

awwash in style



Laundry can be hard labor, but it needn't be done in a dungeon. Even if you have a closet-size or basement laundry area, you can derive inspiration from designer Barbara Sheehan's laundry room.

Sheehan took a guest closet in the back hall of a 1950s Colonial and turned it into a work space reminiscent of an English country manor house. Custom mahogany cabinets, handmade glazed ceramic tile, polished-nickel hardware, and a reproduction antique chandelier are just a few of the classy touches that lend a sophisticated look to a room that in most houses is utilitarian at best. "If you have to spend time in there, put things in there that you enjoy, and don't skimp on materials," Sheehan says.

At just over 7x7 feet, the room's tight dimensions mean every inch has to count. Sheehan found the smallest full-size washer and dryer available—efficient European models—and positioned them below laundry-sorting counters and handsome glass-front cupboards. Between the appliances, another custom cabinet with a granite top serves as the base for a vintage-look concrete washbasin, with a rod for drip-drying mounted on the wall above.

Framed antique textiles, luxuriously full sheer curtains, a bamboo shade, and a houndstooth-pattern area rug lend texture and softness. Let others think you're slaving away on laundry day. We'll never tell.

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Photographer Eric Roth

Location Tara Drive Showhouse, Norwell, Massachusetts

Field editor Estelle Bond Guralnick

OPPOSITE: Layered graphic elements combine with quality materials. **RIGHT:** The stylish yet fully functional sink features a polished-concrete basin and an aged-nickel faucet. **ABOVE LEFT:** Lettering on the glass-panel door emulates the practice of labeling below-stairs rooms in the stately houses of bygone days. **ABOVE RIGHT:** A painted black wooden rod suspends pinch-pleated sheers.



