WHAT'S NEW, WHAT'S HOT: 24 HOME PRODUCT PICKS PAGE 53

This Old House

JUNE 2007

18 easy ideas for your

outdoor rooms

relaxing patios
open-air kitchens
backyard fireplaces

Version:0101

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Cover photograph by **Dominique Vorillon**

Styling by **Tristam Steinberg**

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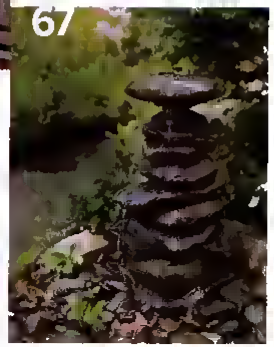

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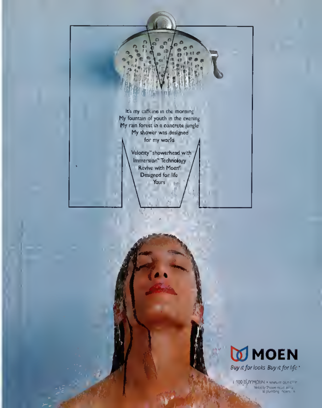

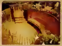

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Foolproof Tool Guide

See the saws, choose among chisels, drill through the drill bits, and more. HUNDREDS OF PHOTOS with useful information on the tools you need in your workshop from *TOH* master carpenter Norm Abram.

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Villa Hoboken

LET'S PUT OUR HEADS TOGETHER, I said to my nephews, who don't entirely resemble the pair on the urn over my shoulder in the photo. We needed to come up with a landscape plan for my backyard—a realistic one. You see, my ideas were foolishly colored by this crazy job I'd had a few years before that took me to Florence and Rome for parties in the gardens of 15th-century palazzi. The courtyards were all beautiful, laid out like rooms, marble fences creating seating areas, fountains offering islands of cool, alcoves with carved benches for quiet chats. Amazing.

But what worked for the Medicis in Florence was not going to work for me in Hoboken. Especially since I only had a 20-by-40-foot patch to begin with and T.J. and Kyle as helpers, at the time aged 8 and 5, respectively. But 8- and 5-year-olds can be smart if you give them the opportunity and when they're not trying to brain each other with garden trowels. Before too long we decided to sod over the weed-covered back half of the yard, which was already surrounded by lilies and shaded by a peach tree. In the corner we'd put a small floor of flagstone and a couple of chairs and a table for a lantern and drinks. Protected by the ceiling of leaves, I'd have something of a lounge, one in which I could relax with a cocktail while they got all hopped up on Mountain Dew and started looking for the garden trowels again.

We rolled out 6-foot lengths of sod, which they liked because it got them filthy, and worked the flagstone into place. It took most of the day to finish. It wasn't the palazzo garden of my dreams, but the time spent building it was special, and I knew it would serve its purpose well. The only thing left to do was go for ice cream. We walked to the scoop shop, the two of them along the way playing a game they invented called Uncle Slap Head. The object of Uncle Slap Head was to jump up and slap me on the top of my head, most hardest slap wins.

Now perhaps you're not bald and your nephews, or children, like games that are a little more wholesome. For them we've got a story on page 88, "Go Outside and Play," in which *TOH* landscape contractor Roger Cook will show you how to build a horseshoe pit and other sport courts. And for the adults in the crowd, we've got "Get Out and Stay Out," on page 74. That story will show you how to plan a backyard room of your own, a kitchen, a pergola, a hammock bower. Drop a line if you need help with the labor. I know these two young brothers.

SCOTT OMELIANUK
EDITOR

with two who don't nephews.

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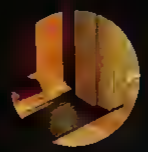

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mail

Landscaping

I think I have Chris Cohan's article ["Small Yard, Big Impact," April] memorized. I have read it that much. Living in the frozen tundra of Indiana, it gave me a few ideas for planting, but most of all I enjoyed the fence. I have constructed a native stone fence down two sides of my yard and was leaning toward iron across the front, but now have decided to go with one similar to yours. I appreciate the detailed construction diagram as I am retired and will have to build it myself. Thanks for some great ideas.

LARRY WISE, BY E-MAIL

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I really enjoyed the story about landscape architect Christopher Cohan's garden. He did an amazing job with a small piece of property! I happen to live in Rye and have always admired that house. I was particularly impressed with all the attention to detail such as the hinges, cutouts, and lighting. Great job!

JENNIFER SWAIN, RYE, N.Y.

Pocket Doors and Plumbing

I very much enjoy the Bath Design section as I am in the planning stages of adding a new master bath. In the April issue the bath has pocket doors that slide into the wall behind both the sink and toilet. In the sink picture the water lines come directly out from the wall. How did they manage to run both the door and the plumbing lines in that same area? Thanks and keep up the great work and generating of great ideas.

MARK CHABALLA, AMBLER, PA.

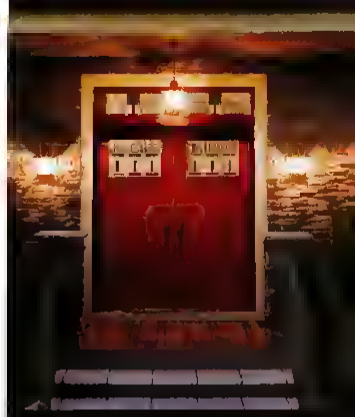
The editors reply: Good question. The designer specified deeper wall framing to allow the water supply and drain lines enough clearance from the frame for the pocket doors.

Newel Posts

Your story on reusing newels ["New Turns for Old Newels," Salvage, April] brought to mind my own. When our local grade school, where four generations of my family graduated, was scheduled to be torn down, I contacted the district superintendent about salvaging a memento. As his family had also gone to the same school, we were on a mission! The item I wanted most was the newel post at the bottom of the staircase coming from the principal's office. When I explained that every member of my family had probably "visited" the principal a time or two and when leaving, swung around that very post, he understood completely! So much so that he took the one at the top of that same staircase. We each have a treasured piece of Kelly Avenue School, Peoria Heights, Ill., and an irreplaceable piece of family history.

ILENE CASEBEER, SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

New ways to make a dramatic entrance.



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around the HOUSE

EDITED BY KELLY BEAMON

Dad Bag

Papa's got a brand-new one

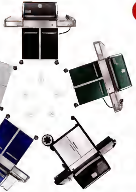
A WISE MAN once said there's a tool for every job, by which he meant tools like adjustable pliers for jobs like fixing a leaky sink. But as any parent will tell you, there are other kinds of leaks, too, and those require a very different set of tools. Which is why child-care product maker Graco designed the Daddy Diaper Bag, a baby friendly version of a tool satchel—the one made by sister company Irwin—that stows all the gear necessary to clean up Junior's plumbing problem. "We took the Irwin design and changed the tool pockets on the inside to hold a bottle and Binkys," says Graco product manager Kerry Strzelecki. It also has a wipes case, changing pad, and resealable plastic pouch for stowing dirty bibs. Six exterior pockets provide a ready handle on rattles and Cheerios. We think it pretty much beats those squishy jobs printed with the powder-blue teddy bear motif. Plus, as soon as the kid is properly potty-trained, you've got a handyman's hand-me-down, able to hold a couple of wrenches, a 16-ounce hammer, nails or screws, and, in the old bottle holder, a can of WD-40. $40 at gracobaby.com. —SALVAGLICA

SPEAKING OF BATTLING LEAKS...

GETTING SOAKED
Burst pipes, drips and leaky toilets combined cause over $1 billion a year in property damage, reports the Insurance Information Institute.

WATER TORTURE
A faucet leaking just two drops per minute can waste up to 105 gallons a year, according to the American Water Works Association.

NOT ANOTHER GREAT WALL?
China's Three Gorges Dam blocks 51 billion cubic feet of water and generates 49 billion kilowatts of power—but displaced more than 100 towns.



THRILL GRILLS

Even if you don t give a burger s flip about the trend in building permanent dining, cooking, and eating spaces outside (see page 74) it has triggered a cooler look in grills, which you can enjoy—and for a fraction of the cost of updating the entire backyard. With these grills, you ll gain storage, expand your prep area, and add color, all without a contractor. 1. Genesis E 310 three-burner, black, $650. 2. Genesis E 310 three-burner, green, $650. 3. Spirit E 310 three-burner, stainless steel cart with black-painted lid, $500. 4. Genesis E 320 with side burner, blue, $700. 5. Summit S-650 with six primary burners, a side burner, smoker box, stainless steel, $1,800. (For models using natural gas, add $20.) For dealers, visit weber.com.

{ ORIGINS QUIZ }

Q A French aristocrat created pruners in 1815. But an easier-to-use ratcheted version was born of a deeper kind of nobility: R. Steuart Florian, owner of the American Standard Company in Connecticut, designed them for his wife's smaller, gentler grip. When did a patent immortalize his act of inventive chivalry?

A. 1966 B. 1899 C. 1951 D. 1872

(turn to Origins Answer, page 18)

10 USES Newspaper

We're all watching more news than we read, but there s still plenty of newspaper to recycle—about 9 million tons every year. Here are other ways to consume the news. —MARK FEIRER

1. **Patch a hole.** To fix small holes in drywall, *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva stuffs wadded newspaper in the breech as a backer for joint compound.
2. **Eat odors.** Work boots smelly? Stuff 'em with newsprint. The odor disappears.
3. **Make animal bedding.** It's warm and healthier than sawdust or straw, since it inherently resists bacteria and is nontoxic if eaten.
4. **Get rolling.** If the car's stuck in mud, sand, or snow, a hefty section of the thick Sunday edition, slipped under the drive wheel, lends enough traction to move you on.
5. **Wrap presents.** The sports section makes a great gift wrap for that new cordless drill Dad s getting on Father's Day.
6. **Make a dry workshop funnel.** After sorting through fasteners spilled out on a section, roll it up and let the hardware slide back into your coffee-can storage.
7. **Sprout something.** *TOH* landscape contractor Roger Cook germinates seeds between two sections of damp newspaper kept in a warm place.
8. **Kindle a fire.** Crumpled newspaper works, but rolling sheets diagonally and tying them in a lazy knot works better, suggests John Gulland of Woodheat.org. The knot concentrates flames in a single area.
9. **Enhance compost.** Add it to an indoor worm bin to feed them—and the decomposition process.
10. **Soften a tomato.** Ross Siragusa, of the California Tomato Growers Association, wraps slightly underdeveloped tomatoes in newsprint. This holds in the ethylene gas the fruit emits, promoting ripening.

Smarter, Faster, Thriftier Composting

TOO BUSY OR TOO LAZY TO COMPOST?
CHEAT A LITTLE WITH THESE TOOLS

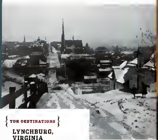
As great as composting is, it's hardly fast. The DIY approach to a leaf bin will have you aerating mixing and monitoring the yield for up to a year before you can use it. Then it's gone in a scoop. If you're impatient or just don't have the backyard for traditional compost steps let these tools help you bend the rules

Zero gumption to start an indoor bin
TRY Compost tea bags. Prepackaged bags fit right in the cupboard One steeped in a gallon of warm water makes enough brew to fertilize a slew of houseplants—or 4,000 square feet $10 for 12 bags, poultrycompost.com > 1

A low tolerance for touching rotting matter
TRY A moisture meter. Compost needs to be only as moist as a wrung out sponge. But who wants to do a squeeze test? This meter once it's calibrated eliminates guesswork—and contaminated hands $100 reotemp.com > 2

A slow-developing bin of kitchen scraps.
TRY Worms in the mix A pound of composting earthworms, called red worms, eat half a pound of food scraps daily processing them quicker than decay alone. Their waste is the fertilizer $20 a pound, yelmworms.com > 3

A small property and no shed
TRY A compact tumbler Just 32 by 33 by 24 inches it fits on a patio or in a small yard And because the mix aerates as the bin tumbles you skip a composting step. $300 gardencomposter.com > 4



{ TOP DESTINATIONS }

LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

Architectural gems abound in this Blue Ridge Mountain town which, unlike lots of other Southern cities survived the Civil War with its structures relatively intact Now home to seven national historic districts, it's buzzing with restoration projects in various stages of completion Decaying Greek Revivals await their turn cheek by jowl with restored Queen Annes Federal-style buildings house restaurants bars and hotels So impressive is the revitalization that the National Trust for Historic Preservation gave the city its 2006 Great American Main Street Award.

The annual James River Batteau Festival—which commemorates the town's origins as a launching point for flat-bottomed boats transporting the colonial era cash crop of tobacco to Richmond—is a chance to see things close-up Reenactments of these river rides occur on June 15 and 16. For more information visit lynchburghistoricalfoundation.org —KEITH PANDOLFI

TOP An 1858 photo of the Daniel's Hill Historic District. ABOVE The restored 1855 Court House

{ ORIGINS · ANSWER }

Q/A **A.** 1966 Florian's pruners use a mechanical ratcheting system to increase hand strength up to seven times. His son Nat, American Standard's current president, says the ratcheting system in the pruners is similar to that used in a car jack.

OLD BEFORE THEIR TIME

SOME ACCENTS GET A WORN-IN LOOK BEFORE THEY HIT THE STORE SHELF

New houses aren't usually brimming with character. Which is why so many of us love old places, with their patina of history and architectural detail: their drafty rooms, balky furnaces, groaning floorboards, leaky roofs, cracking plaster. Getting the picture? Face it. The charm wears off when the lock rusts over or molding finally cracks beyond repair. But fortunately, manufacturers are making it easy to opt for the new and still end up with the best of the old. Witness an expanding array of products manipulated to simulate years of use. A sampling we've gathered: spans cabinets whipped with coat hangers, prealligatored wall covering, and objects covered in moss or rust that's usually the result of years of neglect—now handily applied at the factory. —ALEX JACOBS

1 Pine cabinet with hand-applied pegs and warm hale imperfections. $140, qcc.com. 2 Cabinet faux aged with rubbed paint finish. $183, qcc.com. 3 Terra-cotta urn. $29, smithandhawken.com. 4 Terra cotta dove. $12, smithandhawken.com. 5 Cast-iron window latch, comes pre-rusted. $12, houseofantiquehardware.com. 6 Wall covering precracked on a specially treated backing. $44 per yard, mdcwall.com.

OR, IF YOU PREFER THE NEW THINGS YOU BUY TO LOOK NEW...

High style is no longer the province of the hip, the cool, and the cutting-edge. In fact, even the most basic aspects of your home and its systems—that yellowing smoke alarm in the kitchen, for instance—could be made sleeker and less institutional looking. Not that a thermostat or grille should steal the show, but these are much better complements to any room.

1 > **VA-VA VENT** This bathroom exhaust fan has aerodynamic grilles. $311, broan.com.

2 > **HOT SMOKE ALARM** It sounds off with your prerecorded voice; the curvy casing awakens the eye. $40, signelonesafety.com.

3 > **COOL THERMOSTAT** Interchangeable plastic covers camouflage the maker's standard thermostat in six finishes, including chrome and leather. $25 each, residential.carrier.com.

4 > **SLEEK METER** The egg-shaped detector connects to your toilet's plumbing, stopping the flow when it detects a leak. You won't mind if you catch a glimpse. $120, aquasone.com.

5 > **SAVVY SWITCHPLATE** Elegant in its understatement, this dimmer controls both lights and ceiling fan. You control the mood. $75, lutron.com. —NATALIE RODRIGUEZ

PHOTOS: KEATE

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05-1124 Revised: Apr., 2006

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Problem:
Frequent hosts needed room to prepare dinner parties for up to 20

Solution:
Annex adjacent nooks to add a second prep and cleanup area. Here's how »

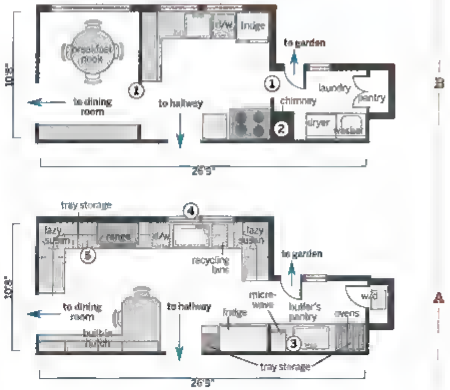
BY **KELLY BEAMON**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **DAVID FENTON**

BUYING INTO A FORMER RENTAL can mean inheriting some slipshod spaces. While the footprint of this San Francisco kitchen may have been original to the 1928 apartment, the contents—including the electric stove and vinyl floor—were left over from a more recent, none-too-lavish remodel. The couple renting it loved to cook and had put up with the cheap redo for several years before the unit was put on the market. Three years later, after buying it and socking away some cash, they set about remaking the kitchen with enough room and storage to accommodate prepping for their frequent dinner parties.

Designer Beth Laughlin found room to expand by taking down a wall that divided the space from an adjacent breakfast nook at one end, and removing a sliver of wall with a doorway to the laundry area at the other. Now one continuous galley, the enlarged kitchen has a peninsula with two stools where friends can hang out while the hosts are at the stove. There are two distinct prep-and-cleanup zones: one along the original sink wall and another in a butler's pantry alcove (where the washer and dryer had stood), complete with double ovens and the all-important second sink. "Having another sink definitely helps when we're getting a meal and the table ready for guests," says the husband. "It also speeds cleanup afterward." Soft-green granite covers five times more counter space than the kitchen had before, and a mix of flat-panel and beadboard-front cabinets—including a built-in hutch with vintage-style crystal knobs—triples the storage. Newly milled baseboard rings new oak flooring, both made to match originals in the rest of the rooms. The result: a gourmet kitchen that blends beautifully with its period surroundings.

BEFORE: The bare-bones space narrowed at one end with a doorway to the laundry area. AFTER: White-painted glass-front cabinets, beadboard accents, and a light fixture with a vintage look make for a kitchen that's at home in the 1920s apartment.

B BEFORE. The original kitchen was walled off from the breakfast nook and the laundry area. AFTER: By removing walls and annexing the adjacent spaces, the new design more than doubles the workable square footage and transforms the kitchen into a long galley that narrows at one end



The Plan

>> Expand in two directions within the original footprint, then relocate bulky appliances to a second work zone.

What They Did

1 | DEMOLISHED INTERIOR WALLS. Taking over the breakfast nook added 80 square feet of space to the kitchen. Removing a wall with a doorway gave back the laundry alcove.

2 | TOOK OUT A CHIMNEY. Originally next to the laundry area, it was removed to make way for the second prep-and-cleanup zone. The contractor was able to remove the nonworking clay flue and seal it off at the bottom, since the apartment occupies the building's top floor.

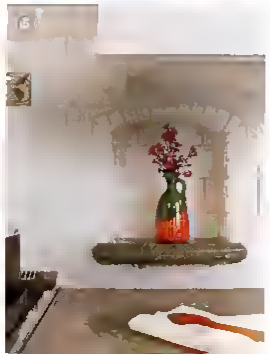
3 | REARRANGED LARGE APPLIANCES. The fridge and wall ovens were placed on either side of the secondary sink. The new six-burner cooktop and dishwasher sit to the left of the main sink, which wasn't relocated.

4 | REVISED THE WINDOWS. To make up for the loss of a large window in the eating area (needed to make room for the range hood and more cabinets), the sink window was enlarged by a foot along the sides and at the top with the addition of a fanlight.

5 | ADDED PREP AND STORAGE AREAS. The new kitchen is ringed with countertops for fixing meals and upper and lower cabinets to hold cookware. Custom inserts organize specialty gear, including undercounter lazy Susans in two corners for small appliances. Vertical compartments next to the fridge, over the ovens, and to one side of the cooktop stow cutting boards, cookie sheets, and baking tins. "Most people don't realize how much vertical storage they need," says designer Beth Laughlin.

FLOOR PLAN: JAN WORDLE

"When I start a project, I like to take stock of the small appliances and cookware in a kitchen, then see if I can design cabinet interiors to organize the client's inventory." —BETH LAUGHLIN KITCHEN DESIGNER



The Details

>>An arch motif helped give the galley kitchen a vintage look that blends with the home's 1920s style

1 **NEW ARCHED DOORWAYS** in the kitchen looked so authentic that the couple added more in the apartment's other rooms. The curves are repeated in the fanlight over the sink, the edge of the custom exhaust hood—and in tiled niches on either side of the cooktop. The adjustable-cord pendant light is a new interpretation of an early-20th-century shop task lamp.

2 **TOUCHES OF BEADBOARD** on the Brookhaven cabinets—custom range hood, end interior of the built-in hutch—mixed in with flat-panel door and drawer fronts—give the cabinetry personality and old-fashioned charm.

3 **A CLUSTER OF APPLIANCES,** including the paneled 48-inch KitchenAid refrigerator and Dacor wall ovens, flanks the secondary sink from Rohl near the old laundry area, where a butler's pantry alcove serves as a second prep and cleanup zone. Old-fashioned ring pulls and cabinet knobs complement the classic style of the cabinets.

4 **WHITE SUBWAY TILE** covers the backsplash. It's interspersed with green and pink flower tiles, which the wife chose to suit the traditional style of the home and her husband's love of gardening.

5 **GRANITE COUNTERTOPS** made of sage-green Costa Smeralda are veined like marble—which would have been the period-appropriate choice—but are far more stain-resistant. Arched tiled niches flanking the cooktop hold accent pieces and cooking oils.

For tips on keeping your granite countertop stain-free, thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

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Shutter Selections

>> Batten down (and dress up) the hatches of your home with traditional window shutters

BY NATALIE RODRIGUEZ
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIKA LARSEN

SHADOWY SHUTOUT
Darkly painted shutters like this forest green one with recessed panels offer an eye catching contrast to any light-hued home. 16 by 47 in. $175 per pair, unfinished. vixenhill.com

IT'S SPRING. Birds are singing, flowers are blooming, and you're finally getting to that list of upkeep projects you brainstormed all winter long. You've replaced the roof shingles and added a fresh coat of paint to the wood siding, but your home's exterior still feels unfinished. Ah, the house of perpetual renovation—maybe it's the trim color that needs to be changed? Then suddenly you realize what's missing: shutters. Once needed for safety—protecting household occupants and expensive glass panes from the elements—they're now unnecessary in all but the most hurricane- and tornado-prone areas. And yet, there's nothing like them to give your home a boost of curb appeal. Check out the following pages for tips on getting the right style of shutters for your home.

RAISE EXPECTATIONS
Don't forget to dress up smaller-than-average gable or attic windows with custom-sized panels. Give the exterior some bounce and flavor with bright red shutters that pop against light-colored siding. 12½ by 27 in. $80 per pair. atlanticshuttersystems.com

EASY BREEZY
Splash a dash of tropical fun with a brightly painted Bermuda shutter. Most popular down south and in the Caribbean, these louvered panels allow air to circulate while blocking out the harsh sun. Hinged from the top, one panel will cover an entire window. 28 by 47 in., $323, unfinished; timberlane.com

NATURAL STUD
A stained hardwood shutter with hand-forged hardware and vertical stiles adds a touch of age-old craftsmanship to any abode. 13 by 48 in., $272 per pair; coppermoonwoodworks.com

BUILD YOUR SKILL
Learn more about painting movable louver shutters. **Workshop**, p. 105

MESSAGE IN A SHUTTER
Let your neighbors in on your quirky personality with a whimsical sailboat or squirrel cut into the wood panels. Or try the traditional symbol of welcome, the pineapple. 18 by 48 in., $206 per pair, unfinished; shuttercraft.com

FIRST-STORY VANGUARD
For restoration purists, putting paneled shutters anyplace but on the first floor would be a design faux pas. Traditionally, they were bolted when closed and were a line of defense against burglars. 16 by 60 in., $300 per pair, unfinished; artifexshutters.com

LOOKING GLASS
You don't have to board up your windows completely to get the light-control benefits of louvers. A half-glass shutter gives you the best of both worlds. 12 by 48 in., $550 per pair, unfinished; signatureshutters.com

Capping the top of your shutters with a strip of copper will fend off damage from rainwater.

For how to repair and rehang old exterior shutters, go to **thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts**

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FALL IN LINE
Bring some symmetry—and a punch of color—to your home's exterior with peach painted louvered shutters on both the top and bottom stories. 16 by 60 in. $300 per pair, unfinished. artifexshutters.com

THE ORIGINAL
Perfect for a rustic log cabin or charming country cottage, simple unpainted board and batten shutters were originally used by colonial settlers to protect their diamond paned windows. 16 by 40 in. $181 per pair, unfinished. shuttercraft.com

EYEBROW LIFTER
Match the arched window casings of your Italianate home with a curved shutter that's half paneled, half-louvered. 14 by 40 in. $295 per pair, unfinished. shuttercraft.com

When louvered shutters are closed, their slats should be slanted away from the house so that rain doesn't pool on the window casings.

Handy Hardware

...need the appropriate hardware. While an Acme full-...rter hinge will do the trick (1), it's pure function. Just as practical and more stylish are metal tiebacks, or shutter dogs, which attach to the exterior walls and pivot to open and close panels. While a popular design is the S-shape, also known as a rat's tail, there are other motifs, such as grapes. If you have wood siding, you can use a plate-mounted shutter dog (2). Otherwise, you'll need a lag-mounted one (3) that bolts directly into your home's exterior. The hardware should be placed toward the bottom center of the shutters, so you can easily reach out to turn them.

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Planting in Pots

>> Container gardens are a movable feast for the senses. Here's how to assemble and care for knockout combinations

BY **JEANNE HUBER** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MICHAEL SKOTT**

THE INGREDIENTS Clockwise from left: Container garden essentials include a pot with a flared mouth, potting soil, a trowel, slow-release fertilizer beads, a mix of plants, feet to elevate containers and keep from trapping moisture on wooden decks, pruners to tidy up plants, pottery shards to place over drainage holes, and gardening gloves.

CONTAINERS ALLOW YOU TO GARDEN where there's no ground to till, brightening up the patios, porches, decks, and stoops where we linger on long summer days. They also let you skip the major digging and weed pulling of backyard gardening and fast-forward to the fun: designing, planting, and enjoying. You get just enough dirt under your fingernails to feel like you've accomplished something.

Pairing up pots and plants in pleasing compositions, you can even work in perennials, grasses, and dwarf evergreen shrubs to provide year-round interest. Best of all, container gardens are close-up delights. They invite you to slow down, notice the details, and savor the scents.

Here's how to pot up some gems.

1 PICK A POT

Unless you're set on specific plants, it's best to pick the pot before you decide what's going in it. Look for ones in a style that suits your home. Classical urns look great on stone patios or flanking the front entry of a formal house, while clean-lined geometric shapes complement modern settings. Muted neutral colors emphasize the plants, while vivid ones draw more attention to the pots themselves. If you're going for a grouping, an odd number of pots generally looks better than an even-numbered collection.

Aesthetics aside, there are also practical concerns when picking pots. For a mixture of plants, look for containers at least 12 inches wide. Annuals usually need at least 8 inches of soil depth, while grasses and shrubs may need two or three times that amount. The ideal container has straight sides or ones that flare out at the top for easy access. If you'll be placing pots on a deck or a rooftop, look for lightweight materials, such as metal or composite. These and some glazed ceramic pots also have the advantage of being nonporous, so they keep soil moister. Porous unglazed terra-cotta gets a wonderful patina over time but allows soil to dry out more quickly.

Any pot needs drainage holes so roots don't get waterlogged; these should be covered with pottery shards, stones, or a small piece of screening to keep soil from migrating out. If containers sit on a wooden deck, consider using pot feet or a plant stand to elevate them so that the decking doesn't stay wet, which will lead to rot.

2 ASSEMBLE THE PLANTS

Think beyond one-note plantings of marigolds or impatiens. For a long-lasting display, combine showy annuals with ornamental grasses, shrubs that change leaf color in the fall, or dwarf evergreens. Go for a mix of colors, textures, and foliage types. A tall grass, a delicate vine, and a plant with large, interesting leaves make a good combination. "A vertical element is important to give the planting height," says Gabrielle Whiton, a container-plant specialist at Bainbridge Gardens, a nursery on Washington's Bainbridge Island. She often starts with a dwarf conifer, then selects lower-growing and trailing plants to go around its base. One of those might be a flowering perennial or annual in a 4-inch container. She places this, pot and all, into the soil at the front of a large container. Once the blossoms fade, she can pull out the small pot and put in a new one with a plant just coming into bloom. She also likes to echo the pot color in her plantings.

To balance form and proportion in a pot, Ellen Zachos, owner of Acme Plant Stuff in New York City, which creates and maintains container gardens, relies on her own catchy recipe of "thrillers, fillers, and spillers." Thrillers are tall plants that go in the center or back, fillers are medium-size plants that fill out the middle, and spillers gracefully trail or cascade over the edge to soften the pot's hard edges. "Resist the urge to crowd in too many different things," says Ellen Zachos, who likes to stick to three to five types, tops. "A lot of plants are fine, but a lot of different kinds of plants starts to look messy."

Unless you need a deck decoration for a party next weekend, select plants that are relatively small and let them fill out. Avoid buying ones whose roots stuff the nursery container. Dense root balls shed water, so these plants may become parched once you repot them, even if you water often. Pair up plants that are suited to the same exposure, whether sun, part sun, or shade, and that have similar water requirements.

3 DEAL WITH THE DIRT

Since ordinary garden soil is too heavy and can introduce disease, be sure to use a bagged planting mix or a homemade equivalent. Products labeled "potting soil" contain sterilized soil and other ingredients, while "soilless mixes" consist mostly of peat moss or peat substitutes, compost, and perlite or vermiculite to keep it loose. Soilless mixes weigh less but dry out faster, but some plants, such as succulents, prefer them. For a homemade batch, mix five parts compost with one part builder's sand, one part vermiculite or perlite, and one-quarter part dry organic fertilizer.

Whichever medium you use, check to see if it contains slow-release fertilizer; if not, consider mixing in some granules at planting time.

4 PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE

If you are growing shallow-rooted specimens in tall pots, you might want to fill in the bottom half with lightweight materials such as broken terracotta pot shards or Styrofoam packing peanuts. This promotes drainage and prevents waterlogged soil. Start planting in the center or with the largest specimen and work outward, scooping and filling as needed so that the plants wind up with soil at the same level that they had in the original containers—1 to 2 inches below the lip of the pot. Give plants a thorough drink, using a watering can or a soft-spray nozzle on a hose. Check the level of the soil again and add more if necessary.

Keep watering often—whenever the soil is dry 2 to 3 inches below the surface—and fertilize regularly (if you haven't used slow-release beads), following package directions. Clip off spent blossoms or branches that grow too long. With just this minimal maintenance, your container gardens will flourish all summer long, and—depending on what you've planted—even beyond. ■

MIX UP SOME ORNAMENTAL EDIBLES This miniature kitchen garden, for full sun conditions, will provide culinary herbs and fresh berries all season long. It starts with (A) tall bay (*Laurus nobilis*). Other plants include (B) upright rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Roman Beauty'), (C) spearmint (*Mentha spicata* 'Kentucky Colonel') (D) lemon thyme (*Thymus citriodorus*) and (E) golden-leaved alpine strawberry (*Fragaria vesca* 'Golden Alexandria').

TAKE THE CONTAINER COLOR INTO ACCOUNT If you find a pot in a color you love, play it up with the plantings. In this full sun mix, blue and yellow-green foliage and pink flowers enhance the planter's teal-rimmed golden yellow, including (F) dwarf cypress (*Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'True Blue') (G) blue oat grass (*Helictotrichon sempervirens*), (H) 'Glacier Blue' euphorbia (I) pink miniature petunias, and (J) creeping thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* 'Silver Posie')

DESIGN WITH MOVEMENT IN MIND If you've got a sunny spot where a gentle wind blows, take advantage of your site conditions with vines and grasses that'll catch the breeze. Here (K) New Zealand wind grass (*Anemanthele lessoniana* or *Stipa arundinacea*) adds height, while (L) 'Jade Dragon' euphorbia—which produces chartreuse flower bracts in late spring/early summer—fills in the middle, and (M) creeping wire vine (*Muehlenbeckia axillaris*) spills over the edge

For more container garden ideas go to thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

USE SUNNY SHADES TO BRIGHTEN SHADY SPOTS Though white-flowering plants are often suggested to light up dark areas, container designer Gabrielle Whiton thinks yellow does the job best. Here she used (N) Picturata aucuba (*Aucuba japonica*) which has splashes of yellow on its leaves, to provide a lot of height against (O) dwarf hinoki cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana'), a conifer that grows only 1 to 2 feet high. Lower growing (P) yellow violas (*Viola cornuta* 'Yellow Delight') serve as filler, though over time they will join (Q) variegated periwinkle (*Vinca major* 'Expotiora') in spilling over the pot's edges

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

Commercial fixtures like these pendants, salvaged from a diner in New York's Catskill Mountains region, make great kitchen task lights over a cooking island or breakfast bar

Old Light for a New Look

>> Hang a vintage fixture to give a style boost to a bedroom, dining room, or hallway

BY AMY R. HUGHES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTINE LARSEN

TODAY YOU HAVE ONLY TO FLIP A SWITCH. But in the late 18th century, lighting a chandelier was… difficult. After climbing the ladder—or more likely steadying yourself on a chair—and lifting the heavy wrought-iron fixture off its giant hanging hook, you then had to break out the tools: tinder box, striker, and scissor snuffer. Candlewicks couldn't just be lit, they required frequent trimming to keep them from smoking up the house.

I tell you this not to discourage you from hanging a period light fixture above your dining table but to demonstrate how far household lighting has come. Plus, most of the chandeliers and pendant lamps that you're likely to find dangling from the rafters in architectural salvage and antiques shops are far less troublesome.

Thank Thomas Edison for that. In 1879, he invented the first commercially viable incandescent lightbulb and, more important, the electric lamp to power it. That meant Americans could stop fussing with candles and later gas fixtures. Victorian-era urbanites who were wealthy enough to take advantage of gaslight technology, which preceded electricity in the home, converted their elegant "gasoliers," swapping out jets for sockets and running wires through piping that previously pulsed with fuel.

These converted fixtures are among the most expensive today. They are also some of the most opulent, with cast brass or bronze arms decorated with floral, animal, and human forms, and with hand-blown glass shades, often in brilliant colors. One such chandelier, with ram's-head castings and frosted glass shades, salvaged from a late-19th-century Second Empire–style mansion in Bar Harbor, Maine, costs $8,500 at Blue Dolphin Antiques in nearby Northport.

TIP > **You can tell a converted gaslight by its shades, which are open at the top and point upward to promote combustion.** Shades on electric fixtures often point down for more efficient lighting and can be open or closed.

TOP LEFT: This four-arm brass fixture with scarlet shades shaped like tulips dates to the 1920s. TOP RIGHT: The medieval look of this pot-metal pendant with hand-painted flowers would complement an Arts and Crafts interior.

More common, and typically less expensive, are hanging lights made during the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, when companies such as Lightolier in New York City were mass-producing fixtures for the millions of new homes, as well as schools and commercial buildings, being built with central electricity. The styles of these lights run the gamut from a hammered-copper pendant with an amber-color bowl-shaped shade for a Craftsman bungalow to a flashy chandelier dripping with crystal teardrops for the grand foyer of a Colonial Revival.

My favorites are the clean-lined Moderne lights popularized after the Paris Exposition Des Arts Decoratifs in 1925, because nearly a century later they still look contemporary. I recently bought such a fixture, with a milky-white and clear glass shade shaped like an inverted wedding cake, for $125 at Zaborski Emporium in Kingston, New York. Now hanging in my bedroom, it's infinitely more stylish than the nondescript home-center light the previous owners of my Art Deco apartment had installed. It's also from the right design era, which is an important factor to consider when buying a salvaged fixture. For interiors without a discernible architectural style, choose lights that match the size and scale of the room. For instance, a flush-mount light will fit in far better than a large chandelier in a narrow hallway. Coordinating the color of a glass shade with furniture, paint, or an area rug will help marry your lighting and decorating schemes.

Once you've got the aesthetics figured out, the installation is simple enough (see how at right). No electrician—or lamplighter or candle snuffer, for that matter—required. ■

How I Swapped in a Vintage Light

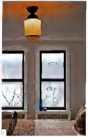
Of all the salvage projects I've done, installing this lightweight fixture was by far the easiest. To do it yourself, all you need is 30 minutes, some basic tools (ladder, screwdriver, wire nuts, circuit tester), and the pain-relieving tablet of your choice—I don't care how many bicep curls you do at the gym, it hurts to hold your arms above your head for that long. Here's the step-by-step:

1 > Cut power to the existing fixture at the breaker. Check to see if there is still electricity flowing by using a circuit tester and flipping the wall switch on and off.
2 > Release the fixture by unscrewing the nuts on its housing (A), and disconnect the hot black and neutral white wires coming out of the metal box in the ceiling from those on the fixture. You may also need to disconnect a third ground wire (usually green or bare copper).
3 > Install a crossbar mounting bracket (kits are available at lighting supply stores), using the hardware provided.
4 > Connect the white wire in the ceiling to the white wire on the fixture by twisting the ends and then screwing on a wire nut (B). Repeat the process with the black wires and with the ground wires, if you have them.
5 > Position the new fixture over the screws on the mounting bracket, and secure using the nuts provided.
6 > Screw in a lightbulb and secure the glass shade (C).
7 > Turn the power back on at the breaker and flip the switch on your new light (D).

A

B

C



D

BUILD YOUR SKILL Learn how to rewire an old light fixture. Workshop, p. 105

Choose the right energy-saving bulbs for your vintage light: thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

Not Too Slick

>>When the dream of first-time home ownership turns into a nightmare

BY **MARK COHEN**
ILLUSTRATIONS BY **SERGE BLOCH**

I'LL NEVER FORGET the first time I laid eyes on my house. It was a perfect spring day, morning sun glinting off the white clapboard siding, a cascade of pink cherry blossoms spilling onto the newly tiled roof of the den. If it wasn't the cutest Dutch Colonial Revival I had ever seen, it was easily the cutest my wife and I had seen that we could afford in 12 months of increasingly frantic searching. It was the sort of house I could imagine raising a family in.

Now it is three-and-a-half years later, and the object of that infatuation dangles bare-bottomed 20 feet in the air. Hoisted up and moved into the backyard, it hovers above the rim of a 30-foot-deep mud pit where the foundation used to be. The crater swarms with backhoes, chain-smoking construction workers, and rumbling dump trucks hauling contaminated dirt. The heavy industrial odor of home heating oil permeates the air.

I always wanted to own the kind of house that stops traffic, and now I do. All day long, cars slow at the curb, drivers and passengers craning for a better view of the worst, most expensive environmental disaster in the history of my tiny New Jersey town. Jaws drop in fascinated horror. Oversimulated toddlers bounce up and down in their car seats.

The reaction is understandable. Our homes, after all, aren't just where we live. They're where we invest our dreams—

All day long, cars slow at the curb, drivers craning their necks for a better view of the worst, most expensive environmental disaster in the history of my town.

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Send in a 115-word or less essay describing something shocking you experienced during a home inspection to toh_marketing@timeinc.com. Our editors will select a submission to be featured in the This Old House Blueprint promotions page.

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and our savings. They're supposed to be our rock, our firmament; the ground isn't supposed to come out from under them—or us. But what the rubberneckers don't realize is that the horror show they see before them could be worse. I could be still battling insurance companies, racking up $10,000 a month in legal bills, hearing about my wife's latest research on the best Latin American countries for fleeing the new bankruptcy laws, and watching her health and my work performance steadily decline under the unrelenting distraction and stress. Compared with all that, this is practically cause for a party.

We got our first inkling that the house wasn't going to be the turnkey operation we were expecting it to be during the home inspection. The inspector—a frustrated comedian hand-picked by our real estate agent, he spent most of his time cracking one-liners—detected a "slight" leak in the underground oil storage tank. My wife, ever the pessimist, worried this was a bad sign. I told her I would check with our experts, but I was sure it wasn't a big deal. A lifelong renter, I, of course, hadn't the slightest idea what I was talking about. I had no idea, for example, that the life span of an underground steel tank is 10 to 50 years, and that the one rusting beneath my future driveway was pushing 75. Or that the insurance industry has increasingly rewritten the fine print in its policies to exclude paying for just this kind of scenario. Or that on the list of issues that should give one pause about buying a house, deal-killers like failing septic tanks, termite-gnawed support beams, and nuclear cooling towers in the backyard, a leaking underground storage tank ranks right at the top. Nor did my "experts" see fit to enlighten me on these matters. To the contrary, our agent, our harried closing attorney, and the guy who answered the phone at the oil company all seemed to agree: It wasn't a big deal. The seller had an insurance policy on the tank, and the policy transferred with the deed to the house.

Three months after the closing, the remediation firm called with some, ahem, bad news. The oil had leached into the groundwater and encroached a few feet onto my neighbor's side of the property line. "Okay," I said. "So why don't you just clean it up?"

"Well, sir, as I'm sure as your attorney explained to you, both those conditions void our coverage."

Several phone calls and Xanax later, I had managed to convince myself that my crack advisers knew what they were talking about when they insisted that this, too, wasn't a big deal. "Right, yeah, well, this happens sometimes," I was assured with confidence. All I had to do now was have the previous owner submit a claim under her homeowner's insurance policy.

By November, the seller's insurance company had also rejected the claim, she'd hired a lawyer, and I was starting to suspect my experts wouldn't recognize a big deal if it was advertised on a turnpike billboard. Then one Friday evening, after several days of rain, I arrived home from work and was hit with a smell eerily reminiscent of some other

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not-so-scenic turnpike roadside attractions. My wife greeted me with that strange, glassy-eyed expression commonly found in teenage buffers of model airplane glue. "I thought I smelled something,' she admitted, "but I wasn't sure." When we made our way to the basement and saw a viscous brown ooze seeping through seams in the vinyl tile, the last shred of doubt left the building. We were screwed.

But not as screwed as we would be. Oh no. My oil spill would take many, many, many more turns for the worse before it was done with me. That "few feet" it had spread onto my neighbor's property? Actually, it was more like a few dozen that extended in an amoeba-like sprawl clear into the middle of his yard and under a portion of his house. My spill was like some extraterrestrial creature that only grew larger the more money I spent trying to delineate it. It flowed uphill. It contained levels of contamination the likes of which the environmental consultants had never seen. They'd hold their meters up to the soil samples, and the little needles would arc to the last hatch in the danger zone and then just collapse back to zero, as if giving up.

By the time the consultants had taken some semblance of a final measure of the thing, the estimated cleanup costs were pushing $500,000 if I chose to move my domicile (if I underpinned it, the tab jumped to $600,000). Four different insurance companies and seven lawyers were arrayed against us at this point, my legal bills topping $100,000, my $115,000 home equity line down to its last $14.36. That's when I had to make perhaps the hardest call in my adult life, and ask my father for a loan so we could keep going.

As it happens, I don't think the insurance companies were counting on Dad stepping up to the plate. Because just eight months and $60,000 later, they met our demands, or at least enough of them that we could begin planning to excavate half our block.

Not long ago my wife asked me a question that she'd never posed in quite the same way before: "Why did you keep going?" The answer seemed so obvious that at first I didn't know what to say. "Well, you know, I was fighting for my life in there." She looked at me quizzically, and that's when I realized that as awful as the ordeal had been for her, it had been worse for me in one crucial respect. At least she had piped up with her reservations during the inspection. I, on the other hand, the man of the house who was supposed to protect us in such matters and provide for our future, had allowed my dreams for us to blind me into taking the advice of a home-heating-oil salesman, a hopelessly overbooked closing attorney with a shabby office above a pizza parlor, and a small-town real estate agent caught up in the biggest housing boom in U.S. history. Certainly lots of home buyers make mistakes, and the usual advice is not to beat yourself up too much about them. But somehow I didn't see me letting myself out of the ring anytime soon.

As I write this, the backhoes and dump trucks are closing in on the last few of the 1,050 tons of contaminated dirt they will remove from my property. More loads of clean dirt and crushed stone arrive daily. Then next week the contractors show up to start laying the footings for my new basement. In the plans it's a beautiful basement—six 22-inch-high windows, foundation constructed of the latest steel-reinforced Styrofoam insulated concrete forms, Energy Star natural gas furnace. When they're done with it, I'm even planning to have them keep going and frame out a little cathedral-ceilinged addition above the den, right where the cherry blossoms used to hang. Sadly, we had to lose the tree. But I think we managed to save the dream. ■

Mark Cohen recently convinced his neighbors to disconnect their own underground oil tank.

Share Your Misery

Got a homeowner's horror story of your own? Tell us about it at: **thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts**

I didn't know my High Blood Pressure could lead to Erectile Dysfunction (ED).

My doctor told me LEVITRA could help.

LEVITRA is a prescription medicine for the treatment of ED.
If you have ED and high blood pressure, ask your doctor about LEVITRA.

Important Safety and Dosing Information

Men taking nitrate drugs, often used to control chest pain (ally [illegible] should not take LEVITRA. Such combi[illegible] could cause blood pressure to drop to an unsafe level. A[illegible] with ED [illegible] are risk of an erection lasting [illegible] hours. To avoid long term injury seek immediate medical attention [illegible] LEVITRA does not protect against sexually [illegible] disease. In rare instances men taking PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicine including LEVITRA) reported [illegible] decrease or loss of vision in one or both eyes. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to [illegible] medicines or to other factors. If you experience sudden decrease or loss of vision stop taking PDE5 inhibitors including LEVITRA and call a doctor right away. Discuss your medical conditions including heart problems and medications including alpha blockers prescribed for prostate problems or high blood pressure with your doctor to ensure LEVITRA is right for you and that you are healthy enough for sexual activity. The starting dose of LEVITRA is 10 mg taken no more than once per day. Your doctor will decide the dose that is right for you. In patients taking alpha blockers your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA. In patients taking certain medications such as ritonavir, indinavir, ketoconazole, itraconazole, and erythromycin lower doses of LEVITRA are recommended and time between doses of LEVITRA may need to be extended. In clinical trials the most commonly reported side effects were headache, flushing, and stuffy or runny nose. LEVITRA is available in 2.5-mg, 5 mg, 10 mg, and 20 mg tablets.

Please see next page for Patient Information.

The more you know about ED, the more you'll want to know about LEVITRA.

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Patient Information

LEVITRA® (Luh-VEE-Trah)

(vardenafil HCl) Tablets

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Read the Patient Information about LEVITRA before you start taking it and again each time you get a refill. There may be new information. You may also find it helpful to share this information with your partner. This leaflet does not take the place of talking with your doctor. You and your doctor should talk about LEVITRA when you start taking it and at regular checkups. If you do not understand the information, or have questions, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

WHAT IMPORTANT INFORMATION SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT LEVITRA?

LEVITRA can cause your blood pressure to drop suddenly to an unsafe level if it is taken with certain other medicines. With a sudden drop in blood pressure, you could get dizzy, faint, or have a heart attack or stroke.

Do not take LEVITRA if you:
- **take any medicines called "nitrates."**
- **use recreational drugs called "poppers" like amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate.**

(See "Who Should Not Take LEVITRA?")

Tell all your healthcare providers that you take LEVITRA. If you need emergency medical care for a heart problem, it will be important for your healthcare provider to know when you last took LEVITRA.

WHAT IS LEVITRA?

LEVITRA is a prescription medicine taken by mouth for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED) in men.

ED is a condition where the penis does not harden and expand when a man is sexually excited, or when he cannot keep an erection. A man who has trouble getting or keeping an erection should see his doctor for help if the condition bothers him. LEVITRA may help a man with ED get and keep an erection when he is sexually excited.

LEVITRA does not:
- cure ED
- increase a man's sexual desire
- protect a man or his partner from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Speak to your doctor about ways to guard against sexually transmitted diseases.
- serve as a male form of birth control

LEVITRA is only for men with ED. LEVITRA is not for women or children. LEVITRA must be used only under a doctor's care.

HOW DOES LEVITRA WORK?

When a man is sexually stimulated, his body's normal physical response is to increase blood flow to his penis. This results in an erection. LEVITRA helps increase blood flow to the penis and may help men with ED get and keep an erection satisfactory for sexual activity. Once a man has completed sexual activity, blood flow to his penis decreases, and his erection goes away.

WHO CAN TAKE LEVITRA?

Talk to your doctor to decide if LEVITRA is right for you.

LEVITRA has been shown to be effective in men over the age of 18 years who have erectile dysfunction, including men with diabetes or who have undergone prostatectomy.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE LEVITRA?

Do not take LEVITRA if you:
- **take any medicines called "nitrates"** (See "What important information should you know about LEVITRA?"). Nitrates are commonly used to treat angina. Angina is a symptom of heart disease and can cause pain in your chest, jaw, or down your arm.

 Medicines called nitrates include nitroglycerin that is found in tablets, sprays, ointments, pastes, or patches. Nitrates can also be found in other medicines such as isosorbide dinitrate or isosorbide mononitrate. Some recreational drugs called "poppers" also contain nitrates, such as amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate. Do not use LEVITRA if you are using these drugs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if any of your medicines are nitrates.
- **you have been told by your healthcare provider to not have sexual activity because of health problems.** Sexual activity can put an extra strain on your heart, especially if your heart is already weak from a heart attack or heart disease.
- **are allergic to LEVITRA or any of its ingredients.** The active ingredient in LEVITRA is called vardenafil. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE TAKING LEVITRA?

Before taking LEVITRA, tell your doctor about all your medical problems, including if you:
- **have heart problems** such as angina, heart failure, irregular heartbeats, or have had a heart attack. Ask your doctor if it is safe for you to have sexual activity.
- **have low blood pressure** or have high blood pressure that is not controlled
- **have had a stroke**
- **or any family members have a rare heart condition known as prolongation of the QT interval (long QT syndrome)**
- **have liver problems**
- **have kidney problems and require dialysis**
- **have retinitis pigmentosa,** a rare genetic (runs in families) eye disease
- **have ever had severe vision loss, or if you have an eye condition called non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION)**
- **have stomach ulcers**
- **have a bleeding problem**
- **have a deformed penis shape** or Peyronie's disease
- **have had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours**
- **have blood cell problems** such as sickle cell anemia, multiple myeloma, or leukemia

CAN OTHER MEDICATIONS AFFECT LEVITRA?

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. LEVITRA and other medicines may affect each other. Always check with your doctor before starting or stopping any medicines. Especially tell your doctor if you take any of the following:
- medicines called nitrates (See "What important information should you know about LEVITRA?")
- medicines called alpha-blockers. These include Hytrin® (terazosin HCl), Flomax® (tamsulosin HCl), Cardura® (doxazosin mesylate), Minipress® (prazosin HCl) or Uroxatral® (alfuzosin HCl). Alpha-blockers are sometimes prescribed for prostate problems or high blood pressure. In some patients the use of PDE5 inhibitor drugs, including LEVITRA, with alpha-blockers can lower blood pressure significantly leading to fainting. You should contact the prescribing physician if alpha-blockers or other drugs that lower blood pressure are prescribed by another healthcare provider.
- medicines that treat abnormal heartbeat. These include quinidine, procainamide, amiodarone and sotalol.
- ritonavir (Norvir®) or indinavir sulfate (Crixivan®)
- ketoconazole or itraconazole (such as Nizoral® or Sporanox®)
- erythromycin
- other medicines or treatments for ED

HOW SHOULD YOU TAKE LEVITRA?

Take LEVITRA exactly as your doctor prescribes. LEVITRA comes in different doses (2.5 mg, 5 mg, 10 mg, and 20 mg). For most men, the recommended starting dose is 10 mg. **Take LEVITRA no more than once a day.** Doses should be taken at least 24 hours apart. Some men can only take a low dose of LEVITRA because of medical conditions or medicines they take. Your doctor will prescribe the dose that is right for you.
- If you are older than 65 or have liver problems, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA.
- If you have prostate problems or high blood pressure, for which you take medicines called alpha-blockers, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA.
- If you are taking certain other medicines your doctor may prescribe a lower starting dose and limit you to one dose of LEVITRA in a 72-hour (3 days) period.

Take 1 LEVITRA tablet about 1 hour (60 minutes) before sexual activity. Some form of sexual stimulation is needed for an erection to happen with LEVITRA. LEVITRA may be taken with or without meals.

Do not change your dose of LEVITRA without talking to your doctor. Your doctor may lower your dose or raise your dose, depending on how your body reacts to LEVITRA.

If you take too much LEVITRA, call your doctor or emergency room right away.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LEVITRA?

The most common side effects with LEVITRA are headache, flushing, stuffy or runny nose, indigestion, upset stomach, or dizziness. These side effects usually go away after a few hours. Call your doctor if you get a side effect that bothers you or one that will not go away.

LEVITRA may uncommonly cause:
- **an erection that won't go away (priapism).** If you get an erection that lasts more than 4 hours, get medical help right away. Priapism must be treated as soon as possible or lasting damage can happen to your penis including the inability to have erections.
- **color vision changes,** such as seeing a blue tinge to objects or having difficulty telling the difference between the colors blue and green.

In rare instances, men taking PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including LEVITRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision in one or both eyes. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines, to other factors such as high blood pressure or diabetes, or to a combination of these. If you experience sudden decrease or loss of vision, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including LEVITRA, and call a doctor right away.

These are not all the side effects of LEVITRA. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD LEVITRA BE STORED?
- Store LEVITRA at room temperature between 59° and 86° F (15° to 30° C).
- **Keep LEVITRA and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LEVITRA

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions other than those described in patient information leaflets. Do not use LEVITRA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give LEVITRA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about LEVITRA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about LEVITRA that is written for health professionals.

For more information you can also visit www.LEVITRA.com, or call 1-866-LEVITRA.

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF LEVITRA?

Active Ingredient: vardenafil hydrochloride

Inactive Ingredients: microcrystalline cellulose, crospovidone, colloidal silicon dioxide, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, polyethylene glycol, titanium dioxide, yellow ferric oxide, and red ferric oxide.

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Macy's Flower Show, NYC

From left to right: David Perri, Promotion Manager GMC; Chris Hoolehan, NE Regional Div Marketing Mgr, Buick, Pontiac, GMC; Ginger Sutton, Assoc. Publisher, This Old House; Roger Cook, Landscape Contractor This Old House; Ken Silverman, Asst. Marketing Mgr. GMC NE Region; David Howe, Group Sales Director Time Inc. Home Collection

GMC and Macy's welcomed This Old House landscape contractor Roger Cook to share his *Landscape and Garden Trends & Tips* presentation during the 33rd Annual Macy's Flower Show in New York City.

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Q We're finishing our attic for extra bedroom space and plan to add dormers. So many dormers look like boxes plunked down on the roof. How can we design them more creatively?

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY **DALE MULFINGER**
Dale Mulfinger is a principal of SALA Architects in Excelsior, Minnesota. His book Gabinology will be published in 2008.

A IF YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT DORMERS, you already know that they are the best way to bring light and fresh air into the new rooms you are creating. Here are some things to take into consideration as you contemplate the size and character those dormers should have, as well as how they will be set into your roof.

Dormers, like skylights, bring sunshine and air into upper floors. But because they project from the roof, dormers also add usable space on the interior. The most popular forms are gable (TOP RIGHT), shed (ABOVE LEFT), and hip (ABOVE RIGHT). In most cases, choose the one that best reflects the style and period of the house.

1 | Types of Dormers

The term dormer comes from the French *dormir*, "to sleep"—the original purpose of these attic spaces. To you and me, a dormer means a window set vertically in a small structure projecting from a sloping roof. That structure has a roof of its own, which can be gabled (the front of the dormer rises to a point at its roof ridge), hip (from the window the roof slopes back to its ridge), or shed style (the roof is flat and pitched at a shallower angle than the house roof).

Typically, our dormer design challenge begins with knowing a little bit about the rooms we are serving. In your case, because they are bedrooms, the windows must be large enough to meet egress requirements—nominally, a 2-by-3-foot window no more than 3½ feet off the floor. If it were studio space you were after, or light yet privacy for a bathroom, then a higher, broader dormer might make sense.

Each of the three common dormer shapes has different stylistic and functional requirements, so you'll need to assess which one best suits your needs and the style of your house.

2 | Gable Dormer

The most common, and the type preferred by the majority of my clients, is the gable dormer. It works on a wide variety of house styles, from a casual foursquare to more formal Tudor Gothics and Victorian-era styles. Gable dormers look best when kept modest in size and vertical in massing, with a minimal amount of space between the window frame and the sidewalls of the dormer. To achieve this thin profile, I often use 2x4s rather than 2x6s to frame the sidewalls, while keeping the standard 2x6 window face wall. The result is better aesthetically and doesn't significantly reduce insulation value, since not much of the sidewall projects through the roof.

The window in a gable dormer is best if it, too, has a vertical orientation, either a tall double-hung or two tall casements. You can decorate it with a round, oval, or diamond top, depending on the style of the house. Round window tops look good on Georgian-style houses, ovals on Colonials, and diamonds on Carpenter Gothics and half timbered styles.

3 | Hip Dormer

Hip roofs work well to cap dormers of intermediate widths and with Mediterranean and French-style designs, particularly those with tile or slate roofs. Because the wide dormer serves to significantly interrupt the existing texture of the roof, it often looks best sheathed in a material that is the same color as the roof rather than the walls of the house. I recently used a hip dormer on an Italianate-style home in Nashville, Tennessee, where we needed venting access in a tile roof—a common use for hip dormers because they don't project out from the roof as far as other types.

4 | Shed Dormer

The shed dormer is the practical cousin, common in vernacular architecture and Craftsman designs. It not only brings in light but, because a whole section of roof gets pushed up, also makes the attic room feel larger. Shed dormers are commonly used in low pitched bungalows to create second-level bedrooms, usually on the back side of the house. I design a lot of second homes and cabins and use shed dormers to achieve cozy bedrooms or lofts in the roof space. These dormers are the easiest type for carpenters to create, as they don't require complicated valleys. That makes them the preferred dormer for all roofing materials, particularly metal roofs.

5 | Dormer Construction

No matter what style of dormer you choose, you will need to consider its location relative to the cross section of the main roof you are setting it in. Dormers of all types are more difficult to do in low pitched roofs (6:12 and below), and relatively easy in steeper roofs (9:12 and above). On low pitches, dormers can get quite deep, bringing little light to the space within.

To construct a dormer in an existing roof, you'll need to cut the rafters to create the void for the dormer. To reduce structural complications, try to make the size of the dormer equal to an increment of the rafter framing. For example, a 4-foot wide dormet would require the cutting of only two rafters in a typical 16-inch on-center roof system. The rafters on either side must be beefed up, as must the headers top and bottom, to support the load of the dormer. The broader the dormer, the greater the load, so it is important to consult with an engineer to size new rafters and ridge beams accordingly.

Whatever your dormer preference, you will find it a great solution for light, views, and fresh air in your new attic space. ■

See a gallery of dormer types thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

GABLE: With their vertical orientation and narrow profile, gable dormers look good in multiples spaced about 8 feet apart. Most often they are sheathed in the same materials as the rest of the house.

HIP: Hip dormers tend to be wider and squatter than gables. Most commonly seen in California and the southern United States, they fit best when the roofs on the house or porch are also hipped.

SHED: Shed dormers are the most casual and, because a whole section of roof is bumped up, bring a feeling of expansiveness to the interior space. Although some require rubber membrane roofs, if they are pitched correctly for water runoff they can be shingled.

GOT A QUESTION FOR AN ARCHITECT?

Each month in this column, an architect will answer a reader's home-design query. If you want advice on anything from how to site your addition to the best layout for a mudroom to choosing the right windows for your space, send your question, along with copies of photographs or floor plans, to House Calls, *This Old House* magazine, 1185 Avenue of the Americas, 27th Floor, New York, NY 10036. If your question is selected, the answer will appear in an upcoming issue. Due to the volume of mail, we cannot answer unpublished questions.

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SHERWIN WILLIAMS

House: Pavestone SW 7642. Trim: Summer White SW 7557. Door: Bittern SW 7600. Sash: Earthen Jug SW 7703.
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PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM RIGHT) JOHN W. TAYLOR (2); KEATS (2)

Cool, New, and Headed to You

>> Get the scoop on the latest toys, tools, and trends for the home

BY HARRY SAWYERS

THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS SHOW is the Fashion Week of the construction world, an insider's peek at the trends and products that will shape the home-building industry this season and for years to come. It's about as glamorous as this business gets.

The show's 1,900 exhibitors don't strut their stuff down runways. Instead, we, the footsore, scoured 40 acres of booths to bring you these two dozen showstoppers. Whether you're looking for high-style items to beautify your house, cool tools, home-safety gear, or things to make the neighbors jealous, you'll find them on these pages. (Trend alert: Oil-rubbed bronze is the new satin nickel, skinny sanders are in, and fireplaces with any visible means of combustion are *sooo* last century.) And if that's not enough, we've got 100 more hot products for you at thisoldhouse.com.

MINI BELT SANDER
Great as belt sanders are, we find their bulk and heft limits where you can use them. Not so this miniature 5¾-pounder. Its 2½-inch wide belt lets it slip easily into tight spaces to say, sand a floor flush against a baseboard, trim a sticking door edge or smooth a stair tread. $120; portercable.com

CANDID CAMERA
With a waterproof, LED-lit camera at one end of a flexible 3-foot cable and a 2½-inch color LCD screen at the other, there isn't much the See Snake Micro can't find behind a wall, in a duct, or down a drain. You can fit the tip with a hook, a magnet, or a mirror for periscoping around blind corners. $220; ridgid.com

CAR TURN
The days of craning your neck and shifting into reverse are behind you. With this motorized merry-go-round planted in your driveway or garage, just spin your car to face the street. Quick getaways have never been so easy. $9,800 for 14-foot model (Mini Cooper sold separately); cartum.com

OH, OUR ACHING FEET! We visited 1,900 booths in four days to find the 100 best building products for you.

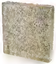
things to gussy up ▼ the place

HIP SQUARES

The swiveling lens on Halo's flush fitting trim kit for recessed downlights allows you to aim light exactly where you want it. They're available in three metallic finishes—nickel, copper, and bronze—and mount into round, low-voltage ceiling canisters. $45. www.haloltg.com

TOUGH WOOD

Dense, rot-resistant, and second only to Brazilian cherry in hardness, Texas mesquite shows off its dark, rustic character in flooring, countertops, mantels, and the distinctive dining table seen here. livingelements.com



PSYCHEDELIC GLASS

A bumpy "stippled" surface on the solid glass VistaBrik paver obscures the view as it magnifies the multicolored glass specks fused to the block's back. Stack them into shower walls for a kaleidoscopic bathing experience that'll blow your mind, man. $90 per 8-by 8-by 1½ inch block. cogirusa.com

GOING DUTCH

Old-fashioned looks combine with modern construction and weatherstripping to make a neighborly exterior double door that keeps kids and pets out of restricted zones without closing them off. This Craftsman style door is available in wood or fiberglass through Jeld-Wen's IWP line. $4,500. jeldwen.com

things to make you safer ▼

MOUNT-ANYWHERE GRAB BAR

The Moen grab bar supports up to 500 pounds of weight, even when mounted on drywall, thanks to its SecureMount hollow-wall anchor. $42 for a 24-inch stainless-steel bar. moen.com

24/7 WATER MANAGER

This HAL 9000 of residential plumbing works like a circuit-breaker panel for your pipes. It automatically shuts off water to pipes that leak or freeze up and allows remote monitoring and control of the system. Its color coded lights and screen display make it easy to pinpoint problems. $1,000. liquidbreaker.com

CUT WITHOUT DUST

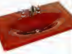
Having inhaled more sawdust than we care to admit, we couldn't help liking the Saw Muzzle, which retrofits to circular saws. With one of these, dust ends up in the shop vac instead of the saw's motor or your lungs. It's one of a full line of universal vacuum attachments that turn power tools into dust-collection systems. $70. dustmuzzle.com

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT) JOHN W TAYLOR; KEATE (2); COURTESY OF JELDWEN; KEATE; JOHN W TAYLOR; KEATE

things to beautify your bathroom

MULTI-ARM SHOWERHEADS
Here are two well made splurges you'll be able to enjoy every morning. The five-point star has independently movable arms to spread the spray any way you want; the ringed star spins to create a spiraling waterfall. Spinning head, $265 in chrome; star head, $235 in brushed nickel; www.danze.com

ONE-OF-A-KIND SHOWER DOORS
These 3/8-inch thick cast glass shower doors obscure the shower stall with swirling abstract shapes or, say, cute representations of swimming turtles among wavy palm trees. www.cardinalshower.com



CAST-IRON VANITY TOP
A shallow sink molded into a single piece of enameled cast iron makes a bold design statement in any bathroom, but we like how easy its high-gloss, fired finish is to clean. Choose from 26 colored glazes. Available separately or as part of a vanity cabinet. Shown with Kohler's Bellhaven faucet. $734 and up; kohler.com

FLEXIBLE CONNECTORS
Sinks with exposed supply risers deserve the classic look of brass tubing, but bending rigid metal is a hassle. These InnoFlex PEX risers are easy to bend by hand, and their metal-look finish can't chip or flake off. (Wish we'd had these for our last faucet installation.) In silver, gold, white, or bronze, $5. www.brasscraft.com

things to save you time

GALE-FORCE COOKING
TurboChef's in-wall Speedcook oven—the one behind the top door—lives up to its name, cooking a 12-pound turkey in 42 minutes, a rack of lamb in five, and a sweet potato soufflé in four. That's 15 times faster than a traditional oven, thanks to its 50-amp draw and a blower that recirculates heated air at 60 mph. (And yet that soufflé stays in its pan.) The bottom oven is a conventional convection cooker. $7,900 for 30-inch. turbochef.com

GO-ANYWHERE WIRING
This flat, low-voltage wire is so thin that you can add light fixtures or home theater equipment wherever you want without cutting holes. Just stick it on a wall or ceiling and then conceal it beneath a coat of drywall mud and paint. $2 per linear foot; sconce and speaker kits also available. flatwireready.com

NO PILOT HOLE NEEDED
A screw that doesn't need a pilot hole, even near an edge? We didn't believe it either until we saw the Spax screw's serrated threads and diamond tip bore through hardwood and MDF without causing any splits. $10 for 70-piece pack; spax.com

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT) COURTESY OF TURBOCHEF; KEATE (2); JOHN W TAYLOR; KEATE (3)

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▼ things to make the neighbors really jealous

BURN, BABY!
Nothing says "Wow!" quite like a 5-foot-long sheet of flame dancing on a bed of broken glass. The gas Fireplace Xtreme cranks out 95,000 Btu (most fireplaces produce around 23,000) to keep you toasty on cold nights. $4,500; fireplacex.com

INSTANT-ON SAUNA
Finlandia's Ever Ready AV electric sauna heater thawed out our winter-weary bones by almost instantly raising the sauna's temperature to a piping 180 degrees. The clear cedar kits with a 6-kw heater start at $6,440; finlandiasauna.com

FINGERTIP CONTROL
The biometric SmartScan lock opens when it recognizes a fingerprint. Its battery-powered system remembers up to 50 fingers; you program it for unlimited or temporary access, or just use an old-fashioned metal key. $200; kwikset.com

DISAPPEARING SCREEN
The Phantom Screen slides up when the window is open and rolls down and out of sight when the window is closed. Blocks bugs when you need to and leaves you with a clear view when you don't. Choose between manual and motorized remote-control operation. phantomscreens.com

BRONZED SKIN
You can now get that trendy bronze-clad look in anodized aluminum, a weatherproof hard as-nails metal finish that won't chip off. Anodized finishes in clear champagne, black, copper and three shades of bronze are available on Eagle windows and doors. eaglewindow.com

ELEVATOR OVEN
In lieu of a door, the Lift Oven's bottom drops down to the countertop, allowing access from three sides and saving you from having to hoist hot, heavy casseroles. Leave the bottom down and it also doubles as a 24-inch-wide ceramic cooktop. About $3,300; gaggenau.com

web bonus — See the 100 best products from IBS and tell us what you think at: thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT) HEATE, COURTESY OF GAGGENAU; COURTESY OF EAGLE WINDOWS AND DOOR; JOHN W. FAY (3)

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Prescription Lyrica is not for everyone. Some of the most common side effects of Lyrica are dizziness and sleepiness. Others are dry mouth, swelling of hands and feet, blurry vision, weight gain, and trouble concentrating. You may have a higher chance of swelling or gaining weight if you are also taking certain diabetes medicines. And, if you drink alcohol or take medicines that make you sleepy, you may feel more sleepy when you start Lyrica. You should not drive a car or work with machines until you know how Lyrica affects you. Tell your doctor about any changes in your eyesight, muscle pain along with a fever or tired feeling, or skin sores due to diabetes. Also tell your doctor if you are planning to father a child. If you have had a drug or alcohol problem, you may be more likely to misuse Lyrica. You should talk with your doctor before you stop taking Lyrica or any other prescription medication. *Please see important product information on adjacent page.*

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IMPORTANT FACTS

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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT LYRICA

LYRICA may make you feel dizzy or sleepy

- Do not drive a car, work with machines, or do other dangerous things until you are sure you will be alert. Ask your doctor when it is okay to do these things.

LYRICA may cause problems with your eyesight, including blurry vision. Call your doctor if you have any changes in your eyesight.

ABOUT LYRICA

LYRICA is a prescription medicine used to treat

- Nerve pain from diabetes
- Nerve pain that continues after the rash from shingles heals

This pain can be sharp or burning. It can feel like tingling, shooting, or numbness. Some people taking LYRICA had less pain by the end of the first week. LYRICA may not work for everyone.

WHO IS LYRICA FOR?

Who can take LYRICA

- Adults 18 years or older with nerve pain from diabetes or after shingles

Who should NOT take LYRICA

- Anyone who is allergic to anything in LYRICA

LYRICA has not been studied for nerve pain in children under 18 years of age.

BEFORE STARTING LYRICA

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions. Tell your doctor if you:

- Have or had kidney problems or dialysis
- Have heart problems, including heart failure
- Have a bleeding problem or a low blood platelet count
- Have abused drugs or alcohol. LYRICA may cause some people to feel "high."
- Are either a man or woman planning to have children or a woman who is breast-feeding, pregnant, or may become pregnant. It is not known if LYRICA may decrease male fertility, cause birth defects, or pass into breast milk.

Tell your doctor about all your medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor if you take:

- Rosiglitazone (Avandia®)* or pioglitazone (Actos®)** for diabetes
- Narcotic pain medicines such as oxycodone, tranquilizers, or medicines for anxiety such as lorazepam
- Any medicines that make you sleepy

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LYRICA

LYRICA may cause serious side effects, including:

- Dizziness and sleepiness
- Eyesight problems
- Weight gain and swelling of hands and feet. Weight gain may affect control of diabetes. Weight gain and swelling can be serious for people with heart problems.
- Unexplained muscle pain, soreness, or weakness along with a fever or tired feeling. If you have these symptoms, tell your doctor right away.
- Skin sores. In LYRICA studies, skin sores were seen in animals but not in humans. If you have diabetes, pay extra attention to your skin. Tell your doctor about any skin problems.

The most common side effects of LYRICA are:

- Dizziness
- Sleepiness
- Swelling of hands and feet
- Blurry vision
- Weight gain
- Trouble concentrating
- Dry mouth

You may have a higher chance of swelling or gaining weight if you are taking certain diabetes medicines with LYRICA. Medicines that already make you sleepy or dizzy may make you feel more sleepy or dizzy with LYRICA.

HOW TO TAKE LYRICA

Do

- Take LYRICA exactly as your doctor tells you. Your doctor may tell you to take it 2 or 3 times a day.
- Take LYRICA with or without food.

Don't

- Do not drive a car or use machines if you feel sleepy while taking LYRICA.
- Do not drink alcohol or use other medicines that make you sleepy while taking LYRICA.
- Do not change the dose or stop LYRICA suddenly. You may have headaches, nausea, diarrhea, or trouble sleeping if you stop taking LYRICA suddenly.
- Do not start any new medicines without first talking to your doctor.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist. This is only a brief summary of important information.
- Go to **www.lyrica.com** or call **1-888-9-LYRICA (1-888-959-7422).**

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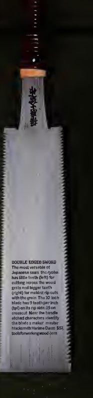
LYU00064H

Zen and the Art of Sawing Wood

>> Unleash your inner samurai with every pull stroke

BY HARRY SAWYERS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PLAMEN PETKOV



DOUBLE EDGED SWORD The most versatile of Japanese saws, the *ryoba*, has little teeth (left) for cutting across the wood grain and bigger teeth (right) for making rip cuts with the grain. The 10-inch blade has 9 teeth per inch (tpi) on its rip side, 15 on crosscut. Near the handle, etched characters identify the blade's maker, master blacksmith Harima Daizo. $57; toolsforworkingwood.com

IF YOU'VE NEVER PICKED UP a Japanese saw, be prepared for a shock. Its floppy blade stuck on a rattan-wrapped stick may seem at first glance to be more toy than tool, hardly capable of any serious work. But get down to the actual business of cutting wood, and you'll ask yourself why you put up with traditional Western-style handsaws for so long.

Many traits distinguish saws from East and West, but it all boils down to this: In Japan, you cut on the pull stroke. Pulling keeps the blade straight, so it can be thin—up to 75 percent slimmer than a Western blade, which must struggle to resist bending with every push. And since thin blades produce thin kerfs, Japanese saws remove less wood, produce less sawdust, and need less muscle power. Put simply, you can cut longer, more accurately, and with less fatigue.

While we have nothing but respect for the brawny, hardworking Western saw, cutting wood the Japanese way is much easier for an amateur. Perhaps it's because you steer the blade with your fingertips rather than the heel of your hand. Or it could be all those tiny, surgically sharp teeth that make starting a cut so simple. But whatever it is, even a die-hard push-cutter can appreciate the silky surfaces those teeth leave in their wake: cuts that feel as if they've been smoothed with a plane.

True, those delicate teeth are no match for plywood or knots. But if a tooth or two does break, the blades can be replaced, which is cheaper than buying a new saw.

So go ahead: Put the samurai moves on a slab of cedar. You're in for a pleasant awakening.

Kerf Wars

A kerf is the narrow gully made by a saw's teeth as they chew their way through wood. As you can see from the photo below, Japanese blades produce much narrower kerfs than

Japanese kerf

Western kerf

ordinary Western-style saws do, thanks to blades that are a mere .02 inch thick—that's about half the thickness of Western-style blades—and teeth that have less "set," or sideways splay.

Nokogiri: saw
Daiku: carpenter
Shokunin: craftsman

TOOL SCHOOL. Master carpenter Norm Abram shows you how to use Japanese saws. **Workshop,** p. 105

Tooth Talk

On all handsaws, regardless of origin, the teeth are made either to cut with the grain (known as ripping) or across it. The rip teeth on both Western and Japanese saws are similar: fat triangles with chisel-edge tips.

Japanese crosscut teeth, on the other hand, are long and narrow, like miniature swords. Each one slices through wood fibers with three knife-sharp edges; a squat Western tooth has only two. You can easily sharpen a Western saw, but taking a file to Japanese crosscut teeth requires steady hands, deep reserves of patience, and a master temple builder as a teacher. If you're lacking any of these, just replace your blade when it gets dull.

1. DEPTH CONTROL
The adjustable stop, or rib, on this saw limits the blade's cutting depth, a useful feature when making dovetails or dadoes. Depth measurements are etched on the blade in 1/32-inch increments. Crosscut side is 24 tpi, rip, 16 tpi. $119, bridgecitytools.com

2. FOLDS UP
Japanese saws' teeth are slender and brittle, so letting a blade rattle around in the toolbox can leave it looking like a hockey goalie's smile. Fortunately, the 10-inch, 15-tpi blade on this crosscut saw folds safely into a wooden handle. $30, garrettwade.com

3. PRECISION CUTTER
Like an English backsaw, a *dozuki* has a steel back to hold the blade rigid as it cuts tenons and dovetails (INSET). Although *dozukis* can't make deep cuts, their blades are half the thickness of unbacked saws. 20 tpi. Saw $40, spare blade $19, japanwoodworker.com

4. PLUNGE CUTTER
The curved blades of an *azebiki* are useful for making rips and crosscuts that start in the middle of a board (INSET). Just rock the handle up and down and watch the teeth sink into the wood. Crosscut side is 16 tpi, rip, 10 tpi. $29, japanwoodworker.com

5. CURVE CUTTER
This 3-ounce curve-cutting saw is light as a feather. The maker, Hishiki, hand tempers the short, white-steel blade to give it enough flexibility to saw gentle curves in thin wood (INSET). 24 tpi. $47, japanwoodworker.com

6. FASTER CUTS
The *ikeda-me* teeth on this *kataba* (single-edged saw) have a repeating pattern of seven crosscut teeth followed by a tooth that clears sawdust from the kerf, making for speedier cutting. 18 tpi. $69, bridgecitytools.com

7. FLUSH CUTTING
The thin, bendy blade on a *kugihiki* (peg-cutting saw) has teeth without any side-to-side set, so it can trim wood dowels and plugs flush without scratching the work surface (INSET). 19 tpi. Saw $22, spare blade $13, japanwoodworker.com

8. BENT HANDLE
With its compact, pistol-style grip on a long (11 3/16-inch) *kataba* blade, this saw lets you take lengthy, satisfying strokes but is still short enough to fit in a 24-inch-long toolbox. 12 tpi. Saw $22, spare blade $12, tajimatool.com

The Western vs. Japanese saw standoff continues at: thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

Why do so many people own the acclaimed Bose® Wave® music system?

- **Stephen Williams of *Newsday* says it "makes the music special" and "is simplicity itself—and simply terrific."**
- Setup is easy. Just plug it in.
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- It's less than 15 inches wide, so you free up lots of space.
- Fits elegantly on your living room end table, kitchen countertop or bedroom nightstand.
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- Play CDs, MP3 CDs or CD-R/RWs. Whichever you like.
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- The changer is designed exclusively for the Wave® music system. Together they stand just 6¾ inches high.
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Building a Fountain

BY HARRY SAWYERS PHOTOGRAPHS BY KOLIN SMITH

YOU TRIED SWEATING IT OUT in the sauna, you can't let go in a yoga pose, and *om* isn't exactly hitting home. And no wonder—you're working too hard at relaxing. What you need is a place to sit quietly and contemplate the sounds of nature: birds chirping, breezes blowing, brooks babbling. What—no backyard brook? Not a problem. Just build yourself the next best thing, with a softly trickling garden fountain.

The project is nothing to get stressed about. In a mere weekend, you can fountain-ize most any leftover garden ornament, turning it into an enchanting monument to tranquillity. Revive a defunct birdbath, declare your own ode to a Grecian urn, or drill holes in a stack of rocks you found on-site, as *This Old House* technical editor Mark Powers did for a friend one hot afternoon. When the job is finished and your fountain runneth over, you'll rinse the tension from your bones in calm, cascading rivulets. Relaxation never seemed so easy.

Pump: Pondmaster 250-gph model 2, $50, pondmaster.com.

COST: $100–$200

TIME: 8 hours

DIFFICULTY: Requires some strength. If you can dig a hole and lift stones, you'll be fine.

TOOLS FOR THIS PROJECT

- SHOVEL
- UTILITY SCISSORS to cut screening
- DUCT TAPE AND STRING to pull the power cord through conduit
- PIPE CUTTER
- ADJUSTABLE WRENCH
- HAMMER DRILL fitted with a 5/8-inch masonry bit

- HANDSAW to cut decking supports
- CAULK GUN

FOR COMPLETE INSTRUCTIONS, TURN THE PAGE AND UNFOLD

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THE HOME DEPOT

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{ overview }

A FOUNTAIN IS COMPOSED OF THREE THINGS: water, which flows up a pipe and trickles back down in a continuous cycle; a pump, which propels the water; and a piece of sculpture, over which the water flows. The sculpture can be built from any material that will withstand constant water. For the project shown here, we used large stones found on-site, but pavers, some metals, or pottery will all work (see "Buying Guide," far right).

Regardless of the fountain material, the guts of the system remain the same. It starts with a waterproof tub or basin that lines a hole in the ground to make a reservoir for the water. Above that is a rigid mesh screen that blocks large debris from getting into the tub. The screen is topped with a support system made from a strong but water-resistant material, such as composite decking, to keep the body of the fountain from falling into the basin.

The submersible pump is the heart of the system. It sits below the water line in the basin, recirculating and fine-filtering the runoff from above. Since the pump is electric, the fountain needs to be within reach of an exterior outlet—pump cords rarely reach beyond 50 feet, and manufacturers discourage the use of extension cords. It also needs to be accessible for maintenance after the fountain is built, so you'll need to cut a trap door in the screen that's big enough for you to reach in, unhook the pump, and pull it out. (The screen and support decking can be camouflaged with small stones or even mulch.) The pipe that carries the water to the top of the sculpture screws onto the pump. It also includes a small ball valve that will allow you to adjust the fountain's flow, giving you the option of creating anything from a calming trickle to a formidable geyser.

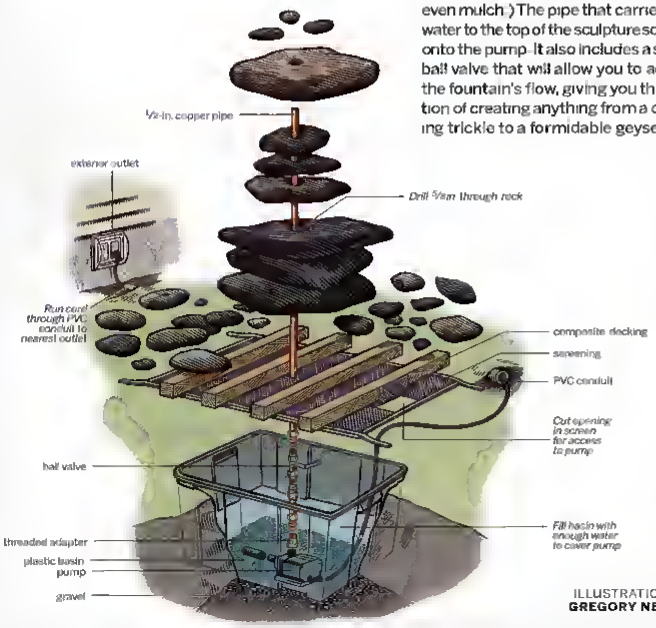


ILLUSTRATION BY GREGORY NEMEC

shopping list

1 | PUMP Available at home or garden centers. Look for one labeled "submersible." Pumps are rated in gallons per hour (gph), a measure of how much water they can handle and how high they can push it. Anything larger than 250 gph is overkill for a basic fountain with a ½-inch pipe.

2 | ½-INCH COPPER PIPE to carry the water from the pump to the top of the fountain. Buy a piece 2 feet longer than your fountain's height.

3 | WATERPROOF BASIN such as a plastic storage bin, mason's mortar-mixing bucket, or washtub, to hold the pump and collect the water. It should be 6 inches wider than the fountain base's diameter and 1 foot taller than the pump so that it fits all the pipe connections while still keeping the pump submerged.

4 | STONES or other material to make the fountain body. Choose something that stacks easily; stones should have flat faces. The copper pipe will give some support, but the materials should stand well on their own.

5 | SMALL ROCKS or large aggregate, such as terra-cotta shards or tumbled glass, to cover the top of the pit. One 5-gallon bucketful should be enough.

6 | ½-INCH-BY-½-INCH COMPRESSION FEMALE ADAPTER to connect the pipe to the pump.

7 | ½-INCH BALL VALVE to regulate the water flow.

8 | SCREEN to protect the pump from debris. A fiberglass or aluminum window screen or grille, or anything that comes in a rigid frame, is best. Get one big enough to span the basin.

9 | COMPOSITE DECKING such as Trex or TimberTech, to support the fountain.

10 | DRAINAGE GRAVEL for in and under the catch basin. Get two 50-pound bags.

11 | 1-INCH PVC CONDUIT to carry the pump's power cord underground to the outlet.

{ step by step }

1

Dig the pump hole »

Using a pointed shovel, dig a pit 2 inches deeper than the basin and wide enough to fit it. Put the soil in a wheelbarrow or on a tarp to protect nearby turf (RIGHT).

Dig a narrow, shallow trench between the pit and the nearest exterior outlet.

2

« Set the basin and conduit

Lay a 2-inch-thick bed of drainage gravel in the pit. Place the basin atop the gravel (LEFT). If necessary, shift the gravel so the basin doesn't rock.

Measure the distance from the outlet to the edge of the pit. Cut a section of PVC conduit to this length. Thread a string through the conduit and tape one end of it to the pump's plug. Pull the plug through the conduit. Tape the plug securely to the end of the conduit so it doesn't get pulled back in. Lay the conduit in the trench and backfill over it.

3

Dry-fit the parts »

Center the pump in the basin (RIGHT). Lay the screen over the pit and mark it at the spot directly over the threaded outlet on the pump. Also mark the screen at the edge closest to the conduit.

Using utility scissors, cut out a 1-inch-wide circle at the center mark. Then cut a three-sided flap at the conduit mark that is big enough to allow you to reach in and remove the pump for servicing (INSET).

« Connect the pipe and pump

Using a pipe cutter cut a 4-inch section off the end of the copper pipe Unscrew the compression fittings on the ends of the ball valve Slide a nut from the ball valve then the brass ring or ferrule, onto the long section of pipe Insert the pipe into one end of the ball valve, then finger tighten the nut over the ferrule onto the valve Attach the short section of pipe to the other end of the valve in the same manner

Screw the threaded end of the adapter onto the pump outlet Take apart the compression end and slide the nut then the ferrule over the short section of pipe Connect the pipe to the pump with the compression fitting Using an adjustable wrench tighten all three compression nuts an extra quarter-turn.

Pour a 2-inch layer of drainage gravel in the bottom of the basin Lay the pump in the center of the basin with the pipe sticking up Slide the screen over the pipe and arrange it so the access flap is near the conduit.

Using a handsaw cut sections of decking long enough to extend beyond the pit a few inches on either side Lay the decking across the pit on top of the screen (LEFT)

Drill the stones »

Stack the stones to create an aesthetically pleasing arrangement Number the underside of each stone in pencil to keep track of the order as you unstack them

Lay a stone on soft ground or gravel Using a hammer drill fitted with a ⅝-inch masonry bit drill through the flat side of the stone (RIGHT) Repeat for all the stones

< TIP **Keep a bucket of water near the drill Intermittently pour some on the stone to keep it wet—and the drill bit cool—as you work**

5

6

« Assemble the fountain

Thread the stones over the copper pipe until they re stacked and balanced Mark the pipe where the stones end Remove the top stone and use the pipe cutter to cut the copper pipe ¼ inch below the mark Replace the stone

Fill the bin from a garden hose adding enough water to rise 5 inches above the pump Open the ball valve plug in the pump turn it on and check the flow Adjust the pressure with the ball valve.

Direct the water by spinning the stacked stones Wedge smaller stones into the gaps to keep the structure stable (LEFT) To make the arrangement permanent turn off the water and squeeze dabs of clear silicone adhesive between the stones Allow the adhesive to dry before turning on the fountain again Once the fountain flows the way you d like it to, close the screen and camouflage the base with small stones

TIP > **Check the basin's water level regularly—especially in a heat wave—and replenish it to keep the pump constantly submerged.**

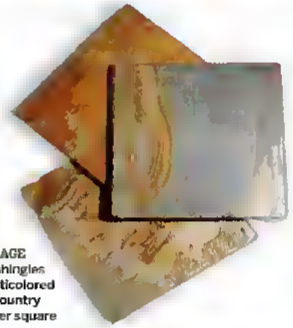
For more on water features, **thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts**

{ buying guide }

The design of your backyard bubbler is totally up to you. As long as it's waterproof and you can rig a pipe through it you can make a fountain out of it Here are a few materials—some classic, some kooky—we think would look cool with water trickling over them

FEATHERED FRIEND Most birdbaths are hollow, so you ll only need to drill through the basin at the top to get the water flowing Tall Copper Birdbath $87, smithandhawken.com

TWISTED METAL Buy a roll of copper or aluminum and turn it into abstract sculpture. Route the pipe through it like a spine, and let the water cascade down. 10-mil copper 1 by 10-foot roll $85 basiccopper.com



COLORFUL COLLAGE Stack slate roof shingles or tiles into a multicolored sculpture. Gold Country slate tile, $2.25 per square foot, global slate.com

SQUARED CORNERS Path pavers come in neat, flat rectangles, which look pretty interesting stacked offset from one another Naturally cleft bluestone, $7 per square foot stoneyard.com

ANCIENT SHAPE A tall urn with a hole in the bottom is an easy conversion—just ba sure to seal around the pipe where it enters the urn so the water will overflow the top. Cast iron urn with pedestal, $85, planterresource.com

POT BUBBLER Arrange garden pots of varying sizes so water appears to pour from one into another then carefully drill through them to fit the pipe Terra-cotta planters 8½ inches, $15 11 inches, $25 14 inches, $40 homedepot.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

A HEARTH OUTSIDE THE HOME

A freestanding fireplace turns this backyard living room in Los Gatos, California, into a year-round destination.

MATERIALS: The same fieldstone that sheaths the fireplace is used on the pool house exterior, giving the entire property a unified look. The mantelshelf, firebox opening, and hearth are made of local Santa Rosa stone. A clay chimney pot extends the height of the chimney, helping to improve draft.

BOUNDARIES: The pool and a low concrete-block wall faced in stucco form the room's borders. Rather than siting the fireplace near their outdoor kitchen (located at the opposite end of the pool), the home owners kept the two areas separate to cut down on foot traffic congestion and create distinct backyard destinations.

PLANTINGS: Potted plants and fruit trees surrounding the room will provide more privacy as they grow. The vine-covered pergola behind the fireplace helps block breezes that can cause the fireplace to smoke.

BY LISA SELIN DAVIS

PHOTOGRAPH BY CAREN ALPERT

STYLING BY JULIE DODGE

We don't want to be indoors when the weather's warm, and we're betting you don't either. So whether you want to lounge around or cook up a storm, here are more than a dozen ideas for open-air rooms you'll want to live in

Get Out and stay out

IMAGINE A SUMMER GETAWAY without bumper-to-bumper beach traffic or interminable airport security lines. Now picture that destination as your own backyard, and you'll understand why Americans will spend billions of dollars this year to transform barren lawns and plain patios into more luxurious—and infinitely more functional—outdoor rooms. "A house isn't finished when the sticks and bricks are up," says Santa Monica, California, architect Peter Schechter. "Almost every project we do now also includes an outdoor room."

More than a multipurpose deck, an outdoor room is typically designed and outfitted for a specific function, whether it's hunkering on an all-weather sofa in an open-air den or cooking in an alfresco kitchen packed with rust-resistant stainless steel appliances. And though the room can be located almost anywhere—as an extension of your house or a separate, secluded retreat in a quiet corner of your property—there are some general guidelines for creating one.

Typically, an outdoor room requires some sort of floor to establish the footprint. (Pea gravel, paving stones, or steppable ground cover will do.) You'll also need walls. A border of potted

plants or a stacked-stone sitting wall can create a feeling of enclosure. And you'll want a roof, which can be as refined as a beadboard porch ceiling or as rustic as a natural arboreal canopy.

In the following pages you'll find trade secrets and practical hints, along with great examples of dining, cooking, dreaming, and entertaining spaces in the great outdoors.

PLANNING WHERE TO PUT THE SPACE

The location of an outdoor room depends primarily on its purpose. "If playing bocce is what you want to do, it's a whole lot different than if you want to drink wine with friends," says Tina Skinner, author of *Outdoor Rooms: Fresh-Air Kitchens and Living Areas*. A dining and entertainment area, for example, should be close to the house, to minimize the hassle of ferrying food and beverages between indoors and out. A game room or sports court is best far from the house, to prevent errant balls from cracking a window and to give kids ample room to run. If you're planning more than one outdoor space, it's important to consider the flow between them; strategically placed focal points, such as a fireplace or fountain, can help draw people from one area to the next.

Schechter advises starting any outdoor-room project by taking into account four fundamentals: wind, light, view, and privacy. You want gentle breezes, not whipping winds; sunshine is great, but not when it brings baking heat; and while you may like your neighbors, you don't want them as voyeurs in your backyard retreat.

CREATING A SENSE OF ENCLOSURE

Privacy is a key consideration because it affects both location and design. "An outdoor room is simply a place within the yard that has a feeling of enclosure," says Skinner. "You need a sense that you can be there without the neighbors intruding." Where houses are close together, a tall wooden fence or vine-covered trellis will shield views. A sunken patio can give a sense of privacy without making you feel hemmed in.

Leveraging existing features of the house and property is one of the best—and most economical—ways to create intimate spaces. If your yard has low spots, for example, you can use the contours as natural walls and create a room in the valley between rises. A cluster of leafy trees can serve as both a wall and a ceiling, while a stream or pond can establish borders. Closer to the house, a seating area nestled against one exterior wall takes advantage of a built-in boundary while it provides a transitional space between inside and out.

ENHANCING THE LANDSCAPE

In an outdoor room, landscaping is both ornamental and functional. A row of hedges can serve as a wall; climbing roses snaking over a pergola can act as a roof. Borders can be formed with potted plants, which also serve as decorative elements. Keep in mind that just as indoor rooms need a fresh coat of paint every few years, those outside require maintenance,

OESTINATION SPACES

Lounging areas away from the house give the owners of this property in Sag Harbor, New York, a place to relax while keeping an eye on the kids playing in the yard.

PERGOLA. A freestanding cedar pergola provides a feeling of privacy and enclosure without blocking sunlight and breezes. The design was inspired by historic images of local outdoor architecture.

LANDSCAPING. Bamboo stakes draped in climbing roses and clematis that blossom at different times of year are positioned alongside each of the pergola's eight posts. Once matured, the foliage and fragrant flowers will envelop the structure, providing shade and protection during light rain showers.

HAMMOCK HIDEAWAY. A shady nook of holly, white pine, and hydrangea makes a natural shelter for a rope hammock suspended from a pair of barn beams. Spaces that incorporate a sense of discovery—through the bushes, out of sight around a bend, at the end of a pathway—feel like true getaways, even if they're in your own backyard.

PHOTOS: (THIS PAGE) JULIAN WASS, STYLING BY MATTHEW MATTIELLO (RIGHT), AMY BRESCIELLO (LEFT); (OPPOSITE PAGE) RAY KACHATORIAN, STYLING BY SUSAN NOWAKOWSKI

INDOOR/OUTDOOR COOKING ZONE

An amenity-packed kitchen and dining area lets the owners of this Santa Monica house cook and entertain entirely outdoors.

MATERIALS. Using a similar marble for the countertops and backsplash in both the indoor and outdoor kitchens creates interplay between the two spaces. The muted gray palette of the slate tile flooring echoes the shingle siding, and a border wall of the same stacked stone that lines the house's foundation further integrates the area.

SHELTER. The porch overhang in the kitchen provides full-time protection from the elements, and a retractable awning can be unfurled when the sun starts to heat up the exposed bar seating area.

PROXIMITY. Situating the outdoor kitchen against the wall of the indoor one let the builder tap into interior plumbing and electrical lines—easier and less expensive than running utilities to a remote destination in the yard. A sliding window above the countertop functions as a pass-through for plates, ingredients, and cookbooks.

WEB BONUS

See photo galleries of outdoor kitchens and other inspiring open-air spaces at: thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

too. That means choosing between plants that are meant to grow wild, like ivy in an English country garden, and more formal privet hedgerows that demand regular shaping.

Also think about which months you'll be using the space. Selecting plants that change with the seasons, for instance, will provide visual interest year-round. As with all landscaping projects, outdoor rooms require both short- and long-term thinking, and plenty of patience. Shrubs grow and flowers blossom, but for a lush and layered look, you may have to wait. "Create what you can now," says Julia Hubbard, a garden designer based in Sagaponack, New York. "Then sit out there and think about what you're going to do next summer."

DESIGNING THE LOOK

The closer an outdoor room is to the house, the more you need to incorporate some of the same architectural elements and materials to visually tie the two spaces together. "It's extremely important for the outdoor rooms to look like they're a part of the house," says Schechter. For an open-air kitchen tucked against the side of a house in Santa Monica, Schechter specified marble counters similar to the ones used indoors. "It's as if we extruded a piece of the house," he says.

The materials you choose for floors and walls should reflect your home's style. Antique brick pavers work well with a traditional Georgian or Colonial Revival; rustic flagstones or wood suits a more casual setting. You can look to local history for inspiration, too. To design a brick patio and cedar pergola for a family in Sag Harbor, New York, Hubbard consulted images of the late-19th-century outbuildings and garden structures typical of the area's Shingle-style houses.

OUTFITTING THE SPACE

If you want people to congregate in your outdoor room, give them something to gather around. A built-in cocktail bar or fountain is a mingling magnet, as is a wood-burning fireplace, which also extends the open-air entertaining season.

When selecting furniture, consider the weather-worthiness of the materials. Metal can rust, wood can turn gray, fabrics can mildew, and some wickers can quickly fall apart. Properly sealed, teak tables and chairs will retain their honey hues for years. Other practical choices are synthetic wicker made from resin and furnishings crafted from Poly-Wood, an extremely durable material made from recycled polyethylene plastic. Outdoor sofas and lounges—even recliners!—now come with cushions clad in fade- and mildew-resistant fabrics, in a slew of styles and colors. For outdoor kitchen appliances, as well as portable food and beverage carts, corrosion-resistant stainless steel is the safest bet.

BRIGHTENING UP THE NIGHT

Illuminating an outdoor room can be as simple as setting candles on a table, hanging a string of whimsical lights under a shade umbrella, or planting tiki torches around the patio. Solar-powered lanterns can provide an ambient glow around dining and lounging areas without the need for wiring.

If you want something more permanent, consider low-voltage path lighting, which can safely lead the way from the house so you don't have to traipse blindly through the yard. Strategically focused spotlights mounted in trees can help define the perimeters of the space, but beware of the baseball-stadium effect. "You want to light up a discreet area, not the whole neighborhood," says Schechter. If your outdoor structure has a solid roof, weather-resistant recessed cans and hanging pendants offer task lighting, which is especially useful for prepping food in a kitchen area.

Of course, the beauty of any outdoor space is that it lets you take advantage of nature's own light-up-the-night sources: the moon and the stars. ■

PRIVATE PATIO DINING ROOM

Ringed by a low boundary wall built from salvaged granite stones, this sunken patio dining area in Reading, Massachusetts, feels intimate even though the neighbors are just a few yards away.

MATERIALS: Beige and gray concrete floor pavers and a stacked-stone wall define the footprint of the space. The wall doubles as a buffet table and extra seating at outdoor dinner parties.

FURNITURE: A patio umbrella keeps diners from baking in the sun while also providing a rooflike sense of enclosure. The teak table and chairs are treated with tung oil to maintain their natural color and prevent rot. The cushions are covered in a quick-drying fabric that resists mildew.

LANDSCAPING: Granite slab steps lead up from the patio into a shade garden that's bounded by rose of Sharon bushes. When in bloom the bushes form a living wall that completely shields the patio from the property next door.

5-ROOM SUITE

By dividing the yard into distinct spaces, the owners of this Los Angeles property created separate outdoor areas for reading, eating, socializing, sunning, and gaming.

SHELTER: Two pergolas topping a pair of porches off the back of the house create protected, denlike seating areas. The overhead structures also provide some much-needed shade in the late afternoon when the areas are awash in direct sunlight.

LANDSCAPING: A vine-draped arbor draws visitors into an outdoor dining area, while a two-level terraced lawn separated by brick steps invites sunbathers to rest in lounge chairs on the lower tier while croquet players hold an impromptu match up above.

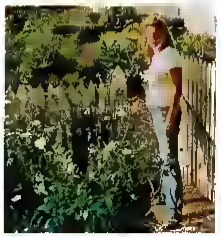
LIGHTING: Copper-topped lanterns match the house's Craftsman style and visually tie indoors and out. Perched on brick piers positioned at the top of the steps, they also provide illumination so guests can safely negotiate the backyard at night.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 128

Out of THE New, Into THE Old

Cracked plaster, peeling paint, and leaking pipes galore couldn't stop one family from swapping their convenience-filled suburban home for a colonial-era farmstead with room to roam

BY MARGARET GILMOOR | PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON ORTIZ | PHOTOGRAPHS BY JÜRGEN FRANK | STYLED BY MARIELLEN MELNER



The 11-acre property in Pennsylvania's Brandywine Valley came with a 1730s farmhouse, outbuildings, and a pond. The herb and vegetable garden—and the picket fence that surrounds it—were added by owners Tony and Cheri Sciscione (FAR LEFT AND FAR RIGHT, ABOVE). The pygmy goat (CENTER, ABOVE) is a family friend.

The Scisciones bought Ravenroyd in May 2001. They spent much of the following spring repairing and repainting the exterior shutters and trim. "I can't tell you how many people stop by to ask us what colors we've used," says Chari. Pratt and Lambert's Mink was selected for the sash. Gloaming for the shutters.

They say good things come to those who wait.

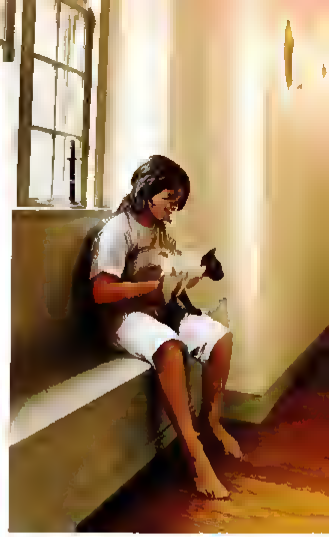
But he who hesitates is lost. So when Cheri and Tony Scisciones discovered after four years of searching that the Pennsylvania farmhouse of their dreams had finally come onto the market, the couple wasted no time selling their comfort- and convenience-filled 1990s home, snapping up the 11-acre property, and moving right into its 1730s house.

The 4,100-square-foot fieldstone farmhouse that the Scisciones had fallen for was not everybody's idea of idyllic—or even inhabitable. Granted, the place had a venerable history: Ravenroyd, as it is known, was once the house of John Parker, the Quaker who cofounded the nearby town of Chadds Ford, where Washington and his troops fought the ill-fated Battle of Brandywine in 1777.

Of more immediate interest, perhaps, to the couple's three preteen children, was the fact that the property possessed a fishing pond, though they'd have to bushwhack their way through heaped trash and fallen trees to reach it. It also had five bathrooms (none of which worked), as well as a barn, a corncrib, a springhouse, and an overgrown orchard, all of which would surely take years to revive. In the home restorer's vernacular, the place had endless "potential," if only the new owners could be patient enough for it to reveal itself—and the Scisciones had not only fortitude but also a clear vision and a workable plan.

"It looked like a challenge," says Cheri, the project's general contractor—"the engine behind all of this," according to her husband—as well as head gardener and nurturer to the family's three children, pet boxer, three cats, and assortment of goats, geese, chickens, and guinea hens. She is also a master of understatement.

The truth of the matter was that time had taken its toll on the old place, which had remained in the Parker family for more than 175 years, then passed through a series of owners over the next two decades, finally ending up in the early 1960s in the hands of a couple who loved and restored the local landmark. With the help of a restoration architect, that couple—dedicated preservationists at a period when "new and improved" were the popular buzzwords—worked to stabilize the dilapidated farmhouse and its outbuildings. Using timber

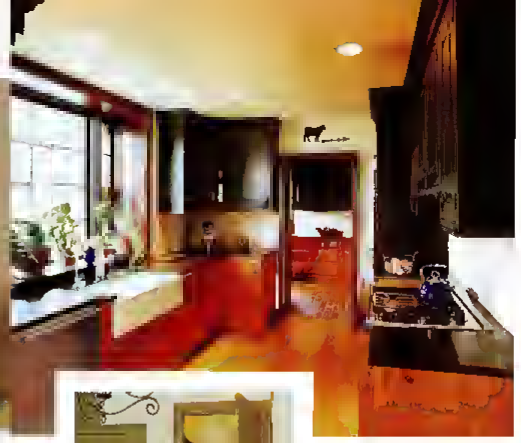


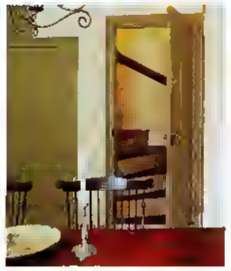
ABOVE: Ten-year-old son Drew and Sushi the cat take a break on the dining room window seat; extra table linens are stowed neatly inside it. **BELOW:** A reproduction tavern table and cherry sideboard; fan-back Windsors; a painted Pennsylvania German Bible box, and local redware pottery underscore Ravenroyd's sure sense of place.

ABOVE: Two nonworking hearths, including this one in the parlor off the main hall, were converted to gas for ease. **LEFT:** Colonial-era mulberry Delft pictorial tiles installed during the 1960s renovation surround the renovated hearth with a true-to-period frame.

"We chose custom cabinets and high-end finishes for the new kitchen because we wanted it to last a long time." CHERI SCISCIONE, HOMEOWNER

Bricks pave the floor of the breakfast room. The settle table and sank-back Windsors are 18th-century-style reproductions. In the corner, a Wardian case—a miniature indoor greenhouse—capitalizes on the natural light the room's southeast-facing double bay windows supply.





ABOVE The honed black granite counters and wide ceramic farm sink blend easily with the kitchen's traditional-style cabinetry. Custom units furnish the adjoining mudroom/butler's pantry/storage area formerly an open patio. **LEFT** From the dining room, one staircase heads upstairs, another (behind the closed door), down.

salvaged from a barn in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, they also designed an 18th-century-style addition that functioned as a family room and turned two small parlors outside the main hall into one better-flowing room with a central fireplace.

But that was 40 years earlier, and the 21st century had sneaked up with a fresh to-do list of repairs and priorities for the new owners to tackle. Some things were small: replacing the faded wallpaper that barely clung to the cracked plaster walls; fixing the gaping holes in the dining room and breakfast area ceilings, and refinishing the wide-plank floors that were concealed under layers of black stain. These tasks would be approached one at a time, just like the more daunting prospects of getting at least one bathroom in working order by moving in day and totally gutting and replacing the kitchen, a necessity that shot to the top of the list as soon as it was discovered that a leaking refrigerator had rotted the subfloor and the broken dishwasher could not be replaced without tearing out the surrounding cabinets.

"With three children, living without a kitchen for a couple of months was tough," says Cheri. To make the process run as smoothly as possible, the couple hired Michael Dougherty of Craft-Way Kitchens, based in Wilmington, Delaware, whose crew lifted the room's vinyl flooring, leveled the surface, and installed new hardwood planks. The Scisciones wanted their new kitchen to keep its old-style charm while including up-to-date amenities, so they selected custom pine and cherry cabinets with

Home Wasn't Rebuilt in a Day

Ravenroyd's restoration time line

MAY 2001
- Scisciones purchase Ravenroyd—against the sensible advice of their home inspector
- Pine floors refinished
- Two bathrooms gutted and rebuilt

SUMMER 2001
- Created raised-bed vegetable-and-herb garden
- Central air-conditioning installed (ah, modern conveniences!)

BY NOVEMBER 2001
- Kitchen, butler's pantry, and breakfast room renovated
- Cracked plaster walls repaired and painted
- Family room refurbished and its built-in bar area remodeled
- All set to host Christmas for 40 friends and family!

SPRING 2002
- Exterior trim and shutters repaired and painted

SUMMER/FALL 2002
- Landscape cleared of debris and natural pond dredged

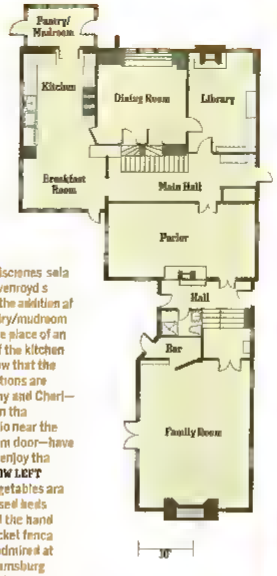
SUMMER 2003
- Installed handmade picket fence around vegetable garden
- Springhouse got a new roof and became a potting shed
- Fieldstone walls refurbished
- Barn's siding replaced, its interior space transformed into a play area with a basketball court

SUMMER/FALL 2004
- Electrical and plumbing systems completely updated
- Added barnyard animals: chickens, guinea hens, pygmy goats, and geese

BY WINTER 2006/2007
- Original dining room converted into a library with custom-fitted shelves
- Master bath and closets renovated
- Orchard revived with new apple, peach, and pear trees

NEXT GOALS
- Plant a perennial garden
- Enjoy the fruits of their labor

Inside: 60s Ravenroyd was expanded to create a family room, using beams salvaged from a Lancaster County barn.



RIGHT The Scisciones' sole change to Ravenroyd's footprint was the addition of a butler's pantry/mudroom which took the place of an open patio off the kitchen **FAR RIGHT** Now that the major renovations are complete Tony and Cheri—shown here on the flagstone patio near the breakfast room door—have more time to enjoy the gardens **BELOW LEFT** Herbs and vegetables are planted in raised beds Tony modeled the hand made 600 picket fence after one he admired at Colonial Williamsburg **BELOW RIGHT** The property's smallest out building is for the birds

a distressed finish, honed black granite countertops, and a fireclay farmhouse sink. Adding a new mudroom/pantry/storage area at the back entrance, just outside the kitchen, made the most of the existing space without expanding the structure beyond its original framework.

Keeping true to the spirit of the pre-Revolutionary house, the Scisciones hired master carpenter Greg Flegal to repair the existing woodwork, wall paneling, and window shutters and re-create lost elements, such as rotted windowsills and missing moldings. Flegal converted a sitting room at the front of the house into a cozy library, constructing shelving in sections, then scribing them to the walls and ceilings.

"Don't dwell on what you still need to do—it can be overwhelming. Think of all you've accomplished!" —TONY SCISCIONE, HOMEOWNER

While the owners took pains to keep the architecture and replacement hardware true to the original period, they didn't make the mistake of attempting to reconstruct colonial times. Instead, they married the old with the new, creating a warm, traditional style that blends historic details with personal touches acknowledging the structure's role as home to a modern family of five—hence the central air-conditioning, a wine cooler in the refurbished bar area, glass-enclosed showers, clean-burning gas fireplaces, and custom-fitted drawers and shelves in the master bedroom closets.

Perhaps the most unexpected change came outdoors, where the farmlike property inspired the Scisciones to clear, level, and seed the yard; dredge the spring-fed pond and stock it with trout; and undertake the planting of a series of raised vegetable and herb beds inspired by the ones at nearby Longwood Gardens.

Six years after moving in, all the major restoration is done, but the house remains a work in progress. "You become a caretaker," Cheri says. "The house has been around for almost 300 years, and we're just passing through." Everything worthwhile takes time. And good things are worth waiting for. ■

FLOOR PLAN: IAN WORPOLE

Check out TOH TV's remodel of a 19th-century New England farmstead at: **thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts**

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

Go outside and play

Turn a ho-hum lawn into a hub of activity with a sport court for horseshoes, croquet, or bocce. TOH TV's Roger Cook shows you how

> Give guests a buffet of playtime options and they will make your home the season's hottest destination. They'll arrive early, stay late, bring treats, and call you the greatest host since Jay Gatsby. All it takes is a backyard filled with games suited to all ages and abilities, a place where family and friends can gather to face off—whether it be for an innocent competition or a heated grudge match. In other words, if you build it, they will come. • But to effect this kind of leisure-time loyalty, you need some sophisticated games. We're not talking about staid badminton or weak-willed Wiffle ball. You need games of skill and strategy, games once played by warriors and kings—games like bocce, horseshoes, and croquet. • Working from a design by landscape architect Elliott Brundage, *This Old House* landscape contractor Roger Cook took one backyard, overgrown with bittersweet and poison ivy, and turned it into a sports lover's heaven, squeezing in a croquet lawn, a horseshoe pit, and a bocce court. The low-maintenance play zones are close to the house and pool, where they offer options for entertainment after a morning swim or before a barbeque feast. Together they provide the perfect enticement for fun-seekers. As Roger puts it: "Anything that gets people outside is a reason for the whole family to spend time together."

BY SAL VAGLICA

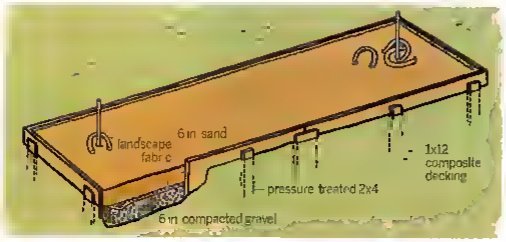
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLER AND KELLER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CARL WIENS

Horseshoes

The satisfying clang of horseshoes wrapping around their target floats through the air on long summer afternoons, enticing adults and children alike to pick up the game. "Guests gravitate toward horseshoes because most people are familiar enough with the rules to play," Brundage says. The 6-inch-deep sand also draws them in, evoking a backyard beach.

Sand is an ideal playing surface for the game: the 2-pound horseshoes are too punishing on grass or asphalt. And that's really all this pit is: a long rectangle filled with sand, surrounded by a durable frame. Official length for a horseshoe pit is 46 feet, but its design is basic enough to replicate on any long, flat sliver of land, as long as you leave 5 feet open behind each stake for safety. The maintenance is as simple as regular raking and the occasional fishing out of an errant leaf from nearby trees.



• The game of horseshoes was so popular during the American Revolution that decades later the Duke of Wellington declared, "The war was won by pitchers of horse hardware."

>HOW TO

1_ Roger prepared the base of the pit by excavating the 8-by-42-foot area 6 inches down until he reached the subsoil. Then he put down a 6-inch layer of gravel and covered that with landscape fabric.

2_ To create the frame of the pit, he dug a 6-inch-deep trench around the perimeter of the gravel, then set 1x12 composite decking boards, turned on edge, into the trench. "The key is to keep the frame as simple as possible," Roger says. He supported the boards with 2-foot-long 2x4 pressure-treated stakes pounded into the ground along the outside of the frame until they sat 3 inches below the top edge. He screwed the boards to the stakes to hold them up. The boards rise 1½ inches above the adjacent croquet lawn to prevent croquet balls from rolling into the pit.

3_ Roger filled the frame with 6 tons of coarse sand, creating a 6-inch-thick layer that he raked level.

4_ Using a sledgehammer, he drove 3-foot metal stakes into either end of the pit, leaving 36 feet between them. The stakes protrude a regulation height of 15 inches above the playing surface.

Croquet

A lush lawn is a jewel in any backyard, but one with thick turf and a birch-tree forest border practically begs barefoot guests to come out and play. On this particular 23½-by-84-foot patch, the game of choice is croquet: the lawn can accommodate a full game of six players. And while it's nowhere near as big as the 5,000 square feet used in official games, the tough mix of bluegrass, rye, and fescue grasses will still stand up to the most zealous competitors.

For Roger, building the lawn was no different from any other sod project, though he added the step of making the field somewhat level. He amended the soil and laid the turf, then gave it a few weeks to take root before allowing players on the field. He also collected large stones that dotted the property to construct a rock wall boundary along one side, separating the gaming area from the trees. All that's left is to place the wickets, grab a traditional wood mallet, and stroll the grounds for a leisurely game.

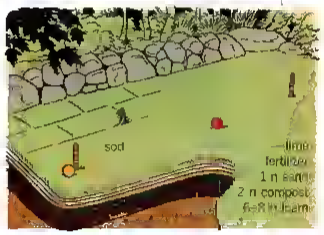
>HOW TO

1_ After Roger cleared the area of brush, he enriched the soil by adding 6 to 8 inches of loam, 2 inches of compost, and an inch of sand (for drainage), then tilling the three layers together.

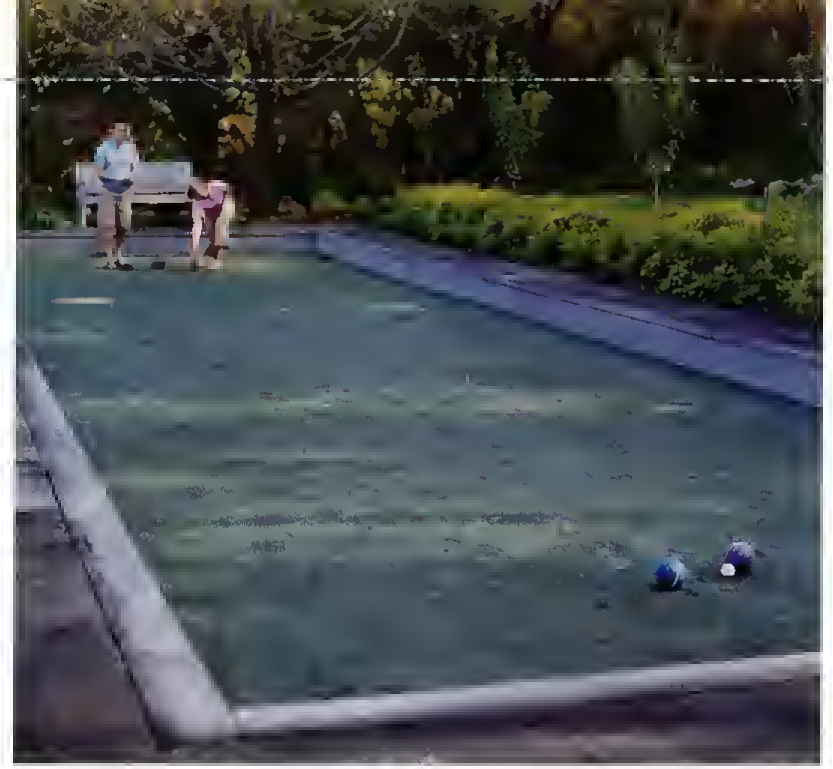
2_ To bring the soil to a pH suitable for turf grass (between 6 and 7.5), he spread starter fertilizer and lime, then raked the amendments into the top inch of soil. Once all was well mixed, his crew leveled out the surface with rakes.

3_ Roger chose to sod the location rather than seed to establish a quick lush lawn. To avoid creating a clear grid, he laid the sod in a running bond pattern, making sure the seams between pieces didn't line up with the seams from the next row.

4_ Once the sod was down, he watered it every morning for the first week to saturate the soil and encourage deep root growth. After three weeks and two mowings, the lawn was ready for play. In the following weeks he cut back on watering, eventually tapering off to an inch a week.



• Some of the most famous wits and entertainers of the 1920s were obsessed with croquet. Harpo Marx had a climate-controlled room just for his mallets.



• Bocce may have started as far back as 5200 B.C. in ancient Egypt, where the game was played with polished rocks.

Bocce

• Legend has it that in 1588 Sir Francis Drake delayed setting sail to fight the approaching Spanish Armada in order to continue playing bowls, the English version of bocce. "First we finish the game, then we'll deal with the Armada," he said.

Bocce is a slow-tempo game, best enjoyed with the sun low and a cocktail in hand. The rules are simple enough. A small ball, called the pallino, gets tossed down the court and players must try to get as close as possible with their own balls, sometimes strategically knocking opponents out of the way.

A regulation bocce court is long—87½ feet—and topped with the same clay used on traditional tennis courts. The court Roger built is only two-thirds regulation size, but that's not an issue, as it is used by little players as well as big. Brundage's design was inspired by courts in Boston's North End, where Italian-Americans play into the evening under the park lights. A deep frame of timbers contains packed gravel that supports the heavy clay and keeps it level. Composite decking on the inside face of the court resists dents, which a 2-pound bocce ball traveling at 10 mph will surely inflict on wood.

A bluestone walk surrounds the court and extends into a patio at one end with a teak bench for players and spectators under the maple trees. Along the side adjacent to the croquet lawn, 'Gold Mound' spiraea, six crabapple trees, and an 18-inch retaining wall create a clear demarcation.

>HOW TO

1_ Roger excavated the 16½-by-61-foot area for the bocce court 26 inches below grade, then dug 6-inch trenches around the perimeter and filled them with 2 inches of gravel.

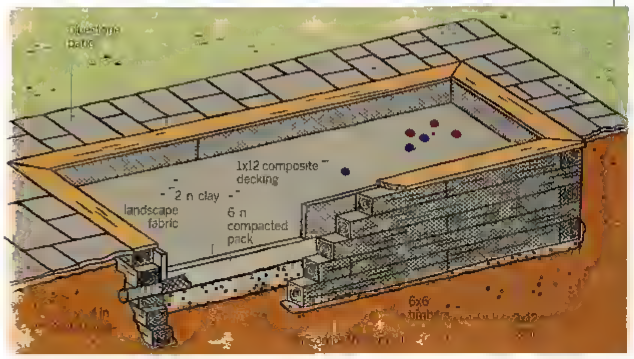
2_ He set the first course of 8-foot-long 6x6 timbers in the trenches on top of the gravel, butting the wood end-to-end along the walls and end-to-side at the corners. Once the timbers were set, he drilled through them every 2 feet and drove 18-inch rebar through the timbers and a foot into the ground.

3_ For the next four courses of timbers, Roger staggered the joints along the walls by 4 feet so they didn't line up with the course below. He also alternated the timbers at the corners to make lapped joints. He drove timber screws through each new course and into the one below—two at each corner and every 18 inches along the sides—to tie them together. He capped the timbers with 2x12 cedar rails (TOP RIGHT).

4_ To prep for the court surface, Roger laid a 6-inch-thick base of compacted gravel (MIDDLE RIGHT) inside the timber walls. Then he wrapped a 4-inch perforated flexible pipe in filter fabric and laid it along the inside edge of the entire court. He capped one end and routed the other end through a hole in a timber he'd cut before he built the wall, so the pipe can drain rainwater away from the court surface. Once the pipe was set, he put down another 6-inch layer of compacted pack, a mix of gravel and stone dust.

5_ He lined the exposed inner face of the walls with 1x12 composite decking screwed to the timbers.

6_ To lay the clay surface, Roger set down metal poles that span the width of the court every 6 to 8 feet. Then he filled between the poles with 2 inches of clay, screeding off the excess by pulling a straightedge across two poles at a time. Once the entire surface was laid, screeded, and level, Roger took up the poles and filled in the voids. Using a water roller, he gently compacted the clay, working across the width of the court, then down the length twice to leave a smooth, even surface. ■



PHOTOS: WERNER CHAPPELL

For more ideas on creating backyard leisure areas around playing courts thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

PICKING OUT GOOD WOOD

A day at the lumberyard with TOH TV's master carpenter Norm Abram

BY MARK FEIRER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUSSELL KAYE

THE OPEN MAWS OF BARN-RED STORAGE BUILDINGS GIVE ARLINGTON Coal & Lumber the ambience of a remote farm. But out back, bright yellow forklifts scuttle between islands of lumber like crabs ahead of the rising tide, anxiously stabbing at piles before backing off, hydraulics whining, with another load for waiting flatbeds. The patrons are largely a work-boot-and-Carhartt crowd, and judging by the scrimmage of rack-topped pickups in the parking lot, they're here for studs and joists, plywood and posts.

This Old House master carpenter Norm Abram walks among the stacks of dimensional lumber that sit briefly paused between the anonymity of life inside a tree and dry entombment in some wall. He grazes his hand over the piles, stopping to pick up a stick and study it. Long before Norm learned how to swing a hammer, his father encouraged an appreciation of wood's strength and versatility. "Like people in a city, every board cut from a tree is different, an individual," he says. For what it's worth, this is one metropolis where Norm clearly knows everyone in town.

Master carpenter Norm Abram takes in the hardwood offerings at his favorite lumberyard.

[1] Arlington Coal & Lumber boasts several barn buildings filled floor-to-ceiling with wood. Here Norm pauses to consider endless piles of plywood. [2] When choosing lumber, Norm first sights down the edge to catch any crook, twist, bow, or other deviation. "It's all about straight and true," he says. [3] The ever present tools of the yard. [4] A quick glance at the cut ends of a stack tells a story about species, grain, and quality.

[1]

[2]

[3]

[4]

[5]

[6]

[7]

[8]

[9]

[5] The yard may have aged a bit in its 73-year history, but the inventory is constantly moving. "Around here, lumber doesn't stick around long enough to get beat up by the weather," says Norm. [6] A 1940s-era radial arm saw has served many generations but still gets the job done. [7] Many of Norm's projects require the finish grade of hardwood plywoods like this birch veneer. [8] The hearty grain of wide fir joists contrasts with spruce studs and painted with a special red coating to block out moisture. [9] A seemingly untouched still life belies the constant activity of the lumberyard.

BUILD YOUR SKILL
Learn how to decipher the grade stamp on dimensional lumber
Workshop, p. 105

THE LANGUAGE OF LUMBER

The words used in the industry to describe wood can be conflicting and confusing. Here's a crib sheet to help you understand just what the pros are talking about.

Softwood > Wood from conifers such as pine, spruce, and fir. Generally used for framing.
Hardwood > Wood from deciduous trees, such as oak, birch, and maple. Used for finish work, such as flooring, cabinetry, and moldings. The term can deceive. The relative hardness of some softwoods is more than some hardwoods.
Nominal dimension > The nicknames for lumber sizes. Softwood dimensions give thickness and width, as in 2x4 ("two-by-four") or 1x8. Hardwood dimensions give only thickness, expressed as a fraction over 4, as in 4/4 ("four quarter") for 1 inch, or 12/4 for 3 inches. Nominal dimension is an artifact that no longer equals actual dimension.
Actual dimension > Lumber's exact size, always smaller than nominal. A 2x4 is about 1½ inches by 3½ inches.
Dimensional lumber > (aka dimension lumber) Wood cut into standard sizes, such as 2x4, 1x6, etc. "Dimension" and "dimensional" are often interchangeable. However, some limit use of the term "dimension lumber" to wood between 2 and 5 inches thick (nominally) and use "dimensional lumber" to distinguish solid wood from engineered lumber.
Board > Lumber thinner than 2 inches (nominal dimension).
Timber > Lumber thicker than 5 inches (nominal dimension).
Engineered wood > Lumber and panels made from wood fibers or veneers glued or molded together, as with plywood, medium density fiberboard (MDF), or laminated veneer lumber (LVL).
Pressure-treated lumber > Wood treated under pressure with minerals to make it resistant to rot and insects.
Board foot > A measure used to price exotic and other woods not milled to standard sizes, equal to 144 cubic inches.
Seasoned > Dried to reduce wood's natural moisture and make it lighter and less likely to deform.
Kiln-dried > Seasoned by baking with dry heat in a special room.
Air-dried > Seasoned naturally by stacking.
Heat-treated > Heated with steam or in a kiln to kill insects and make wood more stable against swelling and shrinking.
Green > Freshly sawn or not yet seasoned and dried.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

MARCH 2002 ISSUE

The copper standing-seam roof and classic architectural touches of the Pearches' box bay, inspired by a *TOH* cover (LEFT), lend added charm to the couple's late-period Italianate home

The homeowners relax at a soapstone-topped center island—a spacious spot for casual dining.

Outside In

Inspired by *This Old House* and a cover photo of a box bay window, this Michigan couple remodeled their kitchen for a better view of a beautiful backyard lake

IT'S A STORY WE'VE HEARD TIME AND TIME AGAIN: a wonderful older home with great architectural details, solid bones—and a crummy kitchen left over from some long-ago remodel.

Clyde and Rebecca Pearch have been there. After moving into their otherwise perfect 1886 lakefront Italianate in Howell, Michigan, they quickly figured out that the 13-by-16-foot kitchen—with its minimal cabinetry, stingy counter space, and *Leave It to Beaver* decor—just wasn't all that functional.

They wanted something bigger. Not much bigger, mind you, just big enough for Rebecca to cook up a pot roast for the extended family each Sunday, and for the caterers the Pearches occasionally hire for big deal holidays and birthday parties to do their thing in comfort.

Their first thought? Knock out the wall between the kitchen and dining room, then combine the two rooms into one eat-in superkitchen. But that wasn't going to work. The second-floor plumbing ran right through the sacrificial wall, and the cost of reconfiguring it threatened to double their budget. "That wall was staying," says Clyde.

It wasn't until Rebecca spied an old copy of the March 2002 issue of *This Old House* that she found the answer to their dimensional dilemma. There on the cover was a photograph of a box-bay-window bumpout. "And boom! That was it," she recalls. Not only would the bump give them more room for additional counter space, it would provide a dramatic view of Thompson Lake, located just beyond the couple's backyard.

Rebecca, who put together an idea book stuffed with *TOH* tear sheets and catalogs from various appliance and cabinet manufacturers, found other ideas in the pages of the magazine. Thumbing through older issues, she recalled a story on Tom Silva installing soapstone countertops and decided they were a warmer alternative to the granite she was considering. "Besides, everybody has granite these days," says Rebecca.

Wanting to squeeze in as much storage space as possible, the Pearches decided to run their new cabinets right up to the kitchen's

By Keith Pandolfi | Produced by Colette Scanlon Ortiz
Photographs by Beth Singer | Styled by Annie Kleene

For ideas on how to carve out more storage in a small kitchen, visit thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

11½-foot ceiling. A solution for accessing them came from yet another *TOH* article that featured a rolling library ladder, which they decided to include in their remodel as well.

As much as we'd like to take all the credit for the handsome result, the Pearches, along with their kitchen designer Kay Maxey, had some bright ideas of their own. Working with contractor John Belkowski, they decided to top off the box bay with a rustic copper standing seam roof. They also chose to recycle the windows displaced by that bumpout for use in their new glass-front cabinets, and ingeniously substituted two oak heating registers for panels in their under the sink cabinet doors, allowing for greater ventilation. "I love that part," says Rebecca. "They're so beefy."

Problems? Sure, there were problems. For one, the bumpout needed some added support up top, so the Pearches had to fork out an extra $400 for a microlam—an engineered beam that allows for more support over a greater span. And some of the cabinetry and appliances had to be reconfigured after Rebecca signed off on a typo in the measurements she'd supplied. "My fault," Rebecca admits.

Still, after a little brainstorming with their contractor—and the pages of *TOH*—the Pearches have a kitchen where the whole family can bond over meals, and where the two of them can also share a romantic dinner alone. "I travel a lot, so when I come home, the last thing I want is to go out to eat," says Clyde. "Now we can sit together, enjoy our dinner, and gaze out at the lake." Just as important, their home now has the finely crafted, stylistically appropriate kitchen it has long deserved.

BUILD YOUR SKILL
Learn how to construct a ventilated cabinet using wooden registers. **Workshop,** p. 105

INSPIRATION #1

MARCH 2002 ISSUE

The Box Bay

The Pearches packed a lot into their box bay—inspired by a *TOH* cover story (above): Five double-hung windows with fixed transoms, from Marvin Windows & Doors, give them a great view of their backyard lake. The bay also makes room for much needed counter space, as well as recessed task lighting. Dual Fisher & Paykel dishwasher drawers to the right of the sink allow for both light and heavy loads, and pull-out waste and recycling bins are located conveniently to the left of the sink.

INSPIRATION #2

NOVEMBER 2001 ISSUE

The Soapstone Sink & Counters

The couple fell hard for soapstone counters they saw in *TOH* (above) but decided on a veined gray Brazilian version for their own kitchen. While some homeowners darken the stone with a once-a-month application of mineral oil to even out the color, the Pearches prefer to keep the stone light. "I just clean it with a sponge and it's fine," says Rebecca. A deep farmhouse sink, fitted with an old-fashioned looking satin-nickel faucet from Cucina, accommodates even cumbersome roasting pans.

INSPIRATION #3

SEPTEMBER 2005 ISSUE

The Rolling Ladder

To maximize storage space, the Pearches built their cabinetry as high as the 11½-foot ceilings would allow. And access to those upper cabinets is made easy with the help of a library ladder from the Putnam Rolling Ladder Co.—a feature inspired by a story found in *TOH* (above). The red oak ladder hooks onto a metal rail and rolls along on old-fashioned wheels with a satin-nickel finish. When not in use, it can be pushed up against the cabinetry and out of the way.

We can't take all the credit...

Of course. Inspiration can be found all over at showrooms and showhouses, in stylish stores and smart catalogs, by checking out other jobs a kitchen designer or contractor has done, even at friends' homes. Here are some other smart ideas built into the Pearches' place.

The Cabinets

Key to the vintage look of the kitchen: inset style cabinets with recessed-panel and divided-light doors from Omega Cabinetry and brushed-nickel knobs and brushed pewter bin pulls from Renovators Old Mill. Under-the-counter drawers provide easy-access storage for cookware, while vertical pedestal-leg pull-outs on either side of the cooktop conceal convenient spice and dishtowel racks. One of our favorite innovations. The couple substituted two oak heating registers from Reggio Register Co. for glass panels originally included with the doors to create a ventilated cabinet that holds cleaning supplies under the sink.

The Appliances

With a nod toward entertaining, the couple chose a Wolf six-burner gas cooktop with stainless steel backsplash—complete with plate warming shelf and infrared heat lamps—and matching vent hood. Ductwork is hidden behind a wall of period-appropriate beadboard. Double Wolf wall ovens allow cooking flexibility for dinners big and small and coordinate with the stainless front GE Profile fridge.

The Island

Accented with beadboard and topped with soapstone, the new 30-by-60-inch island houses a Panasonic microwave and three pull-out storage baskets for the family's art supplies. Two turned legs support a kneehole with enough clearance for the Pearches to dine or pay bills comfortably. To keep the color scheme light and soothing, the cabinetry was painted pearl white and the island moss green. A wrought iron pot rack provides both decorative task lighting and quick access to frequently used pots and pans.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 118

Understand the risks. See the benefits.

What should I know about NSAIDs?

When it comes to relieving arthritis pain, you may think some prescription NSAID pain relievers, like ibuprofen and naproxen, don't have any cardiovascular risks But based on the available research, that's not clear. And if you look closer, the FDA requires all these NSAID pain relievers, including Celebrex, to have the same cardiovascular warning.

What about heart attack or stroke?

Any prescription NSAID, Including Celebrex, may increase the chance of heart attack or stroke, which can lead to death. This chance increases if you have heart disease or risk factors for it, such as high blood pressure, or when NSAIDs are taken for long periods.

How do NSAIDs affect my stomach?

All NSAIDs, including Celebrex, also increase the chance of stomach and intestine problems, such as bleeding and ulcers, which can occur without warning and may cause death. With any of these medicines, patients also taking aspirin and the elderly are at increased risk for stomach bleeding and ulcers

What does this mean for Celebrex?

While all NSAIDs have some of the same warnings, they all treat arthritis pain. But since individual results may vary, having options is important An NSAID, like Celebrex, may be one option. In fact, prescription Celebrex has never been taken off the market. Based on the available data, the FDA stated that for certain patients Celebrex's benefits outweigh the risks But only you and your doctor can make that decision.

What are the benefits?

In clinical studies, a lower percentage of patients on Celebrex reported indigestion, abdominal pain and nausea versus prescription ibuprofen and naproxen. Celebrex can be used with low-dose aspirin. Other prescription NSAIDs aren't generally recommended with aspirin.

What does it do for arthritis pain?

Celebrex relieves arthritis pain, stiffness and inflammation. Just one 200 mg dose provides 24-hour relief.

Any other precautions?

Use at the lowest dose possible for the shortest time based on treatment goals. Do not take Celebrex if you're pregnant or have had allergic reactions to aspirin or sulfonamides. All NSAIDs, including Celebrex, increase the chance of serious skin reactions. And tell your doctor if you've bad kidney or liver problems.

What next?

For many with arthritis pain, not treating is not an option. Talk to your doctor about Celebrex and see what's right for you.

Visit www.celebrex.com or call 1-888-celebrex. But most importantly, your doctor can tell you about the risks and benefits of all NSAID pain relievers.

Please turn page to see important information about Celebrex and other NSAIDs.

Talk to your doctor to... Understand the risks. See the benefits. Underst

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Medication Guide
for Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)
(See the end of this Medication Guide for a list of prescription NSAID medicines.)

What is the most important information I should know about medicines called Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)?

NSAID medicines may increase the chance of a heart attack or stroke that can lead to death
This chance increases
- with longer use of NSAID medicines
- in people who have heart disease

NSAID medicines should never be used right before or after a heart surgery called a "coronary artery bypass graft (CABG)."
NSAID medicines can cause ulcers and bleeding in the stomach and intestines at any time during treatment. Ulcers and bleeding:
- can happen without warning symptoms
- may cause death

The chance of a person getting an ulcer or bleeding increases with:
- taking medicines called "corticosteroids" and "anticoagulants"
- longer use
- smoking
- drinking alcohol
- older age
- having poor health

NSAID medicines should only be used
- exactly as prescribed
- at the lowest dose possible for your treatment
- for the shortest time needed

What are Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)?
NSAID medicines are used to treat pain and redness, swelling, and heat (inflammation) from medical conditions such as:
- different types of arthritis
- menstrual cramps and other types of short-term pain

Who should not take a Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID)?
Do not take an NSAID medicine:
- if you had an asthma attack, hives, or other allergic reaction with aspirin or any other NSAID medicine
- for pain right before or after heart bypass surgery

Tell your healthcare provider:
- about all of your medical conditions
- about all of the medicines you take. NSAIDs and some other medicines can interact with each other and cause serious side effects. **Keep a list of your medicines to show to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.**
- if you are pregnant. **NSAID medicines should not be used by pregnant women late in their pregnancy.**
- if you are breastfeeding. Talk to your doctor.

What are the possible side effects of Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)?

Serious side effects include	Other side effects include:
• heart attack • stroke • high blood pressure • heart failure from body swelling (fluid retention) • kidney problems including kidney failure • bleeding and ulcers in the stomach and intestine • low red blood cells (anemia) • life-threatening skin reactions • life-threatening allergic reactions • liver problems including liver failure • asthma attacks in people who have asthma	• stomach pain • constipation • diarrhea • gas • heartburn • nausea • vomiting • dizziness

Get emergency help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
- shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- chest pain
- weakness in one part or side of your body
- slurred speech
- swelling of the face or throat

Stop your NSAID medicine and call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
- nausea
- more tired or weaker than usual
- itching
- your skin or eyes look yellow
- stomach pain
- flu-like symptoms
- vomit blood
- there is blood in your bowel movement or it is black and sticky like tar
- skin rash or blisters with fever
- unusual weight gain
- swelling of the arms and legs, hands and feet

These are not all the side effects with NSAID medicines. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information about NSAID medicines.

Other information about Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)
- Aspirin is an NSAID medicine but it does not increase the chance of a heart attack. Aspirin can cause bleeding in the brain, stomach, and intestines. Aspirin can also cause ulcers in the stomach and intestines.
- Some of these NSAID medicines are sold in lower doses without a prescription (over-the-counter). Talk to your healthcare provider before using over-the-counter NSAIDs for more than 10 days.

NSAID medicines that need a prescription

Generic Name	Tradename
Celecoxib	Celebrex
Diclofenac	Cataflam, Voltaren, Arthrotec (combined with misoprostol)
Diflunisal	Dolobid
Etodolac	Lodine, Lodine XL
Fenoprofen	Nalfon, Nalfon 200
Flurbiprofen	Ansaid
Ibuprofen	Motrin, Tab-Profen, Vicoprofen* (combined with hydrocodone), Combunox (combined with oxycodone)
Indomethacin	Indocin, Indocin SR, Indo-Lemmon, Indomethagan
Ketoprofen	Oruvail
Ketorolac	Toradol
Mefenamic Acid	Ponstel
Meloxicam	Mobic
Nabumetone	Relafen
Naproxen	Naprosyn, Anaprox, Anaprox DS, EC-Naproxyn, Naprelan, Naprapac (copackaged with lansoprazole)
Oxaprozin	Daypro
Piroxicam	Feldene
Sulindac	Clinoril
Tolmetin	Tolectin, Tolectin DS, Tolectin 600

*Vicoprofen contains the same dose of ibuprofen as over the-counter (OTC) NSAIDs, and is usually used for less than 10 days to treat pain. The OTC NSAID label warns that long term continuous use may increase the risk of heart attack or stroke.

This Medication Guide has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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WORKSHOP

TECHNIQUES, TIPS, AND YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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A 1950s era trio of gardening tools—garden fork, trowel, and five-fingered hand rake—may be worn with time, but they've still got real charm, whether as decorative objects or fully functional implements for tilling and planting.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BEATRIZ DA COSTA

Ask This Old House

› NEED AN EXPERT? WE'VE GOT FIVE, READY TO ANSWER YOUR HOME QUESTIONS

A thick layer of epoxy, slathered over a properly sanded and primed windowsill, fills the cracks and voids that could become home to rot. When painted it looks as good as new wood.

Windowsill Repair

Our south-facing windowsills are exposed to our worst weather, and they're showing signs of damage. How should I repair them?

BOB WELSH, DULUTH, GA.

Tom Silva replies: For this kind of wood repair, you can't beat the high bonding strength of a two-part, wood-compatible epoxy adhesive. But don't just slather the stuff on and expect your problem to be solved. You have to prep the wood thoroughly by removing any paint or decayed wood so that the epoxy has something solid to bond with.

For the past decade or so, I've been working with an epoxy made by Advanced Repair Technology that is formulated to expand and contract with wood. To ensure good adhesion, it's applied in two steps: primer, then filler.

After prepping and sanding the wood, mix up and brush on the thin epoxy primer, which penetrates the wood fibers. Wait 10 minutes, then mix the epoxy filler and trowel it over the damaged areas with a putty knife. When the filler cures, sand it smooth. The filler is so thick that one coat is generally sufficient, but two may be required for very large repairs. Just make sure to sand before putting on a second coat or painting it.

Two Tankless?

I'm considering installing two tankless water heaters: one set to a high temperature for the washing machine and dishwasher, the other at a lower temperature for the bathroom to avoid being scalded. Does this make sense?

ROBERT NORKO, NORTH HAVERHILL, N.H.

Richard Trethewey replies. Not really. Tankless water heaters are expensive, and a single unit, if properly sized, will easily handle the needs of most houses. Just set the unit's water temperature to a nonscalding 120 degrees or so and you'll meet most of your cleaning needs, including clothes washing. Dishwashers do need hotter water than that, so many machines have an internal heater to boost the water to 130 or140 degrees. If yours doesn't already have such a heater, it's less expensive to buy a new dishwasher than another tankless unit.

Front Door Care

I have completely refinished my solid-cedar front door twice—by sanding it to bare wood, staining it, then applying a marine spar varnish—but the finish still doesn't hold up long under our fierce desert sun. Is there anything I can do to help this door?

MARY ZAHORA, GOLD CANYON, ARIZ.

Norm Abram replies: I can tell you from personal experience, with the oak threshold at my front door and the teak on my boat, that keeping a clear finish on outdoor wood isn't easy.

First, you need to prepare the surface properly by completely removing the finish and any sun-damaged wood. When the surface is pristine, apply at least five coats of marine spar

TOM SILVA
GENERAL CONTRACTOR

NORM ABRAM
MASTER CARPENTER

RICHARD TRETHEWEY
PLUMBING & HEATING EXPERT

KEVIN O'CONNOR
HOST

ROGER COOK
LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

Q: WHAT IS IT?

A Two-legged stool
B Drink holder
C Hook for climbing telephone poles
D Or...

*FOR ANSWER SEE PAGE 111

varnish loaded with UV inhibitors; one or two coats isn't enough. Then, once a year, sand the varnish with 220 grit paper and apply two more coats, which provide fresh protection from the sun. That's what I do with my boat, and it's only exposed to the weather about seven months of the year!

If that sounds like too much work, and painting the door isn't an option, try an exterior-grade penetrating oil like Penofin or Australian Timber Oil. Penetrating oils don't form a hard, glossy finish like varnish, so they can't peel. And while you'll need to reoil the door more frequently—at least twice a year—at least oil is easy to apply. I've used it on some outdoor furniture projects and it holds up pretty well if you keep after it.

Shrub Turning Brown

Our 30-year-old English yew has begun to turn brown in places. Is it suffering from a disease or simply past its prime?

JAN & DON ERICKSON, KENOSHA, WISC.

Roger Cook replies: Yews are pretty tough. Only some drastic change could explain why a healthy plant is turning brown.

My first question is, do you have any deer? When they feed on yews, the damaged branches sometimes turn brown. Also, yews are sensitive to altered watering patterns. Have you changed how often or how much you water your lawn, the location of a downspout, or anything else that might have reduced or increased the amount of water this plant gets?

If none of this has occurred, have a certified arborist check the bush for disease or insects.

Choosing the Right Screwdriver Bit

When I was installing stainless-steel Phillips-head screws using a cordless drill, I couldn't seem to find a bit that wouldn't strip the screwhead. What's the best way to match a bit with a screwhead?

BRAD MACDOWELL, SARANAC LAKE, NY

Kevin O'Connor replies: Kevin Enke, the bit expert at bit and blade manufacturer Vermont American, explained to me that a bit that fits snugly in the screwhead recess is less likely to strip the head. The three common Phillips bit

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sizes, from smallest to largest, have PH 1, 2, or 3 stamped on their shanks. With all three bits on hand, it's easy to find the one that fits. If it moves in the recess when you turn the screw by hand, try a larger bit.

I also mentioned your problem to Tom Silva. He had these suggestions: Use a drill/driver and adjust its torque so the bit stops when it meets too much resistance, before it mangles the screwhead. Always drill a pilot hole first, and always keep the bit in line with the screw shank. Tilting a Phillips bit even a few degrees to one side could cause it to lose its grip. With stainless-steel screws, you have to be doubly careful because the metal is soft.

Worn bits are troublemakers, too, Tom says. If a bit's edges start to look or feel rounded over, don't hesitate to toss it.

Repairing Tapered Columns

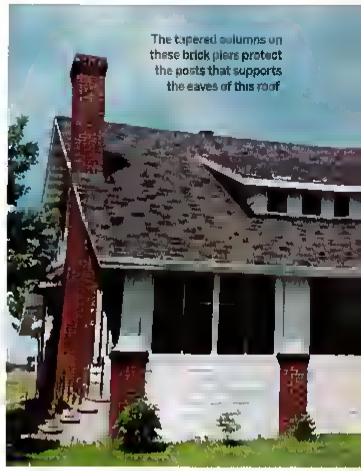
Our 90 year-old bungalow has tapered wood columns in front that hold up the roof over our enclosed porch. One of the columns seems to be deteriorating, but I don't know how to repair it or what materials to use. Do you have any suggestions?

KEVIN & JUDY WEINSTOCK, BARRON, WISC.

Tom Silva replies: With columns that old, I'd say you're lucky that only one of them has problems. It should be taken care of fairly soon, too, because the more water that gets past those tapered boards, the worse things will be for the interior post, which I suspect is what actually holds up your roof.

First, carefully remove the column's outside boards so you can use them as patterns to make replacements. Then check the post and make sure it's in good shape. If you have any doubts about its strength, replace it with preservative-treated stock of the same size.

I'd rebuild the sides of the column using medium-density overlay, an exterior-grade plywood covered with resin-impregnated paper. MDO is durable, stands up to wet weather, holds paint well, and doesn't crack or check the way most plywoods will when left outside.



The tapered columns on these brick piers protect the posts that supports the eaves of this roof.

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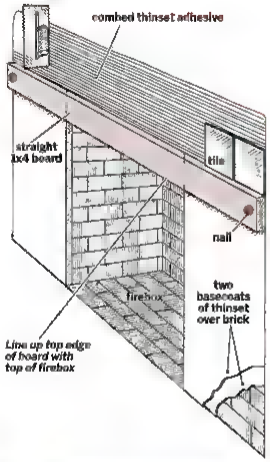

After you've cut the side pieces, butt the edges together and fasten them with galvanized nails and exterior-grade construction adhesive. Then cover the corners of the shell with rot-proof pieces made of cellular PVC trim, such as Azek or Kleer. When all the joints are caulked and the column is painted, you won't be able to tell the difference between it and the originals.

Tile Over Brick

We'd like to tile over the brick around our fireplace. Can I put cement backerboard on the wall and cover that with tile?

ROGER BRUMM, STERLING, VA

Joe Ferrante replies. Sure you could, but it's a lot easier to trowel thinset over the brick and then tile right over that. Here's how to do it.

Cover the hearth with a drop cloth and remove the mantel and anything else that's attached to the brick. Go over the entire area with a wire brush to dislodge any loose mortar, then scrub off the soot with a rag soaked in white vinegar. Let the bricks dry for a day or two, then mix up a batch of white, latex-modified thinset cement to the consistency of mayonnaise. Spread the thinset over the brick with a flat, straight—not notched—trowel and force it into all the grout joints. If the joints are still visible after the first coat cures, skim on a second coat to fill in any depressions. If you do it right, you'll end up with a surface that's as flat as backerboard but without any seams. The next day, lay down a new bed of latex modified thinset combed out with a notched trowel, and set your tiles into that. Don't use mastic; it can't take the heat.

Here's a trick I use when tiling around fireplaces. The row of tiles directly above the firebox is visually the most important, so it should be absolutely straight. Nail a straight 1x board horizontally across the fireplace, in line with the top of the firebox, and use its top edge as a shelf as you set the tiles. The board also prevents the tiles from slipping before the adhesive cures. Work up from the board first, then, when the thinset hardens, take it off and work down the sides of the fireplace.

Joe Ferrante is a tile contractor who has installed the floors and walls of many The Old House projects.

ILLUSTRATIONS: HARRY BATES

PHOTO: ROBERT HARDIN

Removing a Fence

What is the best way to get rid of an old chain link fence and its metal posts?

JIM GARDNER, HAMILTON-N.J.

Tom Silva replies: Removing the fencing itself is easy. Just take off the metal fittings and wire ties that hold it to the posts and peel it off. Removing the posts is another story, because each one is embedded in a posthole filled with concrete. Terminal posts, the ones located at the corners and ends of a fence and on either side of a gate, are the hardest to take out because they have more concrete around them. Line posts are easier to take out because they're in shallower holes.

Start by trying to loosen each line post by rocking it back and forth. If the post doesn't budge, dig around the concrete until it does. You should be able to drag it out of the hole with its concrete boot intact. Terminal posts probably won't pull out so easily, unless you're using a piece of equipment such as a Bobcat or Dingo, those miniature tractors that landscapers use. If I had to remove more than a dozen line and terminal posts, I'd rent one anyway.

If you don't mind leaving the concrete in place, just cut the posts off. You'll need a reciprocating saw and a bunch of metal-cutting blades if you choose this option. ●

To send a question to Ask This Old House, go to thisoldhouse.com/asktoh or write to:

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Include a complete address and daytime phone number. Published questions will be edited for clarity and length and may be used in other media. We regret that, due to the volume of mail received, we're not able to reply to unpublished questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 118

{ A: WHAT IS IT? }

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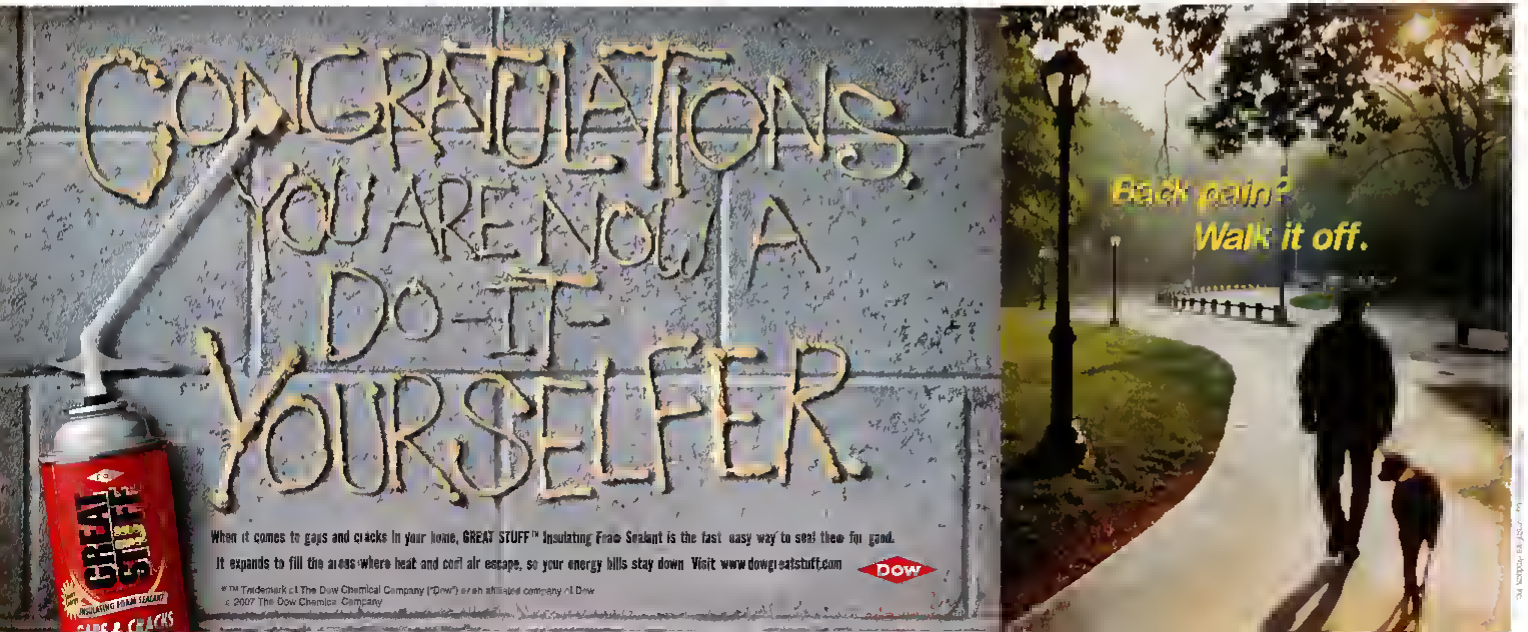

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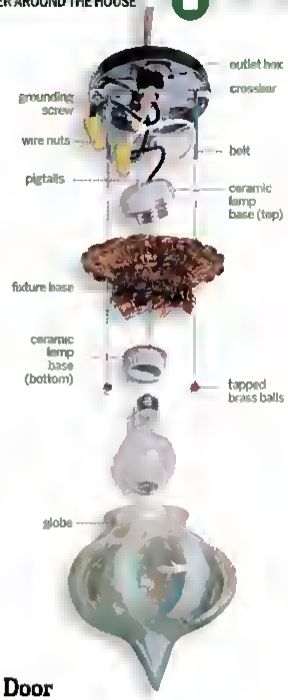
How to Rewire and Hang an Old Light Fixture

Get it working with easy-to-find components

RELATED STORY, P. 40 "OLD LIGHT FOR A NEW LOOK"

When you see a vintage light fixture that would look perfect in your house, don't passit up just because it has brittle wiring or a cracked lamp base. With a few dollars' worth of common hardware and fasteners, it can be safely hanging from your ceiling. These are the parts we needed and the steps we took to get an old fixture from an antique store up and working.

1. Remove the globe and unscrew the two halves of the old ceramic lamp base. Take them with you to the store and buy a replacement of the same diameter.
2. Measure the distance from the ceiling to the attachment holes on the fixture. (We did this by holding the fixture base up to the ceiling, sticking a bamboo skewer up through the base's attachment hole until it touched the ceiling surface, then denting the bamboo with a thumbnail.) Buy an 8-32 roundhead bolt ¼ inch longer than that measurement for each attachment hole, along with a matching nut. (We also bought 8-32 tapped brass balls to cover the exposed bolt ends and match the fixture.) If the outlet box on the ceiling doesn't have a crossbar, add that, and a grounding screw, to your shopping list.
3. Screw the ceramic lamp base halves together, clamping the fixture's base between them. To prevent short circuits, put electrical tape over the lamp base where the pigtail wires are attached.
4. Shut off the electricity to the ceiling outlet. Use a circuit tester to make sure its wires are safe. Remove the crossbar from its outlet box (or package) and insert a bolt in each slot, pointing down. Fasten the green grounding screw loosely to the underside of the crossbar, then screw the crossbar to the box.
5. Check bolt length. Lift the fixture base to the ceiling, and fit the bolts through its holes. Tighten the nuts (or brass balls in this case) onto the bolts until the base sits on the ceiling. Take the base off for the next step. If the bolts are too long, thread a nut up to the head of each one, then cut them with a hacksaw. Back the nut off to restore the bolt's threads.
6. Lift the fixture base to the ceiling, then use wire nuts to connect each pigtail wire on the lamp base to the same color wire coming out of the ceiling box. Attach the bare copper wire to the grounding screw.
7. Insert the bolts through the base again, attach the nuts (or balls) and tighten them until the base rests firmly against the ceiling.
9. Reattach the globe to the base with its screws. Turn the electricity back on and enjoy your new fixture. —THOMAS BAKER



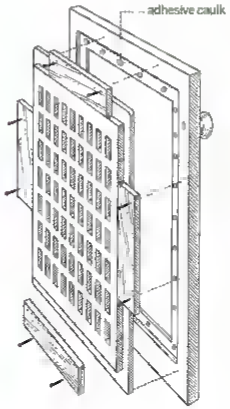


PHOTO: JOHN W. TAYLOR; ILLUSTRATION: HARRY BATES

Building a Ventilated Cabinet Door

Wooden grille inserts provide plenty of airflow

RELATED STORY, P. 98 "OUTSIDE IN"

Under a sink, cabinet doors with open grille work are just the thing to hide sponges and cleaning supplies while letting in plenty of fresh air. While most cabinet companies don't offer this option, you can buy the wood grilles made to cover duct returns in a floor—they're available in custom sizes and almost any wood species—and install them in place of glass in a cabinet door frame. Here's how to do it.

1. Measure the opening. Open the door and, from the back, measure to the inside edges of the door frame. Order a surface-mount wood grille ¼ inch smaller than the opening. Remove the glass from the door frame.
2. Finish to match. Sand all the grille's surfaces with 120-grit sandpaper. For stained cabinets, wipe on a matching gel stain/poly combo finish. If the cabinets are painted, spray on the primer and paint, using thin coats to prevent drips.
3. Mount. Once the finish is dry, dab adhesive caulk around the door's rabbet and press the grille in place. Secure it to the back of the frame with strips of wood, as shown. —KEITH PANDOLFI

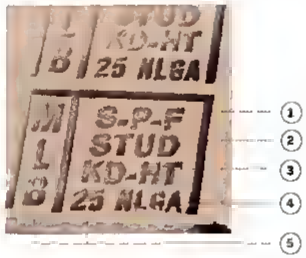
{ TOH TIP }
To get the grille look in a new cabinet, simply order glass-front doors but without the glass.

How to Read the Stamp

An easy way to identify the right framing lumber for your needs

RELATED STORY, P. 94 "PICKING UP GOOD WOOD"

Framing lumber, unlike money, does grow on trees, so there's always the chance it will have some natural defect, such as a large knot or a long split, that can reduce its overall strength. But not all defects are obvious. That's why every stick of lumber coming out of a sawmill is appraised by trained inspectors and given a grade stamp. This cryptic tattoo indicates that a piece of wood meets established standards for strength and stiffness, and it also offers useful information about the type of wood and how much moisture it contains. Follow along as we decode the stamp and show you how to get the most lumber for your money.



Wood Code

Abbreviations for framing-grade softwoods, from strongest to weakest

Doug Fir, D Fir-L: Douglas fir (L=western larch)

SYP: Southern pine

Hem, Hem-fir, H-F: Hemlock or fir

S-P-F: Spruce, pine, or fir

1. Species › Denotes the wood's species or a group of species with similar strengths. (See "Wood Code," left.) While all species are graded at the same four levels of strength and appearance, they are not equally strong. A joist made of Douglas fir, for instance, will cover a greater span than a hemlock joist of the same size and grade. But using bigger joists of a cheaper species might save you money without loss of strength.

2. Grade › Establishes lumber quality based on a grader's visual inspection. The ranking goes from "Select Structural" (highest strength, best appearance) to No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 (lowest strength, not pretty). As the numbers go up, quality and price go down. "Stud" is a fifth designation, meaning it's good for a load-bearing wall. *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva usually buys stacks of No. 2 lumber, which provides good strength at a reasonable price. Those stacks also include some No. 1s and Selects, to boot. For demanding applications, such as interior load-bearing walls, he'll pay extra for these stronger grades.

3. Moisture content › "Green" unseasoned lumber fresh from the mill is labeled either air-dried (AD) or surface-green (S GRN). Its moisture content of 19 percent or more makes it inexpensive, but it can move unpredictably as it shrinks and dries. You'll get less movement with kiln-dried (KD) or surface-dry (S DRY) lumber, which has a moisture content between 16 and 19 percent. (KD-HT means the wood was also heat treated to kill pests, a requirement for imported lumber.) Tom saves money by ordering S GRN wood when framing a new house, figuring that all the wood will air dry at the same pace. But in an existing house where the framing is already dry, he'll use more stable, and more costly, KD lumber or even MC 15 lumber, which has a moisture content of 15 percent or less.

The two remaining designations, while not very useful to a homeowner, enable grading agencies to enforce their standards.

4. Certification mark › Identifies the accredited agency or association that oversees grading accuracy; in this case, the National Lumber Grades Authority.

5. Mill › Gives the trademark or number of the mill of origin. —T.B.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 118.

Painting Louvered Shutters

Follow the numbers when working with a brush

RELATED STORY, P. 31 "SHUTTER SELECTIONS"

Despite all its many nooks and crannies, a louvered shutter can be painted the old-fashioned way—with a brush. Painting contractor John Dee recommends using one that's 1½ to 2 inches wide with straight cut, nylon-polyester filaments. Sand with 120-grit paper, prime all exposed wood with an oil-based primer, then follow these steps for the perfect paint job.

1. Interior edges. Keep paint only on the tip of your brush as you cover these edges. Try not to get any paint on the louvers or other faces of the shutter frame, but if you do, wipe it off immediately with a rag. If the louvers move, rotate them with the tilt rod as you go so that you reach more of the edge. Stop every foot or so and turn the shutter around to paint the edge from the back.

2. Louvers. Stroke from the ends toward the middle and pull away at the center. Watch for runs or drips and blot them up with a dry brush. Paint four or five louver faces, then turn the shutter around and paint their back sides. If the louvers are movable, hold onto the tilt rod or an unpainted louver to keep them from touching. Periodically move the painted louvers back and forth a bit with the tilt rod until the paint dries. Otherwise it will glue the louvers in place.

3. Tilt rod. Hold the rod off the louvers and carefully dab paint onto it with your brush. Turn it from side to side to reach all its surfaces.

4. Bottom edge. Turn the shutter upside down, paint the edge, then turn it upright to rest on or hang from its hooks. (See Tip, right.)

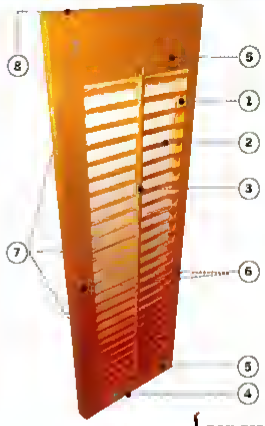
5. Rails (front). Paint the rails on the front of the shutter (the side with the tilt rod), going with the grain.

6. Stiles (front and outside edges). Brush with the grain and watch for drips.

7. Rails, then stiles (back side). Ditto.

8. Top edge. You redone let the shutters dry overnight.

—NATALIE RODRIGUEZ



TOH TIP

Before you start, twist a pair of small screw hooks into the top and bottom edges of the shutter. Use them as handles and "feet" to avoid touching the wet paint.

Photo: Chris W. Taylor

Photo: Russell Kaye

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Norm's Notebook

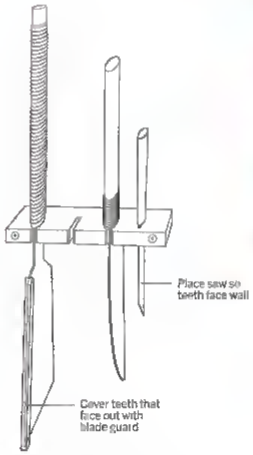
> MASTER CARPENTER NORM ABRAM'S TECHNIQUES FOR JAPANESE SAWS FEATURED IN TOOLBOX, P. 63

>JAPANESE HANDSAWS

Precision Cuts

I use my Japanese saws to cut dovetails or for other precise bench work, and let my power tools handle most of the less refined cuts made on the job site. Of all my Japanese saws, the one that gets the most use is my *ryoba*, shown in the photo, right. It has rip teeth on one side of the blade and cross-cut teeth on the other, so it's like having two saws on one handle.

When I'm using a Japanese saw, I hold the handle with my wrist straight, my shoulder in line with the cut, and my forefinger pointed toward the blade. Slight finger pressure is all it takes to guide this tool.



Tooth Protection

You should always store a saw separately from other tools so its teeth don't get damaged. With Western saws, it's easy enough to hang them on the wall by the big hole in the handle. But Japanese saws have straight handles, so I made a wall-mounted rack just for them (below). Most of the saws slide in and out of vertical, open-ended slots cut into the edge of the rack, but I keep my flush-cutting saw in its own closed slot, like a kitchen knife in a block, because the blade is short and narrow.

{ NORM'S TIP }

The only rule on sawing—whether it's Western or Japanese style—is to stay comfortable and loose and keep your eye on the line. Don't press down too hard; just let the saw do the work.

Sawing Coach

To begin my cuts, I place the saw blade on the cut line and rest my left thumb on the wood, next to and just touching the side of the blade. At first, I make short strokes at a low angle (1). Once the saw is solidly in its kerf, I raise the handle and make long, efficient strokes, blowing away the sawdust as it covers the line (2). But if I veer from that line, I'll go shallow again to correct course.

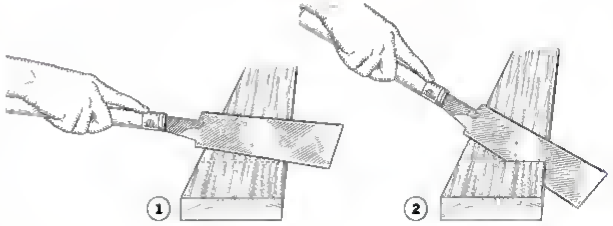


PHOTO: RUSSELL KANE; LUIS RAMOS; HARD SALE

Directory

› SOURCES, PRICES, AND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PRODUCTS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

KITCHEN DESIGN (pp. 25–28)

Designer: Beth Laughlin, Lamperti Contracting and Design, San Rafael, CA, 415 454-1623, lamperbikitchens.com. **Contractor:** Kevin Birmingham, Malpas and Birmingham Inc, San Francisco, CA, 415 285 8508, malpasbirmingham.com. **Cabinetry:** Brookhaven, a division of Wood Mode Fine Custom Cabinetry, Kreamer, PA, 877 635 7500, woodmode.com. **Pendant lights:** Dragonfly and Company, San Carlos, CA, 650 508-0738. **Tiles:** Bedrosian Tile & Stone, Fresno, CA, 559 275 5000, bedrosians.com. **Crystal cabinet knobs:** Cal Crystal, Concord, CA, 800 966 9994, calcrystalusa.com. **Countertops:** Arizona Tile Inc, Oakland, CA, 510 729 6126, anzonatile.com. **Sinks and sink fittings:** Rohl LLC, Irvine, CA, 800-777-9762, rohlhome.com. **Cooktop:** Viking Range Corporation, Greenwood, MS, 888-845 4641, vikingrange.com. **Refrigerator and dishwasher:** KitchenAid, St. Joseph, MI, 800 422 1230, kitchenaid.com. **Ovens:** Dacor Inc., Diamond Bar, CA, 800-793-0093, dacor.com. **Hardwood flooring contractor:** Chet Clark Custom Hardwood Flooring, Belmont, CA, 650 888 9351. **Hardwood flooring:** Golden State Flooring, South San Francisco, CA, 650 872 0500, goldenstateflooring.com.

LUXURIES: Shutter Selections (pp. 31–34)

Shadowy Shutout: Cottage Panelad Shutter, Vixen Hill, Elverson, PA, 800-423-2766, vixenhill.com. **Raise Expectations:** Charleston Raised Panel Atlantic Premium Shutters, Latta, SC, 877 437 0608, atlanticpremiumshutters.com. **Natural Stud:** Mission Copper Moon Woodworks, Allentown, PA, 610 434-8740, coppermoonwoodworks.com. **Easy Breezy:** Bermuda Shutter, Timberlane, Montgomeryville, PA, 800-250-2221, timberlane.com. **Message in a Shutter:** Raised Panel with Pineapple Cutout, Shuttercraft Inc, Guilford, CT, 203 245 2608, shuttercraft.com. **First-Story Vanguard:** Fine Paints of Europe, Paneled Shutter, Artifex Custom Shutters, Lincolnville, SC, 877 618-3587, artifexshutters.com. **Looking Glass:** Reedad Glass Shutter, Signature Shuttar Shoppe, Alpharetta, GA, 800 736-2303, signatureshutters.com. **Fall in Line:** Florence Louver, Artifex Custom Shuttars, Lincolnville, SC, 877 618 3587, artifexshutters.com. **The Original:** Board & Battan, Shuttarcraft Inc, Guilford, CT, 203-245 2608, shuttercraft.com. **Eyebrow Lifter:** Arch Combo, Shuttercraft Inc., Guilford, CT, 203 245-2608, shuttercraft.com.

LANDSCAPING: Planting in Pots (pp. 37–39)

Horticultural services. Gabriella Whiton, Bainbridge Gardans, bainbridgegardens.com. Ellen Zachos, Acme Plant Stuff, acmeplant.com. **Containars and plants:** Bainbridge Gardans, Bainbridge Island, WA, 206 842-5888. **Gardening gloves:** Atlas #370 Nitrile Soft Flex Gloves, Atlas Glove Consumar Products, Ballingham, WA, 360 734 3336, ifsinc.com. **Clippars:** Forged flower shears, Lee Valley Tools, 800 871-8158, leevalley.com. **For furthar reading:** *Down & Dirty: 43 Fun & Funky First Time Projects & Activities to Get You Gardening*, by Ellen Zachos, Storey Publishing, North Adams, MA, 413 346 2100, storey.com.

SALVAGE: Old Light for a New Louk (pp. 40–41)

Featured dealar: Stan Zaborski and Sandy Balla, Zaborski Emporium, Kingston, NY, 845-338-6465, stanthejunkman.com.

TOOLBOX: Zan and the Art of Sawing Wood (pp. 63–65)

Japanesa Woodworking Tools: Their Tradition, Spirit, and Use, by Toshio Odate, Taunton Press, Newtown, CT, 800-477 8727, taunton.com.

HOMEOWNER'S HANDBOOK: Building a Fountain (pp. 67–72)

Featured pump: Pondmaster MO 2 magnetic drive submersibla pump, courtesy of Dannar Mfg Inc, Islandia, NY, 631-234 5261, pondmaster.com. **Carbide drill bits:** Courtesy of Makita Tools, La Mirada, CA, 800 462-5482, makita.com. **Drill:** Check your local Home Depot to rent hammer and rotary drills, homedepot.com. *Thanks to*—Baverly and Bill Saponaro, Cat House Antiques, High Falls, NY, 845 687 0457.

GET OUT AND STAY OUT (pp. 74–79)

A Hearth Outsida. Architect: David Spitzer, David Spitzer Architect Inc, Portland, OR, 503-335 9040, archiplanet.com. **Landscapa architect:** California Horticulture Landscapa Construction Inc., Campbell, CA, 408-364 3198, calhort.com. **Stonemason:** Al Giovanni, Giovanni Stone Inc., Berkelay, CA, 831 236-3492, giovannistone.com. **Fieldstone:** Peninsula Building Matanals Company, Sunnyvala, CA, 408 246-0550, paninsulamatanals.com. **Chairs and ottoman.** Smith & Hawken, 800 776-5558, smithandhawken.com. **Destination Spaces' Architect:** Anthony Vermandois, Anthony Vermandois Architect, Say Harbor, NY, 631-725 2177. **Gardan design:** Romi Sloane Gardans by Romi, Southampton, NY, 631 287 7664. **Rear patios and pergola design:** Julia Hubbard, Julia Hubbard Garden Design, Sagaponack, NY, 631 525 6277. **Custom pergola:** Jebediah C. Stafford, Cartwright Carpantry Corp., Bridgehampton, NY, 631 830-1831, jebcartwright.com. **Indoor/Outdoor Cooking Zone. Architect:** Peter Schechter, Peter Schechter Architects, Santa Monica, CA, 310-393 6138, schachtararchitects.com. **Interior designer:** Sue Aldrich Designs, Santa Barbara, CA, 805-969-7976. **Contractor:** Buildog Construction, Santa Monica, CA, 310 260-3280. **Bar stools:** Quantum bar stools, Victory Furniture, Los Angeles, CA, 310 276-4272. **Yellow pot:** Le Crauset available through Sur La Table, surlatable.com. **Pewter bowls and platters:** Available through Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.com. **Privata Patio Dining. Landscapa architect:** Jeania Smith, JA Smith Associates, Topsfiald, MA, 978-887-7396. **Landscapa contractor:** Domoracki Landscaping Inc, Newburyport, MA, 978-465 4492. **Pavers:** Beton Bolduc Inc, Quabac, Canada, 800 463 9866, bolduc.ca. **Patio tabla:** Custom. **5-Room Suita. Patio chairs, sofa, and end tables.** Kingsley Bate, Ltd, Manassas, VA, 703-361 7000, kingsleybate.com.

IN WITH THE OLD, OUT WITH THE NEW (pp. 80–87)

Buildar: Greg Flagal, Kennatt Square, PA, 610-444 1510. **Kitchan designar/remodalar:** Craft Way Kitchens, Wilmington, DE, 302 998 3305, craft way.com. **Cabinetry:** Quality Custom Cabinetry, New Holland, PA, 800 909 6006, qcc.com. **Mason:** Jason Fletcher, 610 399 5111. **Painter:** Bill Dailey, 610-793 1182. **Countertops:** Custom Flooring, Donald G. Varnes & Sons Inc, Nawark, DE, 302 737 5953. **Gas firaplaces.** Gas Works Inc., Frazer, PA, 610 296 3557. **Hardware:** Ball and Ball Reproductions, Exton, PA, 610 363 7330, ballandball.com. **Recessed and undercabinet lighting:** Juno, junolighting.com. **Sink and faucet:** Rohl LLC, Irvine, CA, 800 777 9762, rohlhome.com. **Refrigarator:** Sub Zero Fraezer Company, Madison, WI, 800 222 7820, subzero.com. **Cooktop and ovan:** Thermador, Huntington Baach, CA, 800 656 9226, thermador.com. **Dishwashar:** ASKO AM Appliance Group, Richardson, TX, 800-898 1879, askousa.com.

GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY (pp. 88–93)

Landscape architect: Elliott Brundage Landscape Architecture, Andover, MA, 978 470 4970, elliottbrundage.com. **Landscape contractor:** K & R Tree and Landscapa, Burlington, MA, 781 272 6104. **Composite decking:** Trex Company, Winchester, VA, 800 289-8739, trex.com. **Timber, cedar cap, and drain tube:** Friend Lumber & Building Center, Burlington, MA, 781 273 1335, friendlumbar.com. **Clay:** Capa & Island Tennis and Track, Pocassat, MA, 800 422 1827, tennisandtrack.com. **Sod:** Sodco Inc., Slocum, RI, 800-341-6900, sodco.net. **Sand:** Quinn-Perkins Sand & Gravel, Burlington, MA, 781 272 0200. **Bluestona:** TH McVey Stona Company, Watartown, MA, 617 923 8866. *Thanks to*— Guild Nichols, 617 720 2283, northendboston.com; John Ross, president, United States Bocce Federation, bocce.com; Rich Curtis, president, United States Croquet Association, croquatamanca.com.

PICKING OUT GOOD WOOD (pp. 94–97)

Lumberyard: Arlington Coal & Lumber Co., Arlington, MA, 781-643 8100, aricoal.com.

GREAT ADAPTATIONS: Outside In (pp. 98–101)

Contractor/buildar: Homa Craftars & Associates Inc., Brighton, MI, 734 216 9239, amencanbuildars.com. **Cabinetry:** Omega Cabinetry Ltd, Waterloo, IA, 319 235 5700. **Ladder:** Putman Rolling Ladder Company, New York, NY, 212 226 5147, putnamrollingladder.com. **Ovens, cooktop, and vent hood:** Wolf Appliance Co., Madison, WI, 800 332-9513, wolfappliances.com. **Disposal:** InSinkErator, Racine, WI, 800-558-5700, insinkerator.com. **Refrigerator:** GE Appliances, Louisvilla, KY, 800-626-2005, geappliances.com. **Dishwashar:** Fisher & Paykel Appliances, Irvine, CA, 888 936 7872, fisherandpaykel.com. **Microwave:** Panasonic, Secaucus, NJ, 800-211 7262, panasonic.com. **Pulls and knobs:** Renovators Old Mill, Millers Falls, MA, 800-659 2211. **Windows and doors:** Marvin Windows & Doors, Warroad, MN, 888-537 7828, marvin.com. **Wood grille inserts (in cabinet doors):** Reggio Register Company, Leominster, MA, 800-880 3090, reggioregister.com. **Brigida bridge faucet in satin nickel:** Available through Cucina, Chicago, IL, 312 733 3926, mycucina.com. **Custom soapstona countertops and sink.** PM P Marble & Granite, Troy, MI, 248 740-1400, pmpmarble.com. **Glass apothecary jars:** Z Gallerie, Troy, MI, 248 649 7101. **Scala, towels, canistars, cookie jar, salt and pepper mills, knife, vinegars, oils, utansils, cookbooks, timer, cutting board, glassware, mortar and pestle, pitchar, candlaholdars, casseroles, and rooster:** Williams-Sonoma, 877-812 6235, williams-sonoma.com. **Toastar, cookwara, decanters, ceramic garlic, artichoke, and pumpkin, tray, mugs, plates, stainless-steel sugar bowl and creamer:** Crate and Barrel, 800 967-6696, crateandbarrel.com.

WORKSHOP

Aak Thia Old House (pp. 107–111)

Windowsill Repair: Epoxy system: Advanced Repair Technology, Cherry Valley, NY, 607 264 9040, advancedrepair.com. **Front Door Care: Penetrating oils:** PenofinUltra premium red label, Penofin Coatings Inc, Ukiah, CA, 800-736-6346, penofin.com. Australian Timber Oil, Cabot Stains, Newburyport, MA, 800-877-8246, cabotstain.com. **Choosing the Right Screwdriver Bit:** *Thanks to*— Kevin Enke, Vermont Amancan, Mount Prospect, IL, 224-232 2000, vermontamerican.com. **Repairing Tapered Column. PVC trim:** Klear Lumber, Westfield, MA, 866-553 3776, klearlumber.com. Azek Building Products Inc, Moosic, PA, 877-275-2935, azek.com. **Tile Over Brick. Tile contractor:** Joe Ferrante, Ferrante Tile, Medford, MA, 781 396-6327. **Removing a Fence. Bobcat skid-staar loader:** Bobcat Co., bobcat.com. **Dingo compact utility loader:** The Toro Company, Bloomington, MN, 888-384-9939, toro.com.

Skill Building (pp. 113–115)

Building a Ventilated Cabinet Door. Grilles: Reggio Register Company, Leominster, MA, 800 880 3090, reggioregister.com. **Painting Louvered Shutters. Brushing putty:** Fine Paints of Europa, Woodstock, VT, 800 332 1556, finepaintsofeurope.com. *Thanks to*— John Dee, John W. Dee Painting & Decorating, Concord, MA, 978-369 8897, johndeepainting.com.

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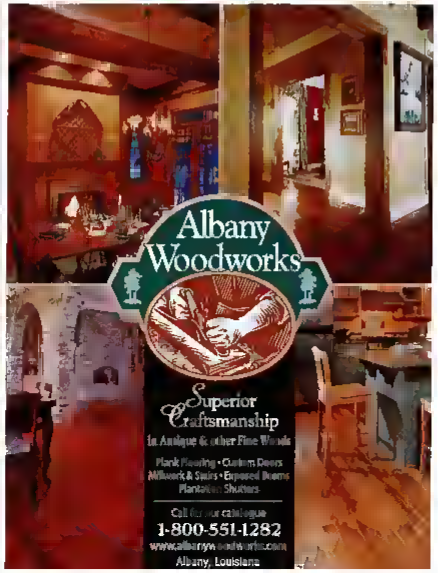

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2. **GMC SIERRA** Home improvers need Professional Grade support GMC Sierras are that and more Whether you're putting up paneling or adding a new suite of rooms, GMC Sierra will make the task easier

BUILDING PRODUCTS

203. ALL FREE BUILDING PRODUCTS LITERATURE

3. **DIY NETWORK** DIY Network is an on-air online network that provides in-depth project instructions, demonstrations and product tips for home and hobby enthusiasts

4. **DOW GREAT STUFF** Great Stuff™ products offer both professionals and do-it-yourselfers an easy solution to help lower energy costs and make the home more comfortable

5. **POLYSEAMSEAL®** Polyseamseal® all-purpose adhesive caulk is formulated to bond like an adhesive and seal like a caulk, making it ideal for 1 001 uses around the home

6. **QUIKRETE** Quikrete Company, a leader in packaged concrete products, has more than 80 manufacturing facilities For additional information on concrete repair products visit our website

7. **SCHLAGE** Schlage Accents™ Collection is the finest line of decorative door hardware, providing a lifetime of design and decorating possibilities.

8. **TREX** Trex® Composite Decking and railing can make your dreams deck a reality Trex® offers more preferred styles, colors and finishes, all backed by a 25-year warranty

FINANCIAL SERVICES

204. ALL FREE FINANCIAL SERVICES LITERATURE

9. **NEW YORK LIFE** New York Life brings peace of mind to millions of Americans We would like to do the same for you in retirement

10. **STATE FARM** No one understands your insurance and financial needs like your neighborhood State Farm Agent We live where you live ®

FLOORING

205. ALL FREE FLOOR LITERATURE

11. **FORBO MARMOLEUM** Marmoleum Click natural, healthy, easy-to-clean flooring available in 18 colors in both panels and squares for an easy, glueless installation

12. **LUMBER LIQUIDATORS** Lumber Liquidators is the leading retailer of quality hardwood flooring at the lowest prices They offer a variety of brands including Bellawood Over 80 locations nationwide

13. **SHAW FLOORS** What do you want your floor to be? Visit our website for inspiration style advice and floor care tips Let your imagination soar with Shaw Floors

KITCHEN

207. ALL FREE KITCHEN LITERATURE

14. **ELMIRA STOVE WORKS** Elmira builds vintage-styled appliances ranges refrigerators, wall ovens range hoods microwaves and dishwasher panels Elegant 1850's antique-styled or cool 1950's retro-styled Northstar appliances! ($5)

15. **THE HOME DEPOT** The Home Depot is more than a store It's where you'll find the know-how to get your home improvement projects done right

16. **MOEN** Moen offers unique designs for the kitchen and bathroom, including faucets and coordinating accessories that are liveable and enduring Free product literature available upon request

LAWN/GARDEN, POOL/SPA AND PATIO

208. ALL FREE LAWN/GARDEN, POOL/SPA & PATIO LITERATURE

17. **TORO** Whether you're mowing trimming watering or gardening count on Toro to provide the right tools to help you create your ideal yard

LIGHTING

209. ALL FREE LIGHTING LITERATURE

18. **LUTRON ELECTRONICS** Lutron Electronics is the world's leading manufacturer of dimmers for single light entire-room and whole home applications

PAINT/STAIN

210. ALL FREE PAINT/STAIN LITERATURE

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19. **BENJAMIN MOORE** Benjamin Moore Exterior Stain offers a complete selection of the finest stains and sealers for your home Choose from a wide variety of premium quality products that vary in opacity from transparent through solid color

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23. **VALSPAR** Valspar has created the ultimate combination of beauty and performance Thousands of colors that stand the test of time, like nature itself Visit our website to learn more

PHARMACEUTICAL

211. ALL FREE PHARMACEUTICAL LITERATURE

24. **DR. SCHOLL'S PAIN RELIEF ORTHOTICS™** Back Pain Relief Orthotics Adjustable Arch Pain Relief Orthotics and Heel Pain Relief Orthotics Works with every step you take

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PLUMBING FIXTURES & BATH ACCESSORIES

212. ALL FREE PLUMBING FIXTURES & BATH ACC. LITERATURE

25. **KOHLER** Kohler bath and kitchen ideas order a complete set of full-color product catalogs covering baths and whirlpools showers, lavatories toilets and bidets kitchen and entertainment sinks faucets and accessories ($15)

SPECIALTY ITEMS & SERVICES

213. ALL FREE SPECIALTY ITEMS & SERVICES LITERATURE

26. **DAMPRID** Effectively removes excess moisture from the air and creates healthier indoor air Put DampRid to work in your home and put moisture in its place

27. **NKBA** The National Kitchen & Bath Association is the only trade association dedicated exclusively to the kitchen and bath industry, and as such, is a vital resource for consumers and member alike

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

215. ALL FREE TOOLS & EQUIPMENT LITERATURE

28. **GUARDIAN** Guardian is the #1 name in automatic home standby generators, offering a full line of gaseous-fueled models with outputs ranging from 7 to 150 kilowatts

WINDOWS, DOORS, ETC.

216. ALL FREE WINDOWS, DOORS, ETC. LITERATURE

29. **ANDERSEN® WINDOWS & DOORS** FREE! The "Long Live The Home™" idea book from Andersen® Windows Get room ideas inspiration and more

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31. **PELLA® WINDOWS & DOORS** With a little dreaming and Pella® Windows & Doors anything can happen Viewed to be the best

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32. **AMERICAN ALDES VENTILATION**
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46. **MODULINE**
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47. **NU-WAL**
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48. **RAINHANDLER**
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49. **RESEARCH PRODUCTS/BLANKENSHIP**
Incinolet First ever incinerator toilet

50. **SALTER INDUSTRIES**
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51. **SCHROEDER LOG HOME SUPPLY, INC.**
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52. **SHUTTER BLINDS**
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53. **SPEEDHEATER SYSTEMS**
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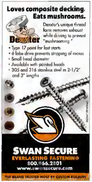
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NOT ONLY WAS Benjamin B. Beekman a pillar of Dundee New York society he was—in the simplest of terms—The Man. Beekman's career included stints as a carpenter furniture maker church elder deacon undertaker and all-around good guy. According to his laudatory 1879 obituary he did more for Dundee "than any other one that lived here and his work in this direction will while it endures stand as a memento of the man."

Some of Beekman's most enduring work includes the three blocks of brick commercial structures he built downtown and one of the town's finest houses this Italianate clapboard manse which he constructed around 1852. He and his wife, Lydia lived here for the rest of their lives raising their seven children.

Succeeding generations of Beekman's family remained in the house until the 1960s. His great granddaughter born and raised next door remembers sitting on the steps of the curved staircase and gazing at the front door's red glass sidelights etched with a grapevine motif. "I remember thinking how lovely they were" she says today. The staircase wasn't bad either. "Benjamin was very much into woodworking—and the house reflects that. It's a fantastic place."

That staircase is still intact as are the house's original cast iron door hardware, horsehair plaster walls two fireplace mantels, and two over two double-hung windows. But after changing hands and serving as a rental property for the past few decades the house needs a complete restoration including an update of its electrical system.

Dundee is a small town located in upper New York State's Finger Lakes region and has a population of about 1 600 people. Aside from the beautiful scenery that surrounds it the town is also close to dozens of vineyards and wineries. While you might not be able to fill Benjamin's big shoes there you could at least build on his legacy and help save one of his most enduring works.

—KEITH PANDOLFI

ABOVE The Italianate-style house has four bedrooms and one and a half bathrooms. **MIDDLE LEFT** The living room features a 1930s brick fireplace, original floors and molding and plenty of sunlight from original windows. **MIDDLE RIGHT** One of the red glass sidelights with grape motif that flank the front door. **BOTTOM LEFT** The curved staircase was hand built by the original owner. **BOTTOM RIGHT** This original black marble fireplace is located in the house's front parlor.

IF YOU KNOW OF A HOUSE THAT SHOULD BE SAVED AND IS CURRENTLY FOR SALE, PLEASE WRITE TO SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE, 1185 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, 27TH FLOOR NEW YORK NY 10036 OR SAVETHISOLDHOUSE@TIMEINC.COM.

THIS OLD HOUSE (ISSN 1086-2633) is published monthly, except for the January/February and July/August issues, by This Old House Ventures, Inc., 1185 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036 (GST R. 127109930). Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40110178. Return undeliverable Canada addresses to: Postal Stn A, PO Box 4015, Toronto ON M5W 1L2. GST #R127 ... Principal office: Rockefeller Center, New York NY 10020-1393 (212-522-1212). Ann Moore, President, CEO; Time Inc.; Howard Rosen, Treasurer; John S. Redpath, Jr., Secretary. © 2007 This Old House Ventures, Inc. Vol. 12, No. 5. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to This Old House, P.O. Box 62376, Tampa, FL 33662-3766; 1-800-898-7237. Subscriptions: 1 year, $24.95. This Old House and the This Old House Window are registered trademarks of This Old House Ventures, Inc. Printed in the U.S.A.

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