



**DESIGNER'S EYE**  
with LAUREN COBURN

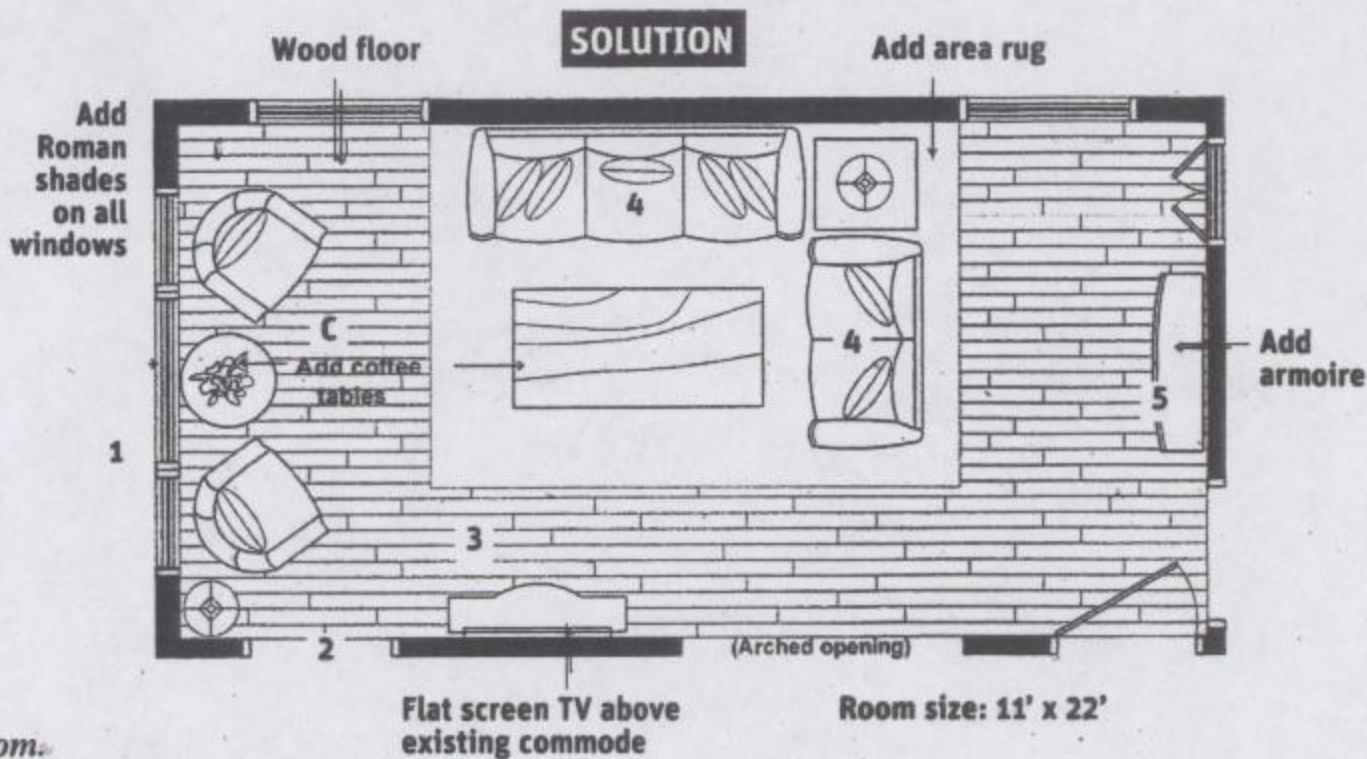
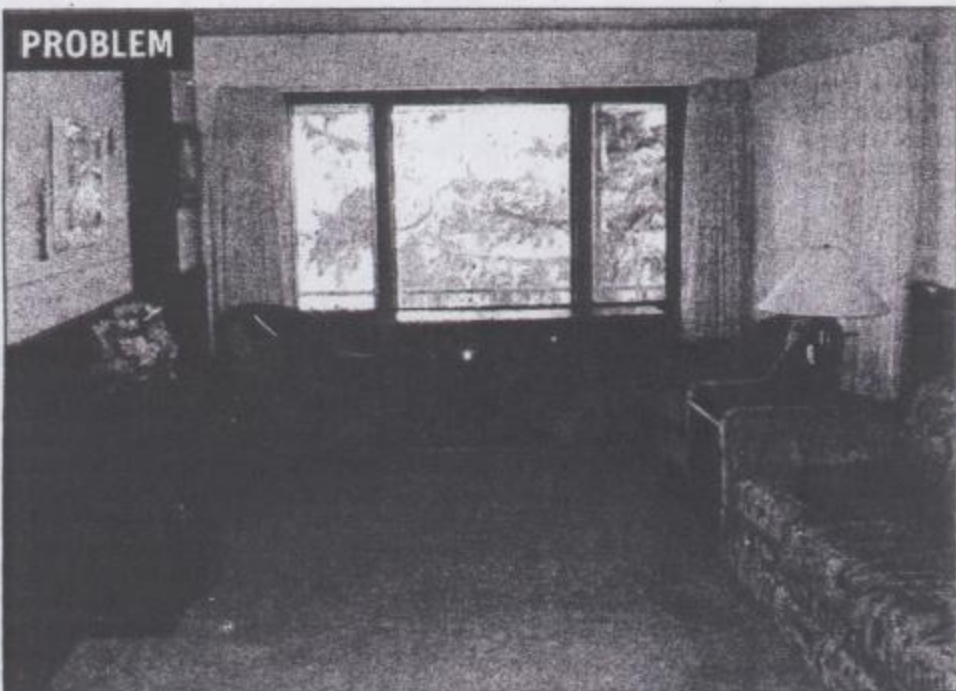
# Impressive openings

Dear Designer's Eye,

My living room is 11 by 22 and is adjacent to the dining room. The front windows overlook the lake. We don't like the tilted mirror over the fake fireplace, the knotty pine lower wall and the outdated carpet. I'm interested in creating a cottage look.

— Linda Timm

## PROBLEM



## DESIGNER'S SUGGESTIONS: Lake views, greenery work nicely together

Dear Reader,

The most impressive elements of your home are the high openings, lake views and greenery (all of which a tall girl like me living in a downtown high-rise can appreciate). My suggestions here will maximize the visual effect of these features and create a country look in a subtle, unpredictable and eclectic way.

**1. Windows:** Your drapes are too short for the windows, and the fabric fills too much of the room. Remove the drapes and replace them with Roman shades, which will make the room appear bigger. Now you'll have space for a large piece of art above the sofa.

**2. Walls:** Painting the knotty pine part of the wall white to match the rest of the wall above it, will provide an interesting textural contrast to create a subtle visual interest. It's important, however, to keep the wood trim on the doorways and other tall openings stained as it is currently, as this look will instantly enhance those tall openings.

**3. Floors:** Since the walls will now be white all the way down to the floor, I recommend removing the carpet and installing wood floors to match the wood trim on the passageways. Then add an area rug to create additional contrast and visual interest.

**4. Furniture:** Reupholster your sofas, add a coffee table, and use fabrics that emphasize and enhance the colors in your rug. Update the space with a flat screen television on the wall across from the sofas. Replace the television stand with a smaller coffee table placed between the chairs to create a second seating area.

**5. Fireplace wall:** To create the illusion of more space, remove the fake fireplace. In its place, you should ef-



ther install built-in bookshelves — which you could fill with your books or with a tasteful collection — or purchase a tall, antique armoire, perhaps in a French country style.

Good luck and don't forget to have fun!

Sincerely,  
Lauren Coburn, IDS  
[www.laurencoburn.com](http://www.laurencoburn.com)

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