

Nest Building

by KATE BRIDGER

LEAVE YOUR ELECTRONICS AT THE DOOR

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Recently I was speaking with a client who was considering setting aside one room in her home where all electronic devices would be prohibited. She wanted a place where the noise and bluster of the outside world could briefly be ignored.

Gone are the days when telephones were firmly attached to fixed walls and computers were anything but portable. Today, telephones reside in back pockets and computers fit into the palms of our hands vying for our attention wherever we go.

Once upon a time there was a big heavy TV set in the living room and family members gathered at prescheduled times to watch specific programming together. Today, many homes have multiple TVs around the house and could be watching third world crises in the kitchen, reality shows in the bathroom, soaps in the bedroom and non-stop sports in the den.

Single purpose rooms are rare in modern homes where everything is open and one space flows seamlessly into the next allowing behaviours and activities do the same. People often eat supper on their laps while watching TV, texting a buddy down the street and monitoring e-mails.

At some point in our lives, it all becomes too much. A sanctuary—be it a physical space, or a designated period of time—provides a welcome and necessary reprieve.

My client wants a room where the family can come to listen to one another, or pursue quiet activities; a room full of books, board games and jig saw puzzles; a room where ringing and beeping devices are not allowed to cross the threshold. We're never going to turn off all the wireless devices that surround us—they have their uses and we are very fond of them—but I think an electronics-free zone is an inspired idea that many households may wish to emulate.