

# SHELVES CAN PLAY STARRING AND SUPPORTING ROLES

In a practical sense, shelves store our everyday items: books, photo albums, dishes, memories, artwork. Junk. While doing their mundane work of storing our precious belongings, they can make an impact in a



room, be a thing of beauty, be a divider or define space.

To define space, they can divide rooms while allowing some visual

connection between spaces. In the home photographed, shelves become walls instead of just lining the walls. The shelves create a transition from living room to kitchen, while displaying cookbooks and art objects.

The shelves' different heights create breathing room and openness at eye level, which allows for two-dimensional artwork to rest along the top counter. These shelves are custom-made of Baltic birch, but units could be purchased and stacked or purchased in different sizes to create the same effect.

Shelves can highlight a collection yet remain in the background. To highlight the objects on display, rather than the shelves themselves, paint them to match surroundings and support them on blind cleats, or use an adjustable track system such as Rakks ([www.rakks.com](http://www.rakks.com)). This system also allows you to customize the shelf arrangement based on the height and depth of objects, or to make a grid or pattern with the shelves.

If it is not feasible to have shelves custom-made, there are many options for purchasing shelves.

Atlas Industries has a beautiful modular system of solid woods and steel that can mix and match storage components with shelves to create a functional modern arrangement ([www.atlaseast.com](http://www.atlaseast.com)).

For a more industrial look, we dressed up black metal shelf



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**Shelving doesn't have to be just about storage or display. It can define and divide space and even be a thing of beauty.**

frames in our office material library with medium-density fiberboard shelves instead of the standard pressboard or gray plastic laminate. These Gorilla shelves are available at many hardware stores.

Modern furniture stores Design

With Reach, Ikea and CB2 (all online) sell a variety of simple shelves, from plastic laminate to translucent cubes in playful colors that stack or snap together. In our kid areas, the clutter of small objects is contained by tubs that can be pulled off the shelves. As

the kids grow up and their toys change, the arrangement and tubs can change too, but the shelves can be left as they are.

Reach Lisa Schmitz, owner of Lisa Schmitz Interior Design in Kansas City, at [lisaschmitz@kc.rr.com](mailto:lisaschmitz@kc.rr.com).