iron in comfort with the Miele rotary iron with an electronically controlled roller speed. The iron has maneuverable rollers for quick and easy transportation and folds away neatly for easy storage.



CHORE
NO MORE

BY HARVEY MARKS

The laundry room is no longer an afterthought. Gone are the days when homeowners would settle for a washer and dryer in the garage or a cramped and uncomfortable work space not much bigger than a closet. Increasingly, laundry rooms are doing double duty, functioning as an artist's studio, a craft center, a home office or even a play area.

That sometimes means taking out walls to enlarge the space. It almost certainly will mean extending the style of your home into the room with fresh paint or wallpaper, natural wood tones, curtains and other amenities. And it also means replacing harsh or dim shadowy lighting with recessed fixtures and task lights that bathe the area in a warm, inviting glow.

LAUNDRY ROOM BASICS

Whether the room serves multiple purposes or just one, it's still a laundry room, so wide, clean counters for sorting and folding are a must. You'll also need to decide whether you want open or closed storage. That could mean long shelves where you can keep laundry day necessities like detergent and bleach close at hand. Or you might want to minimize clutter by tucking everything away in wall cabinets, keeping cleaning agents out of sight but easily accessible above the washer and dryer.

In either case, you'll have to be prepared for occasional spills. A ceramic tile floor is attractive, stain resistant and easy to clean, and damp clothes or towels certainly won't hurt it. Ceramic tile also can help with decorating since you can use the same tile pattern for the sink countertop and backsplash.

Vinyl and linoleum flooring are good possibilities, too. Both are extremely resilient, offering exceptional stain resistance and durability, and each is available in a wide range of attractive colors and patterns.

THE WASHER/DRYER CONNECTION

Of course, the real key to a successful laundry room is choosing the right washer and dryer. If yours have been around a while, it might be



Let your laundry room entertain you as you take care of the clothes, an innovative design trend shown here with Frigidaire's Affinity front-load laundry line. The new products offer SilentDesign, a whisper-quiet washing system, so you can do laundry where you live — or play.



LEFT: Treat your laundry room as a room to decorate. In this space, decorative diamond-pattern designs on the cabinet fronts, skirted sink, coordinating area rug and even a chandelier give the laundry room personality. Photo by Raymond Alderete

time for an upgrade. Currently, consumers are moving toward front-loading washing machines. Because they don't use an agitator to spin clothing, front loaders are gentler on fabrics. They also can reduce water usage by up to 70 percent while providing significant energy savings not available with top-loading machines.

One possibility to consider is the Bosch Nexxt 700 Series Washer-Dryer. The washer has extra settings for cleaning delicates such as silk and wool, as well as a special cycle designed for use with waterproofing agents. Its dryer features an array of temperature sensors that allows laundry to dry efficiently while cutting energy usage by as much as 50 percent.

Frigidaire's Affinity line offers an intelligent fabric-care system that automatically customizes each load for a whiter, brighter and cleaner wash and has a deep-clean cycle to treat stains. The dryer is designed to enhance fabric care by precision-drying clothes while protecting them from excessive heat.

Whirlpool Duet and Asko washers have built-in water heaters for the machines' sanitizing cycles that heat the water extra hot. Both brands come in stackable models with dryers, as well as standalone units.

If you're short on space, consider the new GE Frontload Laundry Pair with stackable washer and dryer units. Its HydroMotion wash system rotates in two directions to clean with exceptional efficiency, and both the washer and dryer are very quiet.

There also is the LG Combo Washer and Dryer, which saves space by washing and drying in the same chamber. It comes in a soft, brushed stainless steel

RIGHT: Take care of your work or personal business with an office/laundry room combination. Shown here, the GE Profile Harmony Clothes Care system introduces a CleanSpeak system, meaning it contains both English and Spanish options on the LCD washer and dryer touch screens.



LEFT: Let the family gather 'round in Whirlpool's new Family Studio, a space where everyone can enjoy hobbies, play games — and take care of home management, like the laundry. The Family Studio features Whirlpool fabric care products and is designed to reveal only the appliances you need, when you need them. Find Whirlpool appliances at Lowe's and Expo Design Center.

CHORE NO MORE



ABOVE: Set up a mini-laundry room in your kitchen with stackable washer and dryer units, such as the new GE Frontload Laundry Pair. The dryer door is reversible for additional flexibility. Find GE products at Jarrell Appliance Gallery.

BELOW: Take the doldrums out of ironing with an excitingly chic Amleto ironing board designed by Group Italia for Magis. The anodized silver-frame laundry room must-have folds flat for storage or can be hung on the wall using the Amleto Hook. Available through Unica Home, www.unicahome.com, for about \$350.



Plenty of lower and upper cabinet space for concealed storage of cleaning supplies, room to hang washed clothing and Bosch's Nexxt 700 Series front-load washer and dryer, likened to a spa for your clothes, makes this laundry room a pleasant working space. Factory Builder Stores and Ferguson Enterprises are local Bosch dealers.

color. Because it has a direct drive with no belts or pulleys, the LG Combo, too, is exceptionally quiet and efficient.

IRONING MADE EASY

Unfortunately, even the best washer and dryer won't completely eliminate the need to iron, at least once in a while. The Miele rotary iron is designed to let you sit in comfort while you work. Its wide roller makes it easy to press everything from shirts and pants to bed linens and tablecloths, giving them a crisp, professional finish. Finally, consider an Amleto ironing board by Magis. This beautiful contemporary Italian board has a sleek silver frame with gray or lilac highlights and folds perfectly flat for easy storage.

The modern laundry room has come a long way. And while doing the wash might never be your favorite task, it no longer has to mean working in dark, cramped spaces or isolating yourself from the rest of the family. In fact, if you design it right, it could even be a place the rest of the family will want to visit.

RESOURCES

EXPO DESIGN CENTER
13900 Dallas Parkway
Dallas, TX
972.934.2900
www.expo.com

FACTORY BUILDER STORES
512 E. Dallas Rd., Ste. 500
Grapevine, TX
817.410.8868
3833 W. Freeway
Fort Worth, TX
817.570.9621
www.factorybuilderstores.com

FERGUSON ENTERPRISES
1502 Slocum St.
Dallas, TX
214.761.9333
www.ferguson.com

FRIGIDAIRE
Multiple locations
www.frigidaire.com

GENERAL ELECTRIC
www.ge.com

JARRELL APPLIANCE GALLERY
2651 Fondren Dr.
Dallas, TX
214.363.7211

MIELE DALLAS DESIGN CENTER
1400 Turtle Creek Blvd., Ste. 177
Dallas, TX 214.752.9000
www.miele.com

STONE APPLIANCE
2651 Fondren Dr.
Dallas, TX
214.363.7211
5212 Airport Freeway
Fort Worth, TX
817.831.6101
www.stoneappliance.com

UNICA HOME
www.unicahome.com