

Designer Dan Rak lives with his dog, Gatsby, in this West Loop apartment that Rak has made into a stylish abode.



SKY-HIGH

Faced with a very convenient and lovely rental, designer Dan Rak (danrakdesign.com) used his arsenal of creativity to make this space very much his own.

Interiors photographed by Ryan McDonald

Why this rental? After several years of flipping houses, I decided to take a time-out to reassess the market and where I want to live as my design practice continues to grow. I came across this new luxury rental building in the West Loop. The finishes were excellent, and I was able to hang new light fixtures and paint the walls. When I brought in my furniture and artwork, it really felt like home.

What was your biggest objective? I wanted to highlight the killer views of the West Loop. I kept the furniture low and the color palette muted, so that while it's a warm and inviting environment in the foreground, the focus is really on the views.

Biggest triumph? I'm really pleased with the furniture layout. The unit is rounded, which offers great views but makes furniture placement a bit difficult. I really wrestled with the selections and layout to make sure that the space would not only look natural, but that it would also allow for maximum seating and a comfortable layout. I've been in the space for about a year now, and I'm really happy with how it looks and lives.

Anything you wish you had done differently? I've got a perpetual desire for change. I'm already dreaming up a new color palette for the space and looking at new lighting. A knack for interiors is a blessing and a curse.

Did any family members get a say? Only my dog, Gatsby. He's easy, though—as long as there's room for his bed on the floor of my bedroom, he's a happy camper.



Clockwise from top: Although Rak had no say in the kitchen design or materials, he likes the look, especially the island, which is movable and has open shelving. Combined with the stools from Four Hands, he notes that the island "really elevates the look of the kitchen;" Rak found the mirror and gumball machine while vintage shopping in Michigan. The dresser is by Four Hands, and the chair is from Jayson Home; in the living room, the Loloi rug anchors a sofa by Bernhardt, chairs from Design Within Reach and a lamp from West Elm.