



# THE LITTLE THINGS

RACHEL AND GLENN'S NEWLY BUILT BRISBANE HOME IS FILLED WITH LOVE, SOUL AND HANDCRAFTED STYLE

STORY & STYLING TAHN SCOON PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN DOWNS



**HAPPILY EVER AFTER** High school sweethearts Glenn and Rachel (opposite, with their children Jonathan, one, and Olivia, three, as well as Holly, their Maltese shih tzu) have created a loving family home full of character - with colourful The Brown Trading Co 'Summer Hibiscus' cushions on the charcoal sofa (opposite, top left) and the personal in the gallery of family portraits lining the hallway (opposite, bottom right). Bespoke pieces are also scattered throughout their house, such as this hands-on focal piece (above) that has turned into a favourite of Olivia's (pictured) - and Holly's. Rachel bought two sheets of chalkboard from Bunnings and had a carpenter attach the frame, which was made from floorboards of the house that previously stood on the block in Brisbane's south-east. "Whenever the carpenter came on-site, I always had a list of extra projects for him to do," laughs Rachel. >

**KITCHEN** The functional family hub blends classic style with clever organisation. Rachel decanted dry goods into custom labelled jars to keep the pantry (opposite, top) neat as a pin while open oak timber veneer shelves display colourful treasures. White is the main player here, from the subway tiles to the beautiful Carrara marble benchtops, and timber touches, such as Freedom stools and engineered 'Regal Oak' floors in Astor, sourced from Godfrey Hirst, add warmth. Glass pendants from Schots Home Emporium are a chic addition.



**G**lenn and Rachel's sweet abode in Brisbane's south-east truly shows that it's the little touches that make a house a home. From colour-dipped dining chairs surrounding a crowd-pleasing table, to a beautiful gallery-like display of black-and-white family photographs, this home tells the story of the couple's life together. And life has been busy. At just 14, the then high schoolers began dating; they attended university together in Brisbane; a stint in Sydney followed as they pursued their respective career paths; and finally, the pull of family brought them back home. "We wanted to have children and raise them near family," says Rachel. "We bought a little investment property while searching for a permanent home."

Now, Glenn and Rachel have two gorgeous children, Olivia, three, and Jonathan, one. But even before the kids were born, the keen entertainers knew exactly what they wanted for their forever home, and the wishlist was long: open-plan living areas with easy access to the backyard, four bedrooms, a separate sewing room for Rachel, and a playroom – for those future kids! "We were looking for our dream house, and of course we couldn't find it. We realised we'd have to renovate or build," explains Rachel. Soon, they found a property in a lovely leafy suburb, but as the home was full of asbestos, a complete rebuild was necessary.

The couple had always admired a chic classic style and they found a design match in Rachael Turner of Front Porch Properties. "We'd seen pictures of Rachael's work," recalls Rachel. "Her homes are a fresh take on the Hamptons style and have a lot of character, which we love." Designer Rachael had Storybook draft up a design, then consulted on the interior design and also took on building duties. By the time the build was underway, Rachel was very busy with then two-year-old Olivia, but took a hands-on approach. "In one way it was hard, as I was heavily pregnant and had a toddler," says Rachel. "On the other had, I was on maternity leave, so I could be on-site to oversee trades or dash to the shops to select furniture and furnishings."

With the build complete, Rachel and designer Rachael teamed up on the interiors. Throughout, a vibrant mix of colours and textures grabs the attention, while inexpensive furniture pieces are a clever blend with a few special ones. And when she couldn't find what she'd imagined, crafty Rachel would sew it herself, or call upon designer Rachael's husband, Simon, to get building: his handiwork includes the striking internal barn doors, the dining table and most of the side tables in the house. The home is also filled with pieces made many years ago by homeowner Rachel's grandparents. "I love being surrounded by homemade pieces," says Rachel. "It makes the interiors more unique."

*"I have to pinch myself all the time because the house is exactly how we imagined it – we couldn't be happier" ~ Rachel*

**DINING ROOM**

To compliment the industrial-style dining room table (right) - which was made by designer Rachael's husband, Simon - homeowner Rachel revamped an assorted mix of black vintage bentwood chairs by painting the tops in a pale blue. "I couldn't find the

colour I wanted so took my blue water jug into the paint shop and had them colour-match it," she says. "Thomas' pendants from Schots Home Emporium and a black and taupe jute rug (for similar, try Faded Empire) help further define the dining area within the open-plan space. >





*“We wanted our own take on Hamptons style, so included beach and industrial pieces, and lots of personal bits from our travels” ~ Rachel*

**MAIN BEDROOM**

Rachel and Glenn's bedroom is a lesson in affordable five-star luxury - and how to optimise space. A chic, extra-wide barn door opens into a serene sleeping area, which centres around an upholstered bed from Aldi that is dressed in linen bedding from Adairs and blue-hued cushions from West Elm and Adairs, plus an Armadillo & Co 'Geranium' hemp rug. Handmade Roman blinds made by Rachel using a kit purchased from Spotlight - "it was very easy... if you can sew a straight line, you can make a Roman," she laughs - allow sunlight to wash in while an ottoman at bed's end received a makeover from Rachel thanks to Spotlight fabric. "I love a staple gun!" she says. The serene 'Break 8' print is by Brisbane photographer Clare Sophia.



**WE LOVE...**

**on-show ensuites**

The slope of the block determined the unusual - yet highly effective - split-level bedroom and open-plan ensuite design, which Rachel says turned out to be a blessing in disguise. "It means we get a view of the city while we're in the bath," she says. Clean lines and luxe finishes allow the on-display area to be a resort-style feature. Try Reece for a similar centrepiece freestanding bath; [reece.com.au](http://reece.com.au).



**PEGBOARD**  
Get the look with 'Masonite Diagonal Pegboard', \$55/1830mm x 1220mm x 4.8mm, Bunnings.

**ENSUITE**

The star of the main bedroom is the step-up ensuite (above) that also leads to separate his-and-hers walk-in wardrobes. A luxurious stone bath and floor-standing mixer (for similar, try Reece) bring a luxe hotel vibe to the space.

**CRAFT ROOM**

A keen sewer, scrapbooker and cardmaker, Rachel is thrilled to have a craft room (left). "It's great to be able to leave a project going, especially larger sewing jobs, and not have to pack up after every session," she says. "It also means everything is accessible so I can

whip up a card in minutes." Before buying any cabinetry, Rachel took stock of what she needed to store, and designed the space around her needs. After careful measuring, separate Ikea tabletops, legs and shelving were selected and then built-in with the help of a carpenter. A generous pegboard, as well as a handful of hooks, allows regularly used items to be easily available. The room receives plenty of natural light and city views thanks to a large window, with task and ambient lighting provided by an Ikea 'Ranarp' lamp and industrial pendant from Beacon Lighting. The desk chair was found at West Elm. >



**PAINT**  
 'Eggshell Acrylic'  
 in White Rhino  
 half-strength. \$97/4L,  
 Porter's Paints.

ARTWORKS (OPPOSITE, MIDDLE SHELF, MESSY BEAR DON'T CARE ONE TINY TRIBE, OPPOSITE, BOBOY'S SHELF, ABC), LOVE YOU TOUCAN PRINTS, THIS PAGE, TOP RIGHT, COOLEST KID EVER, BABY, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS BOTH TUCAN PRINTS, 'I LOVED YOU FIRST ONE TINY TRIBE'



**PLAYROOM**

Rachel designed the delightful mountain wall mural in the children's playroom (opposite) by marking up the shapes with masking tape and then had the painters fill in with half-strength Porter's Paints White Rhino. The forward-facing bookshelves mean the titles are easily accessible for tiny hands and the covers create a colourful gallery display. The very sweet toy ironing board was made by Rachel's grandad for her when she was a child.

**OLIVIA'S ROOM**

Rachel took a contemporary approach to Olivia's room (top left), painting the walls in a soft grey to provide a chic backdrop to pretty hints of feminine colour. Playful pink touches appear in Adairs bed backed with lolly pink paper.

**JONATHAN'S ROOM**

Rachel first found this vintage rocking chair (top right) on Ebay and recovered it for Olivia's nursery, then revamped it again for when Jonathan arrived. The boxes here were leftover from the kitchen cabinetry but cleverly repurposed as shelving. "We wanted to go with dark carpet for the kids' rooms," says Rachel of the 'ST Helia' carpet in Gothic from Sovereignty Carpet & Flooring. The darker floors are matched here with walls painted in quarter-strength Porter's Paints White Rhino, which presents the perfect backdrop to allow a mix of lovely decor items to shine, including 'Safari' animal prints by Modern Mix Designs on Etsy (right). The treasured elephant rocker was made by Rachel's grandad. >





**LAUNDRY**  
 Rachel's stunning and spacious laundry mirrors the classic style of her kitchen with Carrara marble benchtops, floor-to-ceiling subway tiles, shaker-style cabinetry and wooden shelves. Charcoal floor tiles provide a contrasting flourish, while framed prints lend a personal touch.

ARTWORKS (OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT), 'BLESSÉD ARE THE CURIOUS...', ONE TINY TRIBE.  
 'MARBLE ABSTRACT', MOORE CREATIVE, 'HELLO PASTEL', YORKELEE, ARTIST UNKNOWN/ACTUAL PAINT.  
 COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION/ILLUSTRATION, KENZIEDESIGN.COM

**SOURCE BOOK**

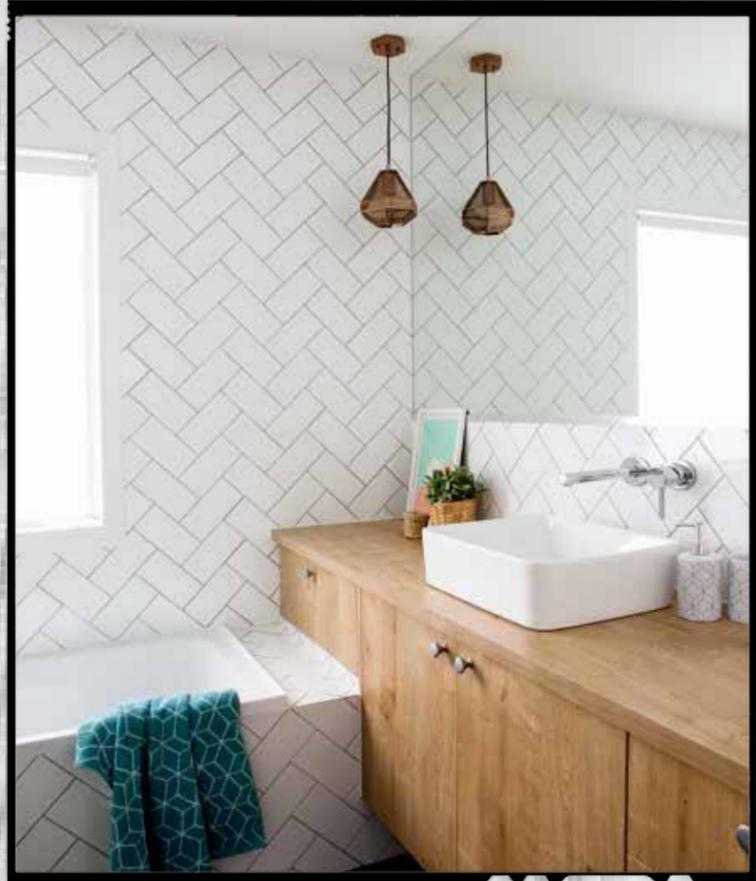


**INSIDE STORY**  
 RACHEL & GLENN'S HOME

**Who lives here?**  
*Rachel, a mathematician; Glenn, an IT sales executive; their children Olivia, three, and Jonathan, one; plus the family's Maltese shih tzu, Holly.*

**What is your favourite room in the house?**  
*Rachel: "The playroom makes my life so much easier, so for that reason I love it. But, on Saturday nights, after the kids are asleep, we've started having date nights on the upstairs deck, so that's become a favourite spot, too."*

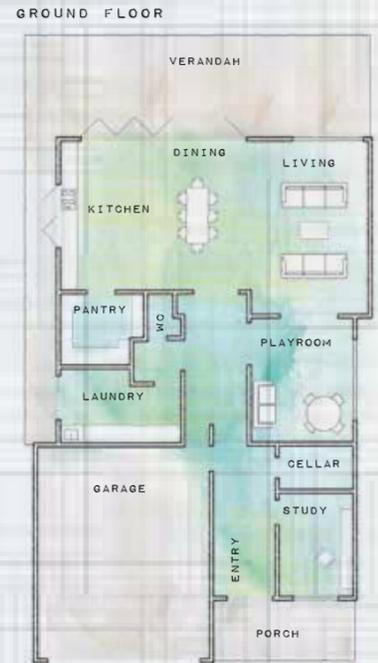
**Your tips on adding character to a home?**  
*"Include homemade, bespoke and second-hand pieces. Most of our regular internal doors are second-hand, while the barn doors were made by our designer Rachael's husband, Simon."*



**BATHROOM**  
 Subway tiles were again used in the family bathroom but laid in a playful herringbone pattern. For further continuity, the same oak veneer used in the kitchen cabinetry

was used here while the copper pendant from Beacon Lighting is the smaller version of one used in the main bedroom's walk-in-robe. The geometric towels were a colourful and cheerful Target find.

**PLANS**



**CONTACTS**

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