

This Old House

NOVEMBER 2007

24
Fast Fixes
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company

Built-in Storage

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- 47 smart design tips
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Plus:

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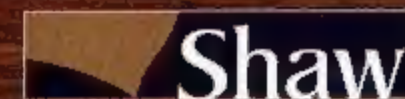


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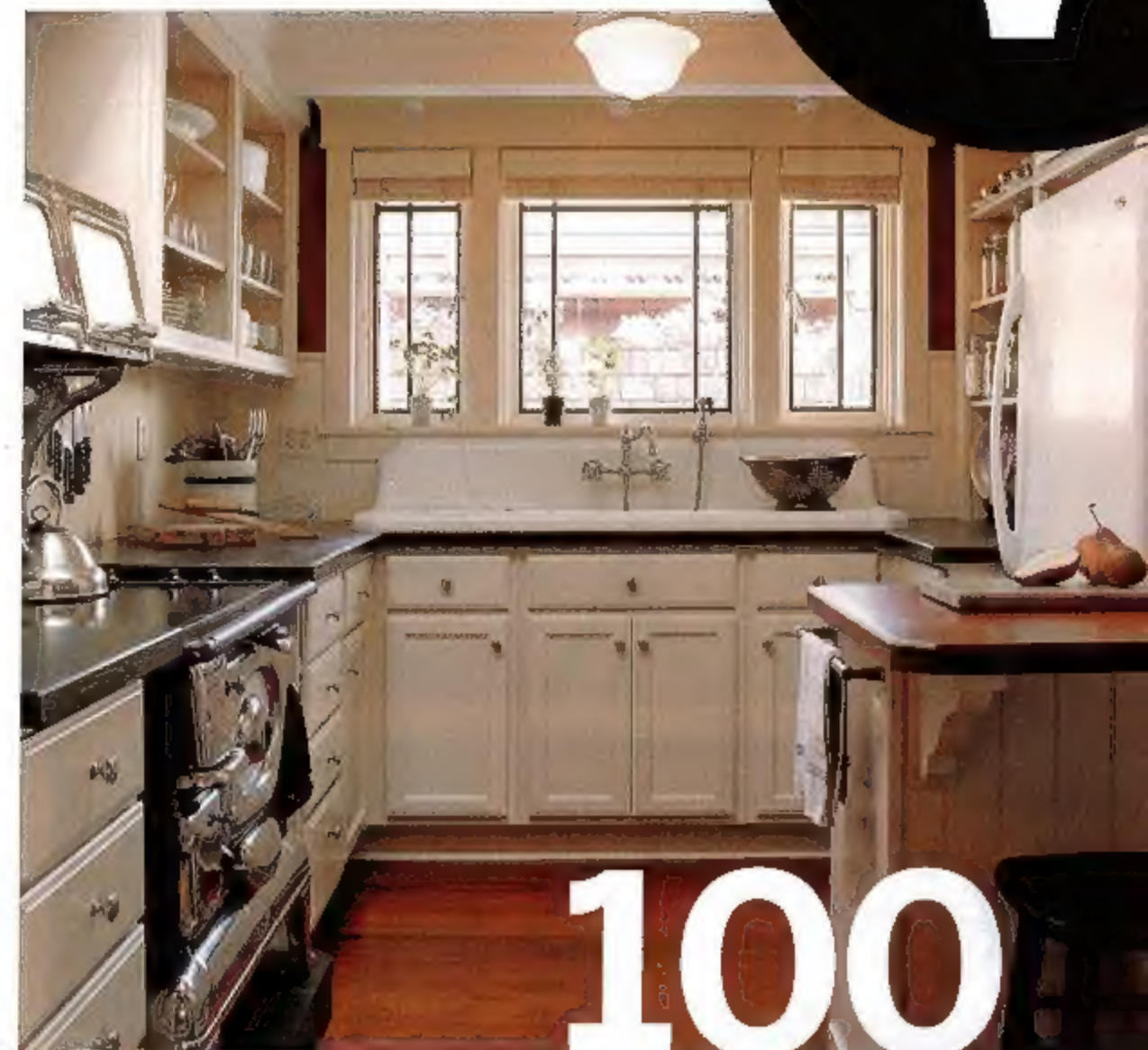
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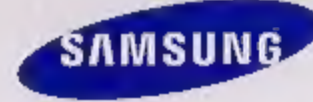


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PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) WENDY CLARKE; ROLIN SMITH; DAVID GARMAN

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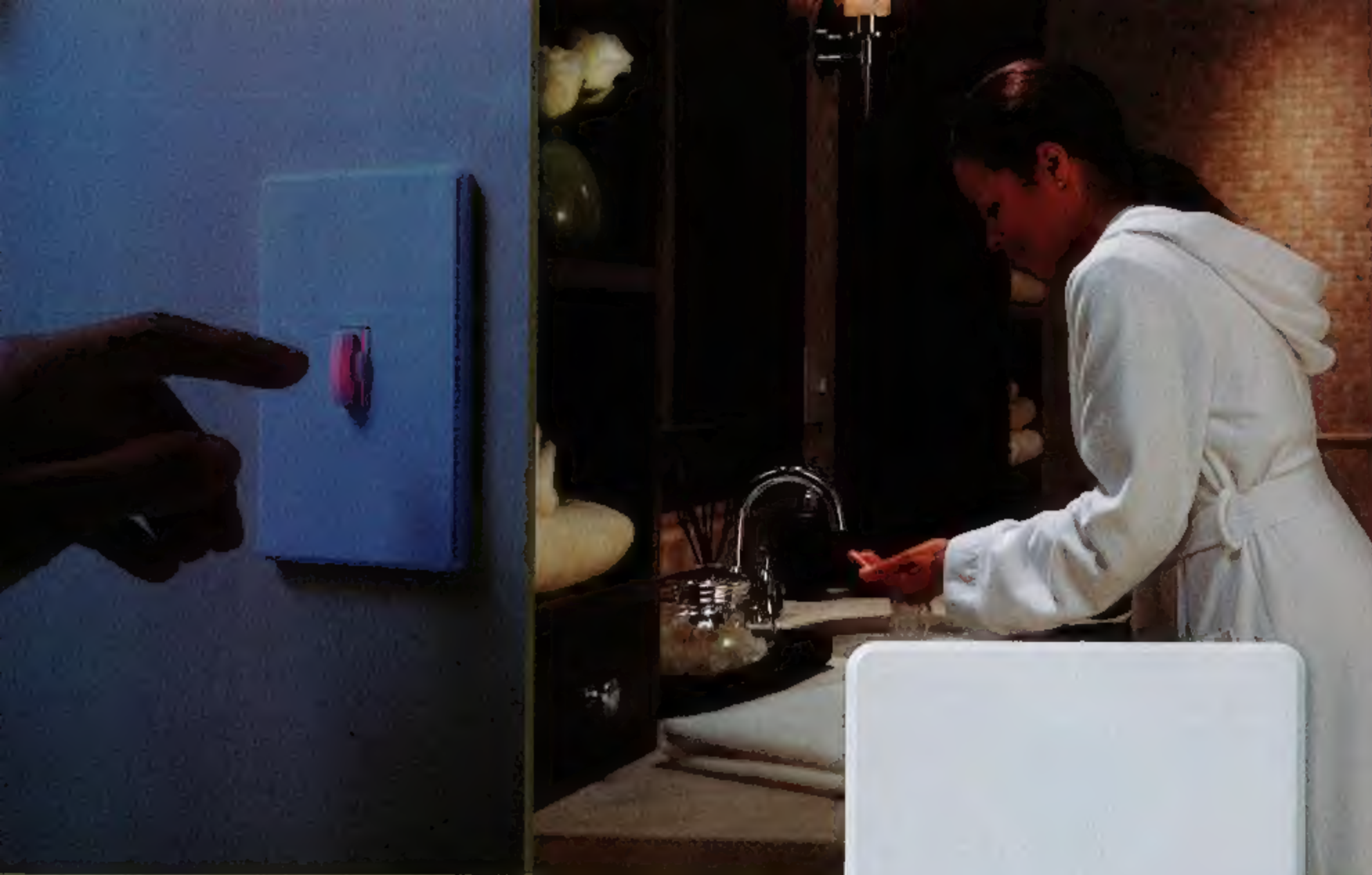
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letter FROM THIS OLD HOUSE

Attack of the Plastic Ice Bats

NOW, WHERE TO PUT MY WIFE'S action-figure collectibles? Seriously. She has dozens and dozens of plastic characters—archvillains mostly, like the exploding Mole Man, Darth Tater (the sci-fi version of Mr. Potato Head), and Ice Bat, who you see up there over my shoulder.

I put up with her habit because, well, I have to, or else she wouldn't let me keep the T-shirts I've had since college. Also I'm counting on the day I manage to talk her into selling them on eBay and make \$500,000, like Steve Carrell's character in *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*. Until then, though, they're on the mantel, or in the home office in cardboard boxes, or both.

We live in a row house built when most homes didn't have closets for people to overfill with junk or T-shirts. And though we've been remodeling, expansion options are limited when your property is only 20 feet wide. Which is why I'm so happy we've got the story on built-in storage on page 88, with eight pages of great ideas and projects. Maybe your wife has action-figure collectibles too—or, more likely, your 14-year-old son—and maybe you don't have many storage options, either. If so, I think you'll find "Built-in Benefits" pretty useful.

Meantime, here's something I'd find useful: your help editing the June 2008 issue of *TOH*. Over the next few months at thisoldhouse.com, we're going to ask you for cover suggestions, for photos of your own projects, for every homeowner tip and technique you've collected over the years. And then we'll ask you to vote thumbs up or down on all of it—our ideas and those of your fellow readers—to see what should make it into the issue. I think it will be a collaboration that'll make a great magazine.

First, though, we need to start planning. What would you put in the June issue if it were your call, which it is? You can e-mail me with ideas for stories you'd like to tell, or ones you want to read to help you solve your own home-improvement problems. Once we get enough, we'll exchange thoughts about them in print and online. Oh, and if any of your ideas tell how a grown man can defeat the small, plastic, but diabolical forces of evil that threaten his way of life, flag the e-mail priority. I'm at scott@thisoldhouse.com.

Scott Omelianuk

SCOTT OMELIANUK
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mail



Post Office

I was struck by the conversion of a 1930s post office ["First Class," September] to a wonderful home. Congratulations to the homeowner, and to TOH for the article.

POs of that era often had murals painted in the lobbies as assistance to artists during the slow days of the Depression. I'm hoping there were none covered over in this case. These works were often treasures in themselves.

LEONARD MIKOLAITIS, VIDALIA, GA.

The editors reply: Alas, so far as the homeowner knows, her PO had no murals.

Ghostbuster

I was pleased to see "The house is haunted" as one of the problems mentioned in "Flirting With Disaster" [September]. It's surprising to see this very real and common phenomenon mentioned in such a down-to-earth magazine! As someone who has "cleared" many houses of "unwanted occupants," I have to say I would be surprised if the remedies offered actually work, but the advice that there's no cause for alarm is sound and should be helpful.

JOHN LITTLE, CANDLER, N.C.

Toolishness

I am a 30-year-old daughter and wife of carpenters. The article "A Toolish Fella" [September] really cracked me up. As I have gotten older, I have realized just how many people out there don't even know how to properly hang a heavy item on a wall. This was a great article, and it reminded me how grateful I am to have a husband and dad who have taught me so much. Thanks!

JESSICA COUGHLIN, ATHOL, MASS.

Green House

Sometimes I feel defensive when I read questions like "Think you know how to be a greener homeowner?" ["Pop Quiz," Green House, September]. Though I did poorly on the quiz, I can't help wondering if being content with my home, as ugly as some of it is, isn't as green an attitude, if not more so, as that of someone who remodels with green products. After all, where does all the fallout go? I'm sure it doesn't all get reused/recycled. I'd bet that much of it is perfectly

functional, just not aesthetically pleasing. Being content with my 1950s bathroom generates no unrecycled waste for the landfill.

DORIS RINDFLEISCH, MENOMONEE FALLS, WISC.

Sump Pumps

In "Sump Pump Works Overtime" [Ask This Old House, September], a reader was concerned about his sump pump coming on two or three times a minute. I think your advice overlooks the obvious answer: The pump's constant recycling indicates that it has plenty of capacity to empty the sump; in fact, it is emptying it faster than water can flow in (good!). To change this short cycling, he needs a larger sump (greater area) so that it takes longer to trigger the pump; then, it will keep pumping longer until the sump is emptied but won't restart again right away.

DAN HATZENBUEHLER, BY E-MAIL

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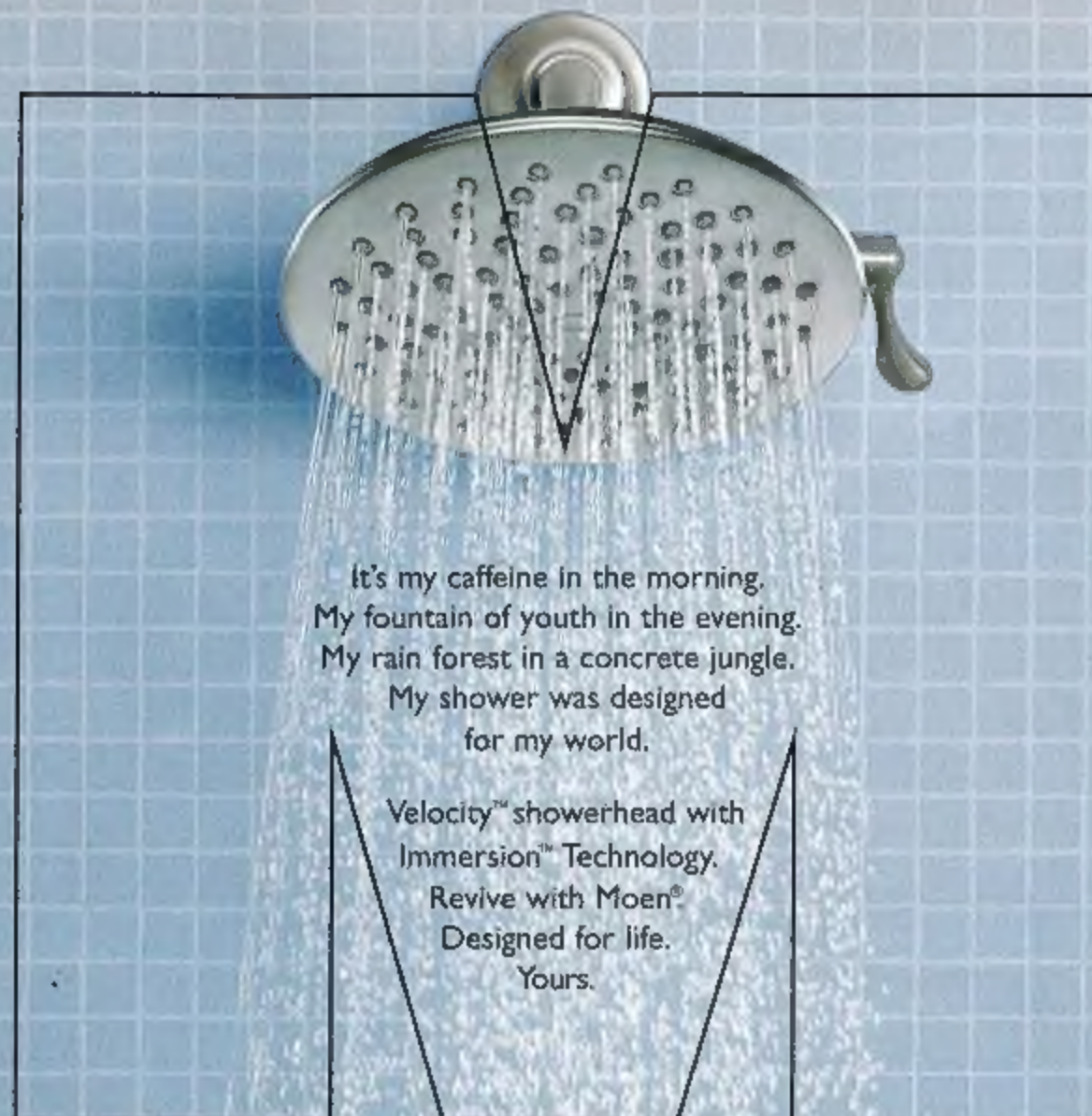
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around the HOUSE

EDITED BY KELLY BEAMON

GET CRANKED FOR THIS

A California collector puts
his wrenches on display

Until last May, tool enthusiast Carl "Bud" Bolt (yes, that's his real name) and his wife, Laila, allowed visitors onto their property free of charge to check out Bolt's ever-growing stash of vintage wrenches. Now his entire 7,000-piece collection, amassed over the course of 50-plus years, is on display at the aptly named Bolt's Antique Tool Museum, located in a renovated industrial building in downtown Oroville, California (boltsantiquetools.com).

Bolt, a former World War II mechanic and retired salesman for Snap-on Tools, got hooked on wrenches at the tender age of 7, when his father made one designed to loosen the oil pan on the family car. Doing research for a lecture he gave at a tool trade show in 1963 convinced Bolt that modern America has depended on the wrench as much as he feels he has. "If we couldn't maintain the machines that make home insulation and lumber," he marvels, "where would we even live?"

To date, about 3,500 people have visited the museum to view Bolt's Stillsons, his homemade box wrenches, and a 1911 Atlas car wrench, as well as to hear his stories and philosophy. For him, our very existence revolves around man's ability to make tools. Without them, he says, "we're just another animal."

—NATALIE RODRIGUEZ



SPEAKING OF WRENCHES...



Beyond IKEA

The town of Enköping, Sweden, has been a center

of adjustable wrench making for years, churning out more than 120 million of them to date.



Tall Order

In 1906, the Massachusetts-based Coes

Wrench Company created a 6-foot-tall wrench weighing 166 pounds, to be used for constructing bridges.

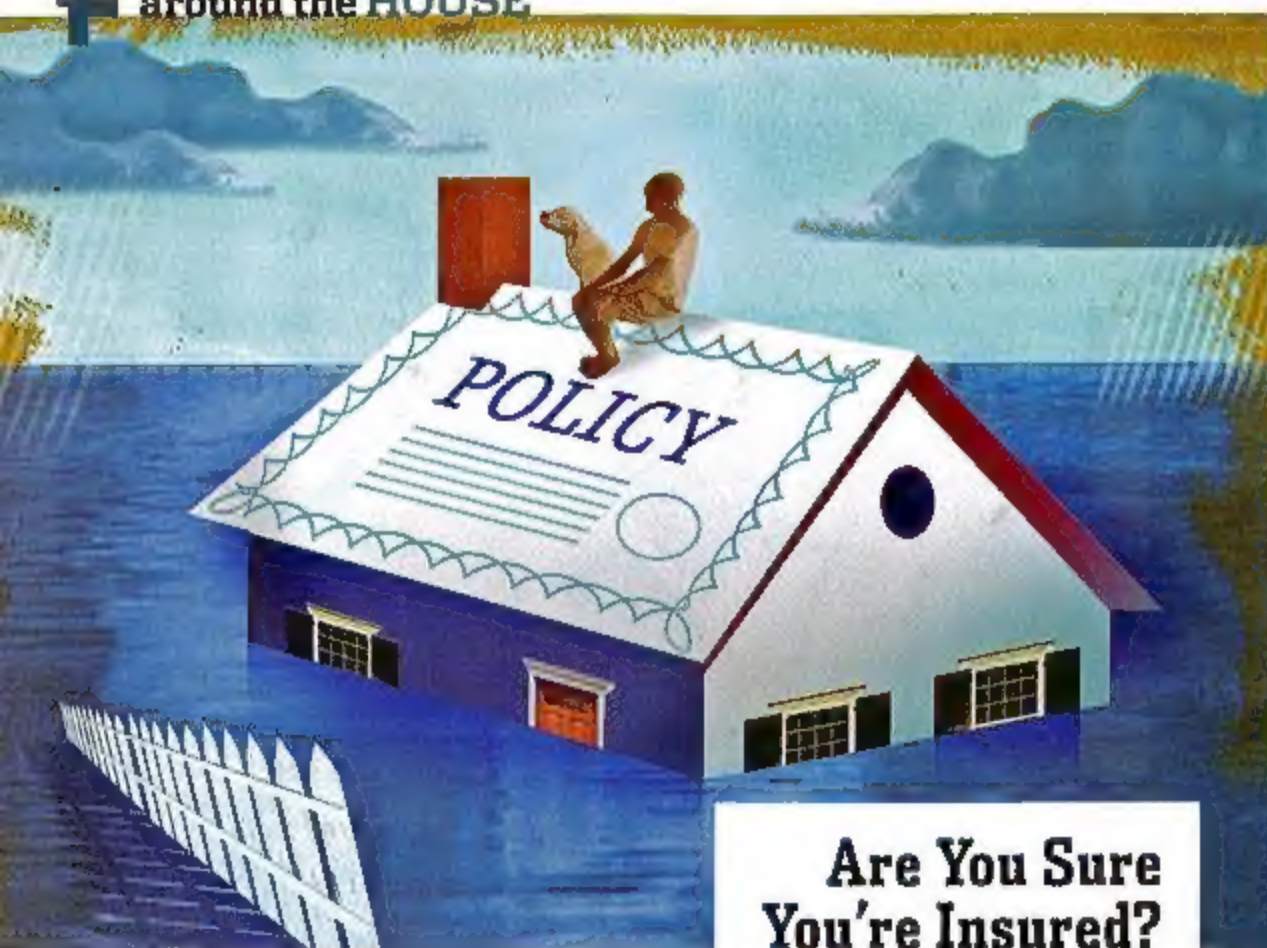


Going Ape

Several people are credited with

inventing the monkey wrench, including the blacksmith Charles Moncke and machinist "Monkey" White.

PHOTO: TIMOTHY ARCHIBALD; ILLUSTRATIONS: TIM CARROLL



Are You Sure You're Insured?

Many people are shocked by the mishaps their policies don't cover

A flood, an earthquake, a municipal pipe leaking into your basement—they all seem like occasions to tap your homeowner's insurance, but none is covered by the typical policy. Surprised? So are a significant number of homeowners polled by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). Out of 700 surveyed, a third of respondents were certain their policies covered flood damage; 51 percent thought they'd be covered if their homes' water-supply lines broke; and 35 percent assumed they'd get some help after an earthquake.

Any one of these disasters could wreck you financially, but floods are especially problematic: Ninety percent of natural disasters are accompanied by some form of flooding, and coverage is entirely up to you to pursue. Standard policies pay out to rebuild, repair, and replace homes

and their destroyed contents in case of fire, hail, lightning, and hurricanes, but flood insurance hasn't been standard since insurers dropped it in the 1920s and 1930s. Not until 1968 did Congress make special policies available under the National Flood Insurance Program—but few people get around to buying the extra protection. "It's hard to spend money on something you may not use," says NAIC president-elect Sandy Praeger. Though you can't always avoid natural disasters, save yourself from financial ruin by following a few rules of thumb (left). —DEENA BUSTILLO

POLICE YOUR POLICY

- > Call for updates in late spring, before the storm season begins.
- > Make updates as needed, taking into account renovations, upgrades, and major new purchases that affect the value of your house.
- > Read the fine print. NAIC's website (naic.org) has a checklist for making changes to your policy at various life stages; it even includes region-specific tips.

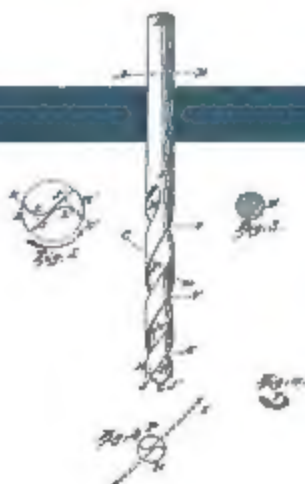
ORIGINS QUESTION

Back in the day, when only paddle, spade, or pointy-tipped bits were made for drilling, machinist Stephen A. Morse conceived a twisted bit to pierce metal more easily.

What year did Morse's patent beat the competition?

A. 1845 B. 1755 C. 1914 D. 1863

(turn to "Origins: Answer," page 20)



10 USES

OLD BLUE JEANS

More than 130 years ago, tailor Jacob Davis convinced a Gold Rush merchant named Levi Strauss to help him sell work pants reinforced with copper rivets. Now, jeans cost as much as a used car. So it pays to recycle 'em—like we do. —MARK POWERS

1: MAKE A NAIL POUCH. Cut away the pant seat but leave it attached to the waistband. Hold the seat to your waist and fasten the waistband in the back. Fill pockets with nails.

2: HOLD YOUR PENCILS. Cut out one back pocket and nail or glue it to the side of your shop cabinet as a pencil holder.

3: REPAIR A RUST SPOT. Got a hole in the floor of your old beater? Buy a quart of liquid fiberglass, dip a swatch of denim in it, then smooth it over the hole. Once it cures, the fabric will become a rigid patch.

4: BOLSTER INSULATION. To close small gaps around framing, soak cut-up jeans in a mixture of borax and water. It will dry into fire-retardant, mildew-resistant, insect-repelling insulation.

5: MAKE A SHOP WEIGHT. Cut off one pant leg and sew up the bottom end. Fill with sand, and then sew the top end closed to make a sandbag that can steady a workpiece.

6: SOOTHE MUSCLES. Cut off a foot-long section of one pant leg and sew up the bottom end. Fill with rice, and sew the top end closed for a microwavable heating pad.

7: CREATE TIEBACKS. Cut out and save double-stitched inseams: They can double as ropes.

8: PATTERN A PAINT JOB. Ripped into rags, your old jeans make great applicators for a mottled glaze or faux finish when painting.

9: MAKE A TOOL WRAP. Cut off a 10-inch section of one pant leg, measured from the bottom hem. Rip the inseam out but leave it attached at the hem. Place the fabric on a flat surface, inside facing out. Place tools on fabric, fold closed, roll up, and tie with the inseam.

10: MAKE LADDER GUARDS. Tape scraps of denim to the ends of an extension ladder to protect your house's siding.



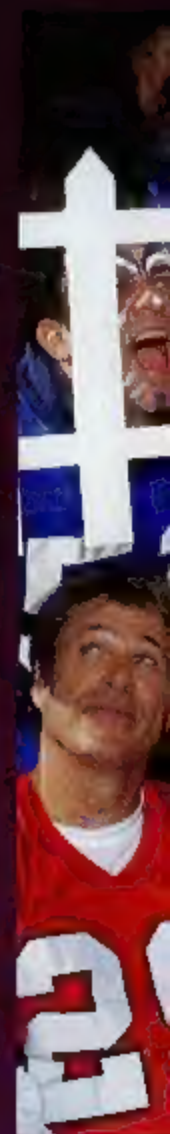
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A | TUBE PUNCH

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D | RASP When you inevitably cut a panel that's slightly too large, this little rasp is abrasive enough to shave it down so you don't need to wrestle it into place.

E | UTILITY BLADE It locks in place and is easy to change.



By C. Howard Walker, Norton books for Architects & Designers, \$25.



CROWNING GLORY

Pick up a few tips on using moldings from this reprinted classic

"Mouldings are honorable things which are not to be treated casually or copied blindly." So proclaims the architect C. Howard Walker in his recently reissued 1926 book *Theory of Mouldings*, a wonky design guide for moldings and profiles that's sure to delight your inner egghead. Walker, an egghead himself (he taught at MIT for nearly 50 years), reveals the often overlooked fact that moldings evolved with specific functions in mind: Cornices, for example, were developed to help direct rainwater away from the eaves and foundations of buildings, and Romanesque-style rounded arches were employed originally because they allowed jambs to let in more sunlight than squared-off apertures. Along with these intriguing historical nuggets, Walker's book offers a treasure trove of line drawings, case studies, and deep, deep analyses of the classical molding designs of yesteryear. Best of all, his usage guidelines still apply today.

Know the basics: "Mouldings define and accentuate structure and form and occur at the places of changes of surface, of material, of intention of expression, and of the articulation of complex structures."

Pair them off well: "In grouped moldings, each group should be compact and thoroughly defined upon at least one of its outer edges, and monotony of treatment, i.e., the repetition of equal similar moldings side by side, should be avoided."

Don't overdo it: "There is no more common fault in designing moldings than that of making them excessive in quantity and scale. Restraint in their use is a virtue." —KELLY BEAMON

PHOTO: MARK WEISS

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SAFE HOUSE

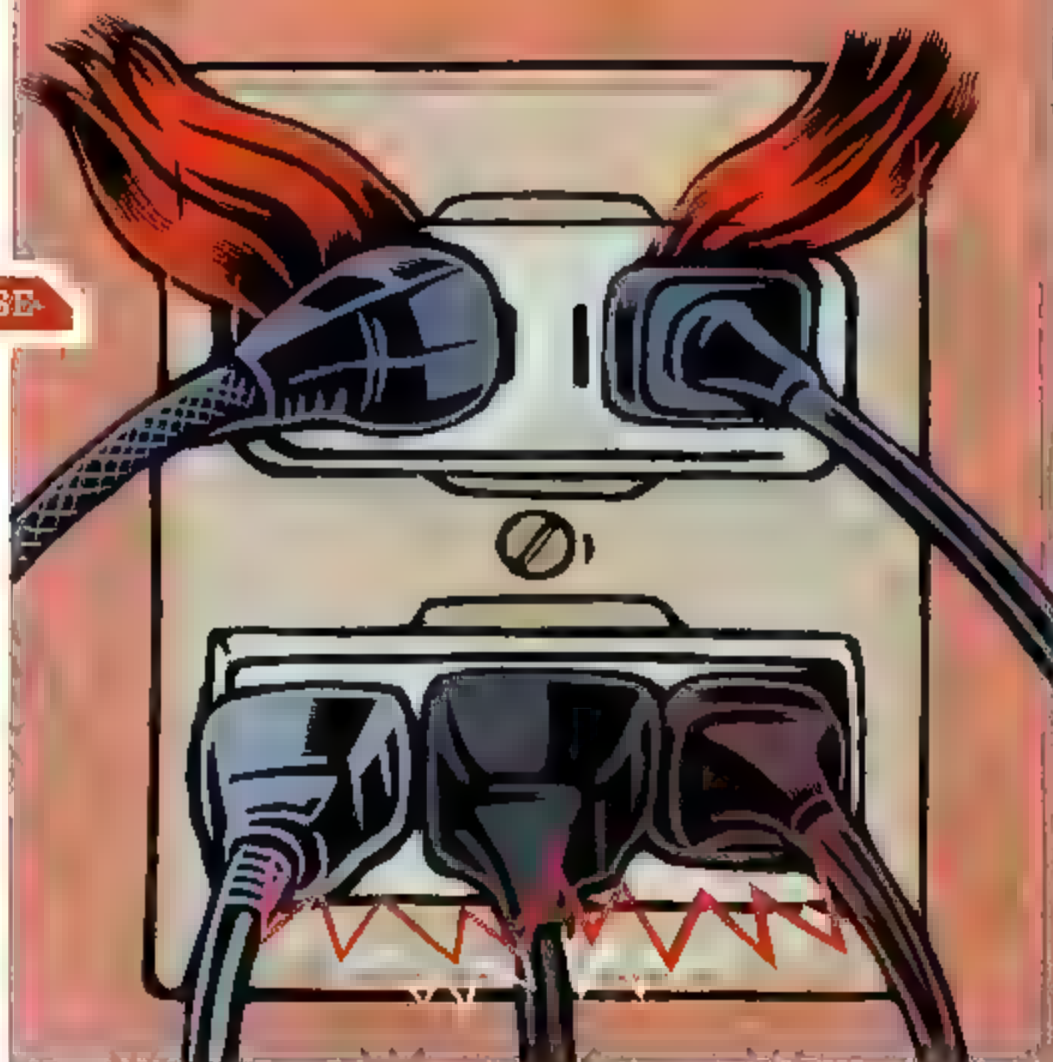
OLD WIRES DIE HARD

Smart homeowners can give them longer lives

One out of three American homes is more than 50 years old, and while historic architecture inspires passionate renovators, outdated electrical systems can be intimidating for novices to tackle. But a recent study finds that old wiring isn't always a problem. "The wiring in old homes is holding up remarkably well," says John Drengenberg, a spokesperson for Underwriters Laboratories, the product safety testing organization, which coauthored the study with the Fire Protection Research Center. While the wires themselves may be in fine shape, overloading a home's wiring system and taking DIY shortcuts are two of the major reasons behind the 32,000 electrical fires that occur in homes each year, which cause a whopping \$674 million in damages. "Sometimes homeowners make changes that compromise the safety of an electrical system," says Drengenberg. "For example, you might start twisting and hammering wires into outlet boxes or taking other shortcuts. Remember houses built in the '20s and '30s were designed to handle a toaster, a couple of lamps, and maybe a washing machine—not 48-inch flat-screen TVs in every bedroom."

A few scenarios cry out for a certified electrician's help. Flickering lights and frequently blown fuses mean you're overburdening the system. Using an excessive number of extension cords to power your everyday appliances means you need more electrical outlets. And if your outlets are too hot to touch or emit a burning smell, it's a sign that your wires are throwing off sparks behind the wall. If any of these things should happen, call in the pros. But no matter what shape your wires are in, these preventive steps will help you avoid bigger problems in the future:

1. **Stop overloading a single circuit**, which often happens when you plug two or more heat-producing appliances like toasters, microwaves, and ranges into the same outlet.
2. **Don't "overlamp"** by putting a 100-watt bulb into a socket rated for 40 or 60 watts. The additional heat damages the wires' insulation over time, making them dangerously brittle.
3. **Avoid taking shortcuts** with DIY projects. Spending extra time to make sure you don't pinch wires when you screw something into the wall could save you from a calamity in the future.
4. **Repair or replace worn wiring** on appliances. This is one common hazard you can easily monitor and control.
5. **Never run cords for appliances under rugs.** A flammable rug and trampled, fraying wires make a deadly combination. —NATALIE RODRIGUEZ



> Five-Alarm Fine Print

As the weather cools off and we spend more time inside, there's more than worn-out wires to worry about. Another safety concern is the use of gas-fueled appliances such as space heaters, which hook up either to a dedicated propane tank or your home's natural-

gas supply line. Some cities prohibit these appliances altogether, citing safety concerns and unclear instructions. One supposedly "vent-free" unit came with a tag that actually warns the user to make provisions for ventilation. If you choose to use one of these devices, here's how to do it without causing any harm:

- >> Install a carbon-monoxide detector in the same room. Devices are typically equipped with automatic shutoff triggered by a drop in the room's oxygen level to 18 percent or below. But having detectors that alert you to the presence of poisonous gas can't hurt.
- >> Use a professional qualified installer if the unit breaks down. The manufacturer will want proof that it was properly installed in order to honor your warranty.
- >> Review the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website (cpsc.gov) for advice on how to use vent-free appliances safely. —SAL VAGLICA



ORIGINS ANSWER

D. 1863. With a bit that funneled out metal filings as easily as augers bored shavings from wood, Morse Twist Drill and Machine Company in Bedford, Massachusetts, became one of the biggest tool suppliers for manufacturers of guns and sewing machines. Now these bits are standard issue in most drill kits.



PONDWRINGS OF A PLANTAIN

I don't know how they do it, but some things just never lose their visual appeal. Me, I tend to look good for about a week, maybe ten days if I avoid full sun. After that, I'm losing my charm quickly. I wonder if there's some special preservative out there that would give me that timeless look.



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NEED TO KNOW

GOOD WOOD FIRES

How to prep your fireplace for its busy season, with tips from chimney expert Mark Schaub

The days are growing short, and there's a chill in the evening air. Before you succumb to your primal urges and set even a single log ablaze, be certain you've taken the steps required to make the fires you start this season as successful—and safe—as possible. Mark Schaub, of Chimney Savers in Hillsborough, New Jersey, has offered his expertise on many *This Old House* television projects. Here, he takes you through the drill.



"Most house fires that start in the hearth are caused by homeowners who've overloaded the firebox or burned a fire for too long—oftentimes during a power outage or around the holidays."

—MARK SCHAUB, FIREPLACE AND CHIMNEY EXPERT

HIRE A CHIMNEY SWEEP.

Book a pro to give your chimney and hearth its annual physical. A certified chimney sweep will inspect your masonry, flue liner, chimney cap, and venting system to make sure everything's clean, clear, and up to code. You can locate a sweep through the Chimney Safety Institute of America (csia.org). Prices vary, but expect a basic hour-long inspection and cleaning to run around \$200.

4

DON'T OVERLOAD THE FIREBOX.

Burning more than three logs at a time increases heat saturation, which could eventually ignite combustible materials adjacent to the fireplace and chimney. (This is a bigger issue with older fireplaces, which may not have the air gap between framing and masonry mandated by current codes.) Schaub recommends testing for heat saturation by placing your hand right above the mantle. If it's too hot to keep your hand there, quit using the fireplace until you have the system inspected.

KNOW WHAT NOT TO BURN.

Fireplaces make poor incinerators. Avoid tossing in Christmas trees, pizza boxes, and driftwood, which flare up fast and could cause a fire in a dirty chimney. Also on the "do not burn" list: painted or treated lumber and newspaper printed in color, because the preservatives and inks create noxious fumes. Manufactured firewood—formed of compressed sawdust, pencil shavings, copper sulfate, and paraffin wax—is a fine choice on its own, but don't burn manufactured logs with real wood or flare-ups could result

WARM UP THE FLUE.

Smoke won't rise if the flue is filled with cold air. To avoid downdrafts that can push out smoke and toxic fumes, warm up the air in the flue first. After you've opened the damper—and before you vent the logs—encourage fireplace smoke to travel up and out the chimney by lighting a rolled-up sheet of newspaper and holding it in a gloved hand at the opening to the flue, so warm air can ascend.

BUILD A FIRE (THE EASY WAY).

Here's Schaub's foolproof technique for a cozy fire in 15 minutes. Ignite a fire starter brick in the center of the grate. Next, place one log lengthwise behind the starter and another one in front of it. When those catch, place a log diagonally across them. This setup encourages combustion air to flow around all three logs.

WATCH AND WAIT.

"Fireplaces are like children. They need to be watched," says Schaub. "Be prepared to stay with the fire until the end. Let it burn out naturally—water tossed onto the fire can damage the firebox—then dispose of ashes safely in a metal bin left outdoors until the embers die. Never vacuum up fresh ashes. 'You'd be amazed at how long embers can stay hot in a bed of ash,' Schaub says. "It could be a couple of days before they cool."

BUILD YOUR SKILL.
Tips for repointing fireplace bricks. *Workshop*, p. 113

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KITCHEN DESIGN



BEFORE: The color-drenched blue-green kitchen had red counters—and some awkward cabinets.
AFTER: New base units open up the range area. A softer yellow-green paint and black granite countertops give the room a sophisticated look. The new island is screened from the dining area by a 42-inch-high cabinet with glass doors. A skylight brightens the space.

Problem: A previous remodel had left certain areas dysfunctional

Solution: **Redesign in small ways to tweak what wasn't working. Here's how >>**

WHEN IT COMES TO CURING YOUR HOME'S ILLS—as with your own, it often pays to go to a specialist. Jason and Irene Jacobson learned the hard way. Shortly after moving into their 1950s North Tustin, California, ranch house in 1998, they renovated the kitchen with help from an interior designer. While pleased with the way the new space looked, they found some negatives. Drawers to the left of the range didn't open at all. ("That happens sometimes," they were told by the designer, who did not have extensive experience in kitchen design.) Ones to the right were so skinny as to be useless, and abutted a tall pantry unit that limited elbow room while cooking. Plus, the bi-level island had a skimpy work surface. "The room was aesthetically pleasing," says Irene, "but functionally, it had challenges." Fast-forward several years: While adding on a master suite, the couple started talking to kitchen and bath designer Dana Jones about their kitchen. "We realized a few changes could make a huge difference," says Jones, who suggested relocating the laundry—which sat in a closet in the L-shaped space—to the addition. Moving it created a domino effect, making room for a walk-in pantry and for reconfiguring the area around the range. "We didn't want to redo the room from scratch," says Irene. "Little tweaks made it all work."

BY JILL CONNORS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
GREGG SEGAL



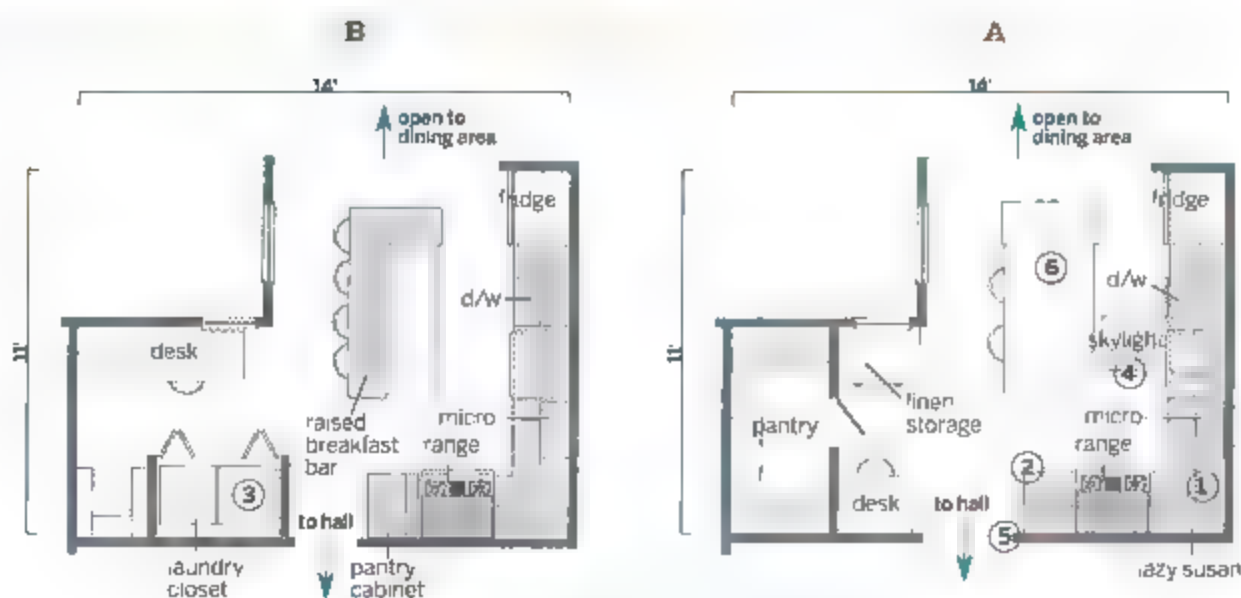
The Plan

>> Make the fewest changes for the greatest impact.

What They Did

- 1 INSTALLED A LAZY SUSAN** inside the cabinet to the left of the range replacing nonoperable drawers from the previous remodel. The turntable is now hidden behind a double-hinged corner cabinet door.
- 2 ADDED AN UPPER CABINET AND LOWER DRAWERS** to the right of the range, replacing a super skinny (useless) cabinet and a full-height pantry unit that made the cooking space cramped. A new section of glass-tilt backsplash and a ribbed-glass cabinet door blend with the rest of the kitchen.
- 3 MOVED THE LAUNDRY** from a closet in the kitchen ell to the addition, and converted the area into a walk-in pantry for food, canister and cookbook storage.
- 4 ADDED A SKYLIGHT** to bring much-needed natural light into the room.
- 5 WIDENED A DOORWAY** to the hall to improve traffic flow into the kitchen.
- 6 RECONFIGURED THE ISLAND.** The base remained, but the countertop was changed to one 36 inches high, comfortable for both working and eating. A 42-inch-high cabinet was placed along one side to screen it from the dining area.

B BEFORE: Cabinets flanking the range were a tight squeeze in the 11-by-14-foot L-shaped kitchen. The washer and dryer were located behind bifold doors, so laundry piled up on the floor in plain sight. **AFTER:** The kitchen ell now holds a 4-by-8-foot walk-in pantry, plus a dresserlike linen-storage unit and a smaller message-center desk. The location of the sink and appliances did not change.



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"A walk-in pantry for storing food not only saves on cabinetry costs but also helps keep countertops clear of canisters, cookbooks, and other clutter."

DANA JONES, KITCHEN AND BATH DESIGNER

The Details

>> The spirit of the kitchen's retro-modern look is true to the ranch house's 1950s roots.

1 HONED BLACK GRANITE COUNTERTOPS replaced bright-red solid surfacing (which the homeowners found that they quickly tired of) for a more sophisticated palette. The existing colorful glass-tile backsplash and gooseneck faucet stayed.

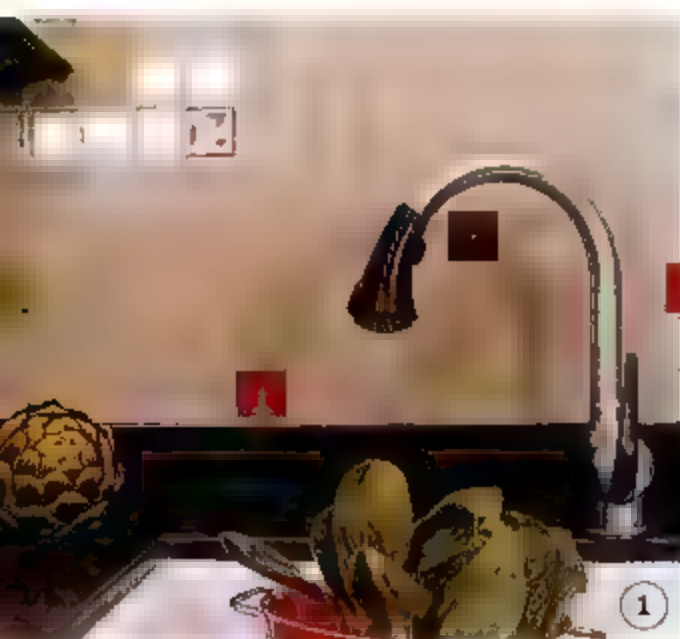
2 THE WALK-IN PANTRY is partially hidden behind a ribbed-glass door. It has shelves on three sides. The lowest shelf is 18 inches off the ground, preserving room to store big items. Repainting the walls and cabinet built-ins a lighter yellow-green brightened the space.

3 THE DRESSERLIKE DRAWER UNIT built in under one of the two windows provides a place for linens and other kitchen miscellany.

4 A SIMPLE, CURVED BRACKET supports the new desk area, reflecting the room's open, casual sensibility.

5 THE FRAMED CORKBOARD above the desk serves as the family's photo and message center. Large enough for a laptop, the desk surface provides an extra spot for checking e-mail.

6 BLOWN-GLASS PENDANT LIGHTS showcase the colorful spirit of the first round remodel, which was subtly streamlined in the redesign.



1



4



5



6



2



3



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PHOTOGRAPH BY J.D. EITZ; JOURNALIST: JEFFREY M. HARRIS

Problem:
The house had no comfortable guest quarters.

Solution:
Annex the garage, raise the roof, and build a luxurious suite. Here's how.

WHEN EMPTY-NEST SYNDROME kicks in, most couples think about downsizing. But when the owners of this Chappaqua, New York, house found that their grown kids were frequently bringing friends home to an increasingly cramped dinner table, they realized they'd need more room than ever. "We were seating 20-something adults at their own 'kids' table," says the husband.

So the couple enlisted the help of architect Carol Kurth in rethinking their home. The result was a whole-house renovation that included converting the old, attached garage into living space. Kurth also suggested raising the garage's roof and using some of the unfinished attic for a separate guest suite. While the bedroom boasts a walk-in closet and lots of natural light, it's the bathroom—with its luxurious two-person soaking tub and serene views of treetops—that's the real star of the space. "The idea was to have a guest bath that's as comfortable and relaxing as the master bath," says the architect. Following the homeowners' admonition not to be "too country or too modern," Kurth warmed up the room with Craftsman-inspired details such as wood vanities, bronze fittings, and stone-look tiles and included amenities like a separate toilet room and twin sinks.

Since their completion, the guest quarters have been put to good use by the couple's grown children and their parents, too—exactly as hoped. "It's important for us to make this house a place where our family wants to come back and visit," says the husband. It looks like they'll have no trouble keeping the suite booked for years to come.

BY NATALIE RODRIGUEZ
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WENDELL T. WEBBER

BATH DESIGN



BEFORE: The homeowners couldn't stand up in the 4-foot-high attic above their old garage, which was crisscrossed with exposed wiring and ductwork.
AFTER: With the roof bumped up, the new bath boasts an airy vaulted ceiling. Custom mahogany-stained open-shelf vanity bases preserve the spacious feeling. Stained medicine cabinets add more warm wood tones.



The Plan

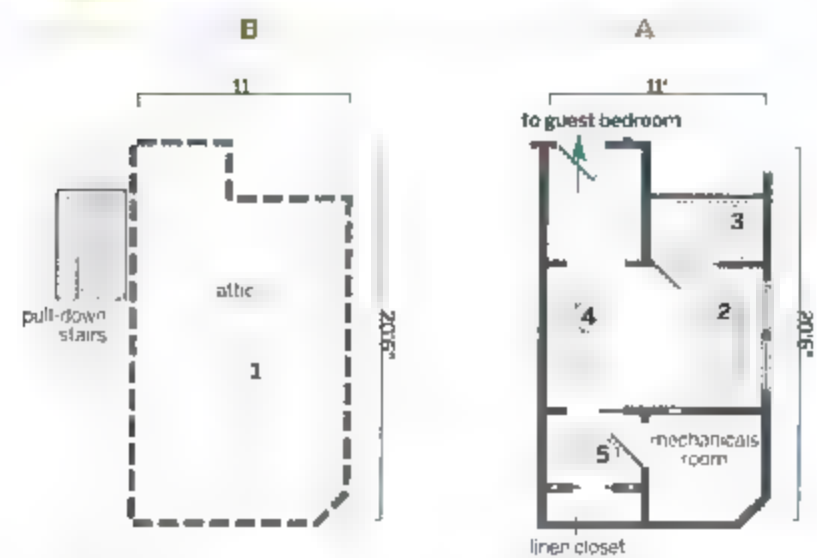
Renovate part of an unfinished attic to fit a spacious, amenity-filled guest bath.

What They Did

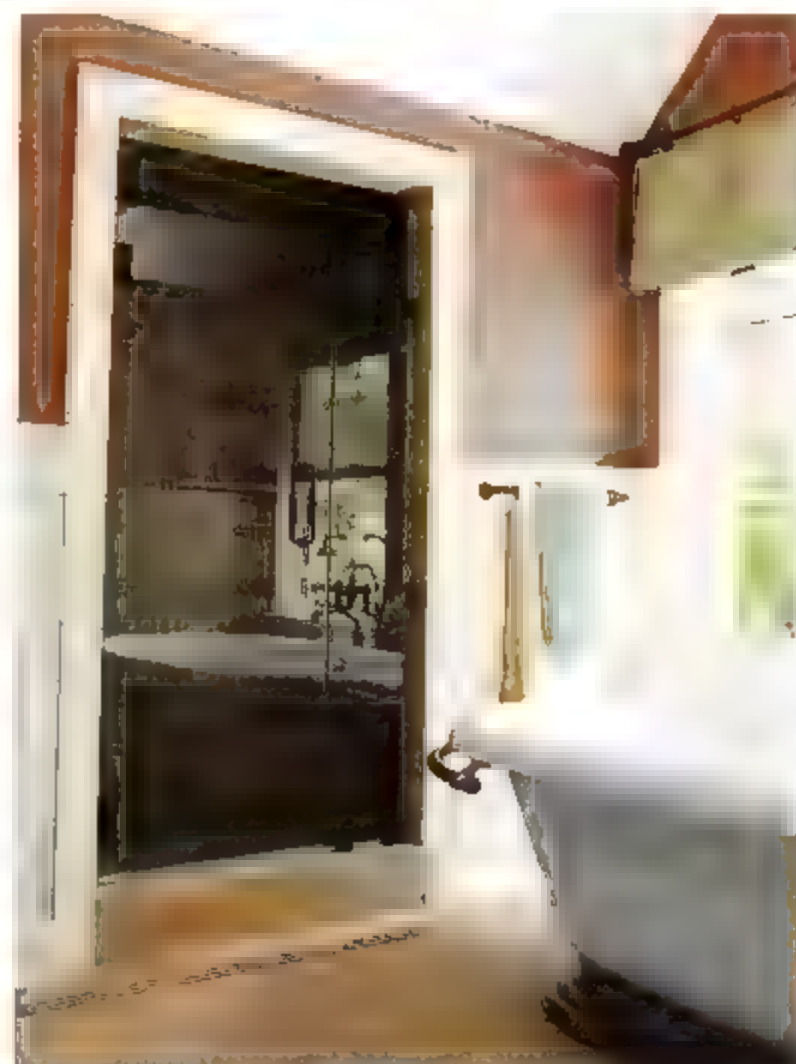
- 1 **CONVERTED AN ATTACHED GARAGE** into living space, raising the roof to fit a guest suite upstairs and adding dormers on one side. The bathroom's new finished ceiling height reaches 11½ feet at its peak.
- 2 **PLACED A TWO-PERSON SOAKING TUB** in the center of the room to create a focal point. Two large double-hung windows behind it offer views of the secluded backyard and the surrounding woods.
- 3 **POSITIONED THE SHOWER** to one side of the tub and a mechanicals room that provides access to rerouted wiring and AC ducts on the other.
- 4 **ADDED HIS-AND-HERS VANITIES** opposite the tub.
- 5 **CARVED OUT A SEPARATE TOILET ROOM** and linen closet with pocket doors, allowing more than one guest to use the bathroom without sacrificing privacy.



See how other homeowners solve their bath design problems at thisoldhouse.com/baths



B BEFORE: The attic space above the old garage was unfinished and had only a 4-foot head clearance. **AFTER:** The renovated 11-by-20½-foot space is outfitted with a large soaking tub, twin sinks, a shower, and a separate toilet room and linen closet.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Space-saving pocket doors in the toilet room open to a linen closet that stores fresh towels and bedding for guests. The muted taupe and beige of the stone-look ceramic tile add to the warm, serene ambience the homeowners were after. Oil-rubbed bronze fittings by Perrin & Rowe fit the Craftsman-inspired decor. A recessed niche in the tiled shower provides ample space for guests' toiletries. Large windows and a frameless glass shower door maximize natural light in the space; beadboard wainscoting adds traditional detail.

BUILD YOUR SKILL
Learn how to make a tiled shower niche
Workshop, p. 13

Photo: Amy White

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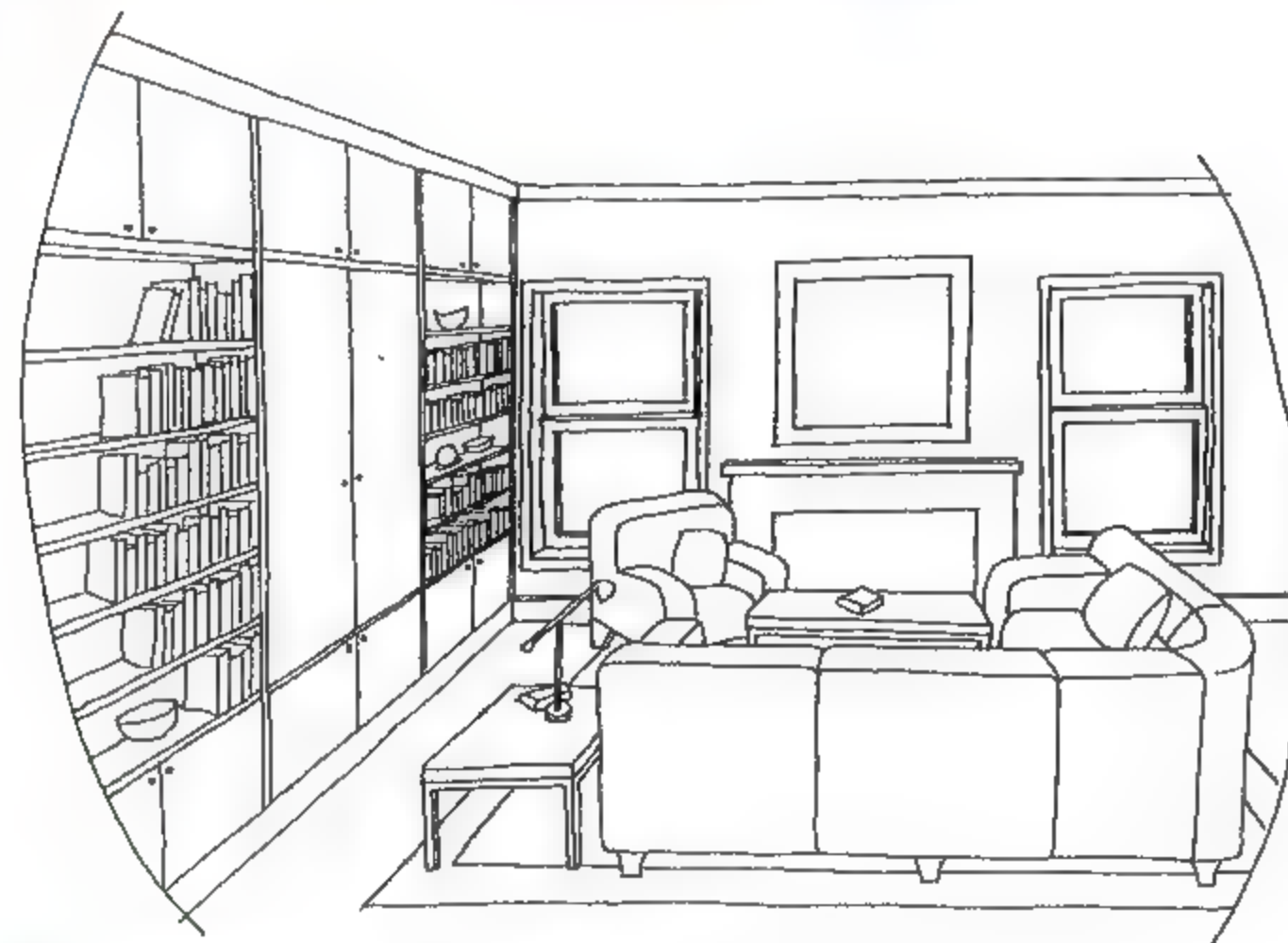


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● We just got a big flat-screen television, and now it's the dominant design feature in our family room. What can we do to better integrate it into the space?



NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T
By concealing the TV behind built-in cabinets, there's less temptation to watch it. Plus, lining the wall with bookshelves encourages reading or studying without distraction from the television.

A THE AVERAGE TELEVISION is on a staggering seven hours a day. That's a fact of American life that I, as an architect, have to incorporate into the design of any home I'm working on. When planning a family room, one of the first things we do at my firm is ask about your lifestyle and viewing habits, because that tells us how much prominence to give the TV.

Assuming viewing habits in your household are average, the trick is to design a space that allows for pleasant, comfortable watching while ensuring that the room also serves its other purposes. The best way to do that is with a flexible seating arrangement (see illustration, above). In this example, a sectional sofa offers ample seating for TV watching or gathering around the coffee table for a good game of Scrabble, and the easy chair can be turned around for quiet reading by the fire. What we want to avoid is turning the family room into a home theater, where everyone just stares at the television without interacting.

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY
WARREN FREYER

Warren Freyer is the principal of Freyer Collaborative Architects, a 10-person firm in New York City specializing in residential design and technology.

1 A Multipurpose Floor Plan

Since the idea of the family room is to bring everyone together in one multifunctional space, here are a few of my tricks for setting up a television without disrupting the inclusive environment.

Placement Keep the TV at a 90-degree angle to the main windows. That way, it doesn't interfere with anyone's ability to look over and enjoy the views. (It also helps cut down on glare, a common problem with daytime watching.)

Screen size The best TV isn't necessarily the biggest one you can afford. What you want is one that's the right size for your space. The general rule is a viewing distance of roughly two to three times the screen diagonal. So a 40-inch screen, for instance, is best viewed from about 7 to 10 feet away.

Acoustics Carpeting and drapes filter out some of the rumbling bass of film sound effects but can absorb a little too much from music. So the best approach here is to stake out a middle ground. Since the room will be used for entertaining as well as for TV watching, some sound-deadening fabric is a good idea, but don't carpet the room from wall to wall and cover every window with heavy draperies.

Lighting Since this is a multifunctional room, you'll want dimmable lighting (if any at all) for movie watching, soft light for entertaining, and task lighting for reading and homework. I like to put recessed overhead lights on a dimmer, ample reading light by every chair, and fixtures around the periphery of the space for accent lighting.

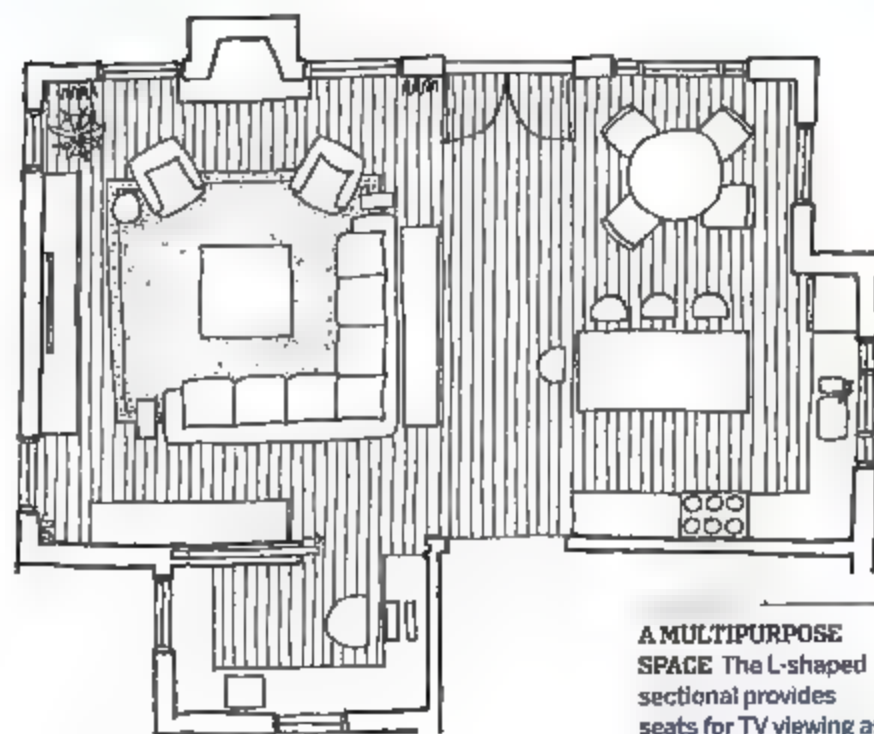
2 Hang It or Hide It?

One nice thing about flat-screen TVs is that, unlike old picture-tube TVs, which can be space-hogging monstrosities, these look good even when they're turned off and don't necessarily need to be hidden behind expensive custom cabinets. But if you think your family will gravitate like drones to the television if it's in plain sight, then I recommend housing it in an entertainment center, as in the illustration on the previous page. Audio and video components can be concealed behind doors, where they're easily accessible but don't create visual clutter.

If you do decide to mount the TV on the wall, you'll need to keep any other components in a cabinet below (see illustration, right) and run the wires behind the wall. For a more customized look, at least one manufacturer has started to offer picture frames, in a variety of styles and finishes, specially made to fit its flat screens.

3 Out of Sight, Out of Mind

If your family is in the minority that watches television infrequently (or is trying to cut down), I'd suggest keeping the set out of the family room altogether and instead moving it into a separate space that can also double as a den or study area. In this scenario, the television shares a room filled with books and is given a warm, cozy feel perfect for occasional *I Love Lucy* marathons. I would close off the space with a solid wood door to keep it acoustically and psychologically separated from the rest of the home. ■



A MULTIPURPOSE SPACE The L-shaped sectional provides seats for TV viewing as well as for gazing into the fire. A pair of easy chairs can be used for reading and relaxing or swung around for your Super Bowl party. A small computer nook with a sliding door allows you to work in silence or remain connected to activities in the family room.



IN PLAIN SIGHT Since the new generation of flat-screen TVs is so sleek-looking, you can hang one on the wall and hide audio and video components in a cabinet below. Wires must be snaked behind the wall to finish off this clean, modern look.

do it right

For tips on how to hang a flat-panel TV on the wall, go to thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

GOT A QUESTION FOR AN ARCHITECT?

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, 135 West 50th St., New York, NY 10020. 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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No Holds Barred

>> Great-looking hooks, rings, and bars can bring new style and comfort to your bath.

By NATALIE RODRIGUEZ
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELLEN McDERMOTT

WHEN IT COMES TO EXTRA-VAGANCE, the bathroom is the one place in the house where homeowners are most likely to lay it on. But even if you don't want to spring for a spa-style tub or custom built steam shower, you can still add style and personality with affordable accessories. Streamlined or sculptural, vintage or contemporary, antique bronze or gleaming chrome, trimmed with leather or crystal, there's a suite of hardware that's right for your space. And you don't have to stop at coordinating your towel rack with your toilet-paper holder; bath accoutrements are increasingly offered as part of collections that also include faucets, showerheads, even toilet-tank levers. Plus, installing a few well-placed hooks and bars can significantly improve functionality and comfort as it unifies the look of a room, all in the space of an afternoon. Here are some choices to get you started.



TWIGGED OUT

If you're the type that likes to be surrounded by nature when nature calls, then consider leaf-sculpted accessories from designer Michael Aram. The oxidized bronze is a "living" finish that will develop a patina over time. Towel bar, \$45; ring, \$20; toilet-paper holder, \$25; soap dish, \$20. michaelaram.com





1 COORDINATED FLUSHERS

Instead of settling for the toilet maker's tank lever, you can swap it out for one that complements your Victorian-style powder room or contemporary master bath. In oil-rubbed bronze (top), \$68; in polished chrome (bottom), \$24. aclo.com

2 HALF CIRCLE

This open ring (for easy towel draping) is part of a complete collection that includes hooks, bars, and faucets. The finish—dark oil-rubbed bronze with copper highlights—makes for an eye-catching contrast against light backgrounds like travertine tile. Devonshire towel ring, \$37; kohler.com

3 DOUBLE DUTY

Swing-out racks are a sleek space saver in small baths. The pair of swiveling arms on this chrome number are a so great for drying delicate hand washables. Broadmoor towel arm, \$330; waterworks.com

4 BATHROOM BLING

Swarovski crystal accents give this nautical-style double robe hook a little flash—the perfect compromise for a his-and-hers master bath. Country Crystal double robe hooks, \$154–\$198; rohlhome.com

5 GREEN RINGS

Bamboo-inspired towel rings bring a bit of Zen spa retreat into your bath. Like the plant itself, they're environmentally friendly, cast from lead-free pewter. In satin finish, \$84; in brass, \$100; greensage.com

6 UNHINGED

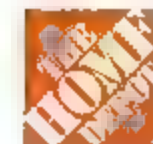
For a rustic cottage retreat or farmhouse bath, simple, unembellished wrought iron fits in nicely. This paper holder, modeled on carriage-house hardware, has a vintage feel. \$82; crowncityhardware.com

BUILD YOUR SKILL
Tips for installing powder coats with drywall anchors. Workshop, p. 113



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smart ideas

Find more easy bath upgrades at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

7 QUICK HOOKUP
The lower arm of this double-duty robe hook swivels, making it easy to hang multiple items. Dazzle robe hook in polished chrome, \$31, americanstandard-us.com

8 CLASSIC BLACK
Design pros point to darker finishes as a hot bathroom trend. The twisted birdcage finials on these black powder-coated zinc accessories look at home in anything from a country cottage bath to a neo-classical retreat. Stony Ridge double robe hook, \$17 and towel ring, \$25, csi-moen.com

9 MINI BAR
If you don't have wall space for a full-size rod but prefer its ease of use to a hook or ring, new 8-inch bars are the best of both worlds. Perfect for that powder-room hand towel. Lockwood mini towel bar in aged pewter, \$43, deltafaucet.com

10 VINTAGE FLUSHER
Complete your period bath with a reproduction brass-and-porcelain lever that can retrofit onto most modern toilet tanks. \$32, crowncityhardware.com

11 ROBE VALET
An old-fashioned concept turned modern, this polished chrome robe hanger makes an interesting silhouette on a master bathroom wall. Margaux valet, \$115, kohler.com

12 A TOUCH OF LEATHER
Flashes of color and texture, like the stitched leather wrapping on the ends of this simple, thin rod, pump up the personality of plain fixtures. Zanz bar 18-inch rod, \$80, atiashomewares.com

Never use a towel rod as a grab bar. They aren't designed to support a person's weight.



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THAT TOPPLED OVER THAT TURNED INTO A HUG THAT MADE
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SALVAGE



Cast With Character

» Do as the Victorians did and use ornamental hinges to enhance your interiors with tiny details

BY AMY R. HUGHES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH WILSON

WHEN I WAS FLIPPING THROUGH the newspaper a few weeks back when my eyes landed on a photo of door hardware that matched a rare antique hinge I'd recently admired at a Texas salvage shop. The hinge, which depicted two Japanese geishas standing on a bridge—one shaded by a parasol, the other stooped under a lantern—was cast in the late 1800s by Connecticut metalwork manufacturer Russell & Erwin.

The escutcheon plates in the picture were the same style but told a different story, with a woman ringing a bell from the balcony of a tall pagoda. My interest piqued, I read the accompanying write-up of an exhibit of late-19th-century household brass goods at the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, and planned a visit.

The show had door hardware, but also lamps, plant stands, and fireplace andirons, many featuring Japanese motifs, such as swooping cranes, delicate cherry blossoms, and bamboo lattice-work. Designers during the American Victorian era were rather obsessed with all things Japanese after seeing porcelain vases, bronze urns, and other artifacts from that country at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, in Philadelphia.

What amazed me was that these intricately patterned objects were mass-produced in factories, rather than hand-forged in artisan shops. Cast in brass,



> Gel-corroded hinge leaves moving freely on their center pin by dousing the hinge with WD-40, which loosens the bond between the metal and any rust.



The geisha hinge seen at Discovery Architectural Antiques in Gonzales, Texas.

bronze, copper, and steel near the end of the Industrial Revolution, the wares were sold in catalogs to style-conscious consumers looking to embellish their interiors.

The designs were born out of the Aesthetic Movement, which advocated “art for art’s sake,” not as a commentary on society. Its influence on Americans’ day-to-day lives is perhaps most strikingly evident in those beautiful yet utilitarian door hinges. And even though most of the late 19th-

century hinges at architectural salvage yards today—except for that Russell & Erwin one with the geishas—wouldn’t merit inclusion in a museum exhibit, they are no less astounding for the level of detail applied to something so

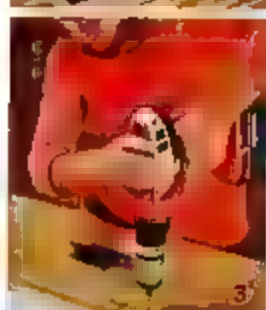
seemingly insignificant: I mean, you don’t even see the hinge leaves when the door is closed. What you do see, however, is the center barrel in which the hinge pin is inserted to hold the leaves together. The barrel on the geisha hinge, for instance, bore a peacock-feather motif. But I have seen other, far simpler hinges with meandering vines, flowers, leaves, and geometric patterns along their spines. Even the pins were decorated, with tips shaped like cannonballs or church steeples.

The relative affordability of these more common hinges, which typically run \$15 to \$30 apiece—compared with up to \$500 for a museum-worthy one—makes them popular with house-part recyclers like me. They are great for linking together old shutters for a folding screen (see how, below) or for hinging the top of a storage trunk or writing desk. Then there’s always their obvious usefulness in hanging doors. Such a practical application may seem like a bit of a waste of such small works of art, but those old Aesthetes would be proud to know their attention to tiny details hasn’t been lost on modern-day homeowners. ■

† How I Turned Salvaged Hinges and Shutters Into a Folding Screen

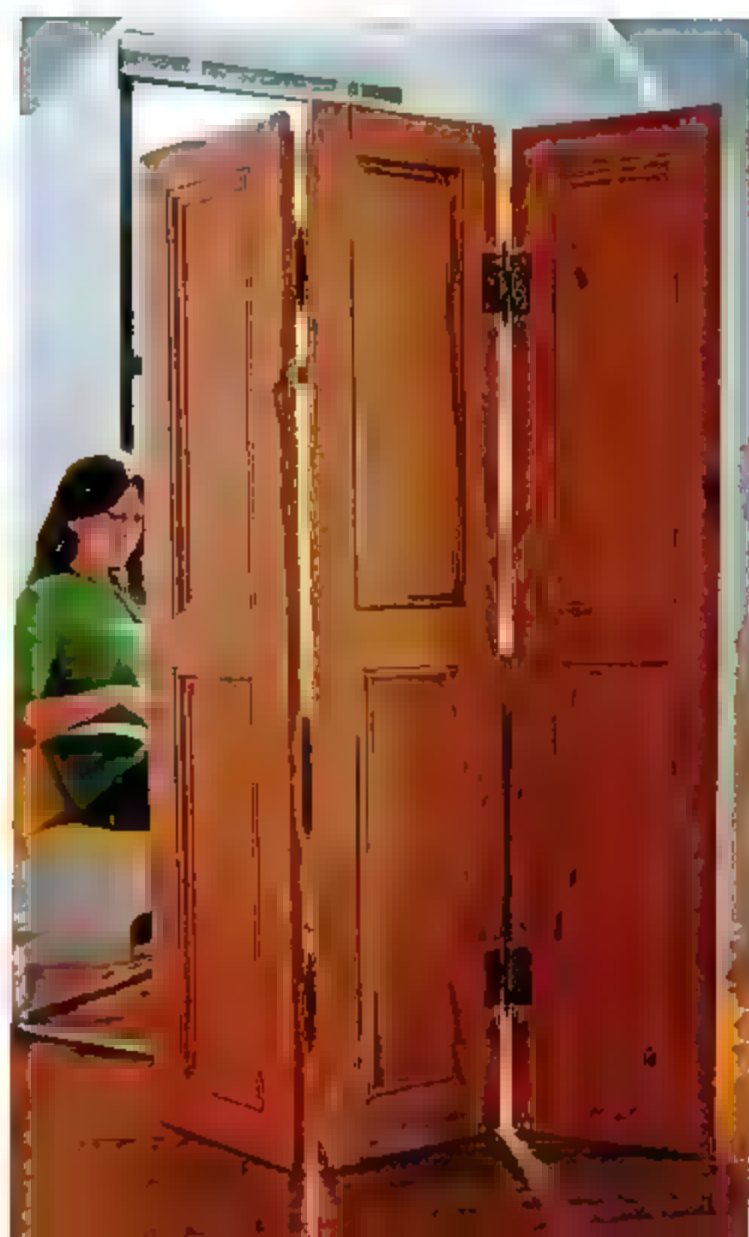
The hardware bins at Olde Good Things in New York City overflow with cool, but very dirty, door hinges in different styles. The challenge for me was in unearthing four that were the same size and style. I wanted to use them to link together three vintage wooden shutters to make a folding screen for my bedroom. After more than an hour of digging, as well as searching for something to wipe my hands on (tip: never wear white jeans to a salvage yard), I finally settled on a matched lot of 3-by-3½-inch steel hinges with curlicue designs and steeple tips. Making the screen was the easy part—to show off my finds, I simply screwed the hinges to the face of the shutters, rather than mortising them. Here’s the step-by-step:

1. Lay the shutters side by side on a worktable, and align their bottoms using a straightedge. (Shutter heights may vary, so be sure to use the bottoms as the baseline when taking measurements.)
2. Arrange one pair of hinges along the gap between two shutters, about a foot down from the top, and the other the same distance up from the bottom. Now measure from the bottom of the shutters to the bottom edge of the hinge leaves and mark their locations. Transfer those measurements to the back of the third shutter to position the second pair of hinges.
3. Mark the locations of the screw holes, remove the hinges and predrill for the fasteners. Reposition the hinges and drive in the screws.
4. Set up your finished screen, and kick back with a book. —A.R.H.



ONLINE VIDEO

Want to make this hinged screen? View more step-by-step on our Salvage channel at thisoldhouse.com/salvage



PHOTOS: PROJECT KRISTINE LARSEN



ADVAIR® helps significantly improve lung function so you can breathe better.*



If you have COPD associated with chronic bronchitis, ADVAIR 250/50 may help. ADVAIR works differently than other COPD medications. It is the only product with an anti-inflammatory and a bronchodilator working together to help improve lung function. Talk to your doctor and find out if ADVAIR is right for you.

Get your first full prescription FREE.† Go to advairCOPD.com or call 1-800-768-0200.

It is not known how anti-inflammatories work in COPD.

Important Information: ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 is approved for controlling symptoms and preventing wheezing in adults with COPD associated with chronic bronchitis. The benefit of using ADVAIR DISKUS for longer than 6 months has not been evaluated. You should only take 1 inhalation of ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 twice a day. Taking higher doses will not provide additional benefits but may increase your chance of certain side effects. Lower respiratory tract infections, including pneumonia, have been reported with ADVAIR. Patients at risk for developing bone loss (osteoporosis) and some eye problems (cataracts or glaucoma) should be aware that use of inhaled corticosteroids, including ADVAIR DISKUS, may increase your risk. You should consider having regular eye exams. ADVAIR DISKUS does not replace fast-acting inhalers for acute symptoms.

*Measured by a breathing test in people taking ADVAIR 250/50, compared with people taking either fluticasone propionate 250 mcg or salmeterol 50 mcg. Maximum effects may take several weeks. Your results may vary.

† See advairCOPD.com for eligibility rules.

Please see accompanying important information about ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50.

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ADVAIR DISKUS® 250/50
(fluticasone propionate 250 mcg and salmeterol 50 mcg inhalation powder)

ADVAIR DISKUS 100/50, 250/50, 500/50 (fluticasone propionate 100, 250, 500 mcg and salmeterol 50 mcg inhalation powder)

What is the most important information I should know about ADVAIR DISKUS?

In patients with asthma, long-acting beta₂-agonist medicines such as salmeterol (one of the medications in ADVAIR[®]) may increase the chance of death from asthma problems. In a large asthma study, more patients who used salmeterol died from asthma problems compared with patients who did not use salmeterol. So ADVAIR is not for patients whose asthma is well controlled on another asthma controller medicine such as low- to medium-dose inhaled corticosteroids or only need a fast-acting inhaler once in a while. Talk with your doctor about this risk and the benefits of treating your asthma with ADVAIR.

ADVAIR should not be used to treat a severe attack of asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) requiring emergency medical treatment.

ADVAIR should not be used to relieve sudden symptoms or sudden breathing problems. Always have a fast-acting inhaler with you to treat sudden breathing difficulty. If you do not have a fast-acting inhaler, contact your doctor to have one prescribed for you.

What is ADVAIR DISKUS?

There are two medicines in ADVAIR: Fluticasone propionate, an inhaled anti-inflammatory belonging to a group of medicines commonly referred to as corticosteroids; and salmeterol, a long-acting, inhaled bronchodilator belonging to a group of medicines commonly referred to as beta₂-agonists. There are 3 strengths of ADVAIR: 100/50, 250/50, 500/50.

For Asthma

- ADVAIR is approved for the maintenance treatment of asthma in patients 4 years of age and older. ADVAIR should only be used if your doctor decides that another asthma controller medicine alone does not control your asthma or that you need 2 asthma controller medications.
- The strength of ADVAIR approved for patients ages 4 to 11 years who experience symptoms on an inhaled corticosteroid is ADVAIR DISKUS 100/50. All 3 strengths are approved for patients with asthma ages 12 years and older.

For COPD associated with chronic bronchitis

ADVAIR 250/50 is the only approved dose for the maintenance treatment of airflow obstruction in patients with COPD associated with chronic bronchitis. The benefit of using ADVAIR for longer than 6 months has not been evaluated. The way anti-inflammatories work in the treatment of COPD is not well defined.

Who should not take ADVAIR DISKUS?

You should not start ADVAIR if your asthma is becoming significantly or rapidly worse, which can be life threatening. Serious respiratory events, including death, have been reported in patients who started taking salmeterol in this situation, although it is not possible to tell whether salmeterol contributed to these events. This may also occur in patients with less severe asthma.

You should not take ADVAIR if you have had an allergic reaction to it or any of its components (salmeterol, fluticasone propionate, or lactose). Tell your doctor if you are allergic to ADVAIR, any other medications, or food products. If you experience an allergic reaction after taking ADVAIR, stop using ADVAIR immediately and contact your doctor. Allergic reactions are which you experience one or more of the following: choking; breathing problems; swelling of the face, mouth and/or tongue; rash, hives; itching; or welts on the skin.

Tell your doctor about the following:

- If you are using your fast-acting inhaler more often or using more doses than you normally do (e.g., 4 or more inhalations of your fast-acting inhaler for 2 or more days in a row or a whole canister of your fast-acting inhaler in 8 weeks' time), it could be a sign that your asthma is getting worse. If this occurs, tell your doctor immediately.
- If you have been using your fast-acting inhaler regularly (e.g., four times a day), your doctor may tell you to stop the regular use of these medications.
- If your peak flow meter results decrease. Your doctor will tell you the numbers that are right for you.
- If you have asthma and your symptoms do not improve after using ADVAIR regularly for 1 week.
- If you have been on an oral steroid, like prednisone, and are now using ADVAIR. You should be very careful as you may be less able to heal after surgery, infection, or serious injury. It takes a number of months for the body to recover its ability to make its own steroid hormones after use of oral steroids. Switching from an oral steroid may also unmask a condition previously suppressed by the oral steroid such as allergies, conjunctivitis, eczema, arthritis, and osteoporotic conditions. Symptoms of an osteoporotic condition can include rash, worsening breathing problems, heart complications, and/or feeling of "pins and needles" or numbness in the arms and legs. Talk to your doctor immediately if you experience any of these symptoms.
- Sometimes patients experience unexpected bronchospasm right after taking ADVAIR. This condition can be life threatening and if it occurs, you should immediately stop using ADVAIR and seek immediate medical attention.
- If you have any type of heart disease such as coronary artery disease, irregular heart beat or high blood pressure, ADVAIR should be used with caution. Be sure to talk with your doctor about your condition because salmeterol, one of the components of ADVAIR, may affect the heart by increasing heart rate and blood pressure. It may cause symptoms such as heart fluttering, chest pain, rapid heart rate, tremor, or nervousness.
- If you have seizures, overactive thyroid gland, liver problems, or are sensitive to certain medications for breathing.
- If your breathing problems get worse over time or if your fast-acting inhaler does not work as well for you while using ADVAIR. If your breathing problems worsen quickly, get emergency medical care.
- If you have been exposed to or currently have chickenpox or measles or if you have an immune system problem. Patients using medications that weaken the immune system are more likely to get infections than healthy individuals. ADVAIR contains a corticosteroid (fluticasone propionate) which may weaken the immune system. Infections like chickenpox and measles, for example, can be very serious or even fatal in susceptible patients using corticosteroids.

How should I take ADVAIR DISKUS?

ADVAIR should be used 2 inhalations, twice a day (morning and evening). ADVAIR should never be taken more than 1 inhalation twice a day. The full benefit of taking ADVAIR may take 1 week or longer.

If you miss a dose of ADVAIR, just skip that dose. Take your next dose at your usual time. Do not take two doses at one time.

Do not stop using ADVAIR unless told to do so by your doctor because your symptoms might get worse.

Do not change or stop any of your medicines used to control or limit your breathing problems. Your doctor will adjust your medicines as needed.

When using ADVAIR, remember:

- Never breathe into or take the DISKUS[®] apart.
- Always use the DISKUS in a level position.
- After each inhalation, rinse your mouth with water without swallowing.
- Never wash any part of the DISKUS. Always keep it in a dry place.
- Never take an extra dose, even if you feel you did not receive a dose.
- Discard 1 month after removal from the foil pouch.
- Do not use ADVAIR with a spacer device.

Children should use ADVAIR with an adult's help as instructed by the child's doctor.

Can I take ADVAIR DISKUS with other medications?

Tell your doctor about all the medications you take, including prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

If you are taking ADVAIR DISKUS, do not use other long-acting beta₂-agonist-containing medications, such as SEREVENT[®] DISKUS or Foradil[®] Aerolizer[®] for any reason.

If you take ritonavir (an HIV medication), tell your doctor. Ritonavir may interact with ADVAIR and could cause serious side effects. The anti-HIV medicines Norvir[®] Soft Gelatin Capsules, Norvir Oral Solution, and Kaletra[®] contain ritonavir.

No formal drug interaction studies have been performed with ADVAIR.

In clinical studies, there were no differences in effects on the heart when ADVAIR was taken with varying amounts of albuterol. The effect of using ADVAIR in patients with asthma while taking more than 2 puffs a day of albuterol has not been studied.

ADVAIR should be used with extreme caution during and up to 2 weeks after treatment with monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors or tricyclic antidepressants since these medications can cause ADVAIR to have an even greater effect on the circulatory system.

ADVAIR should be used with caution in people who are taking ketoconazole (an antifungal medication) or other drugs broken down by the body in a similar way. These medications can cause ADVAIR to have greater steroid side effects.

Generally, people with asthma should not take beta-blockers because they counteract the effects of beta₂-agonists and may also cause severe bronchospasm. However, in some cases, for instance, following a heart attack, selective beta-blockers may still be used if there is no acceptable alternative.

The ECG changes and/or low blood potassium that may occur with some diuretics may be made worse by ADVAIR, especially at higher-than-recommended doses. Caution should be used when these drugs are used together.

In clinical studies, there was no difference in side effects when ADVAIR was taken with methylxanthines (e.g. theophylline) or with FLONASE[®] (fluticasone propionate).

What are other important safety considerations with ADVAIR DISKUS?

Osteoporosis: Long-term use of inhaled corticosteroids may result in bone loss (osteoporosis). Patients who are at risk for increased bone loss (tobacco use, advanced age, inactive lifestyle, poor nutrition, family history of osteoporosis, or long-term use of drugs such as corticosteroids) may have a greater risk with ADVAIR. If you have risk factors for bone loss, you should talk to your doctor about ways to reduce your risk and whether you should have your bone density evaluated.

Glaucoma and cataracts: Glaucoma, increased pressure in the eyes, and cataracts have been reported with the use of inhaled steroids, including fluticasone propionate, a medicine contained in ADVAIR. Regular eye examinations should be considered if you are taking ADVAIR.

Lower respiratory tract infections: Lower respiratory tract infections, including pneumonia, have been reported with the use of inhaled corticosteroids, including ADVAIR.

Blood sugar: Salmeterol may affect blood sugar and/or cause low blood potassium in some patients, which could lead to a side effect like an irregular heart rate. Significant changes in blood sugar and blood potassium were seen infrequently in clinical studies with ADVAIR.

Growth: Inhaled steroids may cause a reduction in growth velocity in children and adolescents.

Steroids: Taking steroids can affect your body's ability to make its own steroid hormones, which are needed during infections and times of severe stress to your body, such as an operation. These effects can sometimes be seen with inhaled steroids (but it is more common with oral steroids), especially when taken at higher-than-recommended doses over a long period of time. In some cases, these effects may be severe. Inhaled steroids often help control symptoms with less side effects than oral steroids.

Yeast Infections: Patients taking ADVAIR may develop yeast infections of the mouth and/or throat ("thrush") that should be treated by their doctor.

Tuberculosis or other untreated infections: ADVAIR should be used with caution. If at all, in patients with tuberculosis, herpes infections of the eye, or other untreated infections.

What are the other possible side effects of ADVAIR DISKUS?

ADVAIR may produce side effects in some patients. In clinical studies, the most common side effects with ADVAIR included:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Respiratory infections | • Bronchitis | • Musculoskeletal pain |
| • Throat irritation | • Cough | • Dizziness |
| • Headaches | • Headaches | • Fever |
| • Sinus infection | • Nausea and vomiting | • Ear, nose, and throat infections |
| • Yeast infection of the mouth | • Diarrhea | • Nasobitis |

Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the side effects with ADVAIR. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

What if I am pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or nursing?

Talk to your doctor about the benefits and risks of using ADVAIR during pregnancy, labor, or if you are nursing. There have been no studies of ADVAIR used during pregnancy, labor, or in nursing women. Salmeterol is known to interfere with labor contractions. It is not known whether ADVAIR is excreted in breast milk, but other corticosteroids have been detected in human breast milk. Fluticasone propionate, like other corticosteroids, has been associated with birth defects in animals (e.g., cleft palate and fetal death). Salmeterol showed no effect on fertility in rats at 180 times the maximum recommended daily dose.

What other important tests were conducted with ADVAIR?

There is no evidence of enhanced toxicity with ADVAIR compared with the components administered separately. In animal studies with doses much higher than those used in humans, salmeterol was associated with uterine tumors. Your healthcare professional can tell you more about how drugs are tested on animals and what the results of these tests may mean to your safety.

For more information on ADVAIR DISKUS

This page is only a brief summary of important information about ADVAIR DISKUS. For more information, talk to your doctor. You can also visit www.ADVAIR.com or call 1-800-425-5249. Patients receiving ADVAIR DISKUS should read the medication guide provided by the pharmacist with the prescription.

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This Old House Greenlist

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This Old House GreenList



Welcome to the inaugural edition of *This Old House GreenList*, your resource for all things Green. From reclaiming and restoration to salvaging and recycling, *This Old House* has always promoted the benefits of green building. To learn more about the best principles, practices and products that can help you lessen your household's impact on the environment, visit www.thisoldhouse.com/green.

A Sustainable Lighting Solution



Replacing standard incandescent light bulbs with Philips new Halogen[®] Energy Saver bulbs is just one of the ways in which people can utilize a sustainable option to create a positive impact in their home atmosphere and a positive impact on the environment. Halogen[®] Energy Saver light bulbs provide a bright white energy saving light without sacrificing the qualities of traditional bulbs.

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Don't throw away the old rechargeable batteries in your cordless power tools! When the batteries finally lose the juice RECYCLE them. There are more than 30,000 retail locations throughout the U.S. and Canada—all part of the Call2Recycle rechargeable battery collection program. To find the collection site nearest you, visit call2recycle.org.

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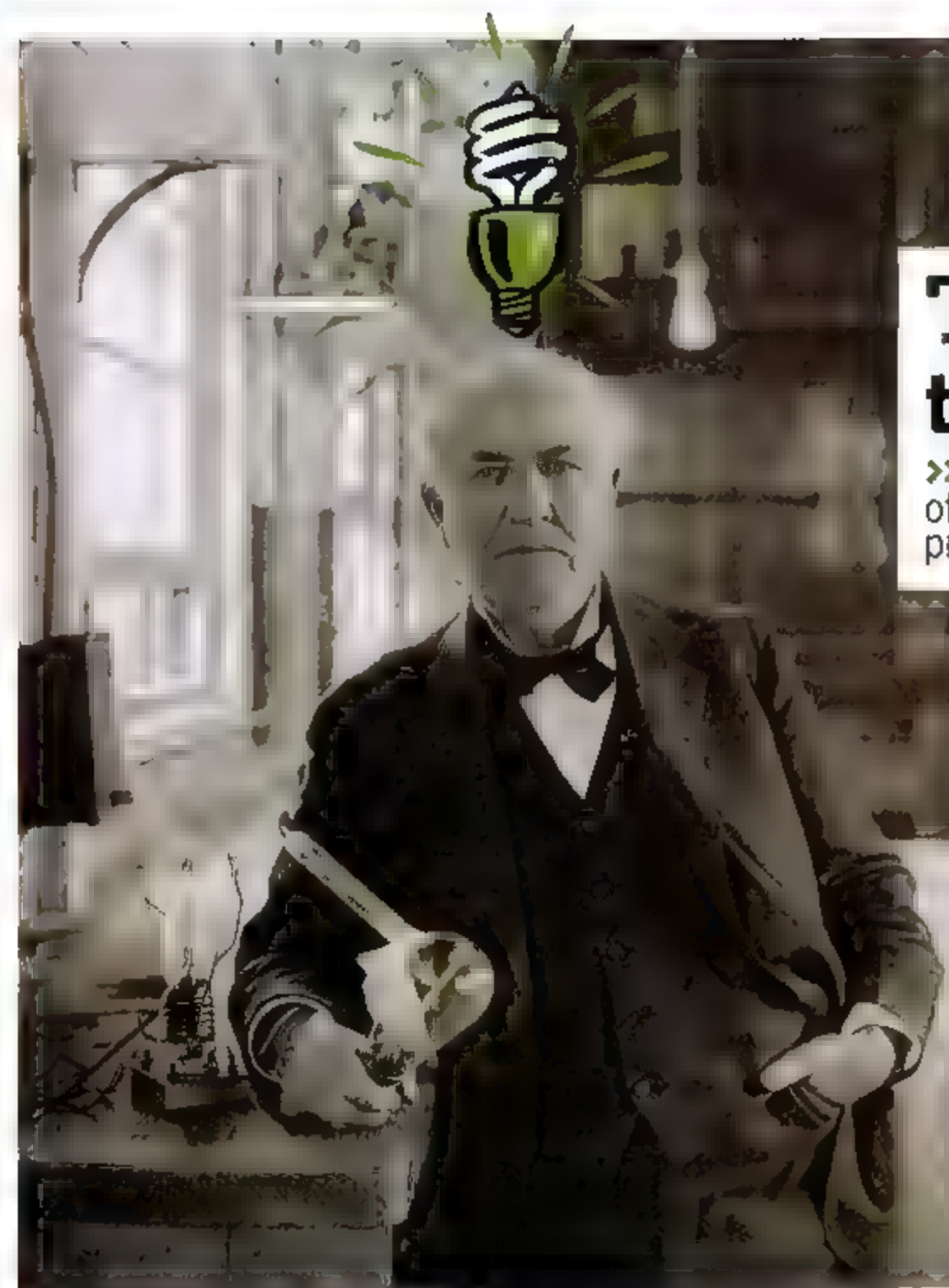
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GREEN HOUSE



Thinking Outside the Bulb

» As Edison's incandescent burns out of favor, compact fluorescents and LEDs prepare for their turn in the spotlight

BY KEITH PANDOLFI

THE INCANDESCENT LIGHTBULB has enjoyed a pretty good run. Introduced to the world on December 31, 1879, by Thomas Alva Edison, this miracle of Victorian ingenuity faced few competitors and has remained a cheap, reliable source of artificial light for well over a century.

But its long tenure as our default lighting choice may soon be coming to an end. As an increasingly worried nation starts to think seriously about how to slow the emission of greenhouse gases, lighting is emerging as one of the chief targets. California and New Jersey are considering banning the sale of incandescent bulbs altogether. Mega-retailer Wal-Mart wants to tip the mainstream consumer scales toward compact fluorescents (CFLs), vowing to sell 100 million of them this year.

Other new lighting options are starting to turn up on store shelves, including high efficiency halogen bulbs and the Holy Grail of green lighting, the LED. Here's a look at what's available now, and how these new products will affect the quality—and the cost—of lighting your home.

According to EPA estimates, homeowners spend a quarter of their energy bills on lighting, at a cost of more than \$37 billion each year.

LED: THE OTHER WHITE LIGHT

When it comes to green alternatives, the light at the end of the tunnel might just be the LED, or light-emitting diode. Unlike incandescents, LEDs don't have filaments to burn out, and, more important, they don't waste the majority of their energy output on useless heat. Instead, they illuminate via the movement of electrons in a semiconductor material.

"LEDs have the hugest potential for the residential market," says lighting designer Nancy Clanton, founder of Colorado-based Clanton & Associates, a company specializing in

PHOTO: THE GRANGER COLLECTION
ILLUSTRATION: TIM CARROLL

LED LIGHTBULBS Unlike CFLs, with their trademark squiggle, LEDs have yet to develop an iconic shape. Some look like traditional incandescents, while others, with their clear glass and exposed diodes, look like something out of 1950s sci-fi. The aluminum fins on some LEDs are heat sinks, which keep the bulbs cool to the touch.

sustainable lighting design. "Where CFLs fail, LEDs will surely take over. And color? Oh, my gosh—you can pretty much dial up any color you want with an LED."

So far, LEDs have been used commercially in dashboard indicator lights and traffic lights. But a few companies are starting to produce them for the home. Dallas-based Lighting Science, for example, offers LED bulbs that resemble incandescents in appearance and can be screwed into any standard socket. While light quality and color are crisp and white, the bulbs aren't nearly as bright as incandescents and, at least for now, are better suited for use in desk lamps or reading lights. Other companies, such as C. Crane and Ledtronics, are also offering LEDs, but the big guys—namely GE, Philips, and Sylvania—are about five years away from introducing their own versions.

"The battle we all face right now is cost," says Lighting Science president Ron Lusk. "The efficiency is great, but they are still cost-prohibitive." Indeed, his company's 30-watt "warm white" bulb costs almost \$50. But Lusk is quick to point out that it costs 90 percent less to run than an incandescent and can last up to 50,000 hours, compared with a CFL's 10,000 hours and an incandescent's 1,200. "From a payback standpoint, it's almost free," says Lusk, adding, rather convincingly, "I truly believe that LEDs are the future of lighting."

COMPACT FLUORESCENT

Until that future arrives, the darlings of the green lighting world are the cheap, super-efficient, and readily available CFLs. They use two-thirds less energy than incandescents and last up to 10 times longer. Each incandescent bulb you replace with a compact fluorescent can save you \$30 on energy bills over its lifetime. Best of all, CFLs cost little more than incandescents—about \$3 to \$5 for a 26-watter (equivalent to a 100-watt incandescent). New three-way and dimmable versions run \$10 to \$14.

If you haven't tried one of these lately, you might be surprised by what you see. "A lot has happened to the CFL



in the past five years," says Kim Freeman, of GE's Consumer and Industrial division. "The light quality is better and not nearly as harsh. It's much more like an incandescent." Other chronic problems, such as nonstandard base sizes, have been eliminated, too.

Still, CFLs aren't perfect. The biggest knock—and the one that's got environmentalists bothered—is that they contain mercury, meaning they have to be disposed of as hazardous waste to avoid contaminating our landfills and water supplies. Still, if the bulbs are disposed of properly, the benefits outweigh the risks. After all, since the mercury in CFLs creates more efficient lights, we save power, thereby reducing emissions from power plants—including mercury.

NEXT-GENERATION HALOGEN

The halogen bulb—basically an incandescent infused with halogen gas—has long been a popular alternative to traditional bulbs. Halogens burn twice as long, use 10 percent less energy, and produce a clean, bright white light. But they still burn hot and, like their predecessors, waste a lot of their energy on needless heat.

GE, Philips, and Sylvania are all rolling out new halogen bulbs that are more efficient than their previous offerings and, on average, last about three times as long as incandescents. GE's Reveal bulbs last around 2,250 hours and cost \$4 to \$5; Philips's Halogen Energy Saver bulbs last 3,000 hours and cost about \$5 a pop; and Sylvania's Capsylite A-Line halogens last up to 3,500 hours and cost \$7 to \$9.

Even the standard incandescent is headed for a makeover. "We are going to work continually on more energy-efficient incandescents," says Sylvania's Jennifer Dolan. The company just came out with the E-Logic bulb, which uses slightly less energy and lasts 50 percent longer than a standard incandescent. One-third smaller than a regular bulb, it comes packaged four to a box. (Eco-bonus: The packages are made of recycled paperboard.) Within a couple of years, GE promises an incandescent that will be nearly as energy-efficient as its CFLs.

"A lot of people still like incandescents," says Freeman. "It's simply another consumer choice." So no matter which type of illumination you prefer, at least in terms of energy efficiency it's clear that bulb manufacturers are beginning to see the light. ■



CFLs last a good long time. But when they burn out, you need to dispose of them properly. Find out how at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

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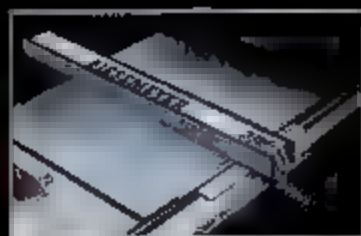
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LOFT DESIGN



THIS OLD HOUSE MAGAZINE SHOW LOFT 2007

Less Gritty in the City

» Drafts and dust didn't faze this couple—until they had kids. Now, with help from This Old House, they're refining their former industrial loft into a more comfortable home

BY KELLY BEAMON PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA PAUL PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON ORTIZ



ABOVE: The Fulton Street building circa 1940, when it was a warehouse and storefront for Dewey's Wines; in 1958, Sterling Optical moved in, relocating from next door INSET: The gray-painted Italianate facade as it looks today.



AT FIRST THEY JUST WANTED to make the 19th-century loft livable. For Sara Lopergolo and Ed Wood, just getting their hands on 1,900 square feet of precious Manhattan real estate back in 1997—a peak in demand for prewar lofts—was a coup. So having to clear the former eyeglass factory on Fulton Street of decades of dirt, pigeon droppings, and rusted equipment—not to mention needing to plumb their own bathroom and kitchen—would be well worth the payoff: a character-filled home in the heart of the city's historic Financial District.

Both trained as architects, the two were eager to explore the idiosyncrasies of a loft conversion. The adrenaline rush was so intense that Lopergolo found herself sitting on the hard terrazzo floor for three solid days, putting together 11 linear feet of IKEA kitchen cabinets, while five months pregnant with her first child. Six years later, they negotiated their way from renting their hard-won home on the building's third floor to owning it. They also welcomed their second child.

Fast forward to today: With daughter Chiara, now 9, and son Bennett, 6, unfinished business from that first round of improvements has resulted in some nagging, everyday annoyances. For instance, the free-standing restaurant prep table that stands in for a kitchen island is uncomfortable to sit at and puts the mess of pots stowed below on view in the open-plan space. The exposed, uninsulated wood ceiling allows every footfall and conversation of people living upstairs to resonate in the living area—not to mention that a fine dusting of dirt floats down from the beams when those neighbors walk around. Add to that uneven heating in winter, when gusting winds swirling between Lower Manhattan's tall buildings continually blow out the pilot light in the old industrial gas furnace near the front windows. Plus, with kids and parents now vying for grooming time before work and school, the bathtub, once essential for bathing a baby and toddler, eats up space that could hold toiletries and towels.

Needless to say, by the time TOH offered

LOFT DESIGN



to help, the family was ready for another round of improvements to refine the space into a more comfortable home. The basic floor plan still works: a kitchen along the center of one wall, open to the dining and living areas up front; the couple's bedroom, partially screened by an 8-foot-high partition wall, across from the living area; the kids' rooms in back; tall storage niches, back-to-back baths (one full, one half), and a laundry room filling out the rest.

But designing lofts for clients in the years since she moved into this one has taught Lopergolo even better ways to preserve the architectural features that make lofts appealing—the high ceilings, huge windows, exposed beams and brick, and wide-open space—while also addressing the inherent challenges. Besides upgrading the kitchen, she'll

Homeowners Sara Lopergolo and Ed Wood, with daughter Chiara and son Bennett, photographed with the loft's terrazzo floor and aluminum window casings—details they prize from the original space.

eliminate a wall that now encloses a back window, to pull daylight into the middle and carve out a shared homework nook for the kids. A former play area will become a tidy workspace for the adults. And a space-saving, shared-by-all bath with a central shower will eliminate the tub. Just as critical (especially after one \$300 heating bill last winter) are the noise-deadening insulation and more efficient heating system they'll finally install—amenities often taken for granted in a traditional home. Says Lopergolo: "These changes will finally give us the balance of industrial space and modern conveniences that we'd envisioned from the beginning."



The Plan

Tweaking the original floor plan means upgrading the kitchen and bath, creating dedicated workspaces for both kids and adults, and improving the insulation and heating system so the loft feels comfortable year-round. Some highlights:

1 KIDS' STUDY NOOK > Removing the lone partition that now divides the kids' bedrooms and putting up two interior walls will narrow their sleeping zones and create a short hallway in the gap for a homework nook near the newly exposed window. The built-in maple desk will come complete with under-the-table drawer storage to corral schoolwork materials.

2 SLEEK HOME OFFICE > In an alcove outside the master bedroom, where preschool toys once reigned, another built-in desk will create a shared home office space for the couple. The wall adjoining its maple work surface will double as a headboard on the master bedroom side.

3 A BETTER BATH > Unifying the family's side-by-side half and full baths and giving them modern polish is high on the homeowners' wish list. Breaking through the wall that divides them and eliminating the tub will allow for a continuous 13-foot-wide wet room lined with Ann Sacks tile. A central shower will allow entry from either of two sides, each of which has a similar setup: an Ann Sacks console lav, a Kohler high-tech touchless toilet, and a Roborn medicine cabinet.

4 A POLISHED PRO KITCHEN > In the existing footprint, the old flat-pack cabinets will come out to make room for pro-grade Jenn-Air appliances and a new wall and island of white-lacquered custom Italian cabinetry from Art et Maison.

FLOOR PLAN: JAM MORFIE



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Finishing a Factory Space

IN THE LATE 1960s when artists famously began moving into New York City's abandoned factories in SoHo and converting them on the sly into spacious live/work setups, they weren't trying to create a new housing style. They were opportunistically (and illegally) homesteading in these huge spaces, suddenly affordable thanks to landlords trying to mitigate their own losses as manufacturing tenants left the city. Now that conversions are sanctioned, lofts' strong industrial character makes them an enticing renovation challenge—but only if you can stand a lot of grit. "This is not just choosing the right crown molding for the living room," says Ed Wood of finishing the loft shown on these pages. "It's a crazy matrix of things that need to get done."

Here are some of his and his wife's hard-won tips for anyone thinking of turning raw industrial space into a home.

1 | DEAL WITH THE BUILDING'S PAST

Spend an afternoon in the city's building department reading the past title deed conveyances and leases. Sara Lopergolo knew that Sterling Optical had bought the space in 1958, migrating from its original space next door. But the lens-making machines left behind gave no clue to the fact that well-known vintner H. T. Dewey & Sons Co. had leased the building from 1912 through Prohibition, or that a slew of other businesses had used the address, from a label manufacturer to a perfume maker. Such discoveries aren't just fun; they can be critical to the cleanup process, since many buildings that cities want to rehab were occupied long before cleaner industry standards—regulating the use and disposal of toxic chemicals and heavy metals, for instance—were put in place in 1976.

Bonus Remodeling Tip

See how you can add terrazzo flooring to your own home at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts



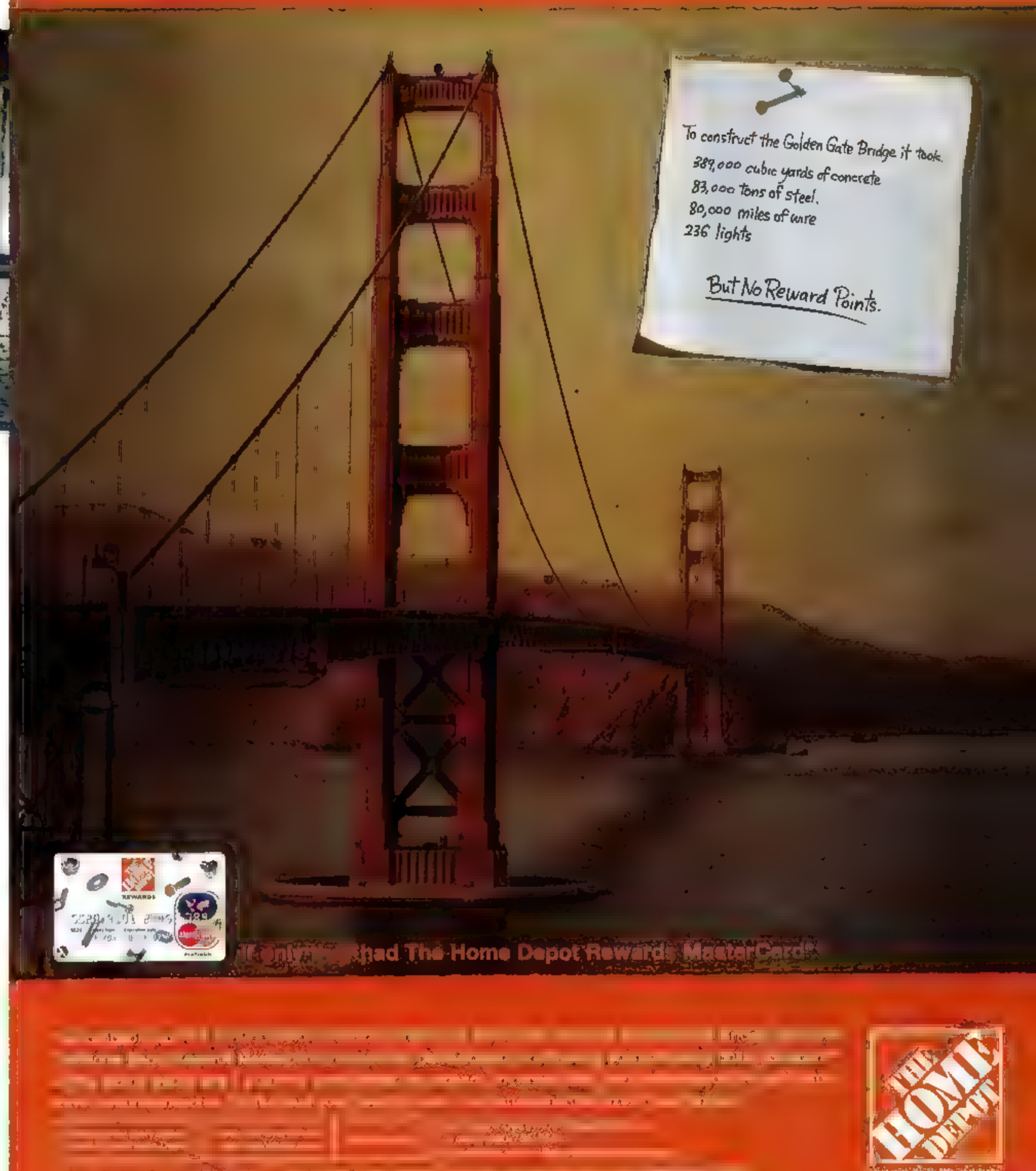
TOP: In 1997 Wood used a paint sprayer to seal the loft's exposed brick walls. **ABOVE LEFT:** A 1908 Manhattan street map shows the building's Fulton Street block. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Dumbwaiters that once carried eyeglass parts to the second floor were cut out. **LEFT:** Steel fire-safety shutters outside the back windows stayed in place.



2 | BRING YOUR OWN BASICS

As Lopergolo and Wood's move-in work suggests, it's best to assume any space that

was formerly zoned commercial will lack essential amenities such as working toilets and sinks; the couple had to run all-new service lines. That meant breaking through the sidewalk twice and digging a trench 8 feet deep to run new water supply lines and updated wiring for the whole building—while they were still renters.



"Sometimes people just plunk a drywall box for bedrooms right in the center of a loft. But to allow daylight in, it's better to place rooms along the edges of the open space."

SARA LOPERGOLO, ARCHITECT/HOMEOWNER

3 | RESPECT THE SPACE'S CHARACTER

The chance to highlight a loft's original materials is among most owners' goals. Now that *TOH* is helping Lopergolo and Wood add residential-grade comforts to their loft, the challenge becomes how to enhance the space's industrial charm. Designing bedrooms and bathrooms as simple drywall boxes on the perimeter leaves the white-painted brick walls visible from anywhere you stand in the space. To keep the ceiling beams exposed, the Roxul mineral-wool batt commercial insulation is being installed in between with a GE adhesive and concealed by strips of drywall. Gray Valspar paint on walls in the kitchen and hallway will also nod to the factory's past. Meanwhile, the terrazzo flooring running through every room except the bath will remain just as it was the day Wood washed and buffed it before they moved in.

4 | BELIEVE IN YOUR BLOCK

The beautiful thing about lofts in any city is that they've come to be seen as good for the neighborhood. They're family-sized, at anywhere from 1,500 to 10,000 square feet; loaded with historic building materials and details; and for more than 30 years have played a largely positive role in returning foot traffic and tax revenue to areas where manufacturers have moved on. But depending on the housing market in your area, you may need guts to nab a bargain. "It's block pioneers [like Lopergolo and Wood] who attract the next wave—the developers and bankers who want neighborhood services after 9 p.m. and ATMs," says Stan Ponte, president of Coldwell Banker Hunt Kennedy. Ponte recalls loft sale prices downtown soaring to \$800 per square foot around the time the couple paid just \$258 per square foot for theirs.

5 | HIRE AN EXPEDITER

Usually these are local, trained architects who specialize in navigating the gauntlet of city building codes and permits. Given the work needed to bring a commercial space up to

residential code, this sort of help is a sanity saver. Though Lopergolo and Wood were trained architects and did plenty of the work themselves, they still hired an expeditor to move the inspections along and coordinate bigger jobs like plumbing and wiring. Some factories may lack adequate rear yards to meet current city fire, safety and clean-air requirements, which can result in having to demo sections of the building.

6 | APPLY FOR REHAB TAX BREAKS

Tax abatements are a common incentive available to owners who convert commercial spaces—and a smart way to get some relief on the back end for some significant up-front costs. In New York City, the "savings can total up to \$30,000 annually on an entire converted building," says Wood. Staying alert to other programs helps, too. He and Lopergolo qualified for a special one-time payout of \$12,000 because of their home's proximity to the World Trade Center disaster on September 11. Now, with conversions underway in neighboring buildings, the entire block is being improved—from sidewalks to street lamps—under the Fulton Street Corridor program.

7 | BUDGET FOR THE UNEXPECTED

Dealing with some bygone equipment is a given in old industrial buildings. Purists might think they'll enjoy living among such souvenirs, but Lopergolo advises dumping the kind of equipment she found, which ate up precious living space and posed a danger to children. Out went a conveyor belt; two dumbwaiters connecting her factory floor to the former warehouse on the second floor; eyeglass parts, and wire-mesh-reinforced windowpanes in front. With no elevator to accommodate their removal, special tools were needed to cut up the large steel pieces, plus a truck to cart them to recycling, adding \$5,000 to the initial \$40,000 in renovation costs. "We could never have afforded this space if we hadn't had to deal with the dirty work," says Lopergolo. "Still, it's been the experience of a lifetime." ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 124

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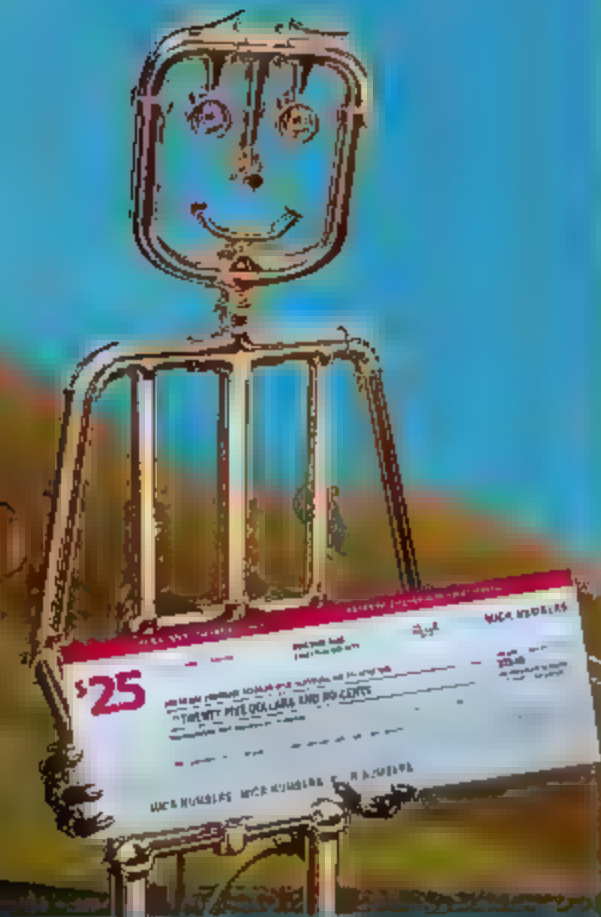
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What is VESicare?

VESicare is a prescription medicine used in adults to treat the following symptoms due to a condition called overactive bladder:

- Having to go to the bathroom too often, also called "urinary frequency,"
- Having a strong need to go to the bathroom right away, also called "urgency,"
- Leaking or wetting accidents, also called "urinary incontinence."

VESicare has not been studied in children.

What is overactive bladder?

Overactive bladder occurs when you cannot control your bladder contractions. When these muscle contractions happen too often or cannot be controlled, you can get symptoms of overactive bladder which are urinary frequency, urinary urgency, and urinary incontinence (leakage).

Who should NOT take VESicare?

Do not take VESicare if you:

- are not able to empty your bladder (also called "urinary retention"), have delayed or slow emptying of your stomach (also called "gastrointestinal retention"),
- have an eye problem called "uncontrolled narrow-angle glaucoma,"
- are allergic to VESicare or any of its ingredients. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.

What should I tell my doctor before starting VESicare?

Before starting VESicare tell your doctor or healthcare professional about all of your medical conditions including if you:

- have any stomach or intestinal problems or problems with constipation,
- have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream,
- have an eye problem called narrow-angle glaucoma,
- have liver problems,
- have kidney problems,
- are pregnant or trying to become pregnant (it is not known if VESicare can harm your unborn baby),
- are breastfeeding (it is not known if VESicare passes into breast milk, and if it can harm your baby. You should decide whether to breastfeed or take VESicare, but not both).

Before starting on VESicare, tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. While taking VESicare, tell your doctor or healthcare professional about all changes in the medicines you are taking including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements. VESicare and other medicines may affect each other.

How should I take VESicare?

Take VESicare exactly as prescribed. Your doctor will prescribe the dose that is right for you. Your doctor may prescribe the lowest dose if you have certain medical conditions, such as liver or kidney problems.

- You should take one VESicare tablet once a day.
- You should take VESicare with liquid and swallow the tablet whole.
- You can take VESicare with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of VESicare, begin taking VESicare again the next day. Do not take 2 doses of VESicare in the same day.
- If you take too much VESicare or overdose, call your local Poison Control Center or emergency room right away.

What are the possible side effects with VESicare?

The most common side effects with VESicare are:

- blurred vision; be cautious while driving or doing dangerous activities until you know how VESicare affects you.
- dry mouth.
- constipation. Call your doctor if you get severe stomach area (abdominal) pain or become constipated for 3 or more days.
- heat prostration. Heat prostration (due to decreased sweating) can occur when drugs such as VESicare are used in a hot environment.

Tell your doctor if you have any side effects that bother you or that do not go away.

These are not all the side effects with VESicare. For more information, ask your doctor, healthcare professional or pharmacist.

How should I store VESicare?

- Keep VESicare and all other medications out of the reach of children.
- Store VESicare at room temperature, 59° to 86°F (15° to 30°C). Keep the bottle closed.
- Safely dispose of VESicare that is out of date or that you no longer need.

General information about VESicare

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

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about VESicare. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about VESicare that is written for health professionals. You can also call (866) 972-4636 toll free, or visit www.VESICARE.com.

What are the ingredients in VESicare?

Active ingredient: solifenacin succinate
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Synthetic

These man-made filaments are usually dipped in water-based coatings. New resins give some brushes the ability to work with both oil- and water-based finishes.



1. Hog Bristle All animal bristles have naturally flagged tips (think split ends), which hold oil paint in the brush's edge and release it throughout the stroke instead of all at first contact. The black China bristle seen here is durable and is best for coating rough surfaces, like siding and decks. The white China bristle (previous page) is softer and leaves fewer brush marks. Use it with glossy enamel paints, varnishes, polyurethanes, or shellac. \$13, besttjebco.com

2. Nylon These long-lasting filaments (often the same formula as the ones you find in your toothbrush) stand up to brick or other rough surfaces without breaking down at the tips. But pure nylon brushes tend to get floppy with heat and soak up water from latex paints. \$25, purdycorp.com

3. Polyester In paintbrushes, as in leisure suits, too much polyester is a bad thing. The stiff, shiny filaments of bargain-bin brushes leave stroke marks, don't clean easily, and begin to abrade and lose shape sooner than nylon. Here, though, a dip in a chemical bath has softened the polyester's tips, making a flexible, soft filament that's ideal for varnish or polyurethane. \$8, woosterbrush.com

4. Synthetic Blend Combines nylon for durability with polyester for firmness. Most are meant for acrylic paints, but this one works on oil as well thanks to a tough, modified-nylon filament called Chinex that simulates the flagged tips of natural bristles. \$26, purdycorp.com



What to Look For in a Brush

The ultimate test of a brush's quality is how well it picks up and releases paint. Unfortunately, you can't check that in the hardware-store aisle, but here are some other things you can look for.

TAPERED TIPS Look at the brush in profile. The tips should come to a tapered point—this gives you more control because they form into a narrow line as you press the brush against the work.

FULL BODY The cardboard or wood spacer creates a void that, on good brushes, holds a reservoir of paint. On cheap brushes, thick spacers make up for a deficit of bristles. Pinch the bristles between your fingers near their base. If they feel thin, you'll be dipping that brush a lot.

FIRM CONSTRUCTION Tug on the bristles. If they come out in your hand, they'll come out in the paint. Ferrules, the metal bands that help hold the bristles in place, should be nailed through the handle and made of rust-resistant stainless or plated steel or copper.

SOFT BRISTLES Touch the tips to your cheek or the back of your hand. Cheap brushes feel stiff and coarse; the feathery, soft ones will apply paint smoothly.

PRICE A quality brush, one that's made by hand, runs \$10 and up.



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5. Synthetic Shorty

You won't lose your grip on this handle, despite the fact that it's less than 2½ inches long, because the flexible elastomeric material resists paint, sweat, solvents, and just about anything else that would sick it up. It actually bends to fit your grip as you guide the ferrule through detailed sash and molding work with latex paint. \$10, woosterbrush.com

6. Radiator Brush

A bent head and a 16-inch handle allow this specialty brush to reach behind the radiator and lay on paint in hard-to-reach crevices. It's available as a blend of black and white China bristles (shown) or a nylon/bristle blend. In the unusual latter pairing, for oil paint, nylon improves durability, while the bristle leaves a smooth, brushstroke-free finish. \$17, besttllieco.com

7. Angled Sash

Though this sash brush is pure nylon, its filaments are engineered to stay extra-firm, even in heat or after prolonged use in latex. That firmness is key when using it to make accurate strokes along narrow window parts. \$12.50, woosterbrush.com

8. Feathery Finisher

With bristles trimmed from the ears of European oxen, this dense, silky brush leaves a stroke-free finish in shellac or varnish. A pronounced taper at the tip affords excellent control of the amount of finish released; you can adjust the angle of the brush to go from covering wide areas to feathering edges. \$35, Gramercy Tools, available through toolsforworkingwood.com

9. Good Grip

You get the best control when you grip a brush down near the ferrule, but many beginning painters grip their brushes too far up the handle. That's not a problem with this ergonomic beech handle, which is bent to fit the crook of your hand comfortably. Its blend of polyester and Chinex filaments works with all paints. \$17, besttllieco.com

10. Square Sash

This unique brush, with its polyester filaments bunched into a square shape and trimmed at an angle, is for precise cutting-in on narrow molding—say, the flat top of a chair rail. \$7, enjoyzibra.com

11. Euro-Style

To use this round, Italian-made equivalent of an angled sash brush, rotate the pecan handle as you drag the cone-shaped bristles along a muntin or meeting rail. Its copper ferrule is tightly packed with white China bristles that pick up a heavy load of oil paint. \$25, Omega Brushworks, available through finepaintsofeurope.com



TOOL SCHOOL
Learn Norm Abram's brush care and maintenance tips. **Workshop**, p. 113

PHOTOS: BRUSHES 9-10 T. MARK WEISS

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MATERIALS



STRONG FRAME
Tom Silva finishes a bathroom shower wall at the TOH TV project house. Most of the new framing around him—studs, headers, sheathing, and joists—is engineered wood.

FROM THE TOH TV JOB SITE

Tougher Timber

» Taking trees apart and gluing them back together into engineered lumber makes for stronger, stiffer, and straighter framing than solid wood

BY SAL VAGLICA PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUSSELL KAYE

WHENEVER TOM SILVA WALKS THROUGH a dining room and the china cabinet rattles, he knows it's because the joists under his feet are struggling to carry the weight of the floor. To the general contractor for *This Old House*, this kind of construction might be charming in an old place, but it's subpar when it comes to new framing. Which is why, as he renovates TOH TV's current project, an 1897 Shingle-style in Newton, Massachusetts, he'll be using engineered lumber for the joists, as well as for the beams, headers, rafters, and sills—anywhere he needs some insurance that the framing will be able to support the load of the house.

This is nothing new; Tom has been incorporating engineered wood products (EWPs) into his framing for nearly two decades. That's because EWPs are incredibly stable—stronger than traditional sawn lumber and rivaling steel—and virtually free of warps, knots, and checks. They're made from wood veneers or strands combined with resins and heat-cured in a controlled environment. The resulting boards and beams are able to carry heavier loads than comparably sized solid wood without bowing. "I like it because it's straight, it's true, and it's strong," says Tom. "And I always know what it's going to hold." And because EWPs are manufactured from fast-growing woods and make use of more of the tree, they have the added value of being eco-friendly.

This strength and consistency does have its price. Some EWPs are heavier—and cost three to five times more per linear foot—than sawn lumber. But more often than not, the total framing costs on a building project using EWPs are lower than for one with solid wood because engineered wood can carry more load with less material. That kind of efficiency explains why EWPs are a staple of both

residential remodels and new construction. So before you head out to the lumberyard for some 2x4s to frame up that new addition, read on to see what the engineered alternatives are—and which ones will best keep your house standing straight and true.

Lumber

LAMINATED VENEER LUMBER (LVL)

What it is: Dried sheets of strong Douglas fir or southern pine veneer glued together with the grains running the long way, then cured in a heated press. The orientation of the veneers gives LVs excellent lateral strength, allowing them to be manufactured in lengths of up to 60 feet. They only come in two standard thicknesses—1 3/4 inches and 3 1/2 inches—but they can be ganged up for greater strength.

How to use it: The thin profile of LVs makes them great for headers, beams, cantilevers, and floor joists (if you need to gain headroom), replacing standard 2x lumber. Tom also uses LVs to build up a beam in a tight space where he can't slot in a thicker piece, or wherever he needs a long straight stud for a tall wall—say, on a gable end.

Cost: A 1 3/4-by-11 7/8-inch LVL is \$4.25 per linear foot, compared with \$1 for 2x12 Douglas fir.

PARALLEL STRAND LUMBER (PSL)

What it is: Strips of 3/4-inch-wide Douglas fir or southern pine veneer stacked parallel to one another, joined with resins, and heat-cured. PSLs come in a wide range of sizes, including a new generation of engineered studs; the uniform orientation of the strands and the species of wood give them superior compression strength, though they are harder to get a nail into. Although often buried behind walls, PSLs are also made architectural grade, meaning they can be sanded, stained, and finished to be left exposed or pressure-treated for outdoor use.

How to use it: PSLs make good columns because of their excellent compression strength. But they can also carry heavy horizontal loads over long spans, replacing 2x10s, 2x12s, 4x4s, and sometimes steel.

Cost: A 3 1/2-by-3 1/2-inch column is about \$4.50 per linear foot, while a 4x4 fir timber would be \$1.50 per linear foot.



"You don't have a lot of waste with engineered lumber because you never have to throw away a piece for being warped, twisted, or full of knots." —TOM SILVA

LAMINATED STRAND LUMBER (LSL)

What it is: Strands of less expensive aspen or poplar fibers arranged parallel to one another, bonded with resins, and heat-cured; comes in thicknesses of 1 1/8 to 3 1/2 inches. Rearranging the strands makes LSLs stronger and more stable than sawn lumber, whose grains are not as consistently straight. But LSLs aren't as

strong as LVs or PSLs because of the species of wood used in manufacturing them.

How to use it: The stability of LSLs and their variety of available sizes make them ideal for vertical applications, particularly as very tall studs for an open entryway. But they also work very well in horizontal applications—providing excellent wind resistance in storm-

PHOTO: JAMES WISSELL

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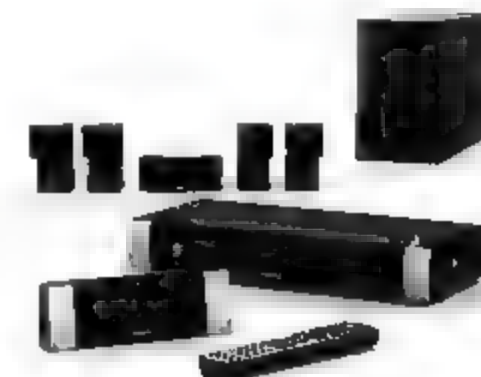
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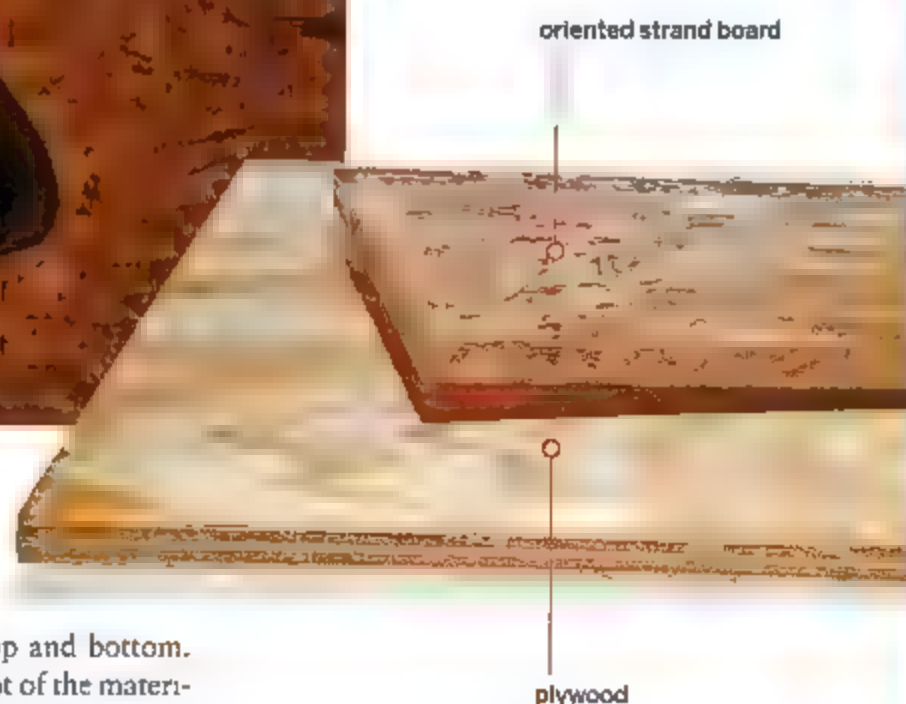
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old siding while creating
a flat surface perfect for
new cabinets.



See before pictures
of this season's *TOH*
TV show project house
in Newton, then check
out the webcams
to see Tom Silva work
in real time.
thisoldhouse.com/newton



prone areas—replacing 2x lumber as headers, sills, or rim joists.

Cost: A 1¼-by-11⅞-inch LSL is \$4.50 per linear foot, compared with \$1 for 2x12 Douglas fir.

GLUED LAMINATED TIMBER (GLULAM)

What it is: Four or more pieces of sawn lumber—usually pine or fir—2 inches thick or less, glued together into flat beams of any dimension. On longer spans, the individual laminations are made from end-jointed pieces. The only limit on a glulam's size, and therefore its strength, is the ability to transport it to the job site. Glulams can be shaped into curves or arches during manufacturing or pressure-treated for exterior use. They also have an architectural-grade face good for exposed applications and can be made to order with higher-quality woods like red oak.

How to use it: As beams carrying heavy loads or wherever they need to be left exposed. Often glulams substitute for steel, which is harder to cut on site. They also make good arches, columns, and large-spanned headers. **Cost:** About \$15 per linear foot for a 5-by-10-inch pine beam, compared to \$10 for a steel beam sized to carry the same load.

I-JOIST

What it is: An I-shaped product with strips of LVL or 2x lumber as the flanges and oriented

strand board (read below) as the middle panel, or web. The construction takes advantage of the fact that joists carry all their load at the top and bottom. "With solid sawn lumber a lot of the material in the middle is wasted, because no work is done in the center of the lumber," says Joseph Charland, a structural engineer with APA - The Engineered Wood Association, a nonprofit trade group. Then the web can be drilled for plumbing, electrical or HVAC, sometimes through pre-scribed holes that speed installation.

How to use it: For floor and roof framing, replacing 2x material.

Cost: A 9½-inch I-joist is \$1.65 per linear foot, compared with 83 cents for 2x10 Douglas fir.

Sheet Goods

PLYWOOD

What it is: Sheets of wood veneer arranged and glued so the grain runs perpendicularly between layers. The granddaddy of engineered wood products (it was patented in 1865), plywood has superior strength due to its cross-lamination and holds nails well. It can be surfaced in a variety of species—including oak or mahogany—for

staining and finishing in furniture making.

How to use it: For sheathing and subflooring. Tom also uses plywood where he's hanging cabinets; the rigid panels straighten out imperfections in the framing before wallboard goes up and provide an unlimited nailing surface.

Cost: About \$20 for a ⅝-inch-thick 4x8 sheet.

ORIENTED STRAND BOARD (OSB)

What it is: Layered sheets made from short strands of wood arranged in one orientation; the layers are turned so the strands are perpendicular between layers, and everything is bonded with waterproof resins and cured. OSB is free of knots and has both vertical and horizontal strength, which helps prevent lateral movement.

How to use it: Because it stays very flat and has no issues with delamination, OSB makes a good sheathing or subfloor alternative to plywood. **Cost:** About \$14.50 for one ⅝-inch 4x8 sheet—a good start toward getting that first wall in your kitchen remodel ready for cabinets. ■

PHOTO: BLOOM - JAMES WOOD

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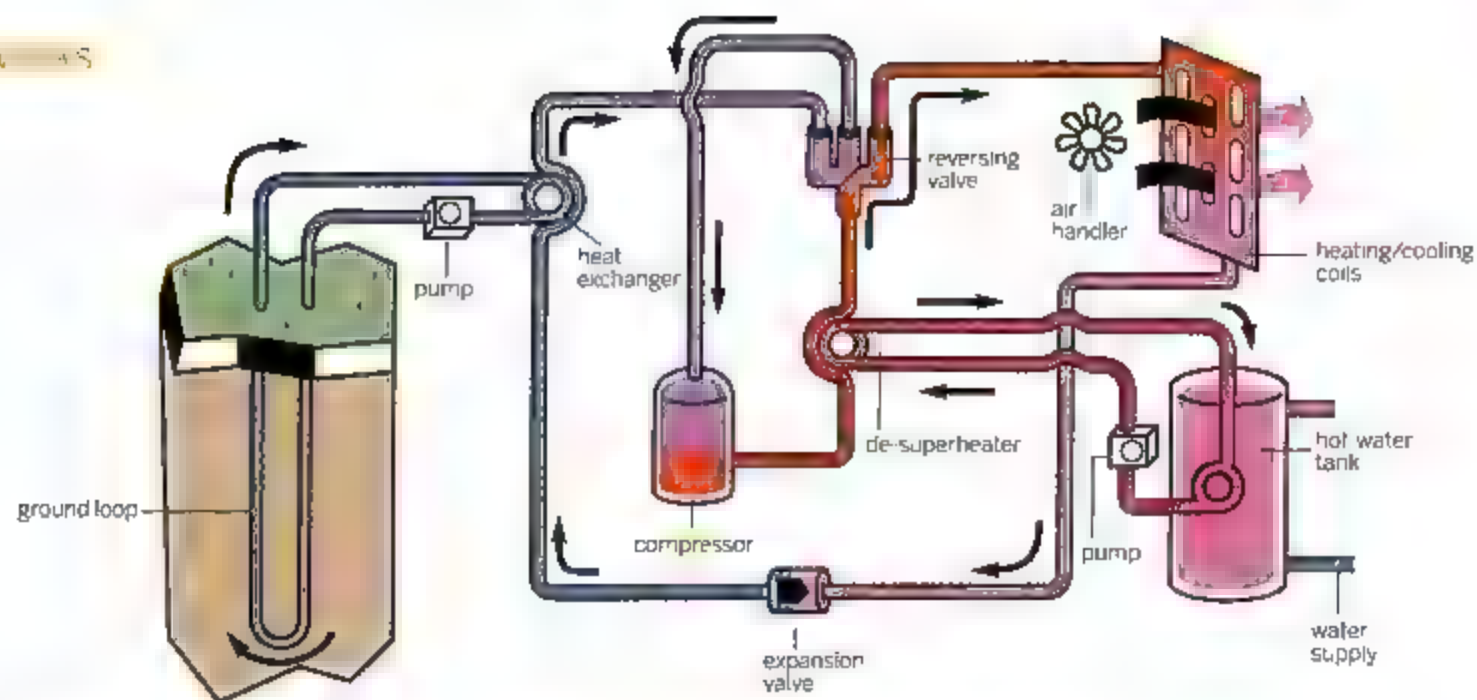
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PHILIPS
sense and simplicity

HOW IT WORKS

Geothermal Heat Pump

The diagram illustrates a geothermal heat pump system. A house is shown with a geothermal heat pump unit installed in the basement. A network of pipes, known as a ground loop, is buried in the ground around the house. The pipes are connected to the heat pump unit, which circulates fluid through the loop to absorb and release heat from the ground. The ground is shown in cross-section, revealing the loop's path. The house has a brick foundation and a gabled roof with dormer windows. The ground loop consists of a main horizontal line that branches into several vertical loops, each with a U-shaped bottom, before rejoining the main line. The heat pump unit is a rectangular box with various pipes and electrical connections. The entire system is designed to provide efficient heating and cooling for the house by utilizing the constant temperature of the earth.



Heat Pump Parts

As with ordinary heat pumps, the refrigerant in a geothermal heat pump runs in a loop through a compressor, condenser, expansion valve, and evaporator, collecting heat at one end and giving it up at the other. The direction of refrigerant flow, which is controlled by the reversing valve, determines whether heat is moving into the house in winter (shown) or being pulled out of it in summer. With the addition of a desuperheater, residual warmth from the system can also supplement a conventional water heater, further reducing energy bills.

Underground, the earth's temperature stays at a constant 50 degrees or so, no matter how hot or cold it gets outside. So while a conventional "air-source" heat pump struggles to scavenge heat from freezing winter air or to dump it into the summer swelter, its "ground-source" counterpart has the comparatively easy job of extracting and dispersing heat through the 50-degree liquid circulating in its ground loop. That's why it takes only one kilowatt hour of electricity for a geothermal heat pump to produce nearly 12,000 Btu of cooling or heating. (To produce the same number of Btus, a standard heat pump on a 95-degree day consumes 2.2 kilowatt hours.) Geothermal systems are twice as efficient as the top-rated air conditioners and almost 50 percent more efficient than the best gas furnaces, all year round.

Another advantage is that there's no need for a noisy outdoor fan to move air through the compressor coils. Geothermal units simply pump liquid, so they can be parked indoors, safe from the elements. Most come with 10-year warranties, but they can last much longer. In the 29 years since Jim Partin, one of the technology's earliest adopters, installed one in his Stillwater, Oklahoma, house, he's replaced only two contact switches.

Despite these benefits, only 47,000 geothermal units were installed last year in the U.S. That's just a tiny blip compared with the approximately one million conventional heat pumps sold during the same period, even though ground-source heat pumps cost about the same to buy. Here's

the rub: You have to bury a lot of pipe—about 1,500 to 1,800 feet for a typical 2,000-square-foot home. (The actual length should be calculated by an expert, based on the optimal heating and cooling loads for the house.) A setup that size could cost as much as \$20,000 to install, depending on soil conditions and how much digging and drilling is involved. A house on a big lot, for instance, might be able to use pipes laid horizontally in long, 4-foot-deep trenches. Houses on small lots or rocky ledges could require three or four holes drilled about 300 feet straight down, a much more costly process.

Even with this significant front-end investment, geothermal systems are so energy-stingy that the payback period is remarkably brief. A study by the Air Force Institute of Technology calculated that it takes on average just seven to eight years to recoup costs. Your actual break-even point depends on local utility rates, excavation/drilling costs, how well your house is insulated, the efficiency of the model you choose, and what incentives your state or utilities provide. A good installer who's knowledgeable about heating and cooling as well as your local geology will be able to make those calculations for you.

The current federal incentive is limited to the standard \$300 tax credit for Energy Star HVAC installations. (Canadians retrofitting an existing home with geothermal qualify for a \$3,500 federal grant.) Some forward-thinking utilities have offered low-interest loans to homeowners willing to adopt the technology. "It's a win-win arrangement," says Steve Rosenstock, energy solutions manager at the Edison Electric Institute, an association of utilities. "The utilities reduce peak demand for heating and cooling as their customers dramatically lower their electric bills." And because the plastic ground loops should last 50 years or more, the payoff for homeowners, and for the environment, can last for generations. ■

Can I Retrofit One?

Retrofitting a ground-source system is not difficult, as long as burying the ground loop is feasible. A house will need ducts to distribute cool air on hot days. Those same ducts can provide warm air in winter. Some geothermal heat pumps can hook up to an existing air handler; other units come with their own integral air handler. Houses with hot-water heating can use geothermal systems, too, although additional radiators may be needed because these systems do not reach the higher temperatures of fuel-fired boilers. (That's not a problem for radiant floor heat, which operates at lower temperatures.)



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Please see next page for Patient Information.

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Home Inspection Stories Exposed Contest: **WINNER**

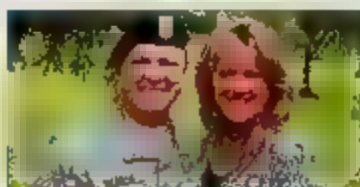
When Ford Lincoln Mercury Certified Pre-Owned invited the readers of *This Old House* to submit their most frightful home inspection stories, the letters came pouring in. We read about everything from leaking pipes to termite infestations, from black mold to a back porch being held up by a jack stand. But one letter stood out from the rest, and our kudos go to **Lieutenant Colonel Greg and Linda Benda** of Saint Clair, Michigan for the following, very entertaining story about their own inspection nightmare.

*"There was an Old Lady who lived in an Old Shoe,
her foundation was crumbling and she didn't know what to do!
So she used Bricks and Stones, Pebbles and Wood,
And she propped up that house as best as she could.
She finally gave up and moved away,
Then we came along - and bought it that day!"*

*We hired a Home Inspector,
to look at that Old Shoe,
Emerging from the
crawl space, he knew just
what to do.
With report in his hand, he
chuckled and said,
(as we looked at the pictures
and nearly dropped dead!)
'The Lady who used to live
in this Old Shoe,
Tried to hold it together... even using some glue!'"*



Photo used by Bob Crabtree, LLC. St. Clair, MI



Our Winners (left)
Lieutenant Colonel Greg and Linda Benda

Honorable Mentions:
Catherine McGurk, Northfield, NJ
Loretta Vickers, Bennington, VT
Melony & Mitchell Hoilman, Prover, WI

Don't be the victim of a poor home inspection. Find a reputable inspector through personal referrals or a reliable trade association's website like the American Society of Home Inspectors (www.ashi.org).

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HOMEOWNER'S HANDBOOK WEEKEND PROJECT SERIES

Painting a Room

By **HARRY SAWYERS**
Photographs by **KOLIN SMITH**

COLOR CHANGES EVERYTHING. Or lack of color, if that's your thing. Point is, everyone knows you can give your drab, washed-out walls a burst of brilliant depth (or wash away your decorating sins with virgin white) just by picking up a paint can and having at them. That's the power of a coat of paint. It rearranges your reality. Which is why painting is the most oft-tackled DIY home-improvement project.

While you don't have to be a pro to learn how to paint like one, there's more to a good paint job than just slathering some color on the wall. That's where we come in. On the following pages, *This Old House* technical editor Mark Powers shows how to coat your walls expertly in one weekend, from the first scratch of the pole sander to the final feather of the brush. And you won't be wasting time taping off every corner or backtracking with the touch-up brush like an amateur. As long as you stay organized and methodical, you'll be able to get on with the satisfying business of transforming your room—and with it your whole outlook.

Walls: Clarksville Gray (HC-102) in eggshell, trim: Abingdon Putty (HC-99) in satin, both from Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com

COST:
\$250 to \$350 for a
10-by-10-foot room

TIME:
Two 5-hour days

DIFFICULTY:
Very easy, but requires
a certain degree of
meticulousness.

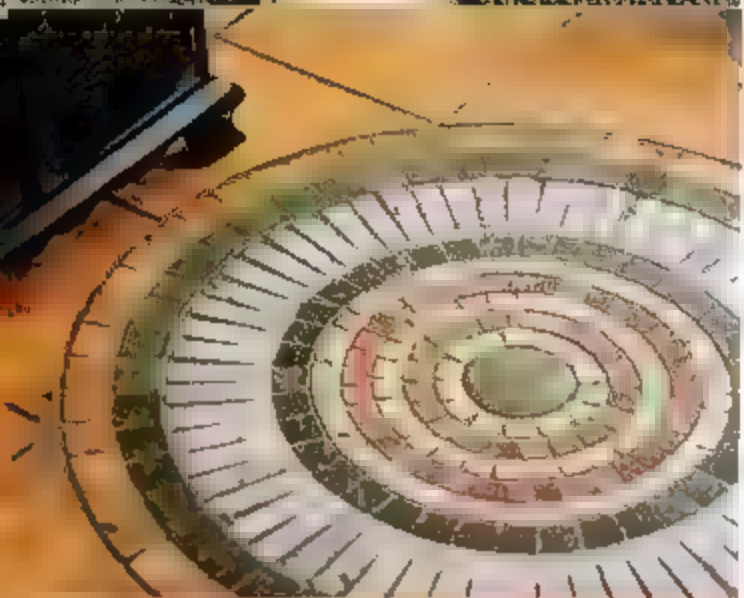
TOOLS FOR THIS PROJECT

SCREWDRIVER	WET/DRY VACUUM with broom attachment
CANVAS TARPS	CAULK GUN
TELESCOPING EXTENSION POLE with POLE SANDING HEAD	PUTTY KNIFE or 5-IN-1 PAINTER'S TOOL
	PAINTBRUSHES (see Toolbox, p. 63, for buying advice)
PAINT SCRAPER to remove old drips and runs	BUCKET to fit with liners and hold paint
DUST MASK	ROLLER FRAME and TRAY



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HOMEOWNER'S HANDBOOK



Paint a Room in Six Easy Steps

Unfold the page for tips on creating the perfect paint job, plus learn how to choose the right paint for your needs



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- 2 hours — Replacing a Bathroom Faucet
- half a day — Installing a Mantel
- 1-2 hours — Installing a Dishwasher

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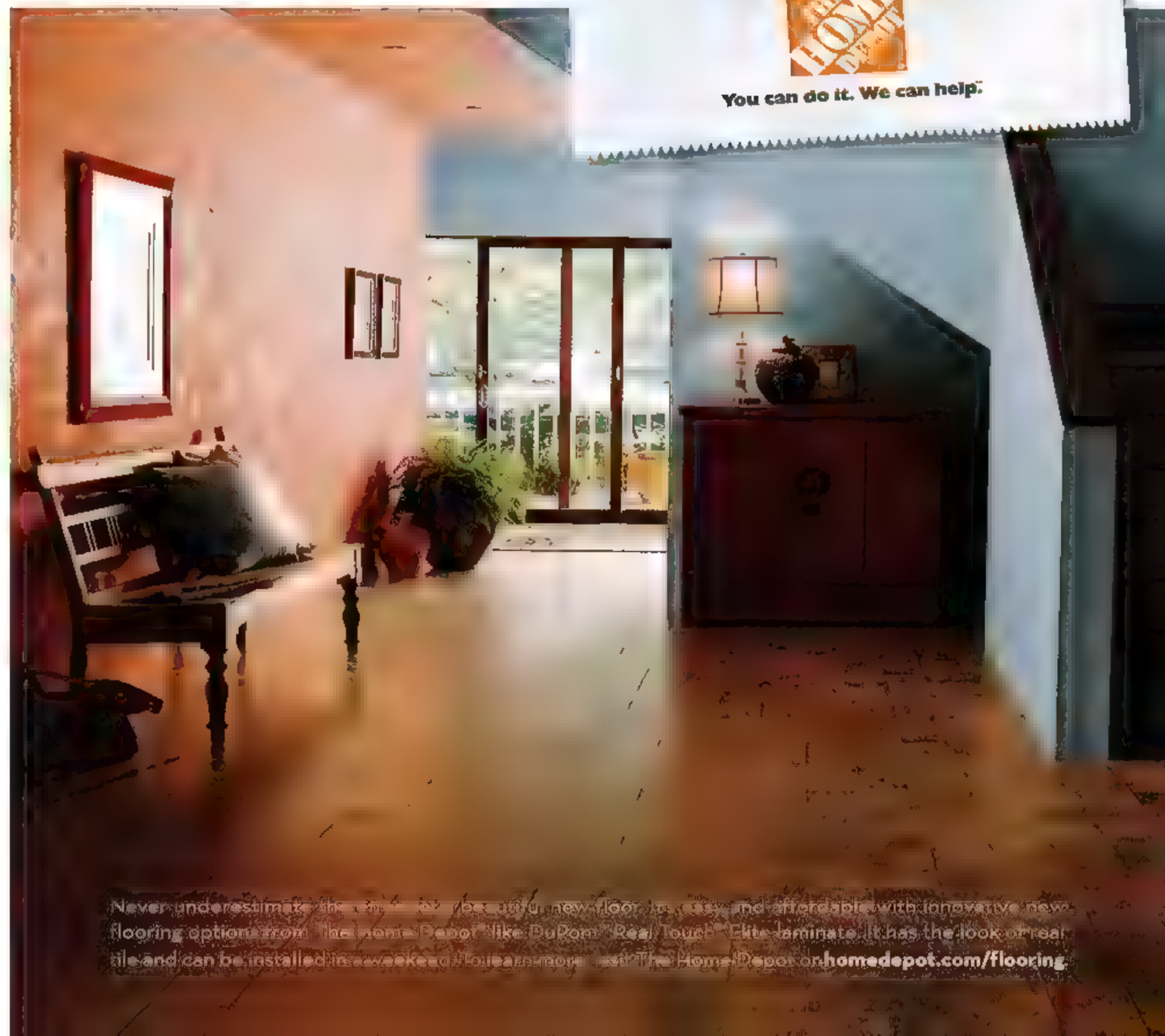
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{ overview }

A POORLY EXECUTED PAINT JOB is easy to spot, with its drips and slips and uneven lines. More often than not, haste is the culprit. But with some thorough preparation up

front, many of the possible pitfalls will be eliminated—and the actual painting will be much easier, as well. So before you crack your first paint can, schedule in a full day for prep.

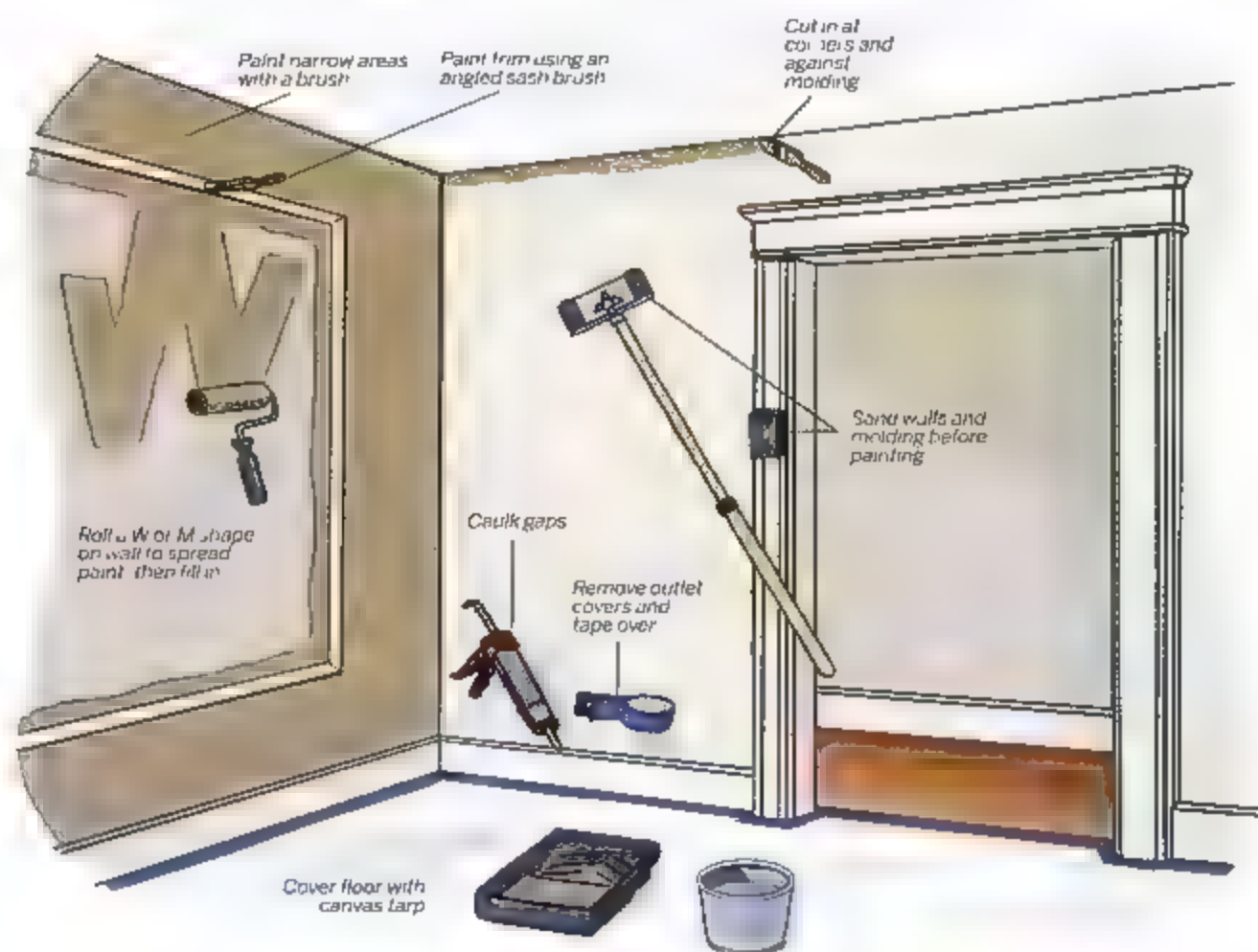
The best prep starts with sanding and sometimes requires scraping. Sanding scuffs up the existing surface so the paint grabs hold, scraping will take off any old bumps or drips. (Be aware of how many layers down there may be lead paint, last sold in the early 1980s, sanding isn't likely to reveal it, but scraping might.) You should also take your time patching holes, caulking gaps, and cleaning dust or grease with soap and water so you start with a pristine surface.

If you're working with new walls, or if you've patched any holes before you start, you'll also need to prime. Primer fills in spongelike pores and creates an even, solid base that takes paint well. You should also prime if you're going from a dark to a light color or vice versa. (In the latter case, have the paint store tint the primer to go with your wall color; it will save you at least one coat of paint later on.) Primer should also be sanded before the paint goes on the wall, for a top-notch job, sand between paint coats, too.

First-time painters tend to tape every edge to guard against misstrokes. But that can bring on its own problems if paint bleeds under the tape or if you peel paint off when removing it. It's more efficient to use angled brushes, which draw a straight line when turned on edge. Proper use of an angled brush can save you hours of setup and touch-up.

Angled brushes also come in handy for cutting in along corners and ceilings and around trim, where rollers can mark. Fill in a few inches at these spots, then marry the line with the field by rolling over them. Keep a wet edge to avoid dark spots or paint pulls.

As you paint, be sure to keep moving. Put the paint on the wall, level it out where it's heavy, and get on with it. Don't use back-and-forth brushstrokes, and don't spend time making the first coat look perfect (it won't be). Finally, take a tip from the pros and always keep a damp rag in your pocket to quickly wipe up your mistakes. Even the best painters color out side the lines once in a while.



shopping list

1 PAINT A gallon of paint covers about 400 square feet. To figure how much you need, add up the lengths of all your walls, then multiply that sum by the room's height. Subtract 20 square feet for each door and 15 for each window. Divide the result by 400 to get the number of gallons you need for one coat. Most walls will need two coats.

For the trim in most rooms, one or two quarts should suffice. If your room has a lot of molding, you may need more. If you think you need more than two quarts, it is almost always more cost-effective to buy a gallon.

2 120-GRIT SILICON-CARBIDE SANDPAPER

Get about a dozen sheets and cut them to fit the pole sander or fold them for hand sanding.

3 SANDING SPONGES

Get three coarse-grit and three fine-grit sponges.

4 LARGE CLEANING SPONGE

5 LATEX PAINTER'S CAULK Get one tube per room.

6 PATCHING COMPOUND to fill holes.

7 PRIMER One quart will cover patches, but you need more to prime entire walls.

8 PAINTER'S TAPE or "blue tape" for protecting hardware and trim.

9 BUCKET and TRAY LINERS

10 ROLLER COVERS Use a shorter nap ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch) for latex paint on smooth walls; a longer nap ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch and up) is best for rougher surfaces.



BUILD YOUR SKILL

Paint roller tips from pros. Workshop, p. 113

ILLUSTRATION BY CARL WIENS

{ step by step }

1

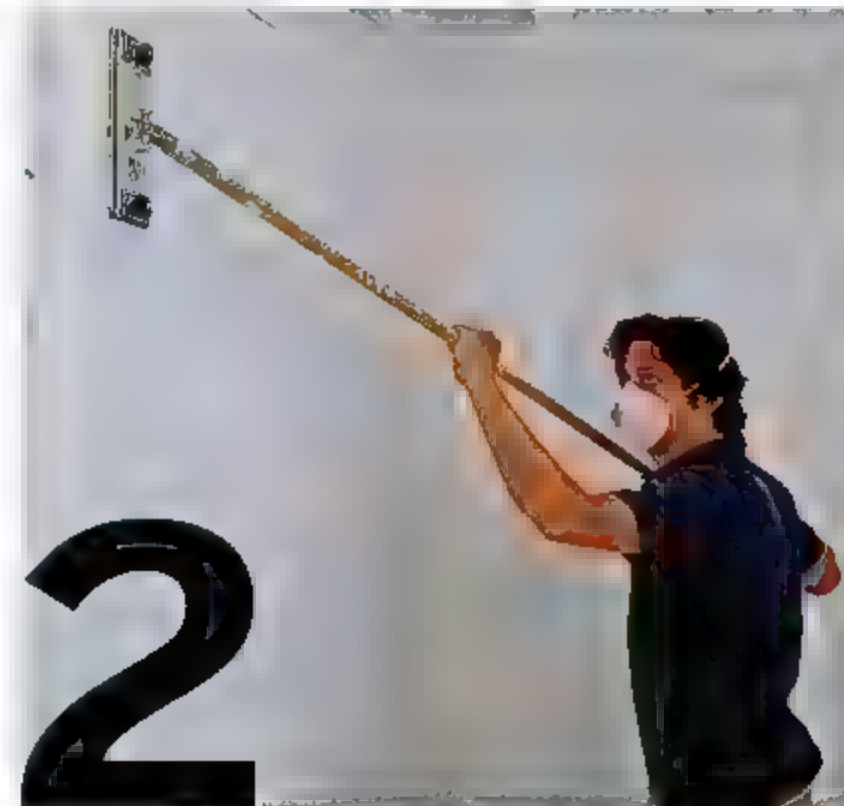
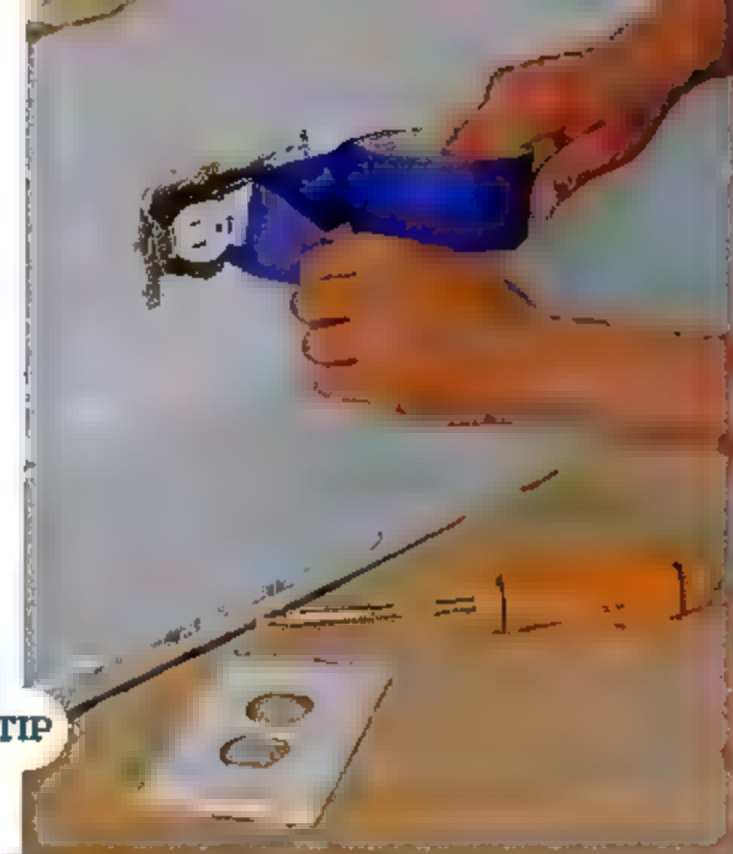
Cover floors and hardware »

After removing any wall art and moving furniture away from the walls, lay canvas tarps (more absorbent and less slippery than plastic) over the furniture and on the floor. Using painter's tape, fasten down the edges.

Unscrew all switch plates and electrical outlet covers, and tape over the remaining switches and holes with painter's tape (RIGHT). Tape around any other hardware that can't be removed.

After removing electrical covers, put the screws back on the fixtures so they don't get lost.

< TIP



« Sand all surfaces

NOTE. Always sand and paint the ceiling completely (following these same steps) before addressing the walls.

Using a pole sander fitted with 120-grit paper, sand the walls (make sure to wear a dust mask). Sweep the sander side to side as you work your way from the top down (LEFT). Apply medium pressure, and take care that the head doesn't flop and gouge the wall. Change the paper whenever the grit gets clogged with dust.

Remove bumps or drips on painted molding with a scraper. Then, using a dampened coarse-grit sanding sponge, rough up the surface. Keep a bucket of warm water nearby, and continually rinse the sponge. Finish with a dampened fine-grit sponge.

Using a wet/dry vacuum, clear all the dust from the walls and trim. Wash the walls with a sponge using warm water and dish soap. Scrub greasy or waxy spots. Wipe everything down one last time with clean water.

2

Fill gaps and holes »

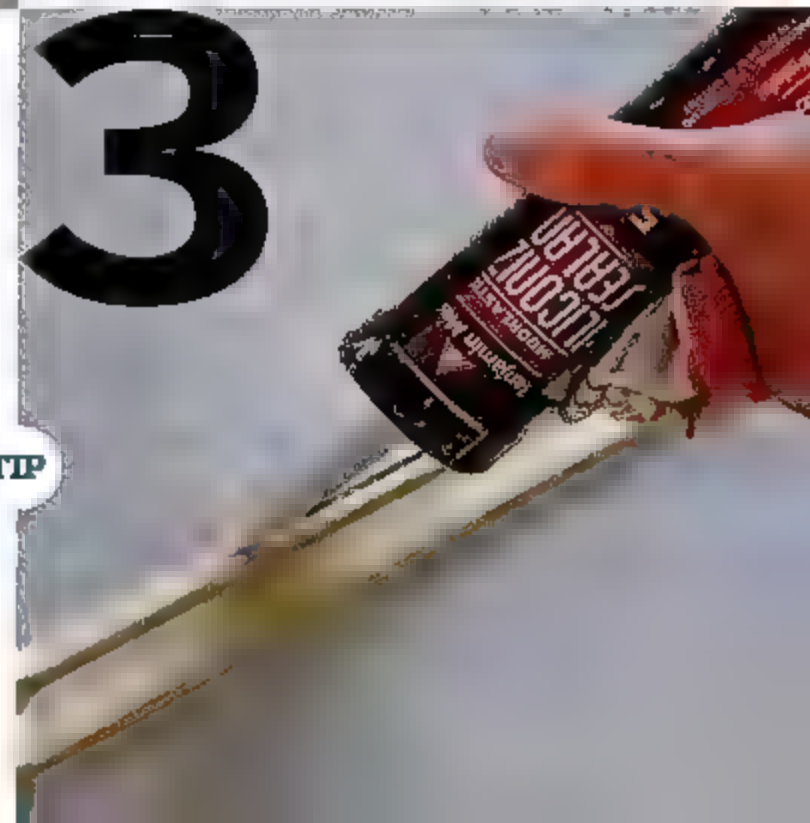
Run a thin bead of caulk over any gaps where molding meets wall (RIGHT). Wet your finger and smooth the caulk with even pressure to push it into the crack and leave a crisp edge.

Using a putty knife, fill any small divots or holes in the walls. Use patching compound for plaster and joint compound for drywall. Sand the filler smooth with 120-grit sandpaper.

Prime the patched spots (or the whole wall if necessary). Sand primed areas with 120-grit sandpaper, and wipe clean of dust with a damp sponge.

For the best control when using caulk, cut a $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch angled opening in the tube's tip.

< TIP



{ buying guide }

Color isn't your only choice when picking out a paint—should you use oil or latex, eggshell or matte, and what does low-VOC even mean? Here's a guide to decoding the various formulas and finishes available in paint today.

formulas



latex: Aka acrylic or water-based paint (water is the solvent), it's the most DIY-friendly choice because it cleans up with soap and water. Most paint sold today is latex, and in many areas it's the only option available in gallons as more states limit the sale of solvent-based products.

oil: Known as solvent-based or alkyd paint (mineral spirits are the solvent), it dries slowly and requires paint thinner to clean. But that slow drying time helps oil paint level out, ridding the surface of brush strokes or roller stipples. Oils harden to a durable, enamel shell.

low-VOC: Paint solvents contain volatile organic compounds that off-gas (creating that paint smell), a health hazard. Recently paint companies have reduced or removed solvents to make healthier products, which are thicker (aka "premium") and dry very quickly. Adding conditioners such as Floetrol or Okon can extend working time without introducing VOCs.

metal: These paints are formulated to adhere to metal and inhibit rust. Acrylic metal paints are fine for nonferrous metal (such as aluminum), but ferrous metal (like a cast-iron radiator) requires an oil-based metal paint.

finishes

flat or matte:

Paint starts out glossy and loses luster with the addition of titanium dioxide, a chalky material. Flat finishes have the most, making them very low on reflectivity. That means they mask flaws in irregular surfaces, but they scuff easily. The best place for flat paint is on the ceiling, where less reflection is a plus. But mattes can enhance the richness of a deep color when used on a wall.

eggshell:

This finish varies widely by manufacturer. The field is generally a bit more reflective but still nicely balanced and not shiny, as the name suggests. The most popular finish, eggshell is meant for walls that are in pretty good shape. The finish cleans more easily than a flat finish.

satin:

A touch shinier, satin finishes make good accents on complex molding profiles or well-prepped window and door casings. They'll resist fingerprints, scuffs, and stains. Satin also works well for kitchens and bathrooms because it cleans well, but it's generally too glossy for other interior spaces.

semigloss:

Shiny without looking wet, this finish can work on any trim. It's better, though, to reserve it for some handsome interior shutters, or allow its superior smudge resistance to protect a banister. All midluster finishes are a matter of taste and circumstance—just prep well, and anything can work.

high-gloss:

The shiniest finish available, high-gloss dries to a hard, glasslike sheen. The most brilliant oil-based glosses reflect light almost as well as a mirror, making them great for paneled interior doors or fine furniture, but too shiny for an intricately carved molding or ceiling adornment.

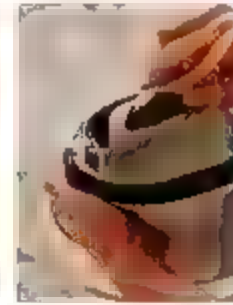


FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 124

« Cut in around edges

Dip a 2½-inch angled brush into a bucket of paint, loading the paint only a third of the way up the bristles. Tap off—don't wipe—the excess on the side of the bucket (INSET). Use the brush to cut in a 2- to 3-inch band of paint at all corners, against the ceiling, and next to molding; this will give the roller some breathing room so it doesn't bump against adjacent areas.

To cut in, run a line of paint along the wall, about an inch away from the edge. Then turn the brush onto the bristles and press down slightly so the longest bristles gather into a point. Use this point to draw a careful line of paint right up to the edge where wall meets trim (LEFT). Once you have a clean line in place, level out any heavy areas or drips, then move on in order to keep a wet edge, don't work in too large an area at one time.



TIP > Never load the brush directly from the can. Use a clean bucket instead, or you risk contaminating your primary paint supply with dust or dried flecks.

» Roll the walls

Once you've cut in around an entire wall area, use a roller to fill in the field. Dampen the roller before using it (with water for latex paint or paint thinner for oils). Dip the roller in a tray filled with just enough paint to reach the grate. Roll it back against the grate to distribute the paint and squeeze out the excess (INSET). Make sure the roller is covered completely before painting with it.

Roll a W or M shape on the wall to distribute the bulk of the paint (RIGHT). Then use overlapping vertical strokes to spread paint evenly between the lines. Continue painting the wall in this manner until it's covered. Overlap a bit of the cut-in edges to blend away any visible brush marks.

If a second coat is necessary, wait until the paint is dry to the touch, then repeat Steps 4 and 5.

When the roller makes a peeling sound on the wall, it's too dry and should be reloaded.



5

« Paint the trim

With broad moldings, such as baseboards and wainscoting, use a wide, straight-edged brush to paint the bulk of the trim.

Then, using a small, angled sash brush (1- to 2-inch), finish by carefully painting a straight line along the edge (LEFT). Hold the brush on edge as you did in Step 4, and let a hairline of paint carry over onto the wall to make up for any imperfections on the molding itself.

TIP > When painting with glossier finishes, sand lightly with a fine sanding sponge between coats to help the final coat take hold.



Figure out how much paint you'll need using our materials calculator at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): STOCK/VEGETY IMAGES; CORBIS; JOSHUA JACKSON; PETER ESTERSON/BEAUTEWORKS/CORBIS; LOOK PHOTOGRAPHY; DAVID PAPAZIAN/CORBIS



BUILT-IN - IN BENEFITS

Store more, get organized,
and add style to your
interiors with these
space-saving ideas

BY JOSEPH D'AGNESE
PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON DRTIZ

Polished brass or woodworking might create a more formal look, but solid wood is strong, durable, and easy to maintain. In a 1940s home in Manhattan Beach, California, constructed of solid 1 1/2-inch lumber, the shelves are sturdy enough to support heavy books of art and reference books along with display items.

Nothing puts your square footage to better use than a built-in. Whether that means a desk framed within a seldom-used closet or a bookcase tucked into a niche beside the fireplace, built-ins maximize every available inch in your floor plan. They handily transform the dead zones under stairs and below windows into functional space and help you get organized by adding new storage options without adding on to your house.

Unlike most freestanding furniture, built-ins are custom-crafted for specific purposes, as well as for those odd nooks and crannies where a standard piece might not fit. You can design them to tie in with other architectural elements in the room, such as crown molding and wainscoting. Fitted with doors, they help maintain the integrity of period interiors by concealing modern amenities like computer workstations or a mini fridge in a wet bar.

You don't have to spend a fortune to get those good looks and the improved functionality, either. On the following pages, we'll show you a portfolio of carpenter-crafted and DIY designs, including one smart project assembled from stock kitchen cabinets, all to help you bring a sense of order and distinction to your rooms.

WORK SPACES



Homework Alcove

Recessed built-ins require more planning and construction than ones that attach directly to the wall, but they are the best choice for conserving precious floor space. This homework station in a boy's bedroom was designed by architect Jay Haverson to fit inside an alcove between a clothes closet and a bathroom. In new construction like this, framing out the area is simple. To retrofit an existing bedroom for a built-in desk, you could colonize a closet or steal space from an adjoining room for a bumpout. For a child's room, build with an eye toward the future. The desk is sized just right for a youngster about 27 inches off the ground, as opposed to 30 inches for adults. In a few years, though, the top of the desk can be raised and mounted on rollers. "It's a nice, nice amenity to have in a bedroom," Haverson says of the built-in homework station, "but the same setup also works well in a home office or den."

idea

Save desk space by building in lights, such as recessed cans or the puck lights used here. Use high-intensity, long-lasting xenon bulbs, and position the light switch within arm's reach. Don't forget to include power outlets and phone and data lines nearby.

PHOTOS (LEFT) JEFF MICHAEL LUPPINO (PREVIOUS SPREAD) MARIA OLMAN



Integral Bar Cabinet

Built-ins concealed behind doors offer the perfect hideaway for food and beverage prep or work areas that might otherwise mar the appearance of stylish living spaces. Case in point is this wet bar designed by architect Stuart Driscoll for a clubby sitting room. When not in use, the bar's multiple sink, glasses, and bar stools disappear behind doors that match the surrounding cherry wall paneling. Cocktails and the doors open out into the room, sliding into recesses flanking either side of the bar, and then disappear behind the trim boards that close snugly over the openings.

idea

Use the back walls of built-ins to boost aesthetics and function. The mirrored panel above adds depth to both the bar and the room. A cork back in a built-in desk (see photo at right) is ideal for tacking up notes and pictures.

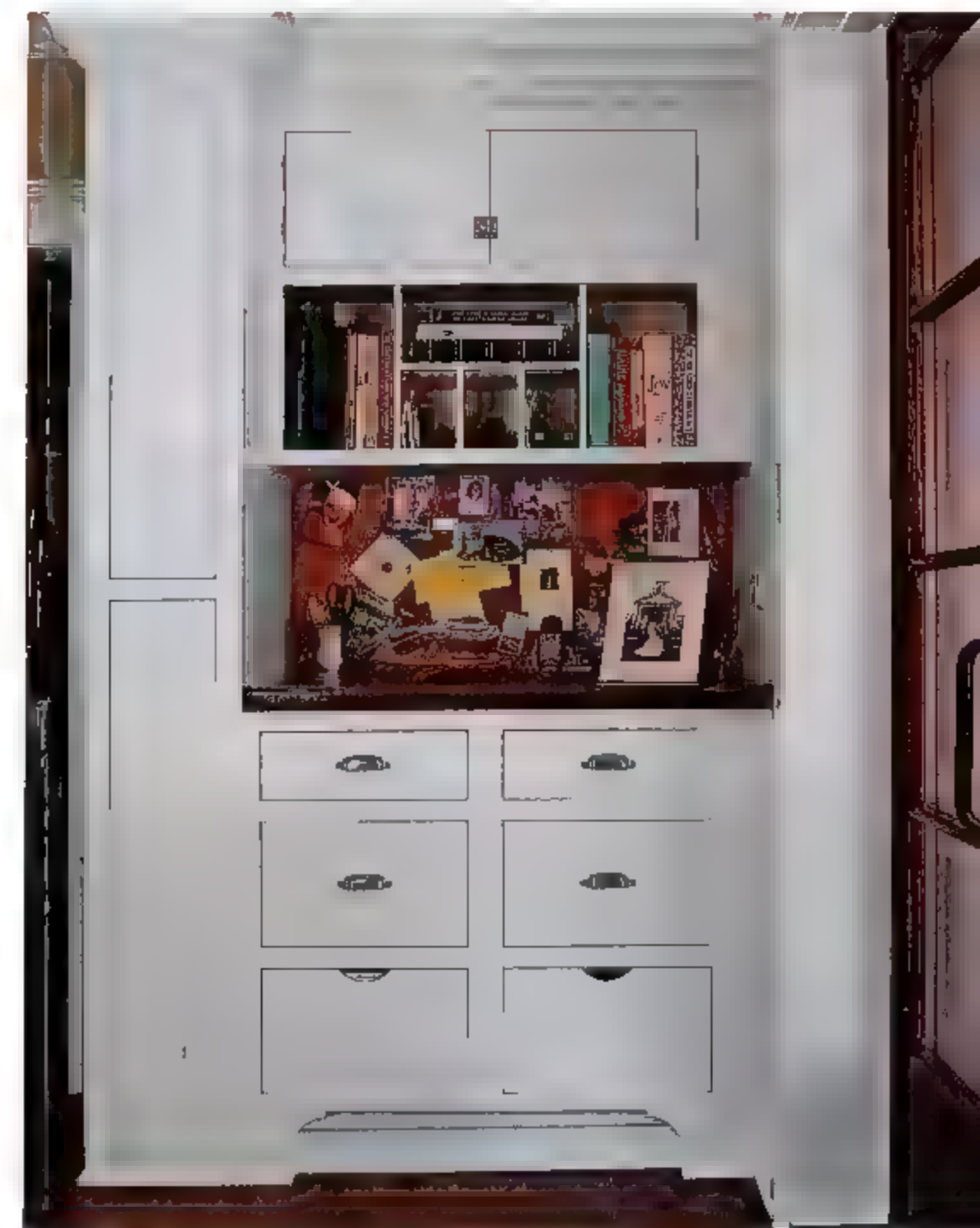
PHOTOS (LEFT) JEFF MICHAEL LUPPINO (RIGHT) JUI AN WASS

Stand-up Desk

The ability to tailor built-ins to suit your particular needs and floor plan gives them a functional advantage over store-bought furniture. Instead of a space-hogging sit-down desk, for this kitchen office, designer Scott W. Smith tucked a stand-up room divider center into a narrow sliver of wall between the hallway to the room and doors leading to a screened-in porch. Eliminating the need for a chair kept the design traffic-free and clear of obstacles and also freed up room for three rows of drawers under a 36-inch-high stained wood countertop. The top drawers hold office supplies, the middle ones are for hanging files, and the bottom ones show newspapers and catalogs, and they're ready to be dropped into the recycling bin. Cubbies above the desktop are for organizing mail and cookbooks, and the closed doors up top hide phone books. Floor-to-ceiling shelves on the hallway side of the built-in create even more usable space, while a recessed toe kick on the kitchen-facing side helps give the entire piece an elegant furniture-like look.

idea

The beauty of built-ins is that you can customize them to work best for the people who will use them most. Thirty-six inches is standard counter height for a stand-up desk, but you can vary the height so it's comfortable for you.

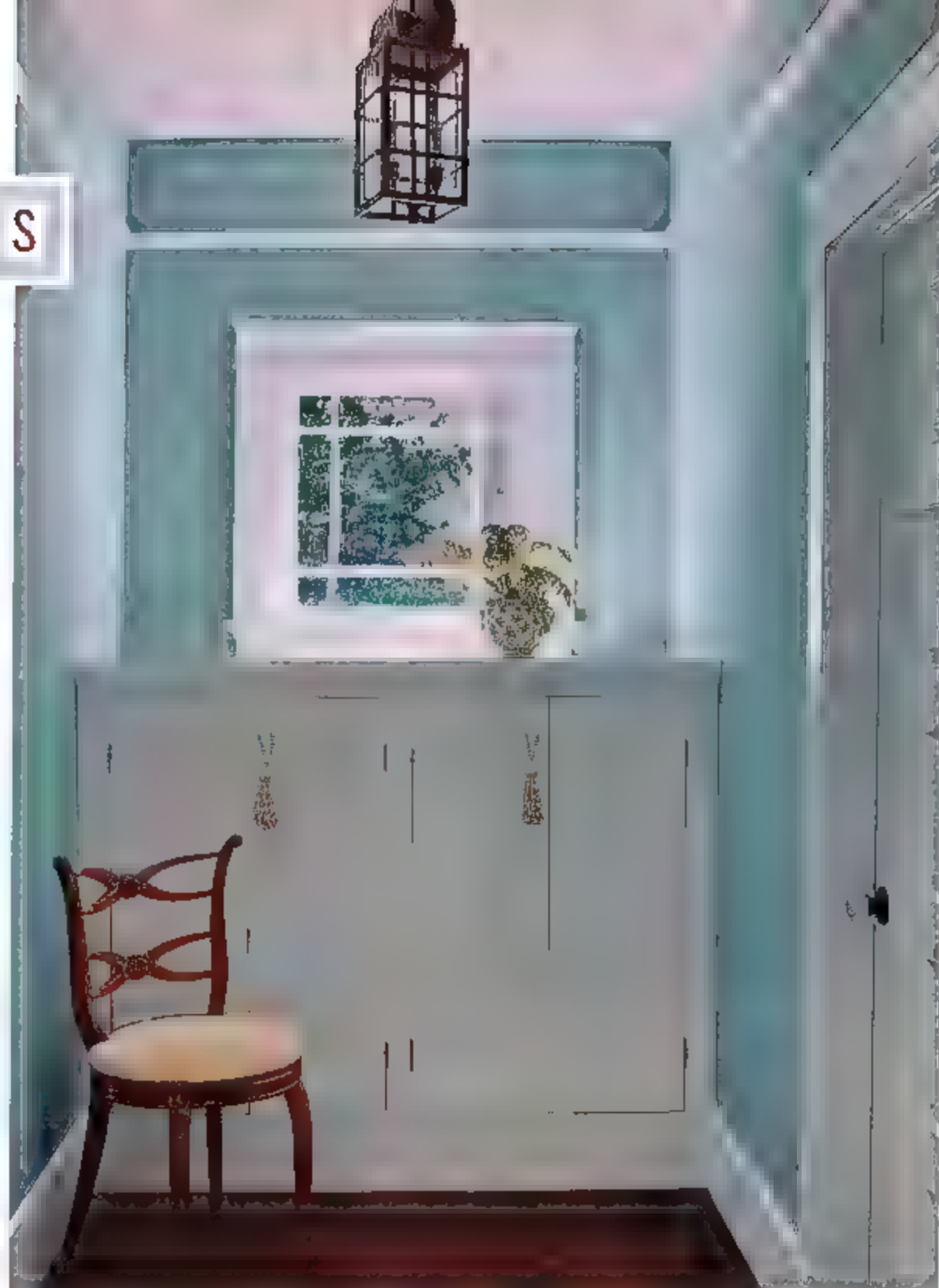


FOUND SPACES

Under-Window Cabinet

The area below a window—often given over to houseplants and little else—presents an excellent opportunity for creative built-ins. Anthony Vermando is the architect for this 1920s Craftsman-style bungalow renovation, singles out the window-cabinet pairing as “a mutual coming together” that turns dead space into usable square footage. The chest-high cabinets provide plenty of space for storing family china. Positioned directly under the sill, they add visual heft to what the designer considered to be an overly small window that was the sole focal point at the end of a long hallway. A similar under-window cupboard could hold linens off a bedroom or extra towels and toiletries outside a bathroom. Without doors, a cabinet could be used to display books and pottery below the window on a large stair landing.

idea For a snug fit between the unit and the wall, remove existing baseboards and crown molding before you install a built-in. For the truly integrated look seen here, extend new matching molding around the built-in wherever it intersects with the original trim.



Columned Room Divider

In cavernous family rooms, built-ins can graciously carve out more intimate spaces and designate zones for specific activities, from dining and lounging to working and entertaining. The owners of this Colonial Revival-style home wanted a portion of their large great room to serve as a kind of private living room and study where they could relax with a good book or catch up on office work. Rather than split the large space in two with a solid wall, architect Mark Hughes designed a less imposing columned divider with built-in bookshelves and cabinets. A wide open area at the top preserves the great-room feeling without sacrificing the coziness of the separate living and working spaces. On the office side, study carrels and shelves hold a selection of the homeowners' weighty legal books (both are lawyers). On the living room side, the open cubbies are lined with natural cherry wood; the closed cabinets below hold more books and memorabilia.

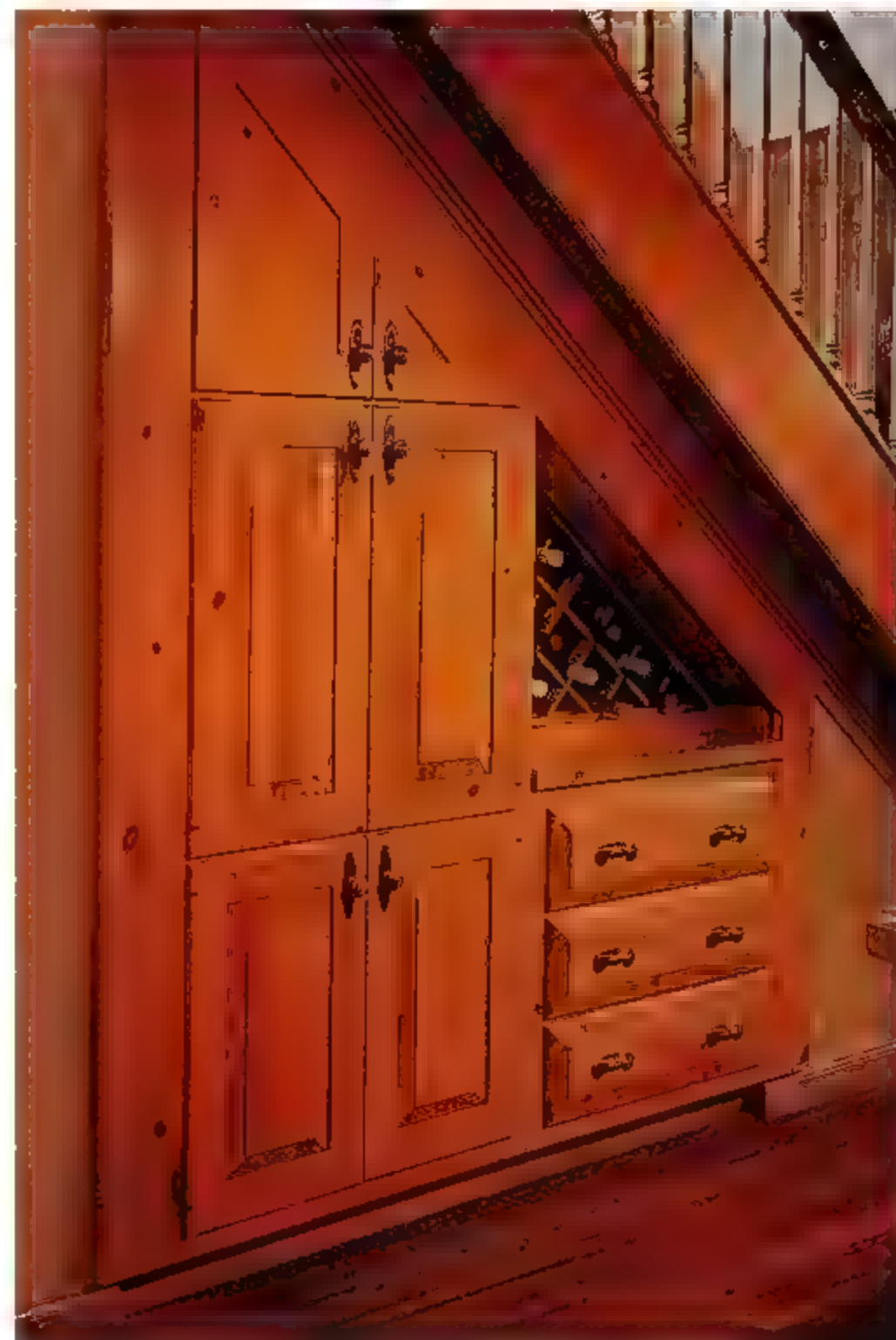
idea Use built-ins to mask structural members. The hollow wooden column seen at left perfectly conceals a 3-by-4-inch steel post that supports the ceiling's load and the master bathroom upstairs.



Stair-Wall Wine Cellar

Unless you've got a Boy Wizard bunking under your stairs, chances are you're not putting the space to very good use. In this case, the kitchen designer made the neglected area a stylish focal point where the homeowners could store and display their favorite wines. Glass decanters and stemware are concealed within the stained-pine cabinetry, and paraphernalia like corkscrews and coasters live in the drawers. The triangular treatment looks difficult to design and install, but the majority of the space is occupied by standard rectangular cabinets and drawers. Only the top cabinet and bottle rack required special cuts and assembly. “Getting a proper fit all depends on how well you can measure and get the dimensions to work out,” says John Troxell, director of design at Wood Mode, the company that made the cabinets. Wide trim boards on the top and sides of the unit help hide any unsightly gaps or scribing where the cabinets were inserted into the wall cavity.

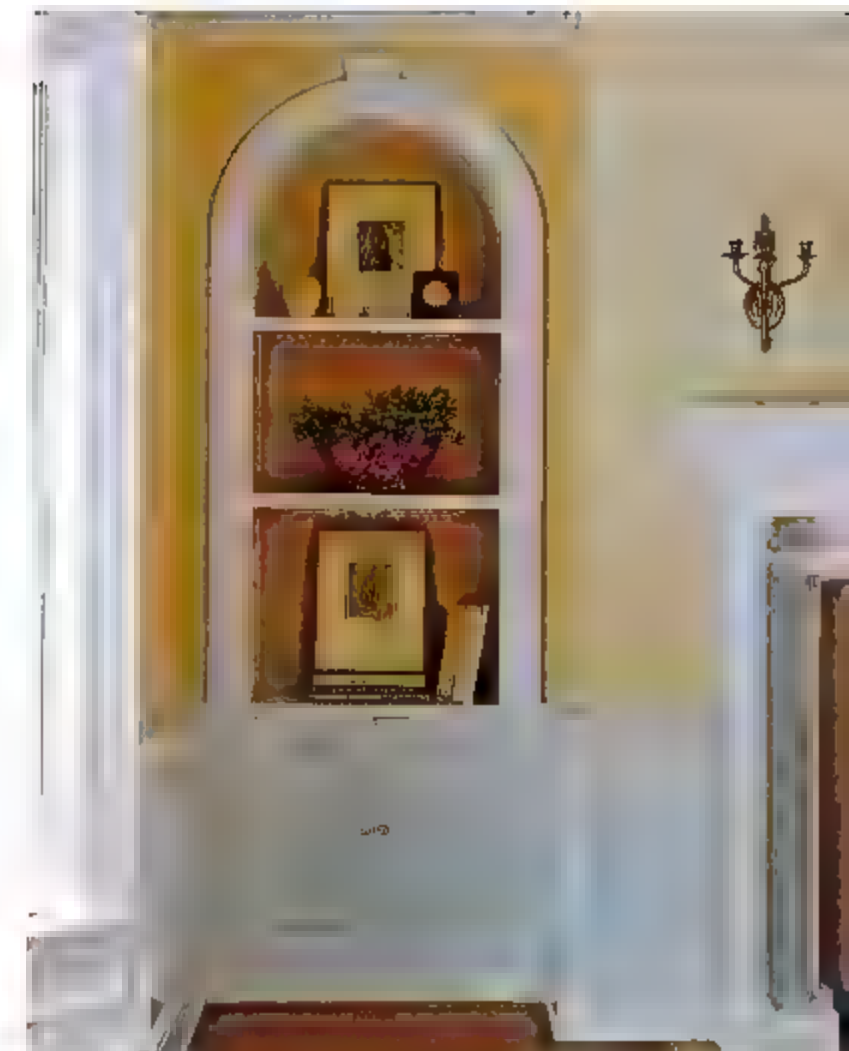
idea Keep dust from collecting in glasses or stored china by using built-in cabinets with doors instead of open shelving. Choose from solid wood doors, ones fitted with glass panes—popular in kitchens—and hinged tempered-glass panels.



Fireplace Niche

A chimney bumpout naturally creates recesses on either side that are ideal for built-in bookshelves and entertainment centers. For this niche beside a fireplace in a newly constructed home, architect Jay Haverson designed an open display case with a closed cabinet underneath. A neoclassical, arched top is reminiscent of details found in early American interiors. The main difference is that the backs of those old niches were often curved like the inside of a barrel. But Haverson's clients wanted a squared-off back to hold books and other standard-size items. The cabinets below hide objects like a box of long fireplace matches, that the homeowners wanted to keep handy but not out in the open.

idea Construct a platform to raise built-in cabinets 2 to 4 inches off the floor so doors will swing freely on their hinges. This is especially important in old houses with uneven floors that can cause doors to stick.

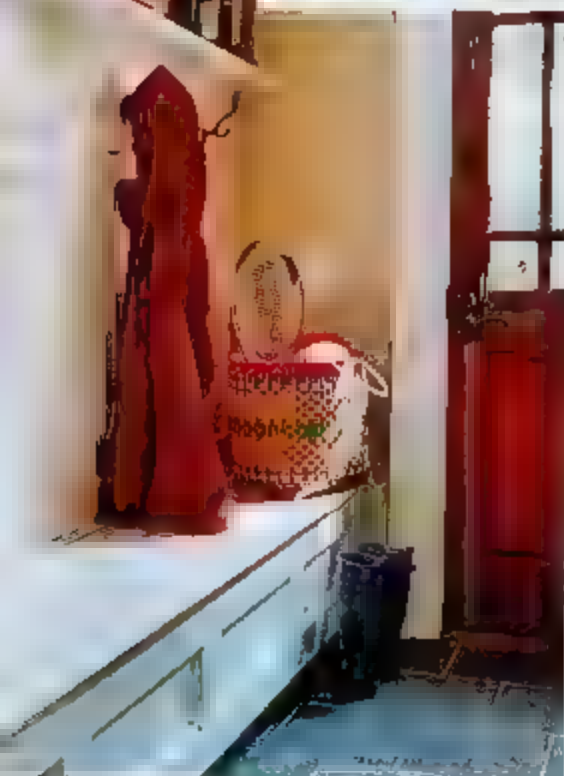


ONLINE BONUS

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PHOTOS: THIS PAGE TOP, JULIAN WASS; BOTTOM/GW ARCHITECTS; OPPOSITE PAGE RIGHT, MICHAEL LUPPINO

STORAGE SPACES



Mudroom Bench

Entries to any home are fortunate magnets for clutter. The trick to mudroom organization is providing storage options for gear throughout the season. As part of the renovation of a 1908 home, architect Carol Kurt used built-ins to create a drop-off point for whatever the homeowners might need to hang on. The adjacent door leads out to the driveway, but also to the family pool, so Kurt designed a hinged-top bench with an inside cavity that's large enough to hold soccer balls, skates, and swim gear. A sliver of space above the bench lets the family slip the tips of their shoes or boots underfoot to keep them from spreading out across the floor. The homeowners currently use the top shelves to display a 12-inch-deep canvas bag and a pair of shoes. The hooks are for hanging jackets and bags and a new step.

idea Choose durable oil-based paints instead of latex for any surface that is going to take a beating, such as frequently used shelving and benches.

Well-Ordered Wardrobe

Bedrooms in old houses often lack a proper closet, and the 1890s Folk Victorian farmhouse was no different. A time-honored solution is to build a floor-to-ceiling wardrobe that spans the entire width of the room, but that approach has drawbacks: It takes up a lot of space. For his client's room, architect Anthony Vermandour broke with tradition by creating a modern, unexploited real estate in most rooms: to add a wardrobe with an adjoining stepped-down shelf in the top of the closet before reaching the ceiling. It's a closet that doesn't gobble up all the visual space, he says. And the varying heights make the single built-in look more like two individual pieces of furniture. The wardrobe is 24 inches deep to accommodate standard clothes hangers, but for a simple cabinet in a hallway, a good design is a shallow 6- or 20-inch depth.

idea Construct built-ins with materials that are appropriate to the age and style of the house in which they are installed. The wardrobe below is made from a rustic-looking beadboard paneling that's perfectly suited to an old farmhouse.



PHOTOS: TOP PAGE, LEFT: JUDITH FRANK; RIGHT: JIM WOODS. THIS PAGE, LEFT: JUDITH FRANK; RIGHT: JIM WOODS. STYLING: JIM WOODS

Dressing-Room Shelving

Built-ins that create an alcove for freestanding furniture can give pride of place to a new or treasured shop or collection. In the case of a fine antique, Dun is a conservationist. For 1840s farmhouse, the homeowners wanted to preserve the original character of the room. The O'Learys installed a handsome chest of drawers into the master bedroom's walk-in closet. The O'Learys responded with a pair of freestanding dressers that flank the chest. They built with just two inches of clearance on either side to give the dressers a sense of permanence in the room. The same approach can be used for a vanity table, which could provide a place for storage for towels and linens, or a mirror, or a place for a medicine cabinet over the sink.

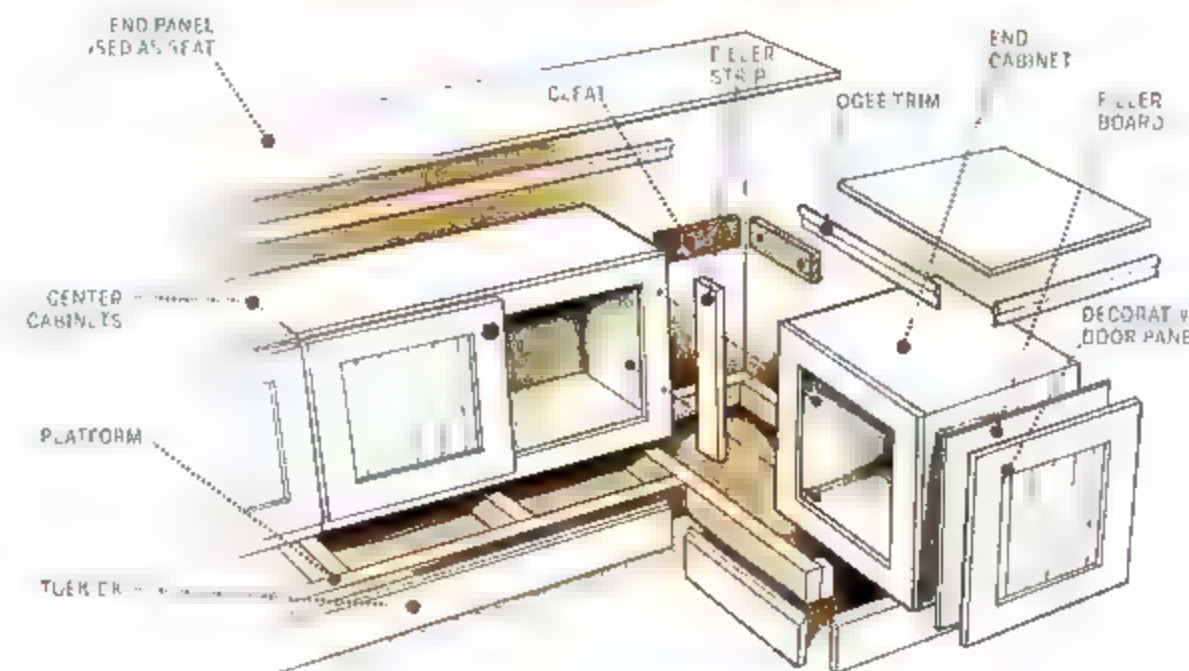
idea Design clothing storage for specific functions. A 10-inch-wide shelf is ideal for men's shoes, while 8 inches is typically the max required for women's. Allow 12 inches for folded shirts and sweaters.



HOW TO BUILD A CUSTOM-LOOK WINDOW SEAT USING STOCK KITCHEN CABINETS

The pros aren't the only ones who can craft a handsome built-in. You can, too. This window seat, for example, was made from four prefinished, white American Woodmark cabinets and their coordinating trim boards, all sold at Home Depot. The 18-inch-deep-by-24-inch-high cabinets are typically used above refrigerators. Here are the steps to follow to re-create this seat at your house. —MARK POWERS

- 1 Use 2x lumber ripped to size to construct a 4-inch-tall U-shaped platform on which the two-door center cabinets and single-door end cabinets will sit. Secure the platform to the floor by driving screws at an angle through its outer framing.
- 2 Arrange the center cabinets side by side on the platform and drive 2-inch wood screws through their adjoining side panels. Then align the end cabinets corner to corner with the center ones. Make room for the doors to open where the cabinets intersect by screwing 3-inch filler strips to the center cabinets' face frames. Then secure the end cabinets directly to the filler strips, using 2 1/2-inch wood screws.
- 3 Anchor the entire unit to the back wall by driving 2-inch deck screws through the cabinets' rear panels, making sure to sink the screws in studs.
- 4 Hide the platform with toe-kick molding secured with 1-inch finish nails. For a truly custom look, attach filler boards and decorative panels that mimic the look of cabinet doors, using 2-inch finish screws fastened from inside the end cabinets.
- 5 Fasten wood cleats to the wall in the open corners to support the 3/4-inch-thick-by-19-inch-deep end panels used to create a sturdy top for the window seat. Secure the center panel to the cleats and the side panels to the end cabinets below using 1 1/2-inch wood screws. Finish the top's outer edge with ogee trim attached with 1-inch finish nails. Add a custom cushion, and take a load off.



Season's Greenings

DON'T RETIRE YOUR GARDENING GEAR JUST BECAUSE THE TEMPERATURE'S DROPPED. POT UP SOME COLD-WEATHER PLANTINGS TO BRIGHTEN YOUR HOME'S EXTERIOR—AND YOUR SPRITS

By Jeanne Huber
Photographs by Keiler + Keiler

As if winter's shorter days and cutting winds aren't enough, empty window boxes and garden pots only rub in the bleakness of the season. But just because spring's on the far horizon doesn't mean you can't dig in now. With the right pots, an armload of cold-tolerant plants, some colorful twigs, and evergreen boughs, you can put together great-looking containers that will last till the weather warms and even beyond. Here's how, courtesy of THIS OLD HOUSE landscape contractor Roger Cook.

[cold-friendly container combinations]

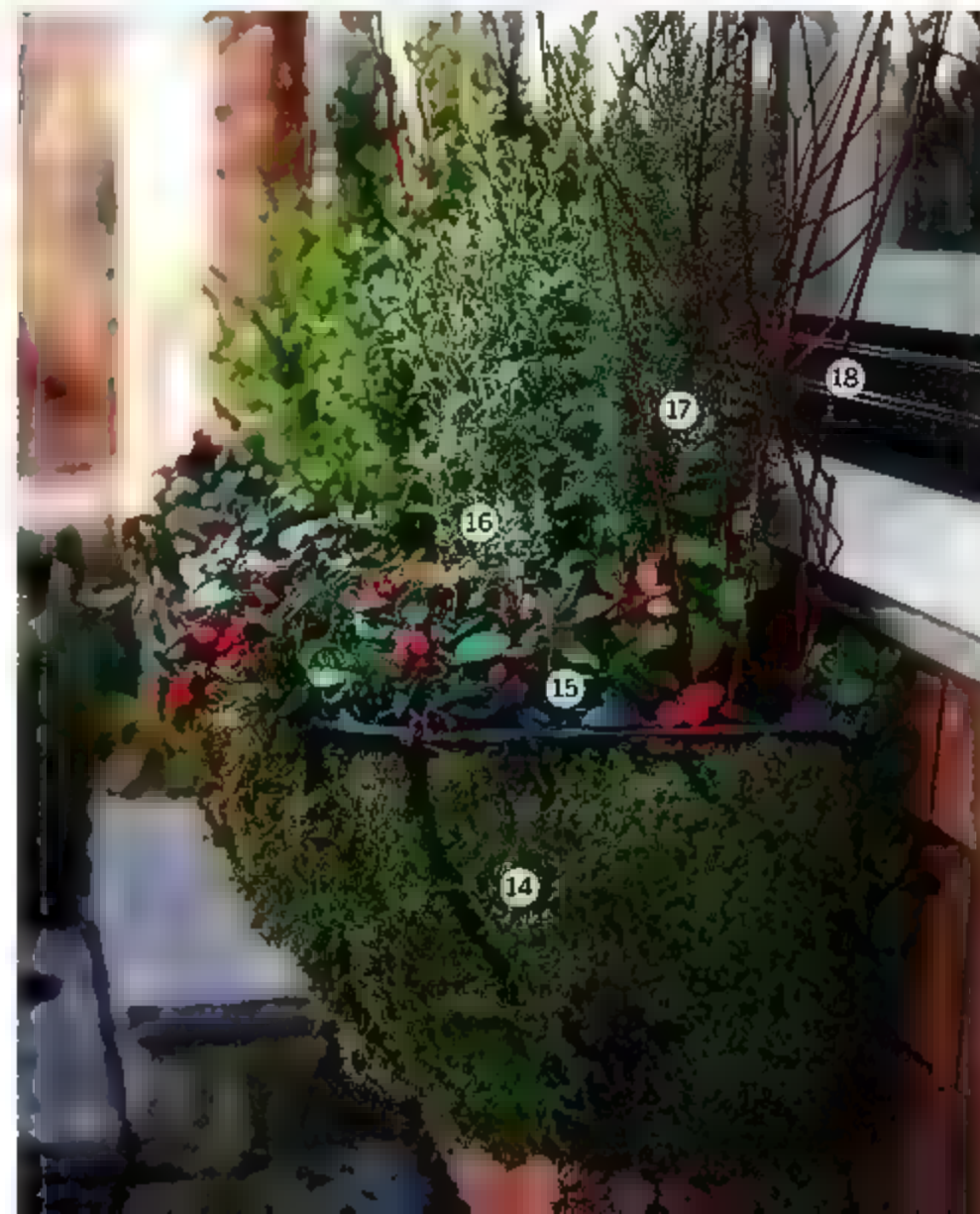
Here are some of Roger's favorite plants for wintertime displays. OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: A metal container sets off rosettes of ornamental kale (1), variegated boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Variegata') (2), and yellow-green dwarf hinoki cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana Aurea') (3). Feathery sawara false cypress (*Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Boulevard') (4) and shiny-leaved common boxwood

(*Buxus sempervirens* 'Graham Blandy') (5) serve as the backdrop. Many of these plants also team up nicely with blue holly (*Ilex meserveae* 'Blue Maid') (6). TOP RIGHT: Roger shops for miniature conifers, which come in balls (7), cones (8), and columns (9) that are sized right for containers. BOTTOM RIGHT: Blue Alberta spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Sanders Blue') (10) towers over sawara false

cypress (11), Japanese rush (*Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon') (12), and creeping juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis* 'Bar Harbor') (13) in pots flanking a door. BOTTOM LEFT: Sheet moss (14) forms a base for the bright red berries and shiny leaves of wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) (15). Taller variegated boxwood (16), miniature juniper (*Juniperus communis* 'Compressa') (17), and redtwig dogwood branches (*Cornus sericea*) (18) line the back of the wire window box.

1 Choose a cold-hardy container.

Unless you live where temperatures never drop below freezing, select weatherproof pots. Water expands about 9 percent as it turns to ice, so even a one-time freeze can crack containers made of terra-cotta or other brittle, moisture-absorbing materials. Metal, plastic, and fiberglass are safe choices. If a ceramic or concrete container catches your eye, be sure to ask if it's been made to withstand a harsh freeze. Some pottery can, if it's been fired at high temperatures. And while standard concrete might break, concrete mixed with polymers stands up better. Wooden planters weather pretty well, too. Roger also likes to use wire window boxes and line them with sheet moss, which adds an extra bit of color while holding back so. Eco-friendly coir mats made from coconut husks do the job equally well.



2 Plant with the coming seasons in mind.

If you're starting a container planting from scratch, Roger recommends covering drain holes with a piece of a broken terra-cotta pot, then adding a little gravel and some landscape fabric to ensure good drainage before you fill in with potting soil. In milder climates or where the plants will be left in pots year-round, mix in some aged compost before you plant, then top with mulch to keep soil moist.

Because Roger usually replaces winter med displays with colorful annuals in the spring, he doesn't add any soil amendments in the fall or even worry about loosening up the soil more than needed to fit in the roots. He also doesn't bother to loosen tangled root balls because the plants won't do any growing over the winter. As he says, "They're just going to sit there and look pretty." He is careful, however, to leave enough space above the soil line for 3 or 4 inches of mulch (he likes aged pine bark). Thick mulch insulates the roots and protects them from drying out if they are popped out of the soil during a hard freeze.

3 Use an antidesiccant.

To keep greenery looking fresh all season even if the roots are frozen or you're using cut branches, spray foliage with an antidesiccant. Roger likes one made from pine tree resin. Since the film gradually weathers away, he usually reapplies it once during the winter. In milder climates, antidesiccant sprays are only needed for cut branches.

4 Monitor the weather—and water as needed.

As long as daytime temperatures remain above freezing, poke a finger down into the soil occasionally and water as needed. Be careful! If the temperature plummets, though, you don't want to water if it's just going to turn to ice. Once your finger hits hard frozen soil, relax. There's nothing left to do but enjoy your handiwork.

lots more pots

Check out 10 stylish containers at thisoldhouse.com/containers



[which plants to pick?]

SMALL CONIFERS or needled evergreens, work particularly well in planters. You can find ones that form balls, cones, and columns, as well as varieties that trail—an especially useful habit in composing a container. The needles offer variety, too, from soft-textured cypresses (1, 2, 3) to rugged junipers (4), in a range of greens as well as golds, reds, and silvers. Miniature conifers grow less than 1 inch a year and top out at about 1 foot; dwarf conifers grow 1 to 6 inches a year, winding up 1 to 6 feet tall. Roger uses spruces and false cypresses that fare well in cold climates like that of his native New England.

OTHER EVERGREENS Roger likes to mix evergreens with variegated foliage into his containers, too. Among his favorites are

Euonymus japonicus 'Golden Maiden' (5), which has glossy green leaves splashed with yellow; dwarf hinokii cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*) 'Golden Sprite' (6), with yellow tips on green foliage; and variegated boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Variegata') (7), whose leaves are outlined in white. For all-green evergreens, good choices include Korean boxwood (8), many hollies, and yews. Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) (9) adds the bright note of red berries. Roger often selects plants in the fall with an eye to what he wants to add to his perennial beds in the spring when he readies the planters for summer annuals. Transplanting from containers into the garden is a thrifty, time-efficient way to build and expand a landscape.

HARDY BLOOMERS Ornamental kale (10), a flowerlike broccoli relative that has frilly leaves splashed with various combinations of pink, cream, and green, does well nearly everywhere through early winter, though below-zero temperatures will do it in. In milder climates, there are several winter-flowering plants to choose from, including pansies, Iceland poppies, primroses, and heliobores, also known as Christmas roses. Ask your local nursery for recommendations.

TWIGS AND BRANCHES To add a few exclamation points to containers, tuck in branches such as curly pussy willow (*Salix caprea* 'Kilmarnock'), ones with colorful bark, such as redtwig dogwood (*Cornus sericea*); types with red fruit, such as American winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) (11); or cuttings of small-leaved *Euonymus japonicus* 'Microphyllus Butterscotch' (12) or soft-needled white pine (13). ■





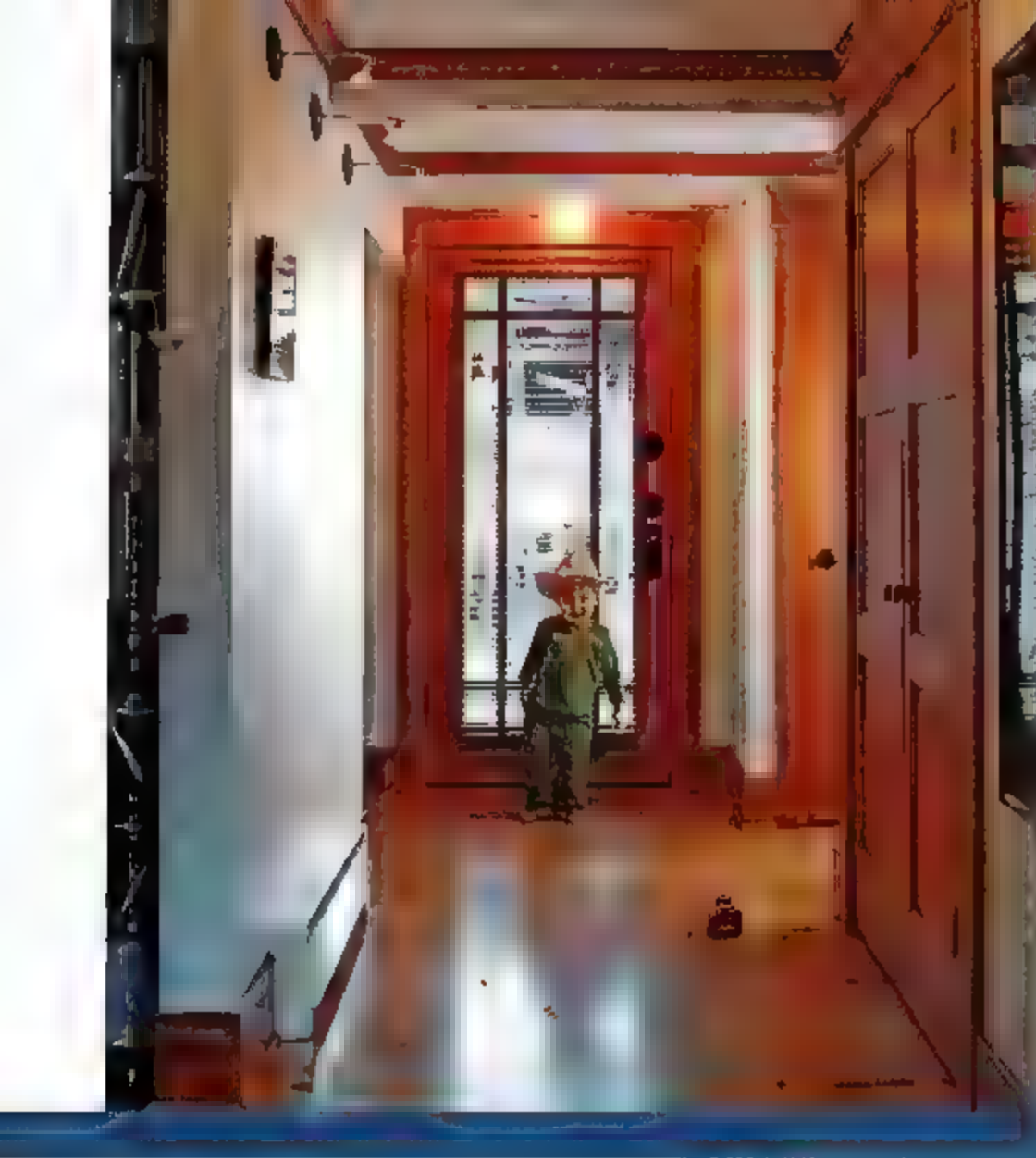
To accommodate
his expanding family,
a Seattle homeowner
used salvaged wood,
eco friendly building
techniques, and
oh, yeah—scuba gear
to remodel his
100 year-old
houseboat

Baby ON BOARD

BY TODD BIERNACKI,
HOMEOWNER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEXANDER / STYLING BY MOLLY MURPHY





FOR TEN YEARS WE'D BEEN LIVING OUR DREAM.

My wife, Krissy, and I had made our home in a 100-year-old houseboat on Seattle's Lake Union. Despite being five minutes from downtown and just eight feet away from our neighbors, when we walked onto our floating home, things just slowed down. With the water gently lapping all around and great blue herons swooping nearby, it was absolutely peaceful.

Then in 2001, after deciding to start a family, Krissy and I realized that our 1,390-square-foot one-bedroom wouldn't be big enough for us for long. Not wanting to give it up, we decided to add on and reconfigure the inefficient layout, which required us to walk through four rooms to get from the main entrance to the home's only bathroom.

Having left my 100-hour-a-week corporate job the year before, I had logged a lot of time pursuing my interest in construction. So I decided to tackle the bulk of the renovation on my own. Rebuilding half the house and adding a bath, however, wasn't exactly going to be a breeze. I had spent nine months working with a contracting firm called Envirostructure, which specializes in houseboats, but I'd never done any designing. So I spent months doing research,

teaching myself to use a CAD program, and consulting my old boss, contractor Eric Hogeboom. All that up-front work paid off when a local engineering firm and the building department signed off on my design for our renovated home.

The challenge was to make the houseboat more efficient but still keep its charm. Seattle laws limit the height of floating homes to 18 feet off the water and rarely allow for larger footprints, but I didn't want to end up with some boxy structure with low ceilings just to get extra square footage. So when planning out the new design, I fought to maintain the look and feel of the original gabled structure. I decided to keep the south half of the house, with the living room, dining room, and one of the home's two upstairs sleeping lofts, largely intact. The loft spaces at either end of the home were unconnected to each other, with separate staircases and low ceilings that peaked at 6 feet. At the north end of the house, I planned to raise the roof to the maximum 18 feet and add a gabled dormer to fit a full-fledged master suite upstairs and a bedroom downstairs. Unfortunately, since the floor and ceiling heights wouldn't match, I couldn't link the second-floor spaces together.

The plans only enlarged the footprint by 30 square feet, but the extra weight meant I'd need more flotation. Our houseboat—one of 460 or so in the city—was originally built on a raft of old-growth cedar logs, but after a century underwater, they weren't very buoyant. About 85 steel drums and some Styrofoam had been added over time, but it was all poorly placed, and the barrels were already rusting apart. So, armed with scuba gear—luckily, diving was something I did have experience in—I spent several days in the spring removing this extra flotation from half of the house.

Since you have to do demo above and below water pretty much at the same time to keep a houseboat from severely listing, I gathered some help for the work. We ran a circular saw up one wall, across the eaves, up the roof and down the other side before gutting the rest of the house down to the unsheathed framing—lap siding was nailed directly to the studs. I then added stringers, which are pressure-treated 6x8s that run perpendicular to the logs and serve as support for the joists, under the new bearing points and walls, pinning them with galvanized steel bolts and bearing plates. When working on water, levels are useless except as straightedges, so I ran strings to make sure the floor framing stayed in plane. To keep the house from twisting out of plane, as well as listing so badly that doors and drawers opened on their own, I did several dives to add and move around 80 new 55-gallon plastic barrels, recycled from a local soda-bottling plant. While working, I found that my tools had a great affinity for the water—but needed swimming lessons. Whenever I thought a lost tool was recoverable, I tied some string to a bolt and the other end to the house, then dropped the bolt into the water in the same area. On my next dive, I would just follow the strings. Most times—success!

By the time I had finished the support structure and

The refinished shell of an antique wood-burning range excases a new glass cooktop. A black stovepipe masks the ducting that leads to a vent fan in the attic. The 5-foot salvaged sink came from a local hotel that was condemned after an earthquake.



LEFT: The dining room's window casings, which match the home's trim, are sustainably fir sanded smooth, then topped with a custom-blended stain and a three coats of clear finish.

RIGHT: A 4-by-7-foot piece of reclaimed schoolhouse chalkboard, installed on a kitchen wall that opens to the dining room, serves as the message center. The rest of the slate was honed to make counters for the kitchen and a bathroom vanity.



ABOVE: Devon Biernacki plays on salvaged maple floors that his dad spent two days patching with epoxy before he had them professionally sanded and finished.



OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE:

A work of nearly floor-to-ceiling windows, a French door and a skylight—one of eight in the house—bring in enough natural light, even on cloudy days to brighten the large living room.

In the guest bath, the homeowner converted a mahogany dresser found at a local Salvation Army store into a vanity topped with honed reclaimed slate.

To get the feeling of an outdoor shower—which they originally wanted, the homeowners installed two skylights and a window in the master bath.

One of several built-ins, this fire storage unit in the master bedroom holds clothing and audio equipment.

floor framing, the Seattle rains were upon us. Krissy and I had moved into an apartment a few minutes away during the demo and planned to stay there for most of the construction, but we still needed to close the house up fast. So we hired Envirostructure to help with the rest of the framing. Since the house had settled and shifted over its life span, it was hard to match the original structure to the new walls and roof. I could have probably rebuilt the old part of the house in much less time than it took to do all the furring and custom work, such as individual rafter cuts. But then, if I had rebuilt everything from scratch, there wouldn't have been any of the original house's soul left. And preserving that was important to me.

To make the house as eco-friendly as possible, we used recycled or salvaged pieces when we could. Krissy helped source materials and together we dug hard for good quality, good vendors, and good prices. For the flooring in the entry and living areas, Krissy got her hands on some old maple from a circa 1865 linen mill in North Carolina. It came from a guy specializing in reclaimed barn wood and was only \$3.60 per square foot. Even at that unbelievable price, though, I almost sent back the stock when it arrived. It looked terrible, with cracks, splits, metal embedded in many of the boards, and lots of holes. The supplier convinced me to accept the shipment and told me that he threw in a few extra boards—actually double the order—so I would have enough of the good stuff to pick out. After installing the better boards, I spent two days filling something like 2,000 original nail holes with epoxy. But once it was sanded and finished I couldn't believe my eyes. It was stunning.

The flooring and peninsula in the kitchen are also reclaimed: teak planks from a mid-19th-century Dutch colonial building in Indonesia. We happened to find the exotic boards in the back room of a local furniture importer. The remaining counters are topped with chalkboard slate reclaimed from a local school. Krissy came home with six 4-foot-wide, 7-foot-tall boards one day and said, "It's cool. Can you do something with it?" After much sanding to remove the deep scratches, it

I SAVED ABOUT \$10,000 BY BUYING OFF WHITE, STOCK KITCHEN CABINETS AT HOME DEPOT, THEN TRICKING THEM OUT WITH EXTRA TRIM AND MATCHING PAINT.

looks beautiful. The counters have been in place for over two years now and have no stains or major scratches, though we are careful about placing heavy pots and pans on it. For all these custom touches, I was lucky to have two buddies, Duane Mullen and Darren Smith, who took turns helping me.

I gave similar attention to the exterior, laying out sustainable Brazilian redwood decking, creating a floating garden with built-in planters and a two-person swing, then hand-weaving copper tubing into a curvy, whimsical railing. It helps keep Devon, now 3, and his 8-month-old sister, Sophie, safely away from the Lake Union waters that we all love so much. ■

Find 11 more ideas for maximizing small rooms at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts



What I Did

Renovated a century-old houseboat

Remodeling cost: \$250,000

Time frame: 4 years

Where I saved: Used salvaged materials and did most of the work myself.

Where I splurged: Wood windows, doors, and trim that I had to sand, stain, and finish.

What I'd do differently: Not use sanded glass bath tile. It's beautiful, but though pretreated with a sealer before grouting, I had to spend three days with a random-orbit sander taking off a grout haze of silicone caulk that remained.

Biggest challenge: Trying to build a square, level and plumb addition without being able to use two normally indispensable carpenter tools: a level and a plumb bob.

How I solved it: Running lots of string lines and retaking lots of measurements.

FLOOR PLANS Though it added only 30 square feet, the new layout accommodates three finished bedrooms (two with extra headroom), a second bath and lots more storage.

1st floor



2nd floor



The whole family enjoys peering through the inch-thick 2-foot-square Plexiglas window in the floor outside the first-floor bath. There, they can view the houseboat's original timber raft, as well as crowds that scuttle over it and fish that swim in the waters below.



#1 Silence Squeaky Floors (and Stairs)

Your overnight guests don't need to know about your midnight refrigerator raids, so tighten up those creaking floorboards and stair treads before they wake up the whole house. Squeeeeek-No-More screws, available at home centers and hardware stores, draw flooring tight to joists, or stair treads to stringers, then their heads snap off, leaving a 1/8-inch-wide hole in the finished surface.

"The holes disappear on carpeting," says *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva. "For wood floors, fill the holes with a wax filler stick in a matching color."



2 4 Quick Fixes

Lightning-fast repairs you can get done before the first holiday party guest rings the doorbell. (Yep, we'll tell you how to fix that, too)

By Josh Garskof Photographs by Russell Kaye

There's nothing like the holiday season—and all the cocktail parties, family dinners, and overnight guests it entails—to make you notice little flaws around your house. Minor annoyances like scratched furniture and creaky wood floors suddenly become intolerable embarrassments. But the crush of

the season leaves little time for breaking out the power tools. Fortunately for you, we've got two dozen holiday shortcuts that will make you house-proud on the quick. Not all of these are exactly textbook solutions, but like stuffing mix and caterers, they'll make your holidays a whole lot happier than if you try to do everything from scratch.



CLOG-MEISTER
TOH plumbing and heating expert Richard Trethewey frees a hair-clogged stopper in this pedestal sink by taking its ball-and-socket assembly off the drainpipe.

Web Bonus

Guests leave behind stains and scratches? Find out how to fix them, at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

#3 Revive a Dead Doorbell

When a doorbell stops working, the button is usually the culprit. To know for sure, all you have to do is remove it and touch the wires to each other (Not to worry, they're low voltage.) If the chime sounds, pop on a replacement switch. If it doesn't, you'll need a voltage tester to sleuth out whether the problem is the transformer, the chime, or the wiring. But since time's running short, consider sticking up a battery-operated wireless doorbell system, like one of the many models offered by doorchime.com.

#4 Keep the Stainless Spotless

Do the fingerprints all over the appliances make your kitchen look like a crime scene? Take the advice of Dan Smith, showroom manager at Valcucine Chicago, an upscale kitchen outfitter. "The secret to cleaning stainless-steel surfaces is to never use stainless-steel cleaner," he says. Most of those products contain naphtha, which leaves an oily film that attracts dust and smears every time you touch it. Instead, Smith recommends using a glass cleaner that contains no ammonia or alcohol, such as the ones made by Restore or Method.

#5 Tighten Loose Chair Legs

A chair that suddenly collapses under one of your guests is no laughing matter (unless, of course, no one gets hurt). To prevent mishaps, *This Old House* master carpenter Norm Abram recommends that you take out any loose stretchers (the horizontal pieces that run between the legs) and scrape off the old glue with a knife. Apply a slow-setting epoxy, and lash everything together with a band clamp around the legs. Wipe up drips with vinegar. Take the clamp off the next day when the epoxy has cured.

#6 Camouflage Scratches in Woodwork

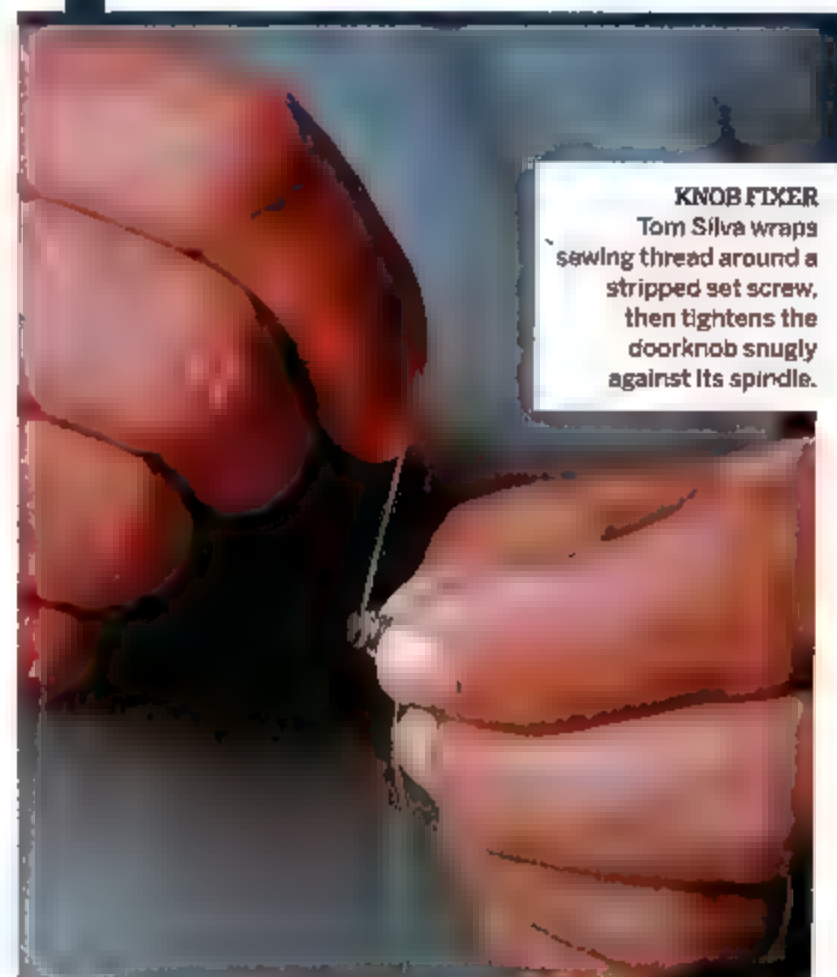
You can hide a damaged finish on antique furniture or any fine woodwork by applying a coat of pigmented wax, such as Briwax, or a pigmented polishing fluid, also known as scratch cover, which will make fine scratches all but disappear.

#7 Mask a Musty Smell

Scented candles or potpourri may help mask odors in small areas, but here's an all-encompassing solution for the whole house if you have forced-air heating. Put a couple of drops of vanilla extract on the furnace filter. The system's blower will then spread the sweet smell throughout the house. If the heat's not on, set the system on fan only.

Tighten a Loose Set Screw

Set screws are those tiny fasteners that hold everything from doorknobs on their spindles to wall-hung toilet-paper and towel hooks on their brackets. But some set screws just won't stay set. Try applying a drop of Loctite Threadlocker Blue to the threads and reinserting it. "It's a superglue-type adhesive that's strong enough to keep the screw from vibrating out, but it will easily release when you want to unscrew it," says Norm Abram. No glue will help if the threads are stripped, though. In that case, wrap some sewing thread clockwise around the screw's shank before putting it back.



KNOB FIXER
Tom Silva wraps sewing thread around a stripped set screw, then tightens the doorknob snugly against its spindle.

#9 Quiet a Bathroom Fan

That noisy vent fan—the one that effectively announces whenever someone is in the bathroom—may just be the rattle of a loose cover. For a simple fix, remove the cover and bend the spring-loaded attachment brackets slightly so that they grip a little tighter against the ceiling. While you're at it, switch off the circuit breaker and thoroughly vacuum the unit's insides to quiet the fan blades and take some strain off the motor.

#10 Ghostbust a Door

Little Lizzie, your monster-phobic niece, will totally freak if that out-of-plumb closet door swings open in the middle of the night. To avoid this trauma, you could take off the door and carefully realign the hinges. Or you could just pull one of the hinge pins, set it on a hard surface, and whack its middle with a hammer. This will bend the pin slightly so that when you tap it back in, the hinge will resist the force—gravity—that's pulling the door open.

#11 Add a Light Switch

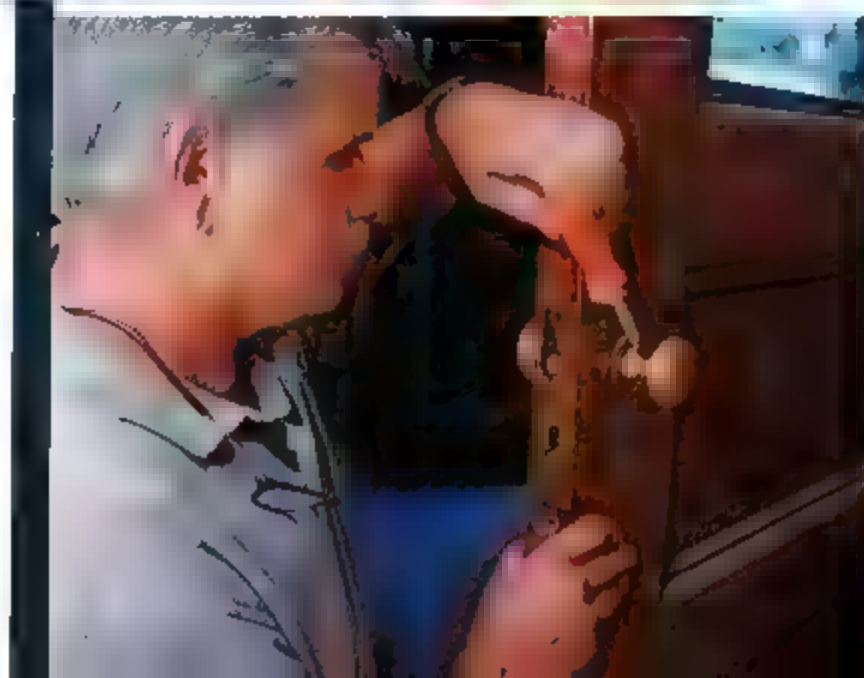
A room that has no overhead light fixture or switched outlet will leave your guests fumbling their way in the dark to turn on the table lamp. Unless, that is, you add a wireless wall switch, like the Leviton Anywhere Switch, which simply glues or screws to the wall. (The standard location is next to the doorknob side of the doorway, usually 43 to 48 inches off the floor.) Powered by disposable batteries, the switch sends a signal to a plug-in controller where you insert the table lamp's plug. Okay, so maybe it's not as much fun as The Clapper, but it's a whole lot quieter and more intuitive.

#12 Pop a Wallpaper Bubble

It's finally time to do something about those air bubbles under the wallpaper that your "handyman" brother-in-law so thoughtfully left behind. Make a tiny slice through each bubble with a sharp razor knife, then take an artist's syringe—a plastic, needle-tipped tool available from crafts shops—and inject a small amount of white PVA glue (like Elmer's) behind the paper. Smooth the area with a wallpaper brush or a dry paint roller, and use a damp sponge to gently wipe away any glue that squeezes out. Your brother-in-law's handiwork will never have looked better.

#13 Sweeten a Stinky Disposer

Why spend the money on store-bought disposer-cleaning capsules when baking soda works just as well? First, run the unit with plain water to clear out any gunk. Then, put in the stopper and fill the sink halfway with warm water. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of baking soda. Now remove the stopper as you flip on the disposer's switch. Toss in some lemon or orange peels as the water swirls down, and switch off the disposer when the water runs out.



Unclog a Powder-Room Sink

The surest solution is to remove the P-trap, flush out the clog, and reinstall the trap. But if you don't want to be stuck under the sink when company arrives, try clearing the clog from above. You might not even need the wrench in your toolbox. Just unscrew the ball-and-socket connection that holds the assembly together in back of the sink (see photo above), slide out the rod, and remove the pop-up stopper. The offending glob of hair and gunk—or at least enough of it to get the drain flowing again—is likely to come out on the end of the stopper. Clean it off, replace the assembly, and hand-tighten its ball-and-socket nut.

#14 Steady a Loose Toilet

Better take care of that rocking throne before Big Uncle Earl comes to visit, the last thing you want is an out-of-commission toilet with a house full of company. First, check the closet bolts holding the bowl to the floor. If they're loose, hand-tighten them, then give them an additional quarter-turn with a wrench. If they're already tight, steady the toilet by slipping some plastic plumpers' shims into the gap where the bowl meets the floor. You'll find these useful wedges in plumbing supply stores and the plumbing aisles at home centers.

#15 Reinvigorate a Wimpy Shower

If your shower power just ain't what it used to be, the showerhead could be clogged with mineral deposits. No need to replace it, though. Gently unscrew it from the pipe and soak it overnight in vinegar. (If you don't have that much time, a 50-50 mixture of hot water and CLR, a powerful calcium dissolver, will do the job in a few minutes.) Then wrap new Teflon tape clockwise around the pipe threads and turn the head back into place.

#17 Lawsuit-Proof the Walk

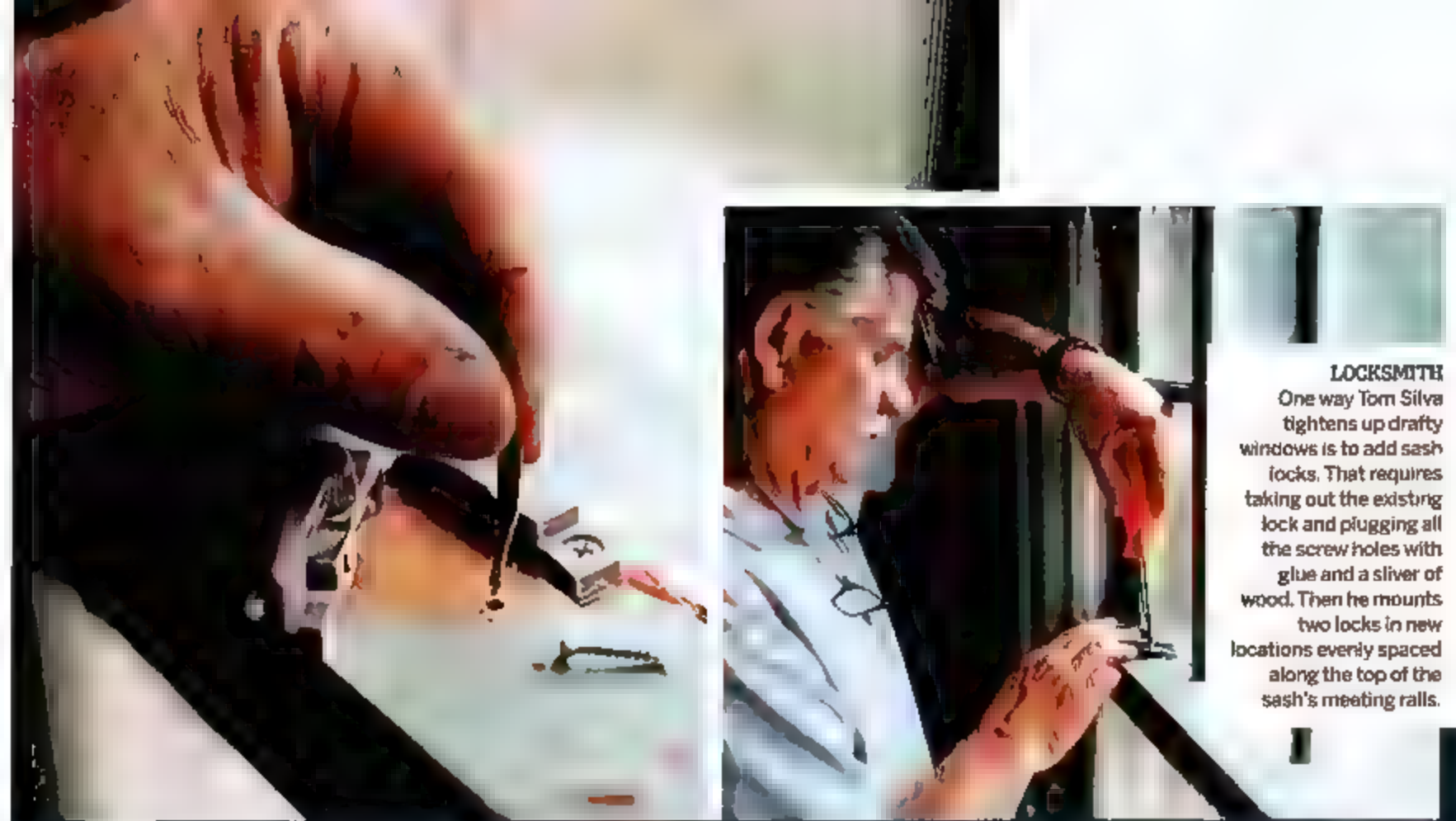
You don't want anyone's memories of the visit to include bruises or broken bones, so make sure there's no ice for people to slip on. But chemical de-icers damage masonry, plants, and shoes, and fireplace ashes or kitty litter ends up being tracked into the house. To clear the walk in a hurry, follow *This Old House* landscape contractor Roger Cook's advice and gently scrape off whatever ice you can with a long-handled ice chipper. Then, loosen the stubborn bits by pouring a bucket of hot water on them. Just make sure to dry up the water with a towel so it doesn't turn into a new layer of ice.

#18 Cover Up Bathroom Mold

The mildew-blackened caulk around your bathtub will surely disappoint your mother, but no amount of bleaching will make it white again. Here's a quick, cosmetic solution: Hide the mildew under a thin layer of fresh caulk. (Let it cure overnight before using the shower.) Mom will never be the wiser. This is not a permanent fix. If you don't remove and replace all the caulk, the mold will grow up through the new layer in a matter of weeks. For step-by-step instructions on how to replace bathroom caulk, see thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts.

#19 Recalibrate the Oven

Have you earned a reputation for medium-rare holiday turkey or blackened pumpkin pie? Maybe it's the fault of your oven, not your cooking. Often the thermostat in the oven wall misreads the temperature inside the cooking space. Check the true temperature with a stand-alone oven thermometer, then recalibrate the oven's thermostat following the instructions in the owner's manual. (If it's missing, you can usually find it online.)



LOCKSMITH One way Tom Silva tightens up drafty windows is to add sash locks. That requires taking out the existing lock and plugging all the screw holes with glue and a sliver of wood. Then he mounts two locks in new locations evenly spaced along the top of the sash's meeting rails.

#20 Tighten a Drafty Window

Those leaky old windows are bound to make your guests uncomfortable or cause the candles to sputter. New weatherstripping—the best solution—requires removing both sash. For an easier fix that you can do with the window in place, Tom Silva suggests adding an extra sash lock.

This treatment is best on sash you can wiggle in and out when the lock is engaged. Remove both lock pieces, and plug the old screw holes with a sliver of wood and wood glue. Link the lock halves together and reinstall them on the sash about a third of the way in from the side of the window. (Don't forget to drill pilot holes for each of the screws first.) Now do the same with a matching sash lock about a third of the way in from the opposite edge. When both locks are closed, the sash should pull tightly together and keep the cold air outside, where it belongs.

#21 Silence a Rattling Door

A door that shakes and rattles when it's closed isn't resting firmly against its stop, the way it should be. For most interior doors these days, you can fix this problem by adjusting the latch plate that the door latch engages when shut. Find the little tab that sticks into the latch plate's hole, and use the tip of a screwdriver to bend that tab slightly toward the stop. Close the door. You'll know the tab is bent the right amount when the latch engages securely and the door doesn't rattle.

If your latch plate has no tab, put some peel-and-stick silicone bumpers onto the side of the stop facing the door. They stop the rattling by pushing the door tighter against the plate.

#22 Brighten an Outdoor Walkway

Folks are still laughing about that long "trip" cousin Raphie took the night he came bounding up to your house. Save him from further embarrassment by installing solar-powered lights, a quick, no-wiring-needed way to illuminate dark walkways. Available in an array of styles, they use photovoltaic cells to soak up the sun's energy, which gets stored in a battery that powers the bulbs after dark. But if the location is shady or you don't want to risk having no lights after a dark, cloudy day, use battery-operated landscape lights instead. They can last for weeks on a pair of D-cells each. Either way, look for lights with LED bulbs, which use very little power.

#23 Add a Fireplace for Santa

Do your children still believe, even though your home has no fireplace? Fuel their fantasies with a direct vent gas unit. Don't tell the kids, but these fireplaces need no chimneys. The heating contractor simply installs the firebox on an exterior wall and vents it directly to the outside. The burner connects to a natural gas or propane supply. (Electric models need no venting at all.) For about \$2,000 to \$5,000 installed, you've got an instant "entryway" for St. Nick and his bag of goodies.

#24 Relax and Enjoy Yourself

You may have an eagle eye for imperfections, but the truth is, your guests probably aren't going to notice all those little things that bug you. So don't sweat it if you don't get to every one of the fixes on your wish list. More than anything, holiday spruce-ups should be about making yourself happy. ■

Reattach Loose Countertop Laminate

You don't need the pros' special tools—laminate adhesive and a J roller—to stick peeling Formica back in place. Use a heat gun, or even a hair dryer, to gently heat the laminate and soften the old glue underneath. Whack it with a rubber mallet or a hammer cushioned by a block of wood. Weight it down for about an hour with a stack of heavy books while the laminate cools and readheres to the substrate.



COUNTER FITTER Tom uses a heat gun to warm up the glue under a bubbled laminate countertop. Pounding the softened laminate with a hammer and a block of wood resticks it to the substrate.

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... differ as they'll soon
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PHOTOGRAPH
BY FLAMEN PETKOV

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105 Skill Building

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Fireplace Mortar Touch-up
Toggle-Bolt Towel Bar
Waterproof Shower Niche

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Brush Care and Use

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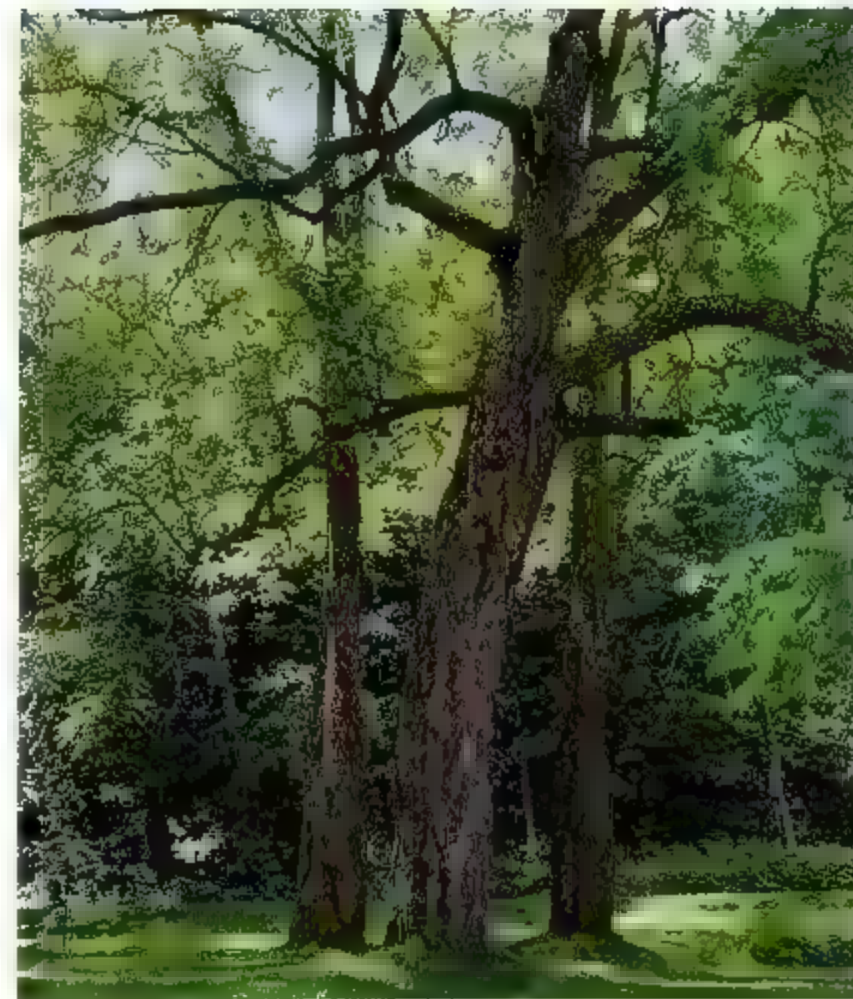
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WORKSHOP

Ask This Old House

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



Turning a Nuisance Into Lumber

We have a tall, healthy black walnut tree that is more a nuisance than a thing of beauty. We're wondering if there might be any commercial use for the tree. How would we find out?

LARRY AND GLORIA DAVIDOW, CLARK SUMMIT, PA

Norm Abram replies: Black walnut is a beautiful wood, one of the few native hardwoods with a deep color. Most any woodworker would be happy to get his hands on some.

Not long ago, arborist Matt Foti gave me some black walnut he had taken down for a customer. When he saw what good condition the wood was in, he cut it into usable planks with a portable sawmill. I used some of those planks to build a set of nesting tables.

ABOVE: Beneath their deeply furrowed bark, black walnut trees yield a beautiful, dark wood prized by woodworkers. But only those trees with straight, fat, defect-free trunks have any commercial value.

Have an arborist take a look at your tree to verify the species and tell you how much it will cost to fell it. He may also be able to size up how much useful wood it could yield by checking the circumference and straightness of the trunk, the height of the lowest branches, and how many defects it might have, such as knots, insect holes, or lightning damage.

If it looks like there's enough good-quality wood, a local woodworker or sawmill might be willing to split or cover the costs of felling and milling the tree. I doubt you'd make any money, but at least you'll be rid of your nuisance and have a good home for the wood.

Salvaging Tile

I'd like to remove some 9-by-15-inch marble tiles attached to a concrete floor with portland-cement mortar. Is it possible to do this without damaging them?

CLEVELAND MCNEEL, BROOKLYN, NY

Joe Ferrante replies: You can do most anything if you have enough time, but unless the tiles are extremely valuable, I wouldn't try to salvage them. Portland-cement mortar bonds solidly to tile, marble, and concrete, so unless these tiles are already loose, the chances of removing them in one piece are slim at best.

I did once reclaim some 150-year-old Delft

Q: WHAT IS IT?

- A Carpet stretcher
- B Brick sizer
- C Boot remover
- D Or...



* For answer, see page 117



TOM SILVA
GENERAL CONTRACTOR



NORM ABRAM
MASTER CARPENTER



RICHARD TRETHEWEY
PLUMBING & HEATING EXPERT



KEVIN O'CONNOR
HOST



ROGER COOK
LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

tiles from a fireplace surround by carefully chipping away the mortar with a carbide-tipped chisel and an angle grinder fitted with a diamond blade. It took me four hours to salvage six tiles, but the fellow who owned them thought they were worth the trouble and expense. Generally, however, you're better off replacing tiles than saving them.

Tiling contractor Joe Ferrante has tiled the bathrooms on many This Old House TV projects.



Authentic, handmade Delft tiles, like the ones surrounding this fireplace, were a famed Dutch export for nearly three hundred years. Now the only sources of Delft tile are dwindling private stockpiles or painstaking removal efforts.

Sagging Storm Door

The screws on my metal storm door don't hold very well, so the door hangs unevenly and doesn't close properly. Do I need to use longer screws?

DEBBIE HARR S. COVINGTON, GA

Tom Silva replies: On a metal storm door there are two sets of screws, the ones holding the door hinge to the jambs and the ones that hold the hinge to the edge of the door itself. Either set might be the problem.

Start by checking the screws that go into the jamb. Open the door enough to get at them and tighten each one. If a screw turns freely, it's stripped and needs to be replaced with a

stainless-steel screw that is at least 1 inch longer. First, lengthen the hole by drilling it with a bit slightly smaller than the screw's shank, then plug the stripped hole by dabbing some exterior wood glue on a couple of wood toothpicks and stuffing them into the hole. Break them off flush with the jamb. Now install the new screw. Repeat for other holes as necessary.

If any of the screws holding the hinge to the door are stripped, replace them with ones that are the next larger diameter but of the same length. If that doesn't work, you will have to drill some new holes in different spots or install pop rivets in the existing holes.

Cold Blast of Air

My two-story house has forced-air heat. Every time the upstairs zone kicks on, we get a blast of cold air before the air gradually warms. Is there a way to prevent this?

MANSOUR MOUSSAVI CRANSTON, R.I.

Richard Trethewey replies: A house with separate zones has two separate sets of air ducts—one for the second floor and one for the first floor. The reason for the problem upstairs is that the ducts run through the attic, and during the winter the air inside them can get very cold when the furnace isn't operating. Then, when the blower does come on, all that cold air is pushed out before the warm air arrives.

The best solution to this problem is to bring the ducts within the envelope of the house by insulating the entire attic. That's a fairly big and expensive project, however.

For a less expensive fix, try wrapping insulation around the attic ducts to keep the air warmer between blower cycles. If that doesn't do the trick, install a fan control that runs the blower fan at a very low speed all the time to prevent cold air from accumulating in the ducts. When the furnace kicks on, the fan ramps up to normal speed. The same control used on a central air-conditioning system will also help keep humidity levels in check.

Unmitigated Galls

We have two 20-year-old 'Canada Red Select' cherry trees that have—so we've been told—"galls." We've cut off the affected areas, but the problem returns. Are galls harmful, and if so, what steps should we take to get rid of them?

ED CANEPA, FERGUS FALLS, MINN.



Black knot is a fungus-induced gall that disfigures and kills cherry and plum trees. A concerted pruning and spraying program may be able to control this disease, but most often it's easier to cut down the affected trees and remove them.

Roger Cook replies: Galls are abnormal plant growths caused by any number of things. The galls on your trees come from a fungal disease called black knot, which affects stone-fruit trees like plums and cherries. It usually spreads from wild cherries to planted cultivars like yours. The galls start small, but as they grow, they gradually encircle and kill the branch. In time, the fungus can girdle and kill the entire tree. In most cases, I would cut down the tree and haul it away, but it sounds like you have significant specimens that are worth trying to save.

First, wait until late fall and winter so you don't spread the disease, then cut off all the limbs with galls, 4 to 6 inches back from each eruption. Keep a lookout for smaller knots and remove them as well. The pruned limbs should be collected and removed far away from the site. This will also be a great time to clear any wild cherry trees from your property.



ONLINE VIDEOS

Starting to feel the chill? Watch Richard Trethewey fix common home-heating problems at thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts

PHOTO: DON PENNY/TIME INC. DIGITAL STUDIO

Once the pruning is complete, the next step is to spray the trees with a fungicide. Spraying calls for very specific timing, however, and is best done by a certified arborist, who will have the equipment needed to do the job safely and efficiently on your large trees. He'll tell you how many treatments are necessary. The good news is that trees have tremendous recuperative powers, so they should grow back nicely if you manage to eradicate the disease.

Laminate Floor Repair

We installed Pergo laminate flooring in our kitchen several years ago. It has held up to our five children very well, except where our boys have dropped heavy tools from time to time, including an anvil, which landed on its pointy end. Do you know of something we can do to repair the damage?

KEITH CHRISTENSEN, MODESTO, CALIF.

Kevin O'Connor replies: I'm guessing that anvil damage isn't covered in your warranty. Ac-

cording to a customer service technician for Pergo, dents less than about 1/4 inch wide can be fixed with color-matched putty available through flooring suppliers. It's applied with a putty knife but shouldn't be sanded because you might scratch the surrounding flooring.

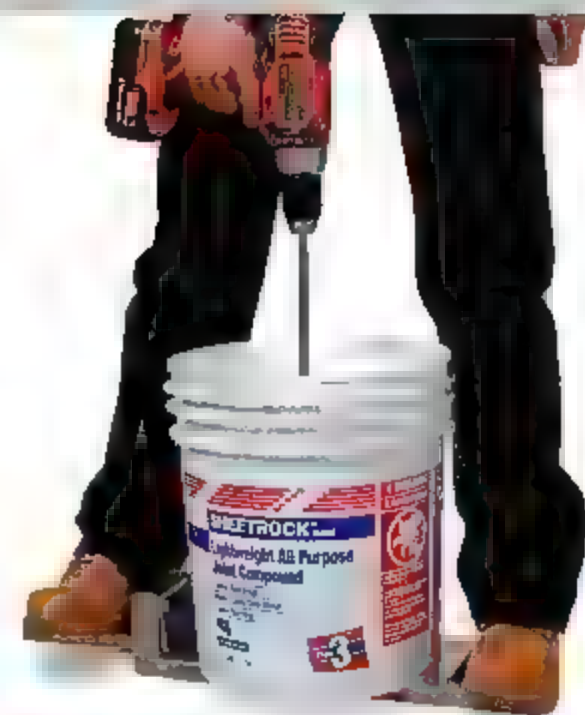
If the damaged area is larger than 1/4 inch, Pergo recommends hiring an "endorsed installer" to replace the plank, because work that isn't done right can damage neighboring planks. Check the Pergo website to find someone near you who has specialized training to do the job right. ■

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

Ask This Old House
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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 24



{ A: WHAT IS IT? }

D Bucket clamp

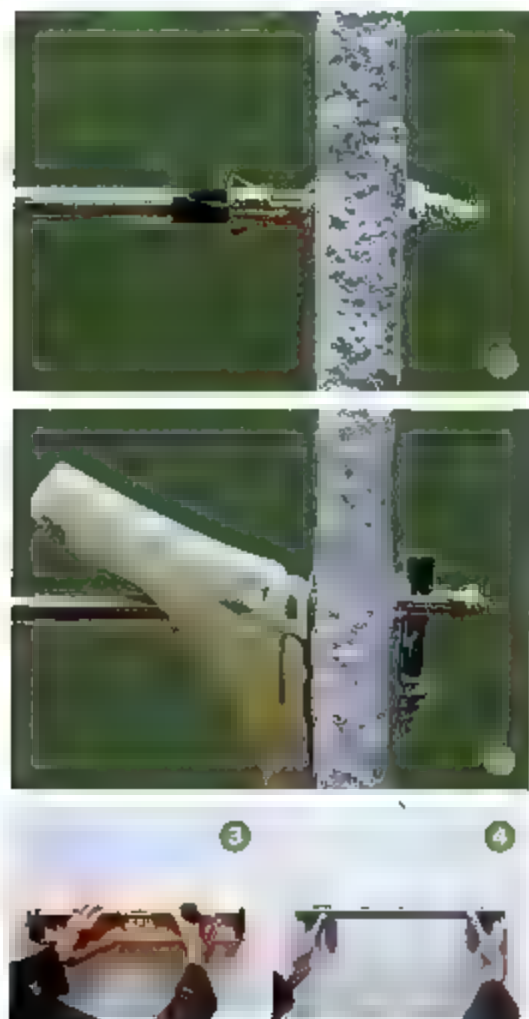
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Installing a Towel Bar

What to do when there are no studs where you need them



Studs provide the best, most secure place to anchor a towel bar. But when there isn't a stud where you want it to be, your towel-bar screws need a good anchor in the drywall. Forget about those cone-shaped plastic anchors often packaged with the bar—they pull out too easily. Instead, spring for some robust metal toggle anchors, which can withstand 40 pounds of pull when embedded in 1/2-inch drywall. So unless you plan to use the bar for chin-ups or arabesques, there's not much chance that it will ever come loose. Just follow these steps:

- 1. Install the anchor.** Make a vertical mark where you want one end of the towel bar to be placed. Screw in the first toggle anchor at that mark until the head is flush with the wall; no starter hole is needed.
- 2. Attach the first towel-bar mount.** Screw the bar's mounting plate (in this case a plastic bracket) into the anchor. The toggle will automatically swivel into position behind the drywall as the screw is driven in. Continue turning the screw until the toggle snugs up against the back side of the drywall.
- 3. Mark the other end.** Hold the bar in place on the wall and make a vertical mark in line with the

screw hole on the bar's other mount. Hold a level so it's in line with the first toggle; use it to position a horizontal mark across the vertical one. Drive another toggle anchor into the wall where the vertical and horizontal marks cross.

4. Complete the installation. Mark the locations of all the remaining mounting-plate screw holes and drive toggle anchors through each one. Then, drive screws through the mounts as in Step 2. Now you can hang those big, heavy, wet towels on your bar without a second's hesitation.

—NATALIE RODRIGUEZ

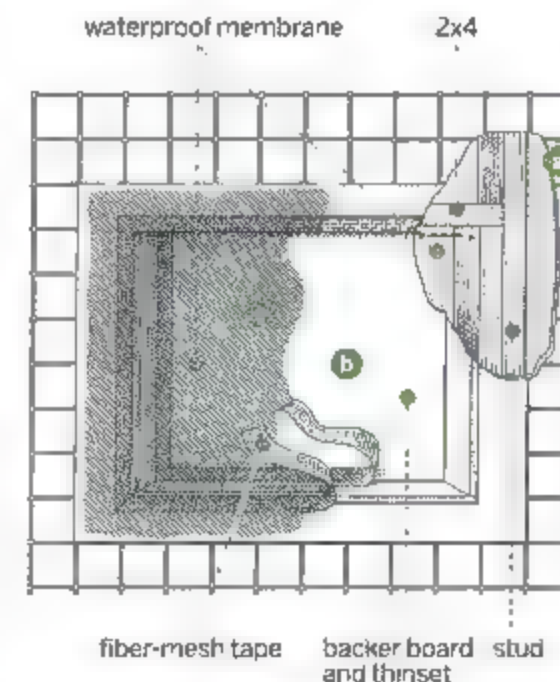
Making a Tiled Niche for a Shower

How to keep water from leaking into the wall



A shallow niche in a tiled shower wall provides a perfect recess for storing the soaps and containers that can clutter up the bathing area. But the added convenience won't be worthwhile if water gets into the wall cavity. Here's how veteran tile contractor Joe Ferrante, a frequent guest on the *TOH* TV show, ensures that niches in newly constructed showers remain watertight. "The method I use is overkill," he admits. "But if you do it this way, it will never leak." —TB

- 1. Look for studs.** This project will be much easier if no studs are cut. To find studs in new construction, look for the screwheads in the backer board. Mark the rough location of the niche on the wall.
- 2. Tile and cut.** Set the wall tile all around the niche location, but stop one tile short of the mark. To find the exact perimeter of the opening, make a spacer tie. Trim down a full-size tie by the thickness of the backer board. Place one edge of the spacer against the set tiles and mark the perimeter of the niche along the other edge. Cut along the perimeter with an angle grinder and a masonry blade.
- 3. Frame the opening.** Insert 2x4s horizontally between the studs at the top and the bottom of the opening. Secure them to the studs with screws driven diagonally. If necessary, screw pieces of wood to the stud faces to make a frame flush with the entire inside edge of the backer board (A).
- 4. Waterproof.** Coat the back side of the wall and all the exposed wood in the niche with a brush-on waterproofing membrane. The next day, when the



membrane has cured, screw backer board to the back wall and to the four sides of the wood frame. Start at the bottom and work up. Cover all the joints with thinset and mesh tape (B). Wait a day, then brush the waterproofing on all the niche surfaces, as well as the untiled border on the face of the shower (C). The following day, comb on the thinset and finish tiling the niche inside and out. ■

TOH TIP

You can put a niche anywhere, at any size or height that suits you, as long as it doesn't interfere with insulation or plumbing.

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WORKSHOP

Norm's Notebook

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

PAINTBRUSH CARE

Buying More Brush Time

Back when most paint was oil-based, we used to say "If you're going to lunch, clean your brush. If you're getting coffee, don't worry about it." Now, some of these new low-VOC latex paints dry so fast, the brush gets stiff in a few minutes. To buy extra time, I'll add a small amount of latex conditioner to the paint, just enough to keep the brush from dragging.



{ TIP }

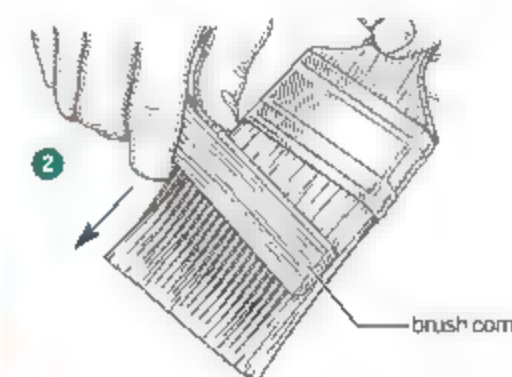
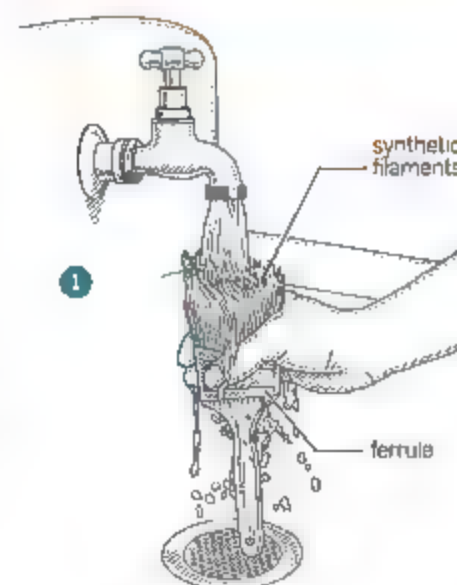
Whether you're using a brush or a roller, the rules for applying paint are the same: Keep a wet edge, lay a thin coat, and use nice, long strokes.

I need good control when I'm applying a finish, so I pinch the ferrule between my thumb and first two fingers. For the final feathering strokes that smooth the finish, I switch to a more delicate grip farther up the handle, as I do here.

Cleaning Out Latex Paints

I clean a synthetic brush as soon as the latex paint creeps up near the ferrule. Put some water in a 5-gallon bucket and swish the brush around to get the bulk of the paint out. Then, for the paint that's collected deep in the filaments, run them upside down under a faucet (1) to make sure you get it all out. When the water runs clear, brush the filaments with a metal brush comb (2), which straightens the bristles and coaxes out any bits of dried paint. Wire brushes also work well for this purpose, but they're pretty aggressive. In a pinch, we also used a hair comb.

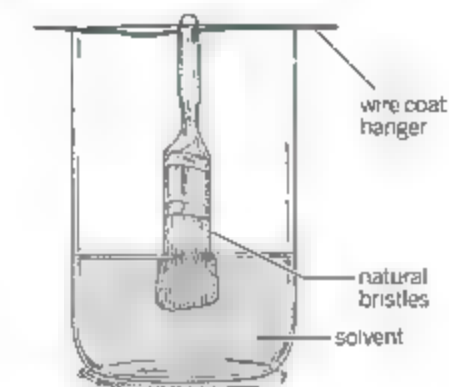
Mechanical brush spinners are a great way to get excess water out of big, 4-inch flat brushes, but for anything 2½ inches or less, just smack out the loose water against a piece of plywood and form the brush back to shape with my hand. Then store the brushes in a plastic zipper bag, or in their original packaging.



Cleaning Out Oil Paints

The first step is a "dirty" jar where the bristles soak in paint thinner without touching the bottom; this way they won't sit in pigment and become bent. It's a trick my father taught me—he'd hang his brushes from a welding rod, but just use a length of coat hanger wire (below). If I need a brush the next day, I'll soak it overnight, then comb it out and get back to work. If I'm putting it away for a while, I'll still soak it overnight, then comb it, and dip it in a jar of clean solvent. After a quick flick to get rid of excess solvent, wipe it dry on a newspaper or a rag. I'll see any paint. I'll dip it again in clean thinner, then flick and wipe again.

Keep the dirty jar tightly sealed. When the paint settles, I'll decant the thinner into a clean jar. I never toss out solvent. It's wasteful, bad for the environment and illegal, besides.



ONLINE NOTEBOOK
See more tips and techniques from TOH's master carpenter at thisoldhouse.com/norm



PHOTOS (TOP) DAVID JARMAN; (BOT) QUINN TREMBLAY; ILLUSTRATIONS: KERRY BATES

Directory



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

(pp. 15-22)

Are You Sure You're Insured? Sandy Praeger, NAIC president-elect and Kansas insurance commissioner. naic.org. **Thanks to:** Insurance Information Institute. iii.org.

(pp. 25-28)

Kitchen designer: Dana Jones, The Kitchen Consultant, Long Beach, CA, 562-431-1911, kitchenadvice.com. **Contractor:** Dan Wentz, E. Dan Construction, Garden Grove, CA, 714-636-7988. **Cabinetmaker:** David Swart, All About Wood, Garden Grove, CA, 714-530-7757. **Cabinet paint:** Hearts of Palm, Sherwin-Williams, Cleveland, OH, 800-331-7979, sherwin-williams.com. **Cabinet pulls:** Restoration Hardware, 800-910-9836, restorationhardware.com. **Range and hood:** Thermador, Huntington Beach, CA, 800-656-9226, thermador.com. **Sink:** Kohler, Kohler, WI, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **Faucet:** Grohe America Inc., Bloomington, IL, 630-582-7711, groheamerica.com. **Microwave:** GE Appliances, Louisville, KY, 800-626-2000, ge.com. **Dishwasher:** Frigidaire, Electrolux Home Products, Martinez, GA, 800-374-4432, frigidaire.com. **Refrigerator:** KitchenAid, St. Joseph, MO, 800-334-6559, kitchenaid.com. **Floor tile:** Antica Ceramica, antiaceramica.it.

(pp. 31-32)

Architect: Carol Kurth, AIA, The Office of Carol J.W. Kurth, AIA Architect, P.C., Bedford, NY, 914-234-2595, carolkurtharchitects.com. **Contractor:** R.C. Torre Construction, Bedford Hills, NY, 914-666-6993, interior.design. Carol Kurth and Tina Schwab, The Carol Kurth Collection Ltd., Bedford, NY, 914-234-2595. **Sinks and tub:** Kohler Company, Kohler, WI, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **Faucets, tub spout, and towel bars:** Perrin & Rowe, Rohl L.C., Irvine, CA, 800-777-9762, rohlhome.com. **Light fixtures:** Hudson Valley Lighting Inc., Newburgh, NY, 845-561-0300, hudsonvalleylighting.com. **Tile:** Ceramica Magica Tile's Perla Series, available through Champion Tile, Bedford Hills, NY, 914-666-2828. **Wallcovering:** Elites, Donghia (to the trade only). **Window treatments:** Kravat Stripe Fabric and Pollack Inset Fabric (to the trade only). **Towels:** Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.com.

(pp. 39-42)

Half Circle: Devonshire towel ring, Kohler Co., Kohler, WI, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **Coordinated Flushers:** Toilet tank levers in oil-rubbed bronze, J9146, and polished chrome, J968, Jaclo Industries, Cranford, NJ, 800-852-3906, jaclo.com. **Double Duty:** Broadmoor towel arm, Waterworks Inc., Danbury, CT, 800-899-6757, waterworks.com.

Bathroom Bling: Country Crystal Double Robe Hook, Rohl L.C., Irvine, CA, 800-777-9762, rohlhome.com. **Unhinged:** Wrought-iron toilet paper holder, Crown City Hardware, Pasadena, CA, 626-794-0234, crowncityhardware.com. **Quick Hookup:** Dazzle robe hook, American Standard Co., Piscataway, NJ, 800-442-1902, americanstandard-us.com. **Classic Black:** Story Ridge double robe hook and towel ring, Moen Inc., North Olmstead, OH, 800-289-6636, moen.com. **Mini Bar:** Lockwood mini towel bar in aged pewter, Delta Faucet Company, Indianapolis, IN, 800-345-3358, deltafaucet.com. **Vintage Flusher:** Brass-and-porcelain tank lever, Crown City Hardware, Pasadena, CA, 626-794-0234, crowncityhardware.com. **Robe Valet:** Margaux valet, Kohler Co., Kohler, WI, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **A Touch of Leather:** Zanzibar 18-inch rod, Atlas Homewares, Glendale, CA, 800-799-6755, atlashomewares.com.

SALEPLACE Cast With Character (pp. 45-46) **Hinges:** Discovery Architectural Antiques, Gonzales, TX, 830-672-2428, discoverys.com. **Olde Good Things:** New York, NY, 888-551-7333, oldegoodthings.com. **Metalwork exhibit:** "A Brass Menagerie: Metalwork of the Aesthetic Movement," Bard Graduate Center for the Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, New York, NY, www.bgc.bard.edu.

(pp. 55-60)

Less Gritty in the City (pp. 55-60) **Architect:** Sara Loperfoglio, RA, partner, Selldorf Architects, New York, NY, 212-219-9571, selldorf.com. **Designer:** Ed Wood, partner, Radi Inc., Hoboken, NJ, 201-420-4700, radiinc.com. **Project architect:** Lauren Wegel, Lauren Wegel Architect, New York, NY, 212-334-4959. **Contractor:** Brian Donohue, Continental Group, Wappingers Falls, NY, 845-298-7018, ziggyrutan.com. **Dywall:** Hugh Murray, C&M Drywall Inc., Maspeth, NY, 917-498-2239, Master carpenter, Patrick McCormack, Castlevale Construction Corp., Maspeth, NY, 718-305-8184. **Bathroom tile:** Ann Sacks Tile and Stone, a division of Kohler Co., Portland, OR, 800-278-8453, annsacks.com. **Plumbing fixtures and fittings:** Kohler Co., Kohler, WI, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **Medicine cabinets:** Roborn, a division of Kohler Co., Bristol, PA, 800-877-2376, robern.com. **Bath fans:** Panasonic Corp., Secaucus, NJ, 800-211-7262, panasonic.com. **Paint:** Valspar Corp., Minneapolis, MN, 800-845-9061, valspar.com. **Sealants:** GE Sealants & Adhesives, Huntersville, NC, 877-943-7325, gesealants.com. **Hardware:** Schiage, a division of Ingersoll-Rand Co., Olathe, KS, 800-847-1864, schiage.com. **Kitchen appliances:** Jenn-Air, a division of Whirlpool Corp., Benton Harbor, MI, 800-536-6247.

Windows: Andersen Corp., Bayport, MN, 800-426-4261, andersenwindows.com. **Kitchen cabinets:** Available exclusively through Art et Maison, New York, NY, 212-226-3665,artetmaison.com. **Insulation:** Roxul Inc., a division of Rockwool International, Milton, Ontario, Canada, 800-265-6878.

(pp. 69-72)

Tougher Timbers (pp. 69-72) **I-joists, parallel-strand lumber, oriented-strand board, laminated-veneer lumber, laminated-strand lumber:** I-Level by Weyerhaeuser Company, Federal Way, WA, 800-525-5440, ilevel.com. **Plywood:** Georgia-Pacific Corp., Atlanta, GA, 404-652-4000, gp.com. **Glulam:** Unadilla Laminated Products, Unadilla, NY, 607-369-9341, unadillam.com. **Thanks to:** Joseph Chariand, Jack Merry, Merritt Kline, and Craig Adair of APA, The Engineered Wood Association, Tacoma, WA, 253-565-6600, apawood.org. Sheldon Kahan, Interstate + Lakeland Lumber, Greenwich, CT, 203-531-8050, interstatelumber.com. Darryl Rogers, Rogers Krajnak Architects, Inc., Columbus, OH, 614-461-0243, rogerskrajnak.com.

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Geothermal Heat Pump (pp. 75-76) **Thanks to:** Phil Jeffers, president, Energy Design Systems, Andover, MA, 800-221-4822, energyd.com. Steve Rosenstock, Edison Electric Institute, Washington, D.C., 202-508-5000, eei.org.

(pp. 81-86)

Painting a Room (pp. 81-86) **Latex conditioner:** Floetrol, The Flood Company, Hudson, OH, 800-321-3444, Okon Paintbooster, Zinsser Co. Inc., Somerset, NJ, 732-469-8100, zinsser.com. **Thanks to:** Benjamin Moore & Co., Montvale, NJ, benjaminmoore.com.

(pp. 88-95)

Recessed Homework Station: Architect: Jay Haverson, Haverson Architecture, Greenwich, CT, 203-629-8300, haversonarchitecture.com. **Integral Bar Cabinet:** Architect: Stuart Disston, Austin Patterson Disston Architects, Southport, CT, 203-255-4031, apdashitects.com. **Stand-up Desk:** Designer: Scott W. Smith, Smith River Kitchens, East Hampton, NY, 631-329-7122, smithriverkitchens.com. **Under-Window Cabinet:** Architect: Anthony Vermandois, Anthony Vermandois Architect, Sag Harbor, NY, 631-725-2177. **Columned Room Divider:** Designer: Mark Hughes, GTM Architects, Bethesda, MD, 866-821-4862, gtmarchitects.com. **Stair-Wall Wine Cellar:** Cabinets: Wood-Mode Inc., Kreamer, PA, 877-635-7500, wood-mode.com. **Fireplace Niche:** Architect: Jay Haverson, Haverson

Architecture. **Mudroom Bench:** Architect: Carol Kurth, The Office of Carol J.W. Kurth, AIA Architect, P.C., Bedford, NY, 914-234-2595, carolkurtharchitects.com. **Well-Ordered Wardrobe:** Architect: Anthony Vermandois, Anthony Vermandois Architect. **Dressing Room Shelving:** Designers: Rick & Liz O'Leary, Two Trees Design, Croton Falls, NY, 914-669-0014. **Window Seat:** Designer: Connie Edwards, CKD, CBD, American Woodmark. **Cabinets:** increase Depth Cabinets, available in depths of 12 to 24 inches in increments of 1 inch. **3-inch universal filler strip:** UF#3. **Toe molding:** 8-foot Ogee PB. **Filler panel behind cabinet door:** base end panel, 3/16-inch. **Top deck:** 3/4-inch wood tall end panel. **Cabinet doors:** Mounted fully overlaid with concealed hinges. Also used as decorative end panel. All parts from the Annapolis White collection by American Woodmark, available exclusively at Home Depot, 800-967-8182, woodmark-homedepot.com.

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Antidessicant: Wilt-Pruf Products Inc., 800-972-0726, wiltpruf.com. **For further information:** The Cox Arboretum and Gardens, coxgardens.com. American Conifer Society, conifersociety.org.

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Baby On Board (pp. 100-105) **Contractor:** Envirostructure Construction Corp., Seattle, WA, 206-325-5853. **Skylights:** Velux American Inc., Greenwood, SC, 800-888-3589, veluxusa.com. **Kitchen cabinets:** Kraftmaid, a division of Masco Corp., Middlefield, OH, 888-562-7444, kraftmaid.com. **Oven:** Miele Inc., Princeton, NJ, 800-843-7231, miele.com. **Slate and kitchen sink:** Second Use, Seattle, WA, 206-763-6929, seconduse.com. **Interior trim stain:** Golden Pecan and English Chestnut, Minwax, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 800-523-9299, minwax.com. **Interior trim finish:** Arm-R-Seal, General Finishes, East Troy, WI, 800-783-6050, generalfinishes.com. **Guest Bath Mirror:** Bellacor, Mendota Heights, MN, 877-723-5522, bellacor.com. **Faucet:** Sign of the Crab, Rancho Cordova, CA, 916-638-2722, signofthecrab.com. **Master Bath Shower fixtures:** Delta Faucet Company, Indianapolis, IN, 800-345-3358, deltafaucet.com. **Grohe:** Bloomington, IL, 630-582-7711, groheamerica.com. **Glass tile:** Chiaro Tile System, chiarotile.com.

(pp. 106-111)

Thanks to: Jeffrey May, indoor air quality professional and author of *The Mold Survival Guide* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004). Dan Smith

Valcucine Chicago, Chicago, IL, 312-755-0356, valcucinechicago.com. **Wireless doorbells:** DoorChime.com, Hermitage, TN, 800-366-7235, doorchime.com. **Snap-off screws:** Squeeeek No More, O'Berry Enterprises, Ringwood, IL, 800-459-8428, oberry-enterprises.com. **Naphtha-free cleaners for stainless steel:** Restore glass cleaner, Restore Products, Minneapolis, MN, 612-331-5979, restoreproducts.com. **Method window wash:** Method, San Francisco, CA, 866-963-8463, methodhome.com. **Wax fill stick:** Minwax, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 800-523-9299, minwax.com. **Thread glue:** Loctite Threadlocker Blue, Henkel Consumer Adhesives, Avon, OH, 800-321-0253, loctiteproducts.com. **Wireless wall switch:** Leviton 6697-W, Leviton Mfg. Co., Little Neck, NY, 800-824-3005, leviton.com. **Wax:** Briwax Wood Care Products, New York, NY, 800-274-9299, briwaxwoodcare.com. **Scratch cover:** Kruckenberg's Gourmet Scratch Cover Whisk Products Company, Eldora, IA, 800-247-5102, whink.com. **Glue syringe:** Jacquard Needle-Tip Syringe, MisterArt.com, Houston, TX, 800-721-3015, misterart.com. **Plastic toilet shims:** William H. Harvey Co., Omaha, NE, 800-331-4276, wnharvey.com. **Direct-vent gas fireplace:** Vermont Castings, CFM Corp., Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, 800-668-5323, vermontcastings.com.

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Opening page (p. 113) **Thanks to:** Joe Gaser, Osborn International, Cleveland, OH, 216-361-1900, osborn.com.

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Cold Blast of Air: ICM CC750 Comfort Control Center, ICM Controls, Dr. Cicero, NY, 800-365-5525, icmcontrols.com.

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Get Your Firebrick in Shape: High-heat mortar, Heat Stop! Refractory Mortar, CMS Industries, Orchard Park, NY, available through Rumford.com. **Installing a Towel Bar:** Towel Bar, Axor Massaud, Hansgrohe Inc., Alphenet, GA, 800-334-0455, hansgrohe-usa.com. **Thanks to:** Pierce Herrin and Phil Heslep, Hansgrohe Inc. **Self-tapping toggle anchor:** Featured toggle available at Lowes. **Zip toggle:** Powers Fasteners, Brewster, NY, 914-235-6300, powers.com. **Making a Tiled Niche for a Shower:** Brush-on waterproofing membrane, Hydroment Gold, Bostik Inc., Wauwatosa, WI, 414-774-2250, bostik-us.com.

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Latex conditioner: Floetrol, The Flood Company, Hudson, OH, 800-321-3444. ■

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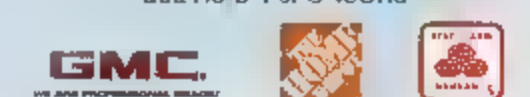
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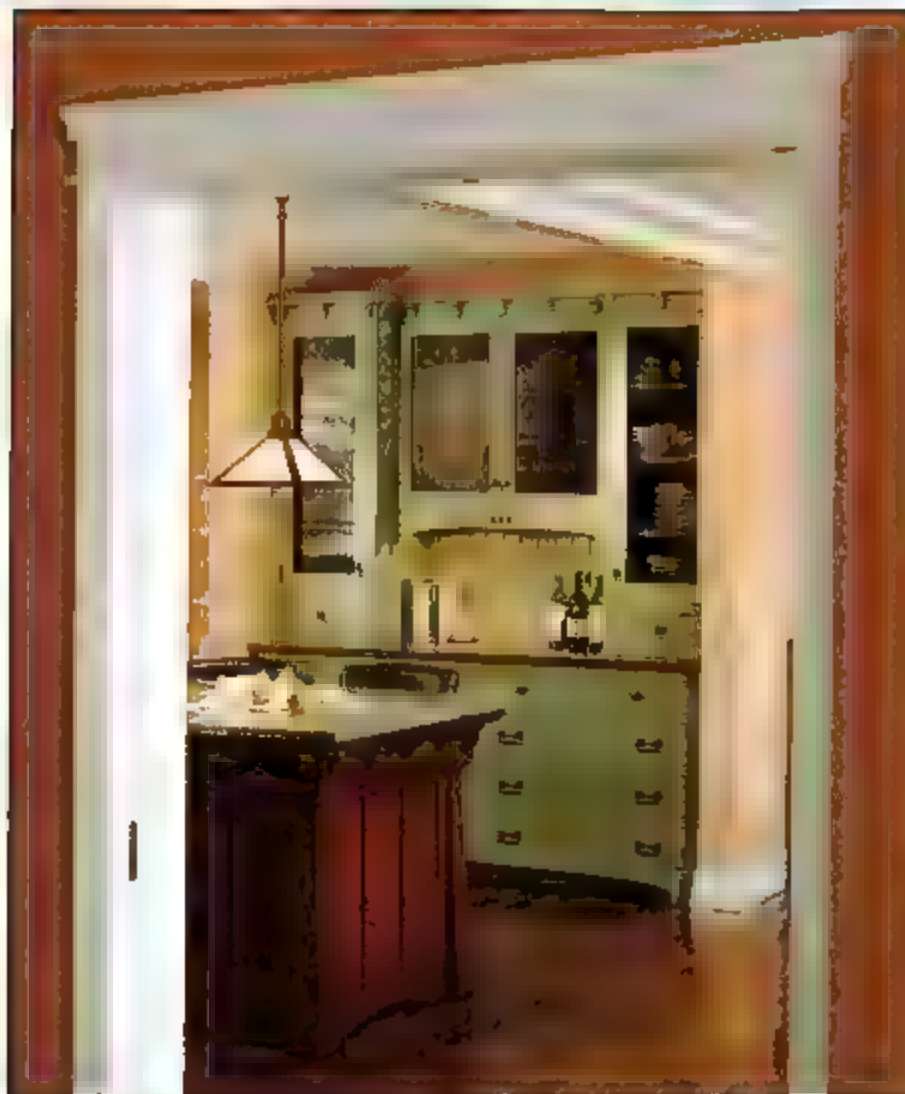
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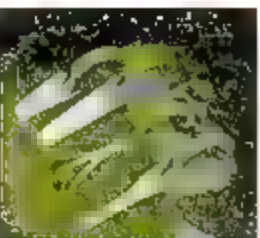
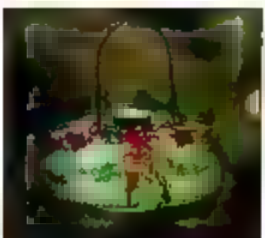
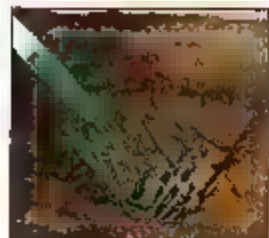
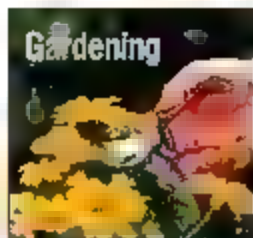
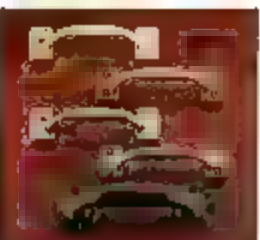
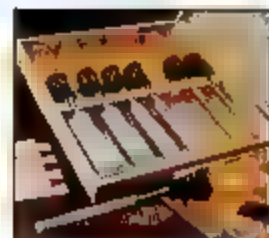
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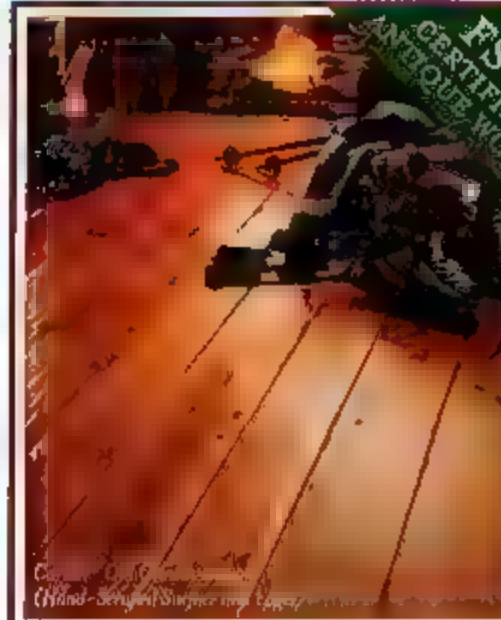
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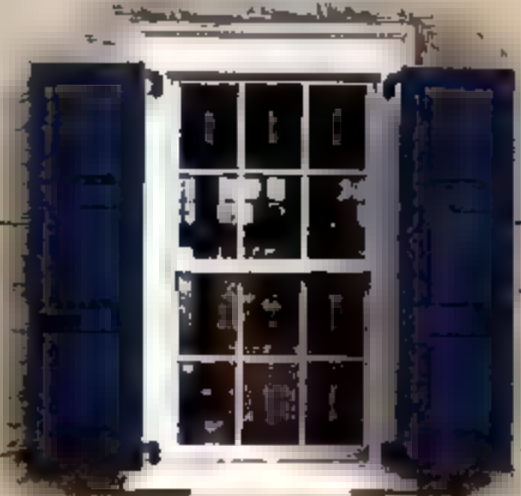


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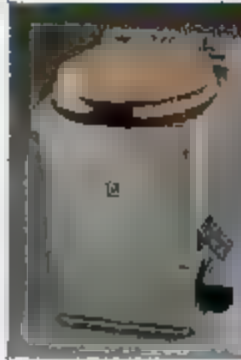
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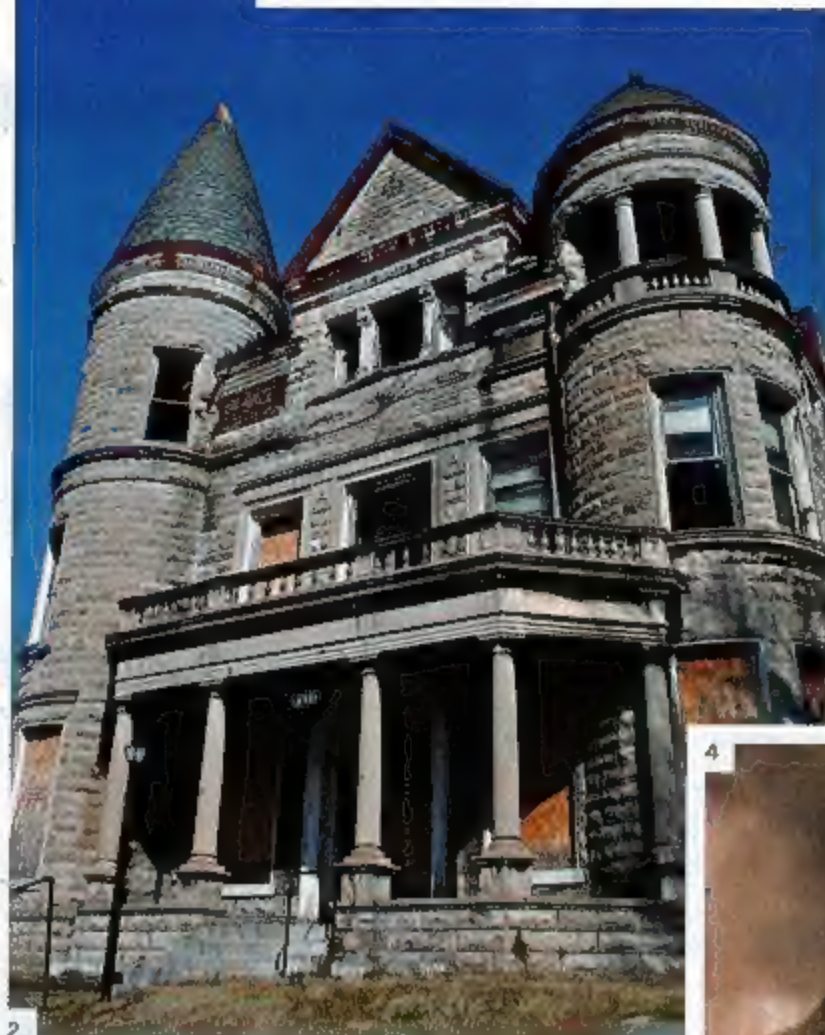
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In the 1920s, the mansion became home to Rev. George Clement, an esteemed bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He and his wife, Emma, raised seven children here, including Rufus Early Clement, later the head of Atlanta University, whom *Time* in 1966 named one of America's most influential university presidents.

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[1] The 7,450-square-foot mansion requires stabilization and a complete rehab. [2] Rough-faced stonework and deep, recessed windows are typical of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. [3] A plaster coffered ceiling. [4] Louisville architect Arthur Loomis built several Richardsonian Romanesque buildings around town—all considered local landmarks. [5] The arched porte cochere—not your typical parking spot.



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