This Old House

29 bargain buys for home & garden

special outdoor issue

Enjoy Your Backyard More

smart deck ideas
outdoor kitchen finds
easy patio how-to

All about... composite decking
page 92

MAY 2009
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affordable upgrades

Colorful potted plants
Vintage bath on a budget
Cottage garden shed

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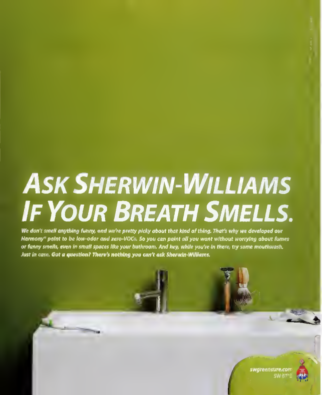

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Cover Photograph by KAREN BUSSOLINI

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B. Pools and spas
C. Fireplaces and fire pits
D. Outdoor kitchens
E. Patio Heaters
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contents { May 09 }

Learn a three-step technique for making spanking-new replacement bricks blend in with their weathered patio partners.

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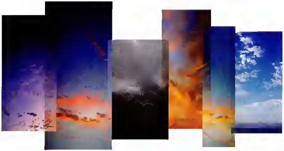

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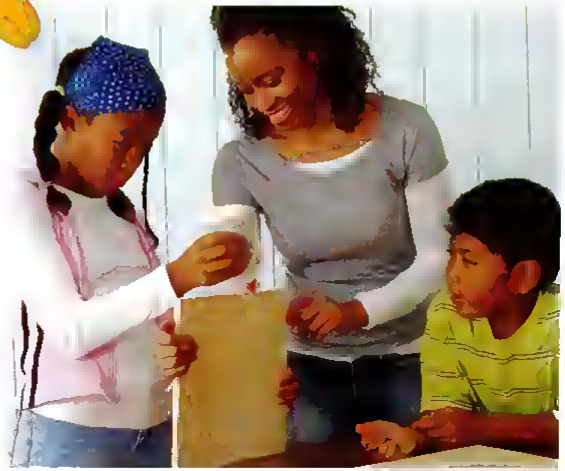
Great Last-Minute Ways to Make Mom Happy



10 Smart **Money-Saving Gifts** for Mom
12 Great Gifts for Mom's **Breakfast in Bed**
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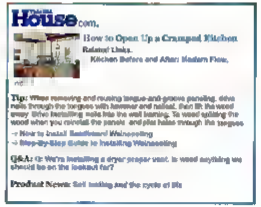

Outdoor living is our theme this issue. Here's what the *TOH* staff enjoys about the warm-weather months...

"I take a book and go sit in my city garden, but I just end up admiring the flowers, the old brick wall and the rowhouses standing tall in the background."

"I love my striped lawn chairs and colorful flower beds. This year's color scheme will be purple, so I'm stocking up on sweet peas, irises and freesias."

"On warm summer evenings I set up my portable outdoor theater complete with projector, DVD player, screen and speakers, and we watch movies on the patio."

I like to hang out by the fishpond I installed in our backyard. The sound of running water and the lush plantings make it a really relaxing spot.

John R. Reiser
PRESIDENT, THIS OLD HOUSE VENTURES INC.

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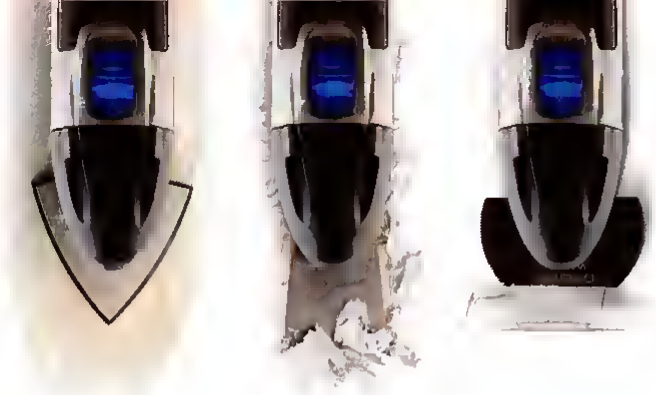

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Why you should DIY unto others

I stood in the living room one recent Saturday morning and put my hands on top of my head the way people do on *Survivor* when they've lost all hope and are full of worry. I think I was trying to keep my brain from exploding.

I'd just made a to-do list of all the jobs around the house, and I was overwhelmed. Finish patching the hall floor. Finish hanging the gutter. Finish the railing on the deck I built two years ago.—The weight of all that finishing pulled me to the ground.

Actually, I was beat after a long week and just felt like lying down.

But when I looked up I saw a hole left from a relocated ceiling fixture. Ugh. So I made note number 41: Patch hole from relocated light fixture. Then I rolled over in disgust. That's when I saw three feet of newly painted baseboard missing a final coat. I added two more things to the list: hire painter, fire painter.

I wondered if I should pay myself severance. Ah, well, one more thing to gnaw my lip over.

Not that I have anything to truly worry about. I have a sound roof over my head (more or less) and I'm healthy (physically, anyway). So why do I make myself frustrated, anxious, and sick with worry over how much I have to do?

I don't know the answer, but I do know at least a temporary cure.

Each year at this time I take a break to shake off my own self-absorption and volunteer, along with the rest of the *TOH* gang, at AmeriCare's HomeFront Day. It's a daylong blitz-build and cleanup at the house of someone elderly or ill or less fortunate and in need of help. Sure, I spend one more day with the same people I already see five days a week, and I hit my thumb with a hammer just like I do every other weekend. But the simple act of doing something for another person makes it all different. It makes your own worries that much smaller. Want to give it a try? Set your to-do list aside and check out where you can volunteer at thisoldhouse.com/bonus.

SCOTT OMELIANUK
EDITOR

P.S. As always, we're interested in hearing from you—about your plans, projects, what you think of *TOH*, and the topics you'd like to see us cover. So drop me a note at scott@thisoldhouse.com.

THREE THINGS I LEARNED FROM THIS ISSUE OF TOH →

1. ***Why an iPhone*** belongs in your toolkit [p. 26]
2. ***How 30 pounds*** of recycled milk jugs can make a better backyard [p. 92]
3. ***How much joy a beer can,*** a chicken and some cheese can bring to a weekend afternoon [p. 68]

readermail

Like a lonely grandmother rocking patiently on the front porch, we sure like it when the mail arrives. This month, as usual, you didn't disappoint. Your letters covered some serious home improvement ground, how you bond with your DIY partners, what you like in the magazine—and what puzzles you—as well as a great idea for a new *TOH* feature.

Old-house newbies

I'm a new subscriber—the April issue is the second I've received—and I just can't wait to tear into the magazine. My husband and I (we're newlyweds) have been doing some type of house project since we bought an old house (built between 1860 and 1880) last year. Every project ends up taking several weekends, even when we plan on it taking one. It's refreshing to read about people's experiences and know that not all projects go smoothly. Keep the great articles coming!

—MEREDITH COX SMITH, BY E-MAIL

Bright idea

THOMAS O. MURRAY, BY E-MAIL

Thanks for "Everything You Need to Rewire a Light Fixture" [Home Solutions, March]. To make sure I got my fixture back together correctly, I took step-by-step pictures with my digital camera before removing each part (above). My antique lamp was made up of stacked metal and ceramic parts with lots of washers, but with the pictures this otherwise complicated lamp was a snap to reassemble!

Experiences in common

Re "The Man Has a Point" [Letter From This Old House, April]: I totally disagree with William, who wrote that editor Scott Omelianuk needs to retire. So much of good remodeling is about precision and perfection, and Scott's humorous letters have made me realize that my husband and I can do a remodel too, even if it's not perfect. We might have to correct something, but it's attainable for us ordinary folk who aren't carpenters, plumbers, or electricians. So thanks, Scott, for letting us laugh with you—and even at you—and inspiring us to give it a try!

—KATRINA ZELTINGER, LITCHVILLE, N.DAK.

The editors reply: You're welcome, Katrina. Seems you're not alone in that sentiment. To see the dozens of letters the column inspired—or to read any of the articles referenced here—go to thisoldhouse.com/bonus.

Finished yet?

Has *TOH* ever invited readers to submit their longest-standing incomplete DIY project? I gotta believe I'd be one of the finalists. You might receive some rather hilarious accounts of tool-toting weekend warriors who have "whenareyagonnafinish"-itis.

—AARON FILIPI, OMAHA, NEBR.

The editors reply: Excellent idea, Aaron. We hereby ask readers to go to thisoldhouse.com/bonus and share photos and descriptions of the DIY project they just can't get around to finishing. The winning entry will be featured in an upcoming issue of TOH.

The right angle

We loved the corner hutch in "Smart Storage Solutions" [March] but chuckled over the idea that we could use a prefab one "since you're always working with a right angle." If you're ever near Newport, New York, drop by the Yale-Cady Octagon House, where our custom dining room hutch has to fit a 135-degree corner. Let's see if you can find any right angles!

—STEVE AND ROBERTA WALSH, BY E-MAIL

Dim the lights, save money

In "50 Nifty Tricks for Big DIY Savings" [Jan./Feb.] it says that dimmer switches save electricity, but my electrician tells me dimmers are rheostats that don't affect electricity used. Is that wrong?

—KURT BEHRENS, BRATTLEBORO, VT.

The editors reply: Yes. According to Cheryl Samartano, product manager at Leviton, dimmers did once use rheostats, lowering light through heat dissipation. But today dimmers reduce power and save electricity by using technology that controls energy flow the way a faucet controls water.

Corrections

→ In "Boost Your Curb Appeal" [April] we misstated two numbers. The metal roof was installed for $12,000, and the punched-tin shingle reproductions would have cost $73,000.

how to reach us

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checklist { May.09 }

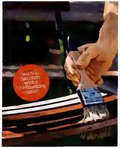
EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HOME RIGHT NOW

☐ Give charcoal grills some TLC

'Cue lovers, banish last year's BBQ residue from your grill's vents, lest it cause your worst nightmare: uneven cooking. Use a wire brush or crumpled aluminum foil to scrape off grime, then wash with warm, soapy water and rinse. Coat cooking surfaces with vegetable oil to keep food from sticking.

☐ Plant squash

These sun-loving gourds produce edible flowers while the veggies mature. Plant butternut, acorn, and other vine varieties about 5 feet apart; bush types like zucchini can be closer together.



☑ Prep patio furniture

Before you kick back on your favorite outdoor lounger, do a little upkeep to help all your patio pieces last season after season.

- Tighten loose bolts and screws.
- Use sandpaper to remove rust from metal frames, then protect unpainted surfaces with liquid or paste wax, or give them a coat of rust-inhibiting primer and paint.
- Fill cracks in wood frames with epoxy putty or wood filler, let dry, then sand and seal.
- Sponge down wood, metal, plastic, and wicker frames with cold, soapy water, then rinse well.
- Clean fabrics and cushions based on the manufacturers' instructions.
- Oil aluminum swivels, glides, hinges, and joints.

Need to replace webbing or make other fixes? Learn how to tackle them at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus.**

TOH TIP

☐ Check the rotation of ceiling fans

Make sure the blades turn counterclockwise, which stirs up cool breezes instead of circulating warm air. To reverse the fan's direction, flip the switch on its base.

☐ Sharpen bypass pruners

Dull blades make ragged, slow-to-heal cuts that invite disease and infection. Follow these steps and your pruners will have a keen edge when you snip back faded flowers or late-summer bloomers.

1. Gripping the tool firmly, clean the blades with steel wool and warm, soapy water to remove rust and dried-up soil. Dry thoroughly.
2. Hold a fine-grit whetting stone against the blade at a 20-degree angle and sweep from base to tip following the blade's curve. About 10 strokes per blade should do it.
3. Finish with a spritz of silicone-based lubricant to prevent rust.

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HEALTHY HOME

Wipe off the poison

After last year's big scare about painted toys, you're probably aware of the dangers that come with lead exposure—particularly to children age 6 and under. So is the maker of Hygenall, a new disposable hand wipe that removes 98 percent of lead and other toxic metals, such as cadmium and mercury, from the skin. The company says its patent-pending cleansing agent, developed by the Centers for Disease Control, is better than plain old soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers at removing lead particles, which can be found not just in paint but also on window blinds, caulk, and pipes. $7 per 20-wipe canister; hygenall.com.

RESEARCH

Paint can change your thinking

What color is your workshop or home office? If you think it doesn't matter, think again. A study conducted by the University of British Columbia found that red walls help people perform detail-oriented tasks, such as paying bills or rewiring a lamp, while blue ones bring out our creative side for, say, planning a kitchen remodel.

77% *Percentage of U.S. households that own a grill or smoker*

YOUR MONEY

Get bucks back for better windows

If you've got drafty old single-pane windows, now is an excellent time to consider replacing them. The stimulus bill signed into law in February includes a tax credit of 30 percent of the cost of qualified energy-efficient replacement windows and storm windows, up to $1,500, when installed through December 2010. Heat lost and gained through windows accounts for as much as 50 percent of your home's heating and cooling needs, so the upgrade will pay itself back over time. For details on the tax credit, visit energystar.gov.

PHOTOS: (TOP RIGHT) ROB COVER; (BOTTOM) RUSSELL KAYE

Heating water now costs less

Good news for fans of long, hot showers: The Energy Star label, which has been granted to super-efficient refrigerators, dishwashers, and washing machines since the 1990s, can now be found on a new generation of gas-fueled and solar-powered water heaters. The Energy Star–rated models can slash water heating costs by as much as 55 percent. Look for heat pumps and gas condensing heaters with the label to debut later this year.

Reporting by Keith Pandolfi and Natalie Rodriguez

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home solutions

Edited by Deborah Snoonian

inside AGE NEW BRICK 10 USES PHONE APPS FOR DIYers MORE

→ SMART IDEA

Ladder plant stand

A rickety wooden ladder that's been gathering cobwebs in your basement may be unsafe to climb, but that doesn't mean you should kick it to the curb. With a fresh coat of paint in a cheery color, it becomes a space-efficient, budget-friendly display station for prized potted plants. If the ladder's spreaders—the horizontal braces that connect the ladder's rung-bearing base and fly sections—are missing or broken, lean the ladder against a vertical surface or stabilize it with two scrap pieces of 1x3 fastened where the spreaders would go. In any case, remember not to walk underneath your new creation—you wouldn't want to jinx your green thumb.

Potted geraniums thrive in full sun and well drained soil

PHOTO: GEM GARDEN IMAGES/ALAMY

planting in pots
Find tips and tricks for successful container gardening at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

→ OUTDOOR SPACES

Blending old and new brick

When used for repair or replacement, new bricks often look too pristine as they rub shoulders with existing ones, especially in a lush yard. A simple weathering treatment, done here before laying this patio, helps them blend in. Here's the how-to: **(1)** Spread out the new bricks on a tarp. **(2)** Use a brush to feather on a small amount of flat-finish gray paint; let dry. **(3)** Add black paint to a bucket of water till the liquid is cola-colored, then splash or sponge it onto the brick. Once dry, the bricks are ready to be laid.

This basket weave pattern interspersed new and old bricks, which helps to further disguise the difference in their ages.

→ MYTHBUSTER

Q: "Is running speaker wire under an area rug a fire hazard?"

A: Most speaker wire is low-voltage and doesn't generate enough heat to pose a fire hazard under a rug, according to John Drengenberg, an electrical engineer with Underwriters Laboratories. To keep the wires from tripping you up, place them in low-traffic areas whenever possible and run them underneath the rug's padding to reduce bulging. —SAL VAGLICA

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Plastic plant pots

You can always return them to the nursery for reuse, but we came up with some reasons to keep a few on hand

1 Displace dirt in a larger pot. When repotting a plant turn a plastic pot upside down in the new larger container and add soil around it When you re done pull out the plastic pot and there will be plenty of room inside the bigger container to place your plant s root ball

2 Protect blades Flip seedling trays upside down and use the crevices to store saws or workshop knives so that the blades don t get damaged in storage

3 Clean fruits and veggies Place stuff you pick from the garden in clean pots and rinse off dirt with water from your outdoor tap. Let the water drain out the bottom holes before storing your bounty

4 Lift a paint project off the ground. Use four or more pots to prop up a cabinet door piece of trim or other item you re painting so that you can reach every nook and cranny

5 Keep twine untangled. Put a ball of twine in a plastic pot and pull the end through a hole in the bottom to keep it neat when using

6 Store holiday ornaments Keep small decorations segregated by enclosing them in seedling trays Place items in the bottom tray invert the second tray on top of it and seal with packing tape For very small items place in a single tray top with a scrap piece of cardboard and tape closed

7 Sift salt onto an icy spot. Stack two plastic pots holding them so that there s an inch or so of space between their bottom surfaces and fill the top one with rock salt Shake the pots over the surface of your driveway or walkway Using two pots prevents the salt from falling through the bottom holes too quickly

8 Encourage kids to save. Give your kids clean seedling trays and have them sort spare change one section each for pennies nickels dimes and quarters

9 Organize cables or electric cords. Bundle and stash cords in upside-down pots in a garage or workroom When cords are in use pull the needed length through the bottom hole enlarging it as necessary

10 Organize hardware. Use seedling trays in drawers or on your workbench to sort and store nuts bolts nails and odds and ends

—JILL AYERS

more 10 uses
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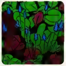
→ YARD CLEANUP

Disguise wilting bulb foliage

Nothing says spring like bright daffodils or tulips—or signals the end of the season like their faded blooms and drooping leaves. If you want flowers next year, the leaves must stay in place until they flop over, turn yellow or brown, and pull out easily. Fastidious gardeners sometimes tidy up by braiding the leaves. But that cuts down on their exposure to light, which they need to make food for next year. Here are some better fixes.

—JEANNE HUBER

1. Play tag team. Plant clumps of tulips or daffodils next to broad-leafed perennials that take time to shoot up in the spring. Hosta, for instance, develops big, showy leaves—a good camouflage for wilting bulb foliage.



2. Blanket the ground. Pair bulbs with groundcovers that mask fading leaves. This strategy works nicely under deciduous trees, where bulbs bloom before trees fill out. Fine-leafed crocus and grape hyacinth hide well under broader-leafed groundcovers like carpet bugle and wild ginger.

3. Plant in pots. In high-visibility areas, like by your front door, nestle bulb-filled pots into the soil, then lift them out when blossoms fade and move them to a less noticeable spot. Fill the hole with colorful annuals.

→ SAFETY

Prudent pit practices

Seems that fire pits are, um, blazing hot. Sales have been up the past couple of years, and in a recent poll 67 percent of homeowners said they wanted an outdoor fire to keep parties going as the night air gets nippy. These tips will keep your friendly fire from becoming a raging inferno.

—NATALIE RODRIGUEZ

Find the right spot. Station your pit on a level stone, concrete, or brick surface that's at least 10 feet from your house, trees, and anything flammable. Unless the owner's manual says it's okay, don't put the pit on a grassy surface, wood deck, or enclosed porch.

Use good fuel. Always burn dry, seasoned wood that was cut at least six months earlier. To keep sparks from flying, make sure logs are no longer than three-quarters of the pit's diameter.

Start the flames safely. Never use lighter fluid, gas, or kerosene to light a fire.

Have a douser handy. Keep a bucket of sand, a fire extinguisher, or a garden hose nearby in case things get too hot to handle.

snuff out flames For more tips on safely quenching a fire at home, go to thisoldhouse.com/bonus

→ SOFTWARE

iPhone apps for DIYers

Why buy specialty gadgets when you can download them for a fraction of the cost? Apps like these are making the iPhone our favorite multitool these days. **Army Knife 8-in-1** (pictured at left, 99 cents) features surface and bubble levels on the same screen, **inchCALC+** ($4.99) lets you calculate dimensions in feet, inches, and fractions instead of converting to decimals, **MeterRead** ($2.99) helps you track energy use at home. Find these and others at the App Store on Apple's iTunes, search by name or browse under "Utilities."

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Lose a wall, gain a workable space

A dismal, outdated room comes back to life with a light-filled open plan

By KIMBERLY GOAD • Photographs by CASEY DUNN

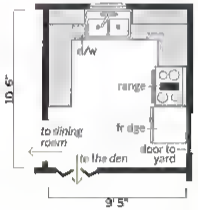
When the fridge blocks an exterior door and the counters are so shallow that the dishwasher sticks out, you know you've got problems. But for Aida Pollard and Jon Maloy, the cockeyed configuration of their kitchen was the least of it. "I love to prepare quick, easy meals," says Aida, "but with only one small window for ventilation, it got so hot I could barely be in there 15 minutes." After 20 years of living with the pinched cooking quarters in their 1949 cottage, the couple knew where to turn: the Austin, Texas, design-build firm CG&S, where Aida works as business manager. Architect Stewart Davis devised a plan to take down the wall separating the kitchen and dining room, bringing in air and light by allowing the kitchen to annex a window and expand by about 50 square feet. "Meal prep no longer feels like solitary confinement," says Aida, pointing to a peninsula that allows her to chat with friends and family while dicing onions. That funky door disappeared, and larger replacement windows and a range hood that vents outdoors help take care of the Texas heat. Aida and Jon, a theater technician, wanted to splurge on lighting and tilework, so they chose midpriced appliances, laminate countertops, and painted cabinets. "We couldn't be happier," says Aida. "I'm amazed we waited so long."

{before}

before Tobacco brown cabinets, tight quarters, and still air made cooking in the old space a nonstarter.
after The wall shared with the dining room came down, making way for light, ventilation, and prep space.

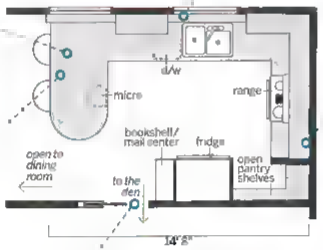
before

The 100-square-feet kitchen was a model of inefficiency with scant storage, dated appliances, shallow counters—and not enough of them



after

Two rooms became one airy open space, with dining on one side, cooking on the other and a snack counter in between.



1 Added a curved peninsula between the kitchen and dining area. The peninsula replaces a wall that was torn down, allowing the kitchen to expand by about 50 square feet, and light and air to flow through.

2 Created extra storage under the peninsula and plenty of space on top to prepare meals and share snacks

3 Moved the doorway to the den to create space for a fridge enclosure that has shelves on one side and on the other hides a pantry designed without doors for the convenience of the cook.

4 Closed off an exterior door formerly blocked by the fridge and added a counter and open pantry shelves to the right of the range.

5 Rebuilt the sink wall with two large windows and a 5-inch-deep windowsill shelf atop a long tiled knee wall

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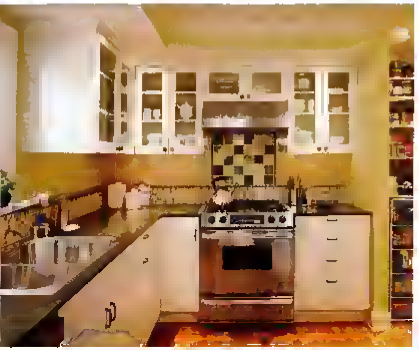
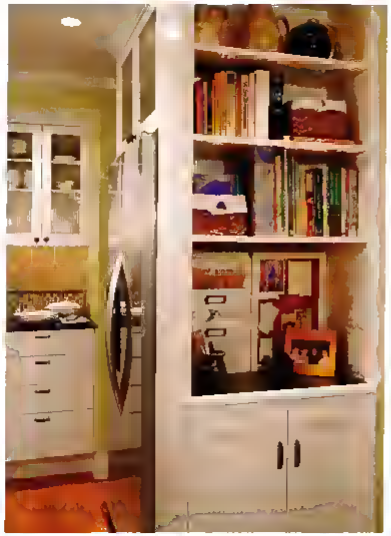
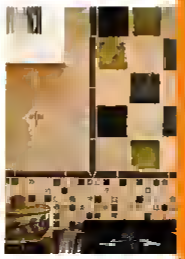
the key details

Soffits, set off by a ribbon of color-hold recessed lighting and give the upper cabinets a finished look. *Paint Kelly Moore's Misty Meadow (walls). Sink and faucet Kohler. Range Maytag. Range hood Broan. Pantry pullouts. Elfa*

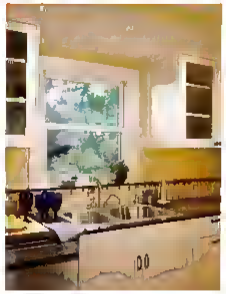


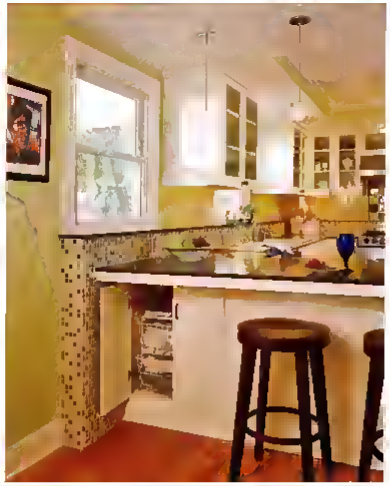


The full-height fridge cabinet has open shelves and a landing strip for keys and mail near the doorway to the den. *Fridge KitchenAid. Pulls and knobs Amerock*



The windowsill shelf, 5 inches deep and topped with the same laminate as the counters, holds plants while adding depth and weight to a space defining wall.





A trio of tiles in carefully coordinated styles and colors makes an eye-catching backsplash complete with a dragonfly inset. *Tile Walker Zanger (large squares). Pratt & Larson (others)*

DIY tile
Learn how to install a mosaic tile backsplash at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

homeowner tip
AIDA POLLARD, AUSTIN, TEX.
"Don't stint on lighting. We have four types—task, undercabinet, recessed, and pendant—all on dimmers, so we can set the mood, whether we're cooking or having a glass of wine."

Bar stools invite guests and sous chefs to pull up to the peninsula. Cabinets hold table linens on one side and a microwave on the other. *Pendants: Tech Light. Countertops: Wilsonart Laminate. Stools: Storehouse*

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the beauty goes on

Add a runner without carpet or nails

Let a lively pattern—and durable porch and floor enamel—add new dimension to your daily climb

By DEBORAH BALDWIN

Cost: About $110
Time: 5 days
Difficulty: Moderate. Don't forget to plan how you'll get up and down those stairs while the work is in progress

This trick-of-the-eye runner, its pattern reminiscent of a patchwork quilt, gets its 3-D quality from the way it flows over the steps. It looks ambitious, but if you start with ivory-painted stairs, you need only add two black stripes, two yellow stripes, then two rows of triangles and one of squares. The hardest part, says Kelly Jeffries, a faux finisher in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, is painstakingly sectioning off the shapes with painter's tape—and allowing each color to dry before applying the next.

First, calculate the placement of the black and yellow stripes. Section off the black stripes with painter's tape, smoothing the edges with a credit card. Using latex porch and floor enamel and an extra-firm sash brush, paint two thin coats. Next, tape off and paint the yellow stripes, also with two thin coats. The remaining center section will serve as an ivory stripe.

Using flexible posterboard, make templates for the triangles and squares, sizing them so that they climb the risers and wrap the treads. Outline the shapes in pencil and tape them off. "To reduce bleeding in the corners," says Jeffries, "pounce on" the paint, one color at a time, with a stiff, lightly loaded stencil brush. Repeat for two coats.

Finally, protect your work with two coats of polyurethane—one glossy, for durability, and the other matte, for ruglike verisimilitude. Then get ready to climb your stairs in style. ■

For the most dynamic look, let the diamond tips and the triangle sides wrap the risers and treads.

To keep lines clean when using latex, try Frog Tape ($6 for 60 yards, amazon.com), which has a special adhesive. Press down edges with a credit card. Paint shapes with a stiff, flattop stencil brush ($6, stencils4u.com) and an up-and-down motion. Gently remove tape while paint is still tacky, and clean any jagged edges with a moist Q-tip.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 108

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Patio umbrellas

Two generous shade-makers—one made of aluminum and acrylic, the other eucalyptus and polyester. And that's just one of their differences

By DEBORAH BALDWIN + Photograph by MARK WEISS

Chaise longue? Check. Cold drink? Check. Shady spot? See below. As more people move outdoors to entertain or just unwind, they're taking along hefty market-style umbrellas normally seen at produce stands and outdoor cafes. Unlike the beach models you plant in the sand, these big guys typically have sturdy bases, tough "ribs," and vented canopies wide enough, at 9 feet, to shade a crowd. But look closer and the two models here offer surprising contrasts beyond price. Read on for their finely shaded differences.

High-End

Ethan Allen
9' MARKET UMBRELLA IN SPA BLUE CAST-IRON STAND
Weight: *70 pounds* ***Height:*** *6' 6"* ***Warranty:*** *1 year*

→$648

$268←

Budget

Pottery Barn
9' ROUND MARKET UMBRELLA IN CHERRY RED CAST IRON STAND
Weight: *81 pounds* ***Height:*** *6' 3"* ***Warranty:*** *1 year*

IS IT WORTH IT?
If you want a sturdy weather-resistant umbrella that opens with the turn of a crank and tilts.

IS IT WORTH IT?
If you like a traditional wooden umbrella that doesn't tilt and opens with a rope and pin.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY

Farmhouse porch

Classic architectural details and vintage furnishings give this outdoor living room timeless style Here's how you can duplicate the look at your house By ELIZABETH ROEHRIG • Photograph by BRUCE BUCK

Passing the afternoon on a comfortable front porch is one of life's little pleasures At this Victorian era farmhouse, the open-air room faces the street, visually inviting neighbors up for a chat But it wasn't always so welcoming. Previous owners had enclosed it So when interior designer Irwin Weiner bought the Bucks County, Pennsylvania, home, he set about restoring it with details that fit its turn of the-century period He painted the original beadboard ceiling sky blue and used flea market finds and new materials to finish and furnish it, with results that feel pleasantly aged. Rattan chairs from the 1920s rub elbows with a '70s-era metal coffee table that's grounded by a faded rag rug

How to achieve a mix that meshes rather than clashes? "Find pieces that seem as if they've been passed down over generations, and the space will look as if it evolved over time," says Weiner. Here, elements you can put together for a similar look.

vintage fan
Old desk fans were often made with a notch on the back so they could hang from the wall. Look for antique models such as this 1950s era aqua blue GE fan at online auctions. $30 ebay com

rag rug
Traditionally pieced together from cotton fabric scraps, these woven rugs add soft color and texture to the floor $130 for a 5-by-8 foot rug rugsusa com

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rattan armchairs
Natural rattan looks at home outdoors, but since it isn't weatherproof it needs a porch roof for cover from the elements. Add cushions to up the cozy factor $150; pier1.com

outdoor pillow
Covered in washable, fade-resistant Sunbrella fabric these pillows offer low maintenance comfort. $35 each; ballarddesigns com

classic swing
A shiny bright red finish gives this hardwood porch swing a cheerful look. If you're going to hang one, be sure to use eyebolts attached to a support beam or ceiling joists $180 with hanging chains homedecorators.com

pro advice
IRWIN WEINER HOMEOWNER
To get period details right, research the vernacular architecture in your area Look for antique postcards of your town on eBay. They're like snapshots of an earlier era "

decorative brackets
When installed in pairs these large pine brackets create charming arches that soften the angles on an otherwise straight lined porch. $55 each vintagewoodworks.com

metal table
A low, round, lacquered steel coffee table provides a handsome contrast to the natural materials in the room. $200 roomandboard com

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"This house is keeping us from the altar...help!"

Our husband-and-wife team of remodeling therapists offers tried-and-true advice for surviving the pitfalls of home improvement By NITSA LALLAS & IGNACIO ARRIBAS + Illustration by JASON SCHNEIDER

Q "I'm itching to walk down that aisle."
My girlfriend has a house that is at least 100 years old. She has dumped all her resources into it and because a few contractors have ripped her off, she can no longer finish the house on her own. She has tried to sell it, but in this market there are no serious buyers. I love this woman. What can I do?
—ANDREW SELPH, TOOELE, UTAH

A Dear Looking for Nuptial Bliss: We hate to see a house come between two people in love. This isn't the greatest market for sellers, but you do have options. If you think you can handle the chaos of a renovation, you could sublet your house and live in hers while it's being finished. Or get creative and try to rent her house to a reliable out-of-work carpenter in exchange for finishing the house while he or she lives in it. Check with the local preservation society to see if the house is eligible for historic home status. She might qualify for tax deductions, and you two could start promoting the house on websites such as historicproperties.com and preservationdirectory.com, which are full of folks looking for the challenge of restoring an old gem. Most important: continue sticking by your fiancée and helping her as much as possible—distributing flyers for the property or taking a weekend to paint the exterior and giving her moral support.

Q "A decade of remodeling squabbles is enough!"
My parents have been fixing their house ever since they bought it 10 years ago. My father always wants to have some input into the design element (he's not very good, though he's a great carpenter). My mother has an eye for design, but she doesn't understand that even the best carpentry can't solve everything. They end up in an argument, and it drives me crazy. How can I stop the madness?
—E. ANTONIETA McCREA, NEW YORK CITY

A Dear Tired of Discord: Differences of opinion in remodeling are as normal as differences of opinion in Congress, but they don't need to be unpleasant. Honestly, your parents are lucky their skills complement each other. Ignacio and I are a little like them: actually, one of us can visualize the design, the other can't. One of us is detailed in planning, the other isn't. One of us likes to make decisions quickly, the other likes to take the time to think things through. We figured out how to turn this into an advantage and enjoy it. Here are a few simple rules for your parents to follow. Start with the attitude that two heads are always better than one. Next, remember to share your point of view but don't paint that wall red unless the other agrees. If you start to get upset, take a break and come back to the issue when you've both cooled down. Last, put yourself in the other person's shoes. She might try a carpentry project and he might choose the next color scheme—if

help us help you
If home improvement is stressing you out or taking your relationship, tell us about it. E-mail help@thisoldhouse.com, and Nitsa and Ignacio may offer you advice in a future issue.

could work! One time I painted the entryway with a faux finish. After five coats, I declared it finished. Ignacio said, "It's too pink." To which I politely responded, "Well, if you think it's too pink, why don't you do the next coat of paint?" He decided the color looked just fine.

Q "I have no clue where to start." I think I need to gut my 1936 home. The flat roof has begun to leak so badly that mold is forming on the walls, and the windows are showing signs of dry rot. I'm nervous about taking on a large project, but if I procrastinate anymore, the next rain could be disastrous. How can I start to research an architect or contractor?

—STEPHANIE SWAN, INGLEWOOD, CALIF.

A Dear Dithering: Get on this right away. Leaky roofs, mold, and dry rot are signs of bigger problems ahead. You're off to a good start by asking for help. First, do some quick research about how to work with architects and contractors at **thisoldhouse .com/bonus**. It will help build your confidence and make you an educated consumer. Second, decide if you are going to fix just those problems or remodel the house. If it's only repairs, you need a good reputable contractor, not an architect. If you're making structural changes, you'll need both. You'll also probably need to boost your remodel funds—painful, we know, but necessary. The last thing you want is to pay more later to fix a second-rate job. To find the pros, comb local resources and websites. Ask people you know and trust for references, like real estate agents or friends who have done remodels. Check out home design showrooms or trade guilds and ask for referrals. You can also go to contractor referral websites such as calfinder.com, angieslist.com, and servicelive.com. Alone, none of these is foolproof, but the more options you have the better. Once you get some good referrals, interview the contractors, check their references, and make sure their licenses and insurance are current. Don't wait for the roof to cave in!

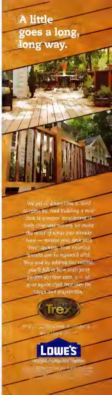
Q "I think my husband is a remodeling addict." Night after night for months and months, my husband watched home-improvement shows, and it made me nuts. I was ready to throw the TV—and him—out the window until one day he started a project that I must say he did quickly and nicely. Then he started another, and another—this went on for two years. The funds were gone, and then some, but everything turned out beautifully. It's been about three years since his home-improvement fling, but he's back on the TV remodeling kick—and he loves his subscription to *TOH* magazine. Any day now he's going to start renovating the second bathroom. What can I do to keep him (and his spending) reined in?

—MARY McGORMAN, WOODRIDGE, ILL.

It's been about three years since his home-improvement fling, but he's back on the TV remodeling kick.

A Dear Enabler: While it's great that your husband is so enthusiastic and talented, you need to make decisions about home-improvement projects as partners. Let your husband know you appreciate his work but that there are limits on how much hammering and sawdust you can take. Just be sure to keep it lighthearted—many wives would love to have your problem. Make a list together of the projects you want to take on and how much money you can afford, and come up with a timetable. If your husband still needs to hammer and nail some more, encourage him to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, which helps build affordable housing for people who really need it. ■

Nitsa Lallas and Ignacio Arribas are coauthors of *The Happy Remodelers*. Their 20 years of renovation experience will help keep you from losing your money, sanity, or marriage when tackling home improvements.



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Placing pots

A landscape designer's top seven tips for incorporating containers into your yard

By STEPHEN ORR • Photographs by KAREN BUSSOLINI

For many plant lovers, container gardening is all about which plants will look great in a given pot. That's important, but thoughtful placement of a container can play an equally significant role in your yard. Robert Welsch, owner of Westover Landscape Design, in Tarrytown, New York, suggests thinking about pots as visual punctuation. "You can place one at the end of a path to lead your eye through the garden or to signal a change in direction on a walkway," he says. "A well-placed container also gives you a moment to pause and enjoy the garden."

On the practical side, since plants in containers are elevated, they dry out more quickly than those in the ground, and it's essential to plan how they'll get adequate water. Here are some guidelines to follow to ensure that potted plants flourish.

- Be sure there is a hose or water source nearby so that you don't have to lug around watering cans, or position a pot so that it receives daily moisture from an automatic watering system.
- As with any plantings, potted plants should be placed where they'll thrive. Put moisture-loving ones in shadier spots and drought-tolerant species in hot, sunny places.
- Container plants need more nutrients. A time-release pellet fertilizer works well, or go organic by dousing pots with diluted fish emulsion once or twice before midsummer.

Pots are infinitely changeable. Swap them around according to season or mood. With container plantings, there are no permanent mistakes. What doesn't work one year can easily be fixed the next. The following ideas from designer Robert Welsch will get you off to a good start.

1 Build a stage for plants to add drama.
Placing pots on risers to form a well of plants turns an uninteresting area of the yard into a remarkable one. Welsch uses the sliced up trunk of an old maple tree to vary container heights: placing tall plants in back, short ones in front. He keeps the arrangement cohesive by using one shade of terra cotta for the pots and a narrow palette for the plants: yellow and green leaves of zonal geraniums (A) and pale orange and yellow million bells (*Calibrachoa*) (B). Along the top: subtropical kangaroo paws (C), deep purple fountain grass (D), and New Zealand flax (E) give texture.
OR TRY THIS: Instead of logs, use upside down terra-cotta pots of various sizes. If you group them tightly, you can also make risers from cinder block or brick and let trailing plants cover them. →

2 Use pots to mark the edges of stairs or walls

An overscaled hypertufa bowl sits like a guardrail on this terrace, marking a turning place on the steps and the edge of the low wall. In the bowl, each plant plays a role. Spires of Elegant Feather, a new annual eupatorium (A) give the composition surprising 7-foot height. Large-leaved Brazilian coleus (B) is the main filler while orange and pink million bells (*Calibrachoa*) (C) add color. Seen from below, the greenery in the pots softens this stony area and emphasizes the changes in elevation.

OR TRY THIS: In a more modern yard, use a series of concrete or metal cube planters filled with bamboo or tall grasses. In a formal setting, fill a large metal urn with a shrub or a small tree, such as a Japanese maple.

3 Create a long-lasting centerpiece

Use a container on an outdoor table to make a miniature landscape. This hypertufa planter is filled with sedums. These come in many colors, but their main calling card is their wide range of intricate textures. Add candles to play them up at night.

OR TRY THIS: Plant low succulents in the saucer of a large glazed ceramic pot. Drill a drainage hole in the bottom first or make sure to tip out excess moisture after you water. Even simpler, plant a metal tray with moss, Scotch moss, or a scented herb such as creeping thyme.

make it yourself
Find step-by-step instructions for making a hypertufa trough at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

fountain how-to
Learn how to turn a container into a water feature at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

4 Turn a container into a fountain near the house

This simple water feature, made from a Balinese urn, dresses up a rocky area at the bottom of a slope. It also adds calming sound to a nearby seating area and masks street noise. Because it's placed near the house, there's easy access to an electrical outlet for plugging in the fountain pump.

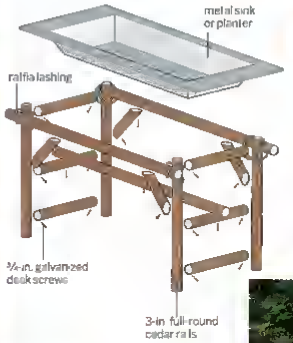
OR TRY THIS: For a more casual look, fill a zinc or galvanized metal tub with aquatic plants and a small bubble-jet pump.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 108

5 Create a console table–type planter for alongside seating.

Instead of displaying plants on a metal stand, build a planter with legs and place it next to furniture on your deck, terrace, or patio. This planter was made from an old metal sink supported by rustic cedar posts, then filled with cactus mix, planted with succulents, and topped with gravel. In this almost waist-high display, a vivid red pancake kalanchoe and cool green sedums can be fully appreciated. Light-catching objects—fishing buoys, slag glass, and rock crystal—add an element of surprise.

OR TRY THIS: Show off a collection of plants: ferns, alpines, even orchids.



HOW TO

Build a planter on legs

You can make a planter like this one with a metal sink or zinc planter with a lip (jamaicagarden.com has some nice ones) and full-round cedar rails from the fencing section of your local lumber yard.

6 Use pots to create a stopping point.

Tall potted plants at the end of this low wall obscure a turn in the path, catching your interest so that you pause before rounding the corner. There's a wide range of colors here, but there's a scheme—silver, yellow, orange, and pink—and choosing pots in similar shapes and a single material creates harmony. Tall, variegated ginger catches the breeze and adds movement. Flowering tropicals, such as lantana, give strong color all summer, while silver eucalyptus knits the varied colors together.

OR TRY THIS: Make a more subtle statement with just one large decorative pot, and fill it with a cascading ivy or licorice plant.

7 Use a big-leaved potted plant as a screen

By blocking sight lines with a tall plant, you create a sense that a yard is bigger than it is. The tall spray of a robust tropical, such as this ornamental ginger (which will have to winter indoors in some areas), also makes the path it sits along feel more enclosed and intimate.

OR TRY THIS: Use a multistemmed birch, a giant ornamental grass, or a flowering tropical, such as a canna lily. If the pot is distinctive enough, you could even leave it unplanted as a piece of sculpture. ■

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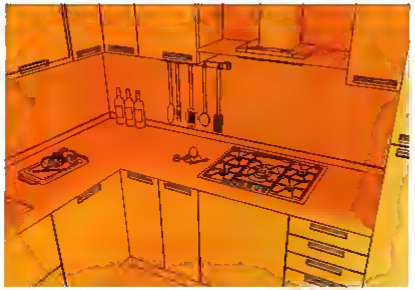
THE NATIONAL KITCHEN & BATH ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

THE ESSENTIAL KITCHEN & BATH REMODELING CHECKLIST

Planning a kitchen or bath remodel is among the most daunting—and potentially expensive—projects any homeowner can undertake. The National Kitchen & Bath Association has put together a checklist to help you navigate the process. Follow these steps before you get started, and you'll not only save time and money, but you'll also enjoy the kitchen or bath of your dreams.



Renderings and drawings can help you better visualize the final design—and prevent costly mistakes and surprises.

Consider your lifestyle
Think about how you and your family use the kitchen or bath. Note traffic patterns and accessibility of important features. What's working? What's not? Question everything.

Create a design file
Collect pictures of rooms, materials, products, and architectural details that appeal to you. Include lists of what you like about friends' kitchens and what you dislike about your own.

Make a wish list
Is there a feature you're willing to splurge on? Where can you save? Prioritize your list from "can't live without" to "only in our dreams."

Keep resale value in mind
Unless this is your forever house, you'll want to avoid anything too trendy, too loud, or too cheap. Clean lines, ease of function, and quality materials will help you recoup your investment.

Shop around
There's been a great deal of innovation in the kitchen and bath industry, with many new products to choose from. Visit showrooms. Kick the tires. Compare prices.

Set a budget
Now that you have an idea of costs, set a realistic budget, and don't forget to keep some padding for any additional costs that might come up.

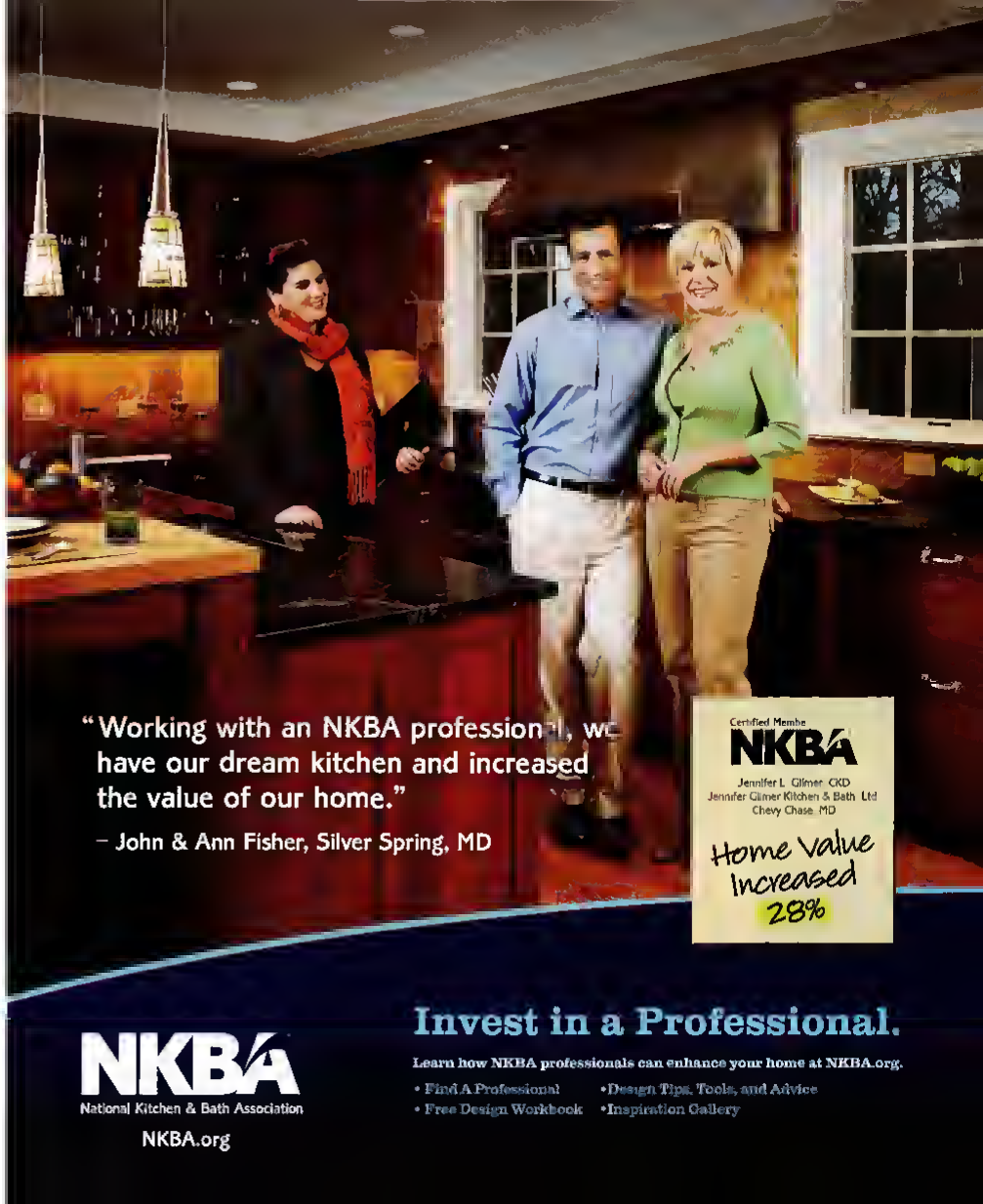
Pick a qualified professional
NKBA-member designers, remodelers, and installers not only ensure your remodel is beautiful and functional, but they can also add value to your investment and help you avoid costly, time-consuming mistakes. All NKBA members abide by a code of ethics, and NKBA-certified designers are experienced pros who have undergone extensive educational training. To find NKBA-member professionals near you, go to NKBA.org.

Get everyone on the same page
To establish expectations, schedule a face-to-face preconstruction meeting with all the building and design pros involved in your project.

Get it in writing
Spell out everything in writing—such as the work required, products used, and estimated timetable—and you'll avoid misunderstandings down the road.

Have a timeline
Rome wasn't built in a day, and your kitchen or bath won't be either. But if you follow these guidelines, you'll find the time, energy, and money put into your remodel will be well worth the wait.

For more assistance, visit NKBA.org. There you'll find more tips, as well as an inspiration gallery of award-winning designs, illustrations, and floor plans, plus building codes and guidelines to help you achieve the kitchen or bath of your dreams.



Products: Cabinets, Siematic Elm (Horizontal); Cooktop, Miele; Countertops, Silestone Grey Amazon Leather; Dishwasher, Miele; Fixtures, Kohler; Lighting, EW Cove; Microwave, Miele; Ovens, Miele; Sink, Franke; Ventilation Hood, Miele; Coffee System, Miele

Too Many Cooks? Never!

RICHARD J. FARRELL
Ginns Kitchen + Bath Design
Pickering, Ontario

NKBA
Member since 1977

Hiring a professional kitchen designer can frequently mean the difference between getting the kitchen you want and settling for something far less. Here, award-winning design and NKBA member Rick Farrell shares the secrets behind his successful kitchen remodel for a family of four cooks from Ontario, Canada.

"Satisfying one client can sometimes be challenging. In this case, I had a family of four chefs, each of whom had a must-have list of kitchen essentials and appliances: built-in ovens, a coffee system, an electric cooktop, a steam oven, a speed oven, and a dishwasher with a timer so that it could be run late in the evening. The clients also wanted to hide their many tabletop appliances and have open storage for access to everyday items—but no wall cabinets. The space was getting smaller!

Two sliding-door pantries with deep drawers solved the storage issues. An entry was widened to allow room for an island outfitted with pullout spice storage, a sink and drain board, recycling center, and usable baking area. Sleek horizontal elm cabinets and floating shelves on either side of the cooktop contributed to the home's clean, contemporary design. And a full suite of Miele stainless-steel appliances completed my vision of pure simplicity while giving the homeowners the high performance they demanded. Success!"

Garden tools shed

Create lean-to storage with tongue-and-groove cedar, or buy a ready made number for an easy install By JENNIFER STIMPSON

All the rust-resistant coating in the world won't save your garden tools if you leave them outside all the time. To create a clean, dry, and accessible locale for your pruners and shovels, plant a handsome wood lean-to shed against the house near the patio or garden. If it's made from cedar, a naturally rot-resistant wood, it will weather nicely while protecting your goods from precipitation and insects alike. You can make one in a weekend out of off the-shelf lumber or buy a panelized kit that screws together in under an hour. Once the quaint cabinet is in place, just remember to rinse off your tools and clean them occasionally with WD-40 before tucking them away. That'll keep rust at bay for years to come.

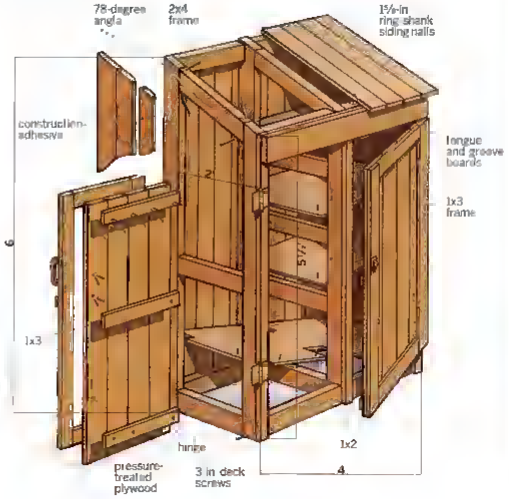
need a bigger shed?
Check out other kinds of storage units at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

build it

You can assemble 2x4 framing, cedar boards, and plywood shelves into a shallow, pitched-roof shed

Price: $400 for tongue and groove boards or $150 for pressure treated plywood
Time: 8 hours
Difficulty: Moderate
Bringing the frame together and sheathing it takes time, patience and precision

1. **Assemble the framing.** Create three identical 2x4 frames with an angled top and a center crosspiece. Connect the three frames with 2x4s at the front and back of the top and bottom. Nail 1x2s around the door openings at the front of the framing. Screw a 2x6 header across the front.
2. **Build a floor and shelves.** Cut a piece of plywood to fit inside the base of the framing; leave a ¾-inch overhang so that the piece will be flush with the 1x2s in the front. Notch the plywood to fit around the framing. Screw it in place. Screw crosspieces inside the middle and right frames to support shelving. Cut plywood shelving and screw it down.
3. **Side the shed.** Nail tongue-and-groove cedar boards to the exterior of the frame on the sides and back. Cut the top edges of the boards flush with the framing using a circular saw.
4. **Attach the roof.** Nail tongue-and-groove boards on the top of the frame. Overhang the roof on the sides and front.
5. **Build and hang the doors.** Cut boards to the height of the doors (to fit below the header). Screw 1x3 strips across the back to hold them together. Attach a 1x3 frame around the front of each door. Attach the doors to the shed with heavy-duty hinges.



buy it

You can choose among wood species, roof design, hardware, and size to find perfect outdoor storage

$400 → the basic
A spruce shell and an asphalt roof with zinc-plated fittings keep the price low on this 5-by-5-foot shed. brookstone.com

$670 → the mid-range
Western red cedar walls and roof give this shallow 4-foot-wide, 69-inch-tall shed a weather-resistant exterior. cedarshed.com

$1,295 → the luxury model
Kiln-dried cedar siding and roof shingles, heavy galvanized strap hinges, and a hefty ring latch combine to make a charming 5-foot-wide, 7-foot-tall shed that stands up to abuse. walpole woodworkers.com

Boosting a brick home's charm

An architect's ideas for freshening it up with Craftsman details and a new color palette

By DEBORAH SNOONIAN • Photo illustration by HOWARD DIGITAL

before

"We haven't touched the exterior yet," says Leslie Russell Yost of this 1912 American Foursquare, which she and her husband are renovating themselves So we asked architect Sarah Susanka, author of the new book *Not So Big Remodeling*, to offer up some ideas for increasing its curb appeal

"The basic structure of this house is good," says Susanka "But the deep overhang makes it look dark" Her first suggestion Whitewash the brick, which would brighten the facade and porch and disguise mismatched brick on the house and columns To lighten the facade's heaviness, she recommends adding a second window to each side of the doorway, though it's a tricky (and pricey) prospect for a brick house Other proposed changes include installing a durable metal roof with a graceful "eyebrow" arch to draw attention to a new Craftsman-style front door.

Leslie, the homeowner, says she's having the brick repointed this spring—a good time to think about painting it and to consider further upgrades. ■

Finishing touches

Craftsman style accents work well on homes with strong simple lines like this one.

paint
Warm tones offset by pine green are a classic Craftsman color combo From top: Pratt & Lambert's Forest Wander Vintage Claret, Brick Dust; from $27 per gallon

house numbers
Predrilled screw holes make these handmade terra cotta tiles easy to attach. Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust: $35 each

entry door
Sidelights and a transom help channel more light indoors—important when the front porch is deep Simpson from $2 000 uninstalled

sconce
Rustic brass complements the brick's texture and using two sconces to flank the doorway reinforces the house's symmetry Kichler; $170 each

WANT A PHOTOSHOP REDO? Send snapshots to **redo@thisoldhouse.com**

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 108

Spring is in the air. Allergies aren't far behind.

This time of year you go nose to nose with allergens every day so maybe it's time to ask your doctor about options, like prescription SINGULAIR Most allergy medicines block histamine SINGULAIR works differently by blocking leukotrienes, an underlying cause of allergy symptoms. Just one SINGULAIR once a day is proven to help relieve indoor and outdoor allergy symptoms—without causing drowsiness. Ask your doctor about prescription SINGULAIR, a different way to treat allergies.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION Side effects are generally mild and vary by age, and may include headache, ear infection, sore throat, and upper respiratory infection Side effects generally did not stop patients from taking SINGULAIR Check with your doctor if you are pregnant or nursing You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088

Please read the Patient Information on the adjacent page and discuss it with your doctor To learn more about SINGULAIR and how you may be able to save on your next prescription,* visit singulair.com or call 888-MERCK-95

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Patient Information
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Generic name: montelukast (mon-te-LOO-kast) sodium

9628414

Read this information before you start taking SINGULAIR®. Also, read the leaflet you get each time you refill SINGULAIR, since them may be new information in the leaflet since the last time you saw it. This leaflet does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition and/or your treatment.

What is SINGULAIR®?

- SINGULAIR is a medicine called a leukotriene receptor antagonist. It works by blocking substances in the body called leukotrienes. Blocking leukotrienes improves asthma and allergic rhinitis. SINGULAIR is not a steroid. Studies have shown that SINGULAIR does not affect the growth rate of children. (See the end of this leaflet for more information about asthma and allergic rhinitis.)

SINGULAIR is prescribed for the treatment of asthma, the prevention of exercise-induced asthma, and allergic rhinitis:

1. **Asthma**
   SINGULAIR should be used for the long-term management of asthma in adults and children ages 12 months and older.

   Do not take SINGULAIR for the immediate relief of an asthma attack. If you get an asthma attack, you should follow the instructions your doctor gave you for treating asthma attacks.
2. **Prevention of exercise-induced asthma**
   SINGULAIR is used for the prevention of exercise-induced asthma in patients 15 years of age and older.
3. **Allergic Rhinitis**
   SINGULAIR is used to help control the symptoms of allergic rhinitis (sneezing, stuffy nose, runny nose, itching of the nose). SINGULAIR is used to treat seasonal allergic rhinitis (outdoor allergies that happen part of the year) in adults and children ages 2 years and older, and perennial allergic rhinitis (indoor allergies that happen all year) in adults and children ages 6 months and older.

When should not take SINGULAIR?

Do not take SINGULAIR if you are allergic to SINGULAIR or any of its ingredients.

The active ingredient in SINGULAIR is montelukast sodium.

See the end of this leaflet for a list of all the ingredients in SINGULAIR.

What should I tell my doctor before I start taking SINGULAIR?

Tell your doctor about

- **Pregnancy.** If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, SINGULAIR may not be right for you.
- **Breast feeding.** If you are breast feeding, SINGULAIR may be passed in your milk to your baby. You should consult your doctor before taking SINGULAIR if you are breast feeding or intend to breast feed.
- **Medical Problems or Allergies.** Talk about any medical problems or allergies you have now or had in the past.
- **Other Medicines.** Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, and herbal supplements. Some medicines may affect how SINGULAIR works, or SINGULAIR may affect how you other medicines work.

How should I take SINGULAIR?

For adults and children 12 months of age and older with asthma:

- Take SINGULAIR once a day in the evening.
- Take SINGULAIR every day for as long as your doctor prescribes it, even if you have no asthma symptoms.
- You may take SINGULAIR with food or without food.
- If your asthma symptoms get worse or if you need to increase the use of your inhaled rescue medicine for asthma attacks, call your doctor right away.
- **Do not take SINGULAIR for the immediate relief of an asthma attack.** If you get an asthma attack, you should follow the instructions your doctor gave you for treating asthma attacks.
- Always have your inhaled rescue medicine for asthma attacks with you.
- Do not stop taking or lower the dose of your other asthma medicines unless your doctor tells you to.

For patients 15 years of age and older for the prevention of exercise-induced asthma:

- Take SINGULAIR at least 2 hours before exercise.
- Always have your inhaled rescue medicine for asthma attacks with you.
- If you are taking SINGULAIR daily for chronic asthma or allergic rhinitis, do not take an additional dose to prevent exercise-induced asthma. Speak to your doctor about your treatment of exercise-induced asthma.
- Do not take an additional dose of SINGULAIR within 24 hours of a previous dose.

For adults and children 2 years of age and older with seasonal allergic rhinitis, or for adults and children 6 months of age and older with perennial allergic rhinitis:

- Take SINGULAIR once a day, at about the same time each day.
- Take SINGULAIR every day for as long as your doctor prescribes it.
- You may take SINGULAIR with food or without food.

How should I give SINGULAIR oral granules to my child?

Do not open the packet until ready to use.

SINGULAIR 4 mg oral granules can be given:

- directly in the mouth
- dissolved in 1 teaspoonful (5 mL) of milder room temperature baby formula or breast milk
- mixed with a spoonful of one of the following soft foods at cold or room temperature: applesauce, mashed carrots, rice or ice cream

Be sure that the entire dose is mixed with the food, baby formula, or breast milk and that the child is given the entire spoonful of the food, baby formula, or breast milk mixture right away (within 15 minutes).

IMPORTANT: Never store any oral granules mixed with food, baby formula, or breast milk for reuse at a later time. Throw away any unused portion.

Do not put SINGULAIR oral granules in any liquid drink other than baby formula or breast milk. However, your child may drink liquids after swallowing the SINGULAIR oral granules.

What is the dose of SINGULAIR?

For asthma—Take once daily in the evening:

- One 10 mg tablet for adults and adolescents 15 years of age and older
- One 5 mg chewable tablet for children 6 to 14 years of age
- One 4 mg chewable tablet or one packet of 4-mg oral granules for children 2 to 5 years of age
- One packet of 4 mg oral granules for children 12 to 23 months of age

For exercise-induced asthma—Take at least 2 hours before exercise, but not more than once daily:

- One 10 mg tablet for adults and adolescents 15 years of age and older

For allergic rhinitis—Take once daily at about the same time each day:

- One 10 mg tablet for adults and adolescents 15 years of age and older
- One 5 mg chewable tablet for children 6 to 14 years of age
- One 4 mg chewable tablet for children 2 to 5 years of age
- One packet of 4 mg oral granules for children 2 to 5 years of age with seasonal allergic rhinitis or for children 6 months to 5 years of age with perennial allergic rhinitis

What should I avoid while taking SINGULAIR?

If you have asthma and if your asthma is made worse by aspirin, continue to avoid aspirin or other medicines called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs while taking SINGULAIR.

What are the possible side effects of SINGULAIR?

The side effects of SINGULAIR are usually mild, and generally do not cause patients to stop taking their medicine. The side effects in patients treated with SINGULAIR were similar in type and frequency to side effects in patients who were given a placebo (a pill containing no medicine).

The most common side effects with SINGULAIR include:

- stomach pain
- stomach or intestinal upset
- heartburn
- tiredness
- fever
- stuffy nose
- cough
- flu
- upper respiratory infection
- dizziness
- headache
- rash

Less common side effects that have happened with SINGULAIR include:

- increased bleeding tendency
- allergic reactions (including swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and/or throat (which may cause trouble breathing or swallowing), hives and itching)
- behavior and mood related changes (agitation (including aggressive behavior, hostility, vivid dreams, depression, feeling anxious, hallucinations (seeing things that are not there), irritability, restlessness, suicidal thoughts and actions (including suicide), tremor, trouble sleeping)
- drowsiness, pins and needles/numbness, seizures (convulsions or fits)
- palpitations
- nose bleed
- diarrhea, indigestion, inflammation of the pancreas, nausea, vomiting
- hepatitis
- bruising
- joint pain, muscle aches and muscle cramps
- swelling

Rarely, asthma in patients taking SINGULAIR have experienced a condition that includes certain symptoms that do not go away or that get worse. These could usually, but not always, be patients who were taking steroid pills by mouth for asthma and those steroids were being slowly lowered or stopped. Although SINGULAIR has not been shown to cause this condition, you must tell your doctor right away if you get one or more of these symptoms:

- a feeling of pins and needles or numbness of arms or legs
- a flu-like illness
- rash
- severe inflammation (pain and swelling) of the sinuses (sinusitis)

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

Talk to your doctor if you think you have side effects from taking SINGULAIR.

General information about the safe and effective use of SINGULAIR

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Do not use SINGULAIR for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give SINGULAIR to other people, even if they have the same symptoms as you. It may harm them. **Keep SINGULAIR and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

Store SINGULAIR at 25°C (77°F). Protect from moisture and light. Store in original package.

This leaflet summarizes information about SINGULAIR. If you would like more information, talk to your doctor. You can ask your pharmacist or doctor for information about SINGULAIR that is written for health professionals.

What are the ingredients in SINGULAIR?

Active ingredient: montelukast sodium

SINGULAIR chewable tablets contain aspartame, a source of phenylalanine.

Phenylalanine: SINGULAIR 4 mg and 5 mg chewable tablets contain 0.674 and 0.842 mg phenylalanine, respectively.

Inactive ingredients:

- 4 mg oral granules: mannitol, hydroxypropyl cellulose and magnesium stearate
- 4 mg and 5 mg chewable tablets: mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, hydroxypropyl cellulose, red iron oxide, prescorn (aspartame, sodium, cherry flavor), aspartame, and magnesium stearate
- 10 mg tablet: microcrystalline cellulose, lactose monohydrate, prescorn (aspartame, sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, magnesium stearate, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, titanium dioxide, red iron oxide, yellow iron oxide, and carnauba wax

What is asthma?

Asthma is a long-lasting (chronic) inflammation of the bronchial passageways which are the tubes that carry air from outside the body to the lungs.

Symptoms of asthma include:

- coughing
- wheezing
- chest tightness
- shortness of breath

What is exercise-induced asthma?

Exercise-induced asthma, more accurately called exercise-induced bronchoconstriction, occurs when exercise triggers symptoms of asthma.

What is allergic rhinitis?

- Seasonal allergic rhinitis, also known as hay fever, is triggered by outdoor allergens such as pollens from trees, grasses, and weeds.
- Perennial allergic rhinitis may occur year-round and is generally triggered by indoor allergens such as dust mites, animal dander, and/or mold spores.
- Symptoms of allergic rhinitis may include:
  - itchy, runny, and/or itchy nose
  - sneezing

Rx only
US Patent No. 5,565,473

Issued July 2000

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202 AUTOMOTIVE

1. FORD F-150 The new F-150 has arrived and from a frame that's twice as strong to revolutionary interiors—it's the toughest F-150 ever.

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

3. HYUNDAI Are car companies committed to quality or is the phrase "committed to quality"? Hyundai. Think About It.

203 BUILDING PRODUCTS

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

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

6. ICYNENE® Soft foam insulation and air barrier system that delivers high performance solutions for efficient building envelopes, thermal comfort and improved indoor air quality.

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8. QUIKRETE® With more than 200 easy-to-use products, QUIKRETE® lets you avoid costly installations, renovations and repairs. For ideas and information, visit our website.

9. SCHLAGE Give your home and family the complete and convenient security of Schlage keypad locks. Schlage Real security sets you free.

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

204 FINANCIAL SERVICES

11. ERA FRANCHISE SYSTEMS, LLC ERA Franchise Systems, LLC is leading the residential real estate industry with more than 30 years experience, has 35,000 brokers and sales associates worldwide.

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

205 FLOORING

13. PORBO MARMOLEUM Marmoleum Click: natural healthy, easy to clean flooring, available in 18 colors in both panels and planks for an easy, glueless installation.

14. LUMBER LIQUIDATORS Lumber Liquidators sells the leading retailer of quality hardwood flooring at the lowest prices. They offer a variety of brands including Bellawood.

15. ENAW INDUSTRIES Show off your beautiful flooring stylish rolled chairs and environmentally-friendly options. From carpet and area rugs to hardwoods, tile, laminate and stone, you'll find the floors that fit your style and budget.

207 KITCHEN

16. BROAN NU-TONE The leader in residential ventilation for good indoor air, including range hoods, downdrafts, exhaust fans, heaters, ceiling fans and indoor air quality products.

CROWN POINT Family owned and operated, Crown Point Cabinetry has been handcrafting the finest quality custom cabinetry for over 25 years. All-wood custom cabinetry is available nationwide.

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

18. INSINKERATOR The world's leading manufacturer of food waste disposers, including Evolution Excel™, the best-selling disposer with three grind stages and 50% less noise.

19. MIELE For over a century, Miele has produced vacuum, cooking and cleaning appliances of legendary performance, superior quality and award winning design.

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

208 LAWN/GARDEN, POOL/SPA & PATIO

21. OLDCASTLE ARCHITECTURE Oldcastle® is leading the way in new architectural landscaping products. Innovational. Progressive. Natural. Creative. Inspired.

22. SUNBRELLA Awnings made with Sunbrella® fabrics provide UV protection, expand outdoor living spaces and keep interior furnishings from fading. Visit our website to learn more.

209 LIGHTING

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

210 PAINT/STAIN

BEHR PAINTS BEHR Wet Look Sealer, a high gloss decorative finish protects surfaces against moisture, stains and automotive chemicals. Perfect for pavers, tiles, brick, stone, concrete, stucco.

24. SIKKENS WOOD FINISHES Sikkens Wood Finishes is a global brand of Akzo Nobel Decorative Paints. We manufacture premium exterior wood finishes as well as interior clears and stains.

25. UGL Protect your home with Drylok® Masonry Waterproofer. Guaranteed to stop water, above and below grade. For additional information or a dealer near you, visit our website.

26. VALSPAR Valspar has created the all-made-to-last-a-lifetime-and-beyond performance. Thousands of colors that stand the test of time...like nature itself. Visit our website.

27. WAGNER Wagner develops a wide array of painting products for exterior and interior saving completion of home improvement painting projects and delivering quality professional painting results. Paint Fast. Paint Smart.

212 PLUMBING FIXTURES/HVAC/BATH

28. DELTA At Delta® our faucets are more than just faucets—because we pair smart features with beautiful design. Visit our website for more information.

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32. UPONOR Uponor is a leading manufacturer and supplier of PEX-a plumbing and radiant heating systems for residential and commercial building markets across North America and Europe.

33. YORK York's Premium Air Conditioners, Heat Pumps and Furnaces are sleek, quiet and efficient. Homeowners have a choice of multiple home comfort systems, including multi-stage cooling and modulating furnaces.

213 SPECIALTY ITEMS & SERVICES

34. NKBA The National Kitchen & Bath Association is dedicated exclusively to the kitchen and bath industry. To get the NKBA's free consumer workbook, visit our website.

35. PROPANE COUNCIL Adding cleaner burning, efficient propane to your home opens up new opportunities for a fuller, more comfortable life. Visit our website.

36. RBRC Answer the call to recycle! Recycle the used rechargeable batteries in your power tools, camcorders, laptops, portable electronics and cordless and cellular phones.

214 TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

CRAFTSMAN Craftsman is America's Most Trusted Tool Brand! Quality, innovation and knowledge are built into every hand tool, power tool and lawn & garden product.

37. DREMEL The Dremel® Multi-Max™ Oscillating Tool helps with a multitude of projects that involve repair, remodeling or restoration.

38. GUARDIAN Guardian is the #1 name in automatic home standby generators, offering a full line of gasoline fueled models with outputs ranging from 7—150 kilowatts.

216 WINDOWS, DOORS, ETC

39. MARVIN WINDOWS & DOORS Get new window and door ideas for your home. Start by filling your vision with the informative free brochure from Marvin Windows and Doors.

40. PELLA® WINDOWS & DOORS Pella's innovations and energy efficiency will make a difference in your home. Send for your free literature to find out more. Pella. Viewed to be the best.®

RESOURCES

AMERICAN INTL. TOOL INR., INC. Dust-Free Sanding

41. ARCHITECTURAL PRODUCTS BY OUTWATER Decorative Building Products

42. ATLANTIS RAIL Stainless Steel Deck Railings

43. FROGTAPE FrogTape with PowerBlock Technology

44. GORILLA GLUE Bonds Wood, Stone, Metal & More

45. HEARTCOTE Color Coated Stainless Steel Deck Screws

46. HOUSE OF ANTIQUE HARDWARE Reproductions true to original

47. HYDRO SIL Room by-room heating system

48. THE IRON SHOP Leading manufacturer of Spiral Stair Kits

KAYNE & SON CUSTOM HARDWARE Custom Forged Interior and Exterior Hardware

49. MONARCH COVERS Custom Radiator Covers

50. NU-WAL Restoration Products

51. PREMIER BATHROOMS Walk-in Bathtubs by Premier

52. REGGIO REGISTERS Heat grilles and registers

53. RESEARCH PRODUCTS/BLANKENSHIP Incinolet - Fast wear incinerator toilet

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58. STAIRWAYS, INC. Spiral Stair manufacturer

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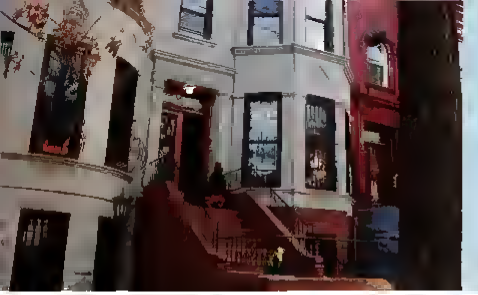

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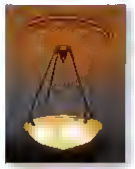

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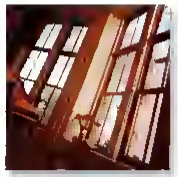

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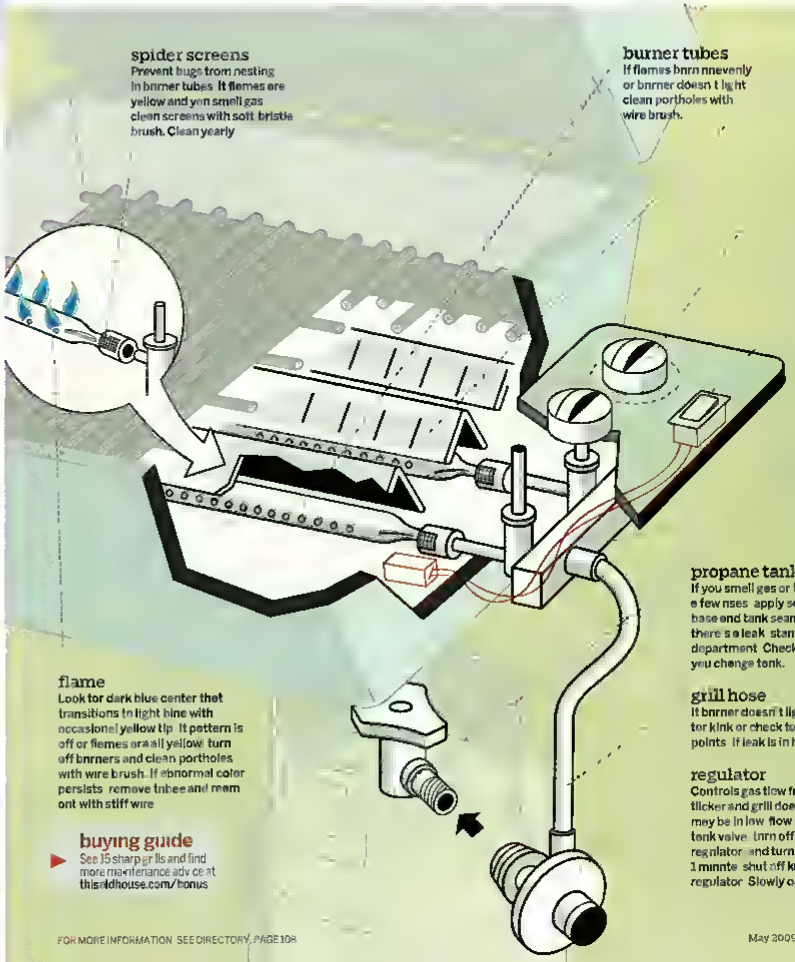
Cooking with gas

Your steaks won't be sizzling this summer if your gas grill's on the fritz. Use this guide to identify parts and problems and keep it firing up just like new

By ALEX QUEVEDO • Illustration by HARRY CAMPBELL



buying guide
See 15 sharp grills and find more maintenance advice at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 108

Turn molding into a charging station

How to create a holding place for electronics from decorative details

By JENNIFER STIMPSON + Photograph by GEMMA COMAS

Cost: $25
Time: 2 hours
Difficulty: Easy It takes only a few fasteners to put the pieces together

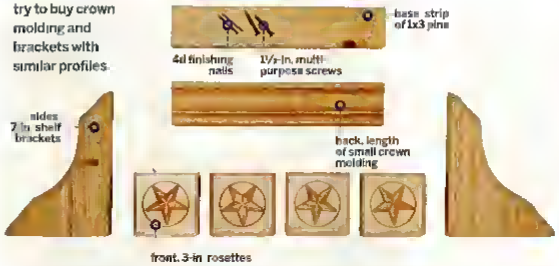
Every evening you arrive home and divest yourself of ringing, beeping, buzzing accessories, dropping them like bread crumbs on the way to the bedroom In the morning you lose precious minutes in a cushion-lifting scramble to gather PDA, phone, and iPod

Your portables clearly need a home base. A dedicated storage space for all your electronics nor only saves your sanity but also prolongs their battery life That's because the lithium-ion cells in these devices have a finite number of full discharges, so they last longer if you leave them plugged in when not in use

You can easily make your own kitchen-office charging station As *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva shows here, shelf brackets and crock molding make a quaint corral In fact, you can put this one together in just over an hour—the time it takes to locate your vibrating cell under the throw pillows

HOW IT S DONE

1_ For a sharp look try to buy crown molding and brackets with similar profiles



pro advice TOM SILVA, *TOH* GENERAL CONTRACTOR

"Leave a gap between the molding that makes the back of your station and the station's base—enough to fit the smaller plug end of a charging cord That way, you can thread the wires discreetly out the back of the station to let them drop behind a desk."

2_ Cut a piece of 1x3 to the length of the four rosettes lined up side by side Glue and face-nail the rosettes to the edge of the board driving a 4d finishing nail at the two bottom corners of each rosette

3_ Align a shelf bracket with the end of the rosette assembly, then drill pilot holes at an angle through the back of the rosette and through the 1x3 base into the bracket Screw the bracket on with 1½-inch screws through the two pilot holes Attach the other bracket the same way

4_ Cut crown molding to fit between the two shelf brackets Align the molding between the brackets angled slightly so that the devices will tilt back when resting on it, making their screens easy to see Leave a 1 inch gap between it and the base Nail it in place though the outside of the brackets Putty the nail holes, sand the wood and finish the station with stain or paint

get complete instructions
Follow a detailed step by step of this project at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

Cooling Classic Homes *the Modern Way*

Window air conditioning units are noisy, drafty and unsightly. And installing conventional air duct systems in old houses often requires carving up closets and walls at great expense and disruption. There's an easier, more efficient way...

Halcyon ductless mini-split systems can cut your energy costs by 50% and provide year-round comfort for your home.*

As much as half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. So, making smart decisions about your home's heating and air conditioning system can have a big effect on your utility bills and your comfort. Ductless heat pumps allow for a peaceful inside environment because components like compressors and motors are installed outdoors. Fujitsu Halcyon systems provide individual room temperatures yet whole-home constant comfort, year-round.

Several Energy Star® Fujitsu systems qualify for a residential Federal Tax Credit of up to $1,500, which applies to equipment cost and labor.

Halcyon

Halcyon is for you if:

- ☑ Your upstairs is a different temperature than downstairs
- ☑ The noise of your window A/C prevents you from hearing the TV
- ☑ You don't want to lose closet space to ductwork
- ☑ You want to reduce allergens and manage room temperature
- ☑ $20,000 quotes for central air give you sticker shock
- ☑ You'd like to lower your utility bill up to 50%
- ☑ You want a system that switches from heating to cooling automatically
- ☑ You're tired of paying to cool or heat rooms you don't use

For over 35 years, we've been making the hottest places cool and the coolest places more comfortable

To find out why Halcyon is right for you, visit us at www.constantcomfort.com

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*Savings may vary based on model selected, hours of operation and geographical location. Example given based on 26-SEER system versus 13-SEER system

Lay a bluestone patio

A natural-looking broken-stone patio provides a gathering place in an organic landscape By JENNIFER STIMPSON • Photographs by WENDELL T. WEBBER

For complete instructions, turn the page

Cost: About $700 for a 10-by-10-foot area
Time: 6 hours a day over three days
Difficulty: Moderate. Some heavy lifting and excavation is required to prepare the site

The bluestone that makes up millions of American patios often comes in neatly sawn rectangles. But for a rustic landscape, nothing looks more natural than "snapped" or "broken" bluestone, terms used to denote an irregular edge on the slabs. *This Old House* senior technical editor Mark Powers recently built a patio out of this hearty stone in his backyard. As he shows on the following pages, laying a long-lasting patio like his is as much about the base underneath it as the layout above. With a little digging endurance and the patience to piece together a rock puzzle, you too can create a gathering space that appears to come from another time.

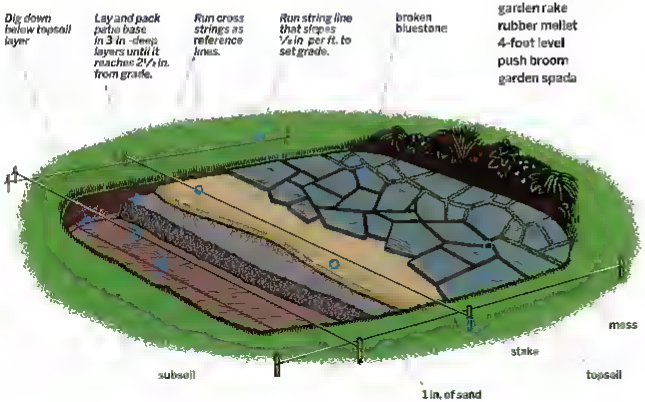
Stone: 1½-inch thick broken bluestone, $240 per ton; vaultstone.com
Moss: Fern moss, $120 for a 25-square-foot box; mossacres.com

Day-to-day timeline

FRIDAY Lay out the size and shape of the patio and arrange the placement of the stones.

SATURDAY Dig out the area, and create the base layer

SUNDAY Position and level the stones, then fill the joints



tools you need

grinder
brick hammer
mason's chisel and maul
spade
shovel
line level
hand tamper or compactor (rents for $85 a day)
garden rake
rubber mallet
4-foot level
push broom
garden spade

materials to buy

1½-inch broken bluestone Sold in stone yards by the ton. 1½ tons cover about 100 square feet with wide joints. Choose an assortment of small and large stones of varying shapes. If possible, lay the stones out at the yard so that you know you have what you need

stakes and mason's line to lay out the pitch of the patio and keep the stones level

paver base A mixture of ¾-inch gravel and stone dust. One yard covers 108 square feet 3 inches deep

leveling sand One yard covers 324 square feet 1 inch deep

moss Sold by the square foot. Buy enough to cover one-fifth of the area of the patio

1. Create a layout

Whether you're building a patio with rectangular slabs or with broken pieces like the one shown here, laying out the stones to perfect your pattern before starting the installation will save headaches later on. Random patterns may require you to cut some pieces to fill in blank spaces.

A Using a rope or garden hose, outline the shape of the patio. Beginning on one edge, lay the largest stones around the field; fit smaller stones in between, leave joints of 1½ to 2½ inches.

To cut a stone, flip it over and mark the underside for the cut. Using a grinder fitted with a diamond blade, score along the cutline. Prop up the stone on a stone you don't intend to use, with the waste edge hanging over, and hit it with a brick hammer to break it naturally along the score. Or set a mason's chisel in the score and hit it with a maul to snap the stone.

B With the pattern set, number the stones in chalk to note the layout. Keeping the stones in order, stack each row to the side.

Tip Take several digital photos of the numbered layout from above to help re-create the pattern later.

2. Excavate

The patio must slope away from the house or other structure to direct runoff away from the foundation. Grade the slope about ¼ inch per foot—keep track by running a mason's line at the proper slope and measuring down from it as you dig. You have to dig deep enough to remove the dark topsoil layer—how deep depends on the soil conditions in your area. But you must go down at least 6 inches to accommodate the base.

A To create a graded line, set stakes a few feet deep at what will be the high and low corners of one side. Moving a level along it as a guide, run a level mason's line between the two stakes about ¼ foot above the ground. Multiply the length of the side in feet by ¼ inch. Move the line on the low-side stake down by that amount. For example, if the side is 5 feet long, lower the string ⅝ inch.

Set two stakes on the opposite side of the patio. Using a level, transfer the height of the line from the top and bottom across, then connect the sloped line on the other side at the same height as the lengthwise lines.

B Using a spade, dig out the topsoil within the patio outline until the dark loam turns to lighter subsoil (typically between 6 and 12 inches).

C Set a stake every 2 feet along the graded mason's lines, and run cross strings at the height of the lines, creating a grid across the excavated area. Check the depth of the area by measuring the distance between the new cross strings and the subsoil. Clear high spots and backfill low points until the area is evenly excavated.

Tip Make a mark on each stake where it meets the ground in case it gets knocked over, then notch the stake to hold the mason's line without tying it off.

3. Put down the base

A patio is only as sturdy as the layers beneath it. Even in a natural design like this one, a sturdy base that drains well will prevent stone edges from popping up and creating a tripping hazard.

A Fill the excavated area with 3 inches of paver base. Using a hand tamper or compactor, pack the base, keeping it graded to the slope of the mason's lines. Continue laying 3-inch layers of base and tamping it until the surface measures 2½ inches below the desired finished patio height.

B Pour 1 inch of leveling sand over the base. Using a garden rake, smooth the sand and even out the field until the sand is 1½ inches below the patio finish height. Keep track of the grading by checking the depth against the mason's lines.

Tip To keep dust down, spray the paver base lightly with a hose before tamping it.

© LISTHAT BY: ONESONYMARC

4. Lay the stone

Bluestone is naturally bumpy, so it's important to keep it as even as possible to avoid creating a trip hazard. You can check the stones with a level: while they may not always read level, you'll be able to tell if they're flush with one another and graded properly.

A Lay a row of stones in place, re-creating the numbered pattern you established earlier. Set all the large stones first, placing smaller stones only for reference. Using a rubber mallet, strike the stones to set them in place.

B Set a level across the stones two by two, and fill with or remove sand until they're even and graded appropriately. Fill in with the small stones. Don't walk on the stones until they're all in place.

Tip **Create a measuring guide by marking the finish distance between the top of the stone and the grade line on a spare stake.**

4

5

5. Fill the joints

Finish the natural look of the patio by planting moss or other plants that can be tread on between the stones.

A Hose down the patio to help lock in the stones. Using a garden spade, remove excess pockets of sand in the joints and replace with excavated soil (indigenous moss often prefers this soil to rich potting soil). Clear the stones of excess sand and soil with a push broom.

B Dip dry moss into a bucket of water and press it into the soil. Plant all the joints and around the edges.

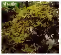
Stepping plants

Add color to your patio with groundcover plants that hold up to foot traffic. Look for herbs and moss that thrive in the amount of sun your yard gets, and make sure to pick softer plants that won't irritate summertime's bare feet.

▶ **find more plants**
See other flowers and herbs that grow well between stones at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

Woolly thyme *(Thymus pseudolanuginosus)* This full-coverage moss thrives around stone and can withstand heavy foot traffic.

Irish moss *(Sagina subulata)* Sometimes known as Scotch moss, this dense mat has tiny white flowers that will stand out against the grey stone.



Fern moss *(Th...)* Its medium green color of this low-growing moss thrives best in full shade or indirect sunlight and does well as a transplant.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 108

Hardwood Flooring Deals!

6 MONTHS SAME AS CASH* WITH THE LUMBER LIQUIDATORS CARD

Dream Home 8MM American Cherry Laminate Flooring with 10 year warranty (6AC) .... 78¢ sq ft

Lisbon Cork Sunset Cork flooring with 25 year warranty (CKML) .... $1.29 sq ft.

Supreme Bamboo 5/8" x 3¾" Horizontal Natural prefinished bamboo flooring with 15 year warranty (SPBAMHN) .... $1.99 sq ft.

Casa de Colour ½" x 2¼" Golden Oak prefinished flooring with 25 year warranty (PRGO31) .... $2.79 sq ft.

Schön Amber Valley Oak easy click installation flooring with 25 year warranty (SC06AV) .... $2.99 sq ft.

Ty Pennington 5/8" x 3¾" Sambucca stained bamboo prefinished flooring with 30 year warranty (TPBAMSM) .... $2.99 sq ft.

Builder's Pride 3/8" x 3" Aztec Cherry flooring with 25 year warranty (PRAZ3S38) .... $2.99 sq ft.

Bellawood ¾" x 2¼" Rustic Red Oak prefinished flooring with 50 year warranty (HUSRO2RW) .... $3.89 per sq ft.

Virginia Mill Works ¾" x 4¾" Matterhorn Birch handscraped flooring with 30 year warranty (VMM45) .... $3.89 sq ft.

Virginia Mill Works ½" x 5" Jamestown Plank handscraped prefinished flooring (HSJTP5) .... $3.99 sq ft.

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Eat Out More Often

Creating a **backyard kitchen** makes it easy. Here, TOH explains which **essentials** are worth the money, which **extras** are not, and how to get a full-on grill experience without the cost of construction

By Amanda Lecky
Photographs by Mark Lohman
Styling by Sunday Hendrickson

Few things rival the appeal of a backyard barbecue on a summer night. Here's another notion that's sure to please: Upgrade your barbecue area to an outdoor kitchen, and any money you spend on it will increase your home's value. "In any market a home with an outdoor kitchen would help buyers choose it over another without one," says Karen Schwartz of ERA Real Estate. The homeowners of the Pasadena, California, kitchen pictured here heartily agree. "When we first looked at this house," says the wife, "the outdoor kitchen was a huge bonus." Although fairly simple in style, the kitchen's 120 square feet of space includes all the amenities: a built-in gas grill, separate side burners, refrigerator, sink, fireplace, and large seating bar. And while such a wealth of features would push a similar kitchen to a hefty $25,000, estimates Pasadena landscape architect Mark Berry (who designed this one), you can get just as much function on a much lower budget. Read on to learn how.

Keys to a Family-Friendly Outdoor Kitchen

1. **Grill** The heart of any such setup (side burners are strictly optional).
2. **Counter Space** A necessity for setting down foods ready to go on the grill—or come off it.
3. **Floor Area** As big as possible to allow for gatherings with friends.
4. & 5. **Lights and Shelter** A spot for spotlights and a shade maker.
6. & 7. **Fridge and Sink** One corrals cold drinks, the other dirty dishes.
8. **Cabinets** Nice to hide the propane and some BBQ supplies.
9. **Hearth** Adds major warmth and ambience (and is ultra convenient for making s'mores).

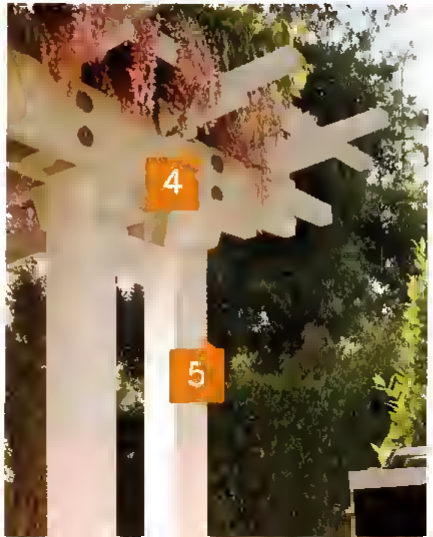
For more details, turn the page

Cookout Center Essentials

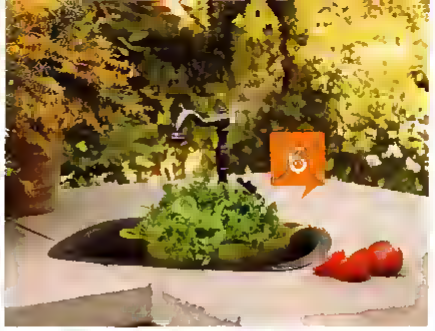
1> Grill "You can get all you really need with a simple grill island," says Berry. But he adds, "Don't skimp on the grill itself, because that's what you'll use the most." As for equipment, be realistic about your needs. "Guys get excited about all the bells and whistles, like side burners," says Kevin Cunningham, owner of Ultimate Outdoor Kitchens in Geneva, Illinois. "But a 36-inch grill is perfect for most families." Cunningham likes grills with built-in infrared burners for searing and suggests springing for an electric rotisserie. Today even moderately priced freestanding grills offer infrared technology (Char-Broil's 42-inch model starts at $270). Add-on rotisserie kits run from $50 to $200 at most home centers—just keep in mind you'll need a GFCI outlet nearby.
BOTTOM LINE: A 36-inch grill set in a cart or island will do the job handily.

2> Counter Space In general, designers suggest at least 12 inches of food prep and landing space on either side of the cooking surface. The most popular countertop materials are ceramic tile, natural stone, and concrete. Concrete counters, like those shown at right, must be sealed annually and a hot pot or utensil can scorch them. Landscape architect J. Neil Bryson of Charlotte, North Carolina, solves the latter problem by having the fabricator lay stainless-steel bars in the surface next to the grill for a built-in trivet. Ceramic tile will save you money, but, says Cunningham, be sure to use a latex grout formulated to expand and contract. "Otherwise, in a cold climate, the freeze-thaw cycle will have those tiles popping off after a few seasons."
BOTTOM LINE: Plan on at least 2 feet of countertop by the grill.

3> Room to Move "Outdoor kitchens are one place where bigger really is better," says Sacramento, California, landscape designer Michael Glassman. "You'll never be sorry you allowed for extra counter space, because inside or out, everyone crowds around the cook. Plus, you'll be able to cook better if you give your guests somewhere to sit, or lean, or work." Cast a critical eye on an existing deck or patio; you may already have space for a generously sized outdoor cooking area. Just be sure to check local zoning laws regarding size and location of your kitchen setup (these regulate, among other things, the safe clearance between open flames and combustible surfaces). For a relatively small investment, you can add a high bar with seating off the prep station. An all-weather folding bar can be had for $300, with mahogany stools for $100 each (grandinroad.com).
BOTTOM LINE: Don't skimp on space, but comply with local codes.



4&5> Lighting and Shelter Two features homeowners frequently overlook are among the most essential, says Glassman: task lighting and overhead shelter. "All it takes is a $25 clip-on grill light to give you direct illumination on the cooking surface."



he says. A freestanding umbrella set into the countertop or on a stand will provide shade at high noon. "Of course, if you can build a pergola or set the kitchen under an overhang off the house, even better," adds Glassman. "That way you can install more extensive lighting as well as fans to help keep insects away from the cooking area." (If the grill is under a roof overhang, however, you may also need to install a vent hood for safety.) Spotlights affixed to the pergola roof brighten this California backyard kitchen at night.
BOTTOM LINE: At least shine light on the grill and put up an umbrella.

Nice-to-Have Extras

6&7> Sink and Fridge Plumbing for an outdoor sink can add $1,000 to $2,000 to your project, Cunningham estimates. But a sink may not be warranted. Designers generally recommend situating your outdoor cooking area close enough to the indoor kitchen that you can comfortably carry a heavy tray between the two. Follow that guideline and the indoor sink should suffice. Your money may be better spent on an undercounter beverage fridge that's UL-approved for exterior use—and the outdoor GFCI to power it—so that you can keep cold drinks at the ready. Models from Marvel, GE, and Decor run about $1,800 to $2,300. Still set on a sink? Save with one that hooks to a hose, such as No-Crank's Outdoor Sink Station ($170, no-crank.com).
BOTTOM LINE: Maybe splurge on the fridge—and skip the sink.

8> Cabinet Storage While it's nice to hide the propane, built-in cabinets are generally optional—unless the grill is a long trek from the indoor kitchen. In that case, go for durable, weatherproof cabinets in stainless steel or a marine-grade polymer. In the kitchen shown here, painted teak doors below the grill and sink access the propane and plumbing, plus BBQ supplies. Add freestanding storage for less with a weatherproof cart on wheels.
BOTTOM LINE: Finish the void under a built-in grill with doors to hide the propane tank and some grill supplies. Or just add a cart.

9> Cozy Hearth Focal points like a fireplace or pizza oven do extend the season, and the overall appeal, of an outdoor kitchen. A fireplace starts about $8,000. A basic pizza oven kit starts at $3,000, with the custom surround adding several thousand dollars more to the project. Mark Berry built his own for about $2,000, using plans from a book. "It really is great for entertaining," he says. "It creates a lot of ambience." As for the happy owners of this kitchen, while they love the convenience of their gas grill, it's the wood-burning fireplace that's the star. "It adds so much warmth," says the wife. And, of course, "it's perfect for roasting marshmellows."
BOTTOM LINE: Short on cash? You can fire up a firepit for about $100.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 108

More Ways to Save: 11 ideas for putting together your own backyard grill center, from just $8

Cool cooker
Charcoal grills are making a comeback. Now you can get the classic kettle with major upgrades. Weber's Performer with gas ignition is set in a heavy-duty steel cart with a weatherproof work surface and tilt-out bin for charcoal—and has a spring green enamel finish. $330. crateandbarrel.com

Bright spot
This weather-resistant gooseneck light clamps on just about anywhere to put a high-intensity LED spotlight on your cooking surface. $25. lowes.com

Less mess
Made from hardwood scraps, all-natural chemical-free Cowboy Charcoal lights quicker, burns hotter, and leaves behind less ash than traditional briquets. $8 for an 8.8-pound bag; acehardware.com

Tool kit
This well-priced tool set from Kenmore includes spatula, tongs, fork, and grill brush, as well as a digital fork thermometer and skewers—all in one storage case. $30. sears.com

Rule the roast
Make Beer Can Chicken sans the can. Fill the Vertical Roaster's vented cone with beer (or wine), slide the bird on top, and cook veggies on the perforated base. $30. williams-sonoma.com

RECIPE

Beer Can Chicken
1 whole chicken
1 tbs. vegetable oil
½ cup spice rub
1 can (12 oz.) beer

1. Rub oil all over chicken. Sprinkle half the spice rub in cavity; the rest over bird.
2. Drink half of beer. Lower chicken cavity onto beer can (if using roaster, simply beer into cone; lift chicken cavity over top of cone).
3. Heat gas grill to medium or burn coals till covered with ash.
4. Place chicken on grill and cover. Cook till thermometer reads 170 degrees F in breast, 180 in thigh.
5. Remove from heat. Let rest 10 minutes before lifting it off can. Dig in.

Smart cart
Add storage and prep space with a rolling stainless-steel-topped cart like the Polaris Kitchen Cart. Prolong the life of the rubberwood base with a preservative (such as TWP 100) to protect it from water and UV rays before taking it outside. $150. kmart.com

Smoke it
Smoke meat, fish, or even cheese at low temperatures in Mece's generously sized water smoker. Green or wet wood chunks set to burn atop the coals infuse the food with distinctive flavor. $130, cooking.com

RECIPE

Smoked Cheese
Mild or sharp cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese, cut into 4-oz. chunks
Fresh herbs, such as sage or tarragon, blanched and dried flat
Red pepper flakes

1. Wrap each cheese chunk in foil, shiny side out, leaving top open.
2. Press herbs into top of cheese, and sprinkle with a few red pepper flakes.
3. Get smoker going very low and slow. Add wood (try mesquite or hickory) to low burning coals. Fill water pan.
4. Seal foil-wrapped cheese on cooking grid; cover. Smoke for 30 to 60 minutes, checking often to ensure it doesn't melt.
5. Remove from smoker. Cool, unwrap, and serve.

Big chill
No need for an outdoor fridge when you can keep drinks cool for hours in this insulated steel beverage tub. Use the bottom tray to keep glassware and bottle openers handy, or use the stand separately and load up both trays with plates, napkins, utensils, and BBQ condiments. Tub, $70; stand, $100. plowandhearth.com

Get shelter
Escape the sun's rays beneath this roomy 9-foot round umbrella. Acrylic canvas with built-in UV protection will keep the stripes vibrant for seasons to come. Umbrella, $80; base, $40. lowes.com

Fire power
Sunset doesn't have to signal the end of the party. Light a fire in this portable 30-inch copper-coated cast-iron bowl to lessen the chill. $140. galam.com

build it & they will come
For pointers on making your own outdoor kitchen island, go to thisoldhouse.com/bonus.

Cookout companion
Provides just the right dose of warmth and family fun. Free. petfinder.com

vintage bath at a budget price

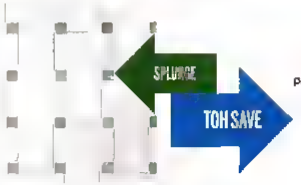
We all love the look of marble floors and polished faucets. It's the top-dollar price we can live without. Which is why *TOH* editors scoured the marketplace for money-saving replicas of the high-end goods found in this tony retreat. The results? Products that are proof positive you don't have to take a bath to make a bath

By Deborah Baldwin
Room photographs by Erik Johnson
Still life photographs by Ted Morrison
Produced by Colette Scanlon
Styling by Marnellen Melker

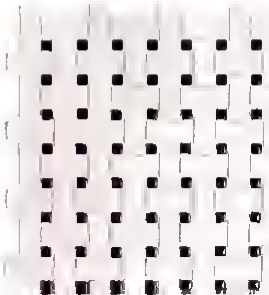
1 basket-weave floor tile

Two takes on the classic trick of the eye: mosaic pale marble with hints of gold and green and crisp black-and-white porcelain

shades of light
Italian Calacatta gold rectangles and dots made of pale green give the Parramore Basketweave marble tile its luminous palette. Its polished, light-reflecting finish requires sealing. $90 per square foot, waterworks.com



graphic look
Contrasting colors and finishes—matte white rectangles and glossy black dots—give this pattern its updated look. Interlocking mesh-mounted squares make this tile extra DIY friendly to install. $11 per square foot, mosaictile.com
SAVINGS $80 per square foot



2 cross-handle faucet

Multispoke handles and flared spouts were staples of early spigots. New versions do wonders for a plain sink.

in fine detail
The hand-polished nickel finish on this widespread faucet gives it a vintage patina, and the porcelain buttons and wide spout are authentic period details. Its French-made all-brass construction comes with a long-wearing ceramic disc valve and lifetime warranty. Jado faucet, $847, waterworks.com

compact curves
This chrome-finished centerset faucet, suitable for a sink top with holes 4 inches apart, gets its charm from a curvaceous spout and handles. Made in Taiwan, its all-brass construction has a 10-year warranty, which doesn't cover a washerless cartridge valve that may need replacing every five or so years. Model 32184, $72, plumbusa.com
SAVINGS $775

3 wood medicine chest

Painted or not, early mirrored cabinets typically hung on the wall above the sink with framed inset doors and nickel knobs.

well framed

This painted, 33-inch high solid-wood cabinet has a vintage-style inset door with a beveled mirror, three adjustable glass shelves, and satin nickel knob. Finished with a decorative wood frame, it can be recessed or wall hung. Devon cabinet, $660; afinacorporation.com

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

wall mounted simplicity

With its wood-framed overlay door, laminated box, and single fixed shelf, this no-knob cabinet is a trim 13 by 15 inches. It's meant to hang on the wall. Sherad in cabinet, $74; nutone.com for store locations

SAVINGS $586

4 leaf-motif border

Decorative subway tiles with floral or leaf patterns were popular in the 1890s. Today's versions may serve as both border and cap rail or just as an inset.

cream-colored leaves

Its warm white color, crackle glaze, and detailed acanthus leaf motif give this border tile—which doubles as a wainscot cap—a Victorian-era feel. Each 3¾-by-6-inch tile is hand-pressed and hand-glazed in California; purposeful pooling of the glaze adds dimension. Architectonics Collection buy-leaf tile, $28 each; waterworks.com

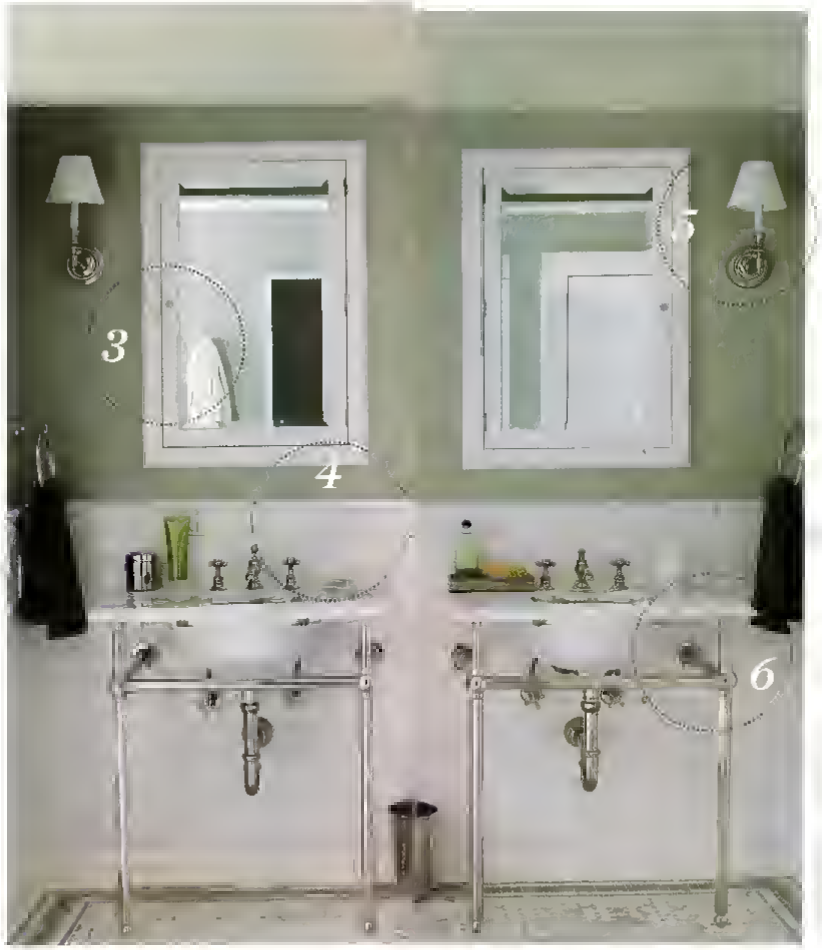
SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

more nature inspiration

A semitranslucent 4½-by-8-inch snow white-glazed tile is meant to give its factory-made consistency a hand-crafted look. Acanthus tile, $14 each; daltile.products.com

SAVINGS $35 per linear foot



5 candlestick sconces

Baths of yore were softly lighted with chandeliers and sconces—a look that's making a comeback. Here, two candle-style fixtures, each a foot tall, in polished nickel.

fully fashioned

Its designer provenance (it's credited to Bill Bless), linen shade, and concealed fasteners give this fixture a flawless traditional look. Single French sconce, $126; circalighting.com

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

streamlined value

The taller shade, made of synthetic silk shantung, on this slightly simpler version has a more contemporary look, as does its all-metal candlestick. It attaches with two screws that have decorative caps. Buller sconce, $59; feiss.com

SAVINGS $67

6 washstand sink

Sinks with exposed metal console supports (and pipes) span the 1880s to the present, keeping baths open and airy and towels right at hand.

like the console of old

Its marble top—in this case Italian Calacatta gold—with a graceful ogee edge, vitreous china basin, and nickel-finished tubular frame, replicates console sinks of an earlier era. It fastens securely to the wall and is poised on ball feet. Danby console, with Savoy, $1,890; waterworks.com

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

leggy wall mount

This vitreous-china sink gets old-fashioned flair from a built-in washstand-style backsplash that secures to the wall. Chrome front legs attach to the floor, and optional towel bars snap onto the sides. Essex sink, $530; cheviotproducts.com

SAVINGS $1,360

lots more details

Find other ways to give your bath a vintage look at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

7 tub filler

These two versions of the statuesque Victorian tub filler feature cross-handle faucets and a cradle for a hand shower

stand-alone sculpture

This large-scale Edwardian-style floor-mounted tub filler, made in England, stands on exposed legs and rises nearly a foot above the tub's rim. It has a polished nickel finish over all brass construction, a 5-foot hose, and porcelain trim on its diverter lever and cross handles. A generous ceramic disc valve is designed for fast tub filling. Comes with a lifetime warranty. Model U.3521X, by Perrin & Rowe, $4,292; rshhome.com

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

off-the-wall value

Chrome-over-brass construction and porcelain trim give this smaller set its retro look. It is shown as a wall mount but can be deck- or floor-mounted with additional parts. Made in India. It has a 5-foot hose, ceramic cartridge, and lifetime warranty. Flex chrome tub filler $299 (wall mount) or $695 (floor mount), bathsfromthepast.com

SAVINGS $3,597

8 train-style towel rack

Credit railway cars and hotel baths with popularizing storage racks that can hold a stack of terry cloth

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

euro-style flair

This solid-brass rack is 28 inches wide and 11 inches deep, with a hand-polished nickel finish, hidden screws and four beefy hooks. Lugano towel rack, $429; restorationhardware.com

scaled down

This lighter-weight chrome-over-hollow-brass rack is 22½ inches wide and 9 inches deep, with curved top and bottom rails and semiexposed screwheads. Hotel towel rack $69; dynastyhardware.com

SAVINGS $260

9 pedestal tub

Like the earlier tubs they echo, these centerpiece soakers are made of cast iron to hold the heat.

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE

right curves and complexion

This 68-inch-long, 13½-inch-deep, two-piece tub has a porcelain enamel finish with a tough titanium glaze guaranteed not to peel or corrode for two years. It weighs 383 pounds and costs $100 to $350 to ship. Dual model 8116, $2,650; sunrisespecialty.com

same shape, different finish

This two-piece cast-iron tub, 66 inches long and 13½ inches deep, has a porcelain enamel finish with a glaze guaranteed not to peel for one year. It weighs 552 pounds but shipping is free; just be sure to check your floor supports. Double-ended pedestal tub, $1,400; vintagetub.com

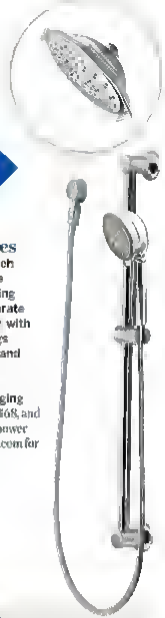
SAVINGS $1,250

10 dual showerheads

The Victorians cleaned up under rainheads "roses" atop exposed nickel risers with attached hand showers

SPLURGE

TOH SAVE



high-rise profile

Porcelain levers, an exposed mixer, and a hand-polished nickel finish give this single-stem French-made unit its true vintage style. The 8-inch rose, fed by a large valve, is designed to drench; the handheld shower has a porcelain handle and 60-inch hose. Eastern Exposed Shower System, $3,677; waterworks.com

two easy pieces

This octagonal 8-inch rainhead is a simple retrofit for an existing wall shower. A separate chrome hand spray, with four shower settings, has a 69-inch hose and can be positioned anywhere along its 30-inch bar for hanging. Inspire showerhead, $68, and four-function hand shower by Moen, $216; moen.com for store locations

SAVINGS $3,394

TOTAL TOH SAVINGS $11,404

READER REMODEL

After 23 moves, we finally found our forever home

With nearly 30 years of construction experience under their belts, this couple took on a crumbling 1901 Dutch Colonial Revival, adding vintage-look details energy-saving systems, and cozy new living spaces inside and out

By Debbie Stoner
Homeowner
Photographs by
Judith Bromley
Styling by
Stephanie Sandston

Chills ran up my arms while I watched the crew toll my beautiful old home, creaking and groaning, off its crumbling stacked-sandstone foundation and onto rails set up in the side yard. I knew we had to pour a concrete foundation to save the 1901 house, but that didn't mean I had to like it. A few nerve-racking hours later, it was safe and sound on its temporary resting place. What a relief! My husband, Dennis, who has decades of home-building experience, had planned everything out to the inch, so I should have known he and the crew would get it right, but it was a scary ordeal. After all, this wonderful old house was my dream come true, and I really didn't like seeing it perched perilously off the ground.

See, for years I routed my morning walks through the historic district of our mountain town of Bozeman, Montana, imagining what the interiors of the 19th- and 20th-century homes must be like. While visions of my very own old bungalow danced in my head, I never really believed I could talk Dennis into the idea of "rectifying someone else's mistakes," as he puts it. But after 23 moves during his 29-year career, he promised the next move would be →

my choice. I jumped at the offer, dragging him off to tour several old houses on the market.

And when we saw this Dutch Colonial Revival, we knew it had just the right potential. Outside, the home had a gambrel roof and unique front porch arches, still intact. Inside, while much had been stripped away over time, some bits of character, like push-button light switches, remained. I also loved the house's history. It was built for an enterprising female music professor at the turn of the century from a $5 architectural plan from *Ladies' Home Journal*. She financed it with music lesson fees.

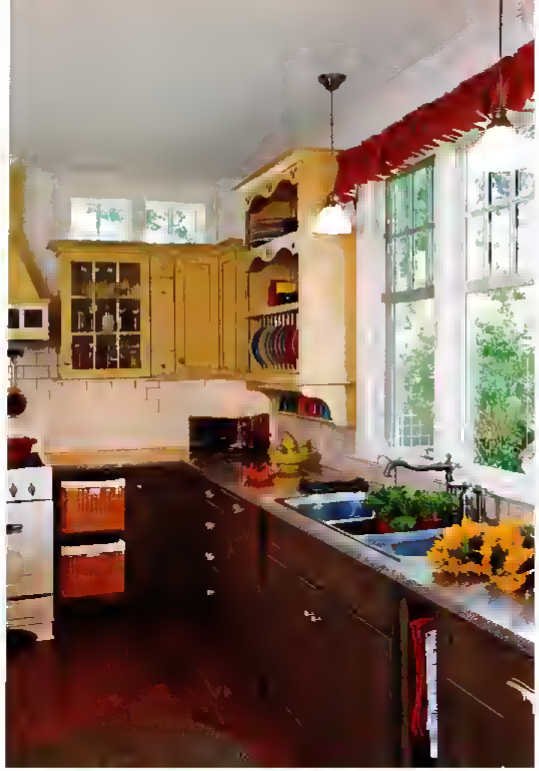
As with any old house, it had some problems. Several families had occupied the home, and it showed. Porches were enclosed, picture windows had been added, and a spray-on cottage-cheeselike preservative sold by Sears in the early 1970s encased the cedar lap siding and had cracks running through it. Interior trim had also been altered, and most of the solid five-panel doors had been cut to fit wall-to-wall carpet. In short, it needed lots of work.

The house had 1,440 square feet of living space plus a large front porch, but it lacked some modern-day conveniences, namely a home office, laundry room, and crafts area. Since the property covered three city lots, we decided to add on. While we couldn't be purists, we wanted to make every new detail look as old as possible.

From the beginning Dennis and I jumped into researching ways to add historically appropriate charm to the place. We collected sticky-noted stacks of magazines for reference, tearing out the photos we really liked. I already knew I wanted to turn an upstairs nursery into a walk-in closet and master bath with two pedestal sinks, a claw-foot tub, and sage green walls—just like one I had seen in the September 2003 issue of *This Old House*. But we waited and lived in the house for a year before deciding how big a remodel we wanted to take on. Good thing, too. Over that time we fully experienced the house's inadequate insulation, questionable wiring, ancient plumbing—and, yes, the crumbling foundation, which had left the floors crooked and had to be replaced.

We decided to take time away from our custom-home-building business, where we both manage projects, to make the remodel our full-time job. We meticulously drew up floor plans and spec sheets, keeping energy efficiency in mind as a top priority. That meant adding sprayed urethane insulation, radiant heat, double-pane windows, and low-flow toilets. On the first floor we also decided to add a portico entry and a powder room and to open the kitchen to the dining and living rooms. That last decision wasn't historically correct, but it fit our lifestyle and allowed us to use the original parlor chimney chase to add a centrally located fireplace.

Having been so deliberate with our planning, we thought we had prepared for everything, but the house, of course, still had a few surprises in store. While preparing it to be moved, we found asbestos in the attic and the attached walls of a lean-to shed; removing it was a hurdle



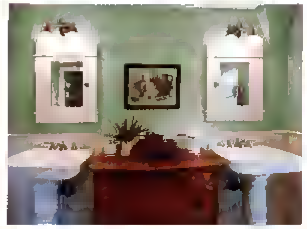
● RIGHT: With its beadboard ceiling, subway tile, and wood floor, the colorful kitchen pays homage to the 1920s.

● BOTTOM: A handsome fireplace warms up the living room. The mahogany mantel and ceramic tile surround were based on features found in neighboring houses and handcrafted by local artisans. The folding rocker traveled by covered wagon to Nebraska with Debbie's great-grandmother.

homeowner tip

DENNIS STONER, BOZEMAN, MONT.

"Organize pages torn from magazines in three-ring binders tabbed by subject. That way you'll know where to find them and what you wanted to replicate."



want this look?

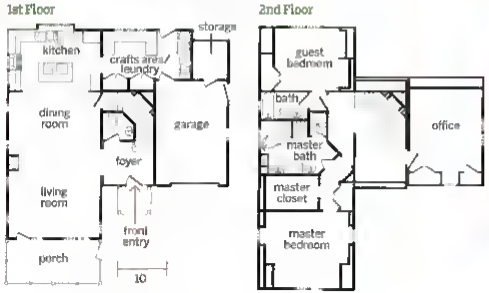
Learn how to install beadboard wainscoting at thisoldhouse.com/bonus.

● ABOVE LEFT: A claw-foot slipper tub is nestled into a corner of the new master bath.

● ABOVE RIGHT: An antique oak dresser sits between two pedestal sinks, providing storage for toiletries and extra towels.

floor plans

Adding on to the side of the house provided room for a new crafts area, laundry, and office.



■ LEFT Old-fashioned hydrangeas, dogwoods, roses, and lilacs surround the porch and new picket fence. A gated garden arch now leads to the backyard.

■ BELOW: Scenes from a sweat-equity scrapbook: homeowner Dennis Stenar installing the weather vane on the new garage, wife Debbie prying nails out of the home's original floors.

■ OPPOSITE: The couple takes a well-earned rest. The paver patio sits behind the barn-style garage where the couple lived during the remodel.

we knew could be dealt with only by professionals. Luckily we were able to get the men in white suits there within two weeks. It's a bit strange, I have to say, to see your home turned into a hazmat zone, complete with a little tent outside for showering.

After that, Dennis and I immediately started gutting the house's interior while it sat in the side yard. We had agreed in the beginning to take on the demo, but I really didn't know what I was getting into. It was hot, muggy work, and I hated wearing a respirator. I also wasn't too fond of having to pluck out hundreds of nails from the original fir floors, which we discovered after tearing off a layer of new oak that had been laid over them. I spent a good week crawling across the first floor with a crowbar, green knee pads strapped on. Thankfully, Dennis took care of most of the heavy hauling, while I scooped debris into buckets.

We tried to reuse, sell, or give away as much as possible, since neither of us cared to see good materials waste away in a landfill. The offer of "free" garnered some help removing the carport, patio cover, and awnings. Dennis also lugged several pallets' worth of sandstone slabs from the old foundation to recycle in the new basement's window wells. In the end we dragged out eight tons of lath, plaster, drywall, wiring, and plumbing pipes. Finally, with that done and the new foundation in place, we celebrated the house's return to its original location.

It was a short-lived party, though, as we had to get started on the addition. For months we had been living in a barn-style detached garage we had built in the backyard before starting the main house's remodel. While the 22-by-24-foot structure held our essentials—bed, desk, table, and makeshift kitchen—life there was getting claustrophobic. We had put in a half-bath, but Dennis and I had to make daily treks to the local gym to shower. And while we managed to steam vegetables on a hot plate and heat up most meals in the microwave, I was looking forward to having the use of a full kitchen again. Dennis was also eager to show that he could do all the framing, carpentry, and siding himself. Of course, obtaining several new top-quality power tools was a necessary first priority!

Dennis built new gambrel-shaped trusses on-site and put up custom-milled interior trim and paneling. Together, we installed new oak plank flooring. I, meanwhile, spent hours doing online research and reaching out to local suppliers to find the Heartland appliances for our 1920s-style kitchen and the right moldings to dress up the living room. This was the fun part that made all that nasty demo work worth it! As the projects consumed our days and nights, we decided to leave the interior painting and staining to professionals.

Just about 16 months after this whole process started, we were finally able to take our belongings out of storage. Remodeling this place turned out to be a lot harder than I had first imagined, but being able to surround yourself with the fruits of your labor is rewarding beyond description. We officially plan to grow old in this home. No more moves. All the old packing boxes have gone to recycling. ■

What we did

Renovated and enlarged a 1901 Dutch Colonial Revival.

Time frame: 16 months
Where we saved. Recycling as much of the old building materials as possible, such as reusing foundation stone in the basement window wells.
Where we splurged. Reproduction plumbing fixtures, like the vintage tub with silver-painted claw-feet, and lighting.
What we would do differently: Nothing! I think we did everything pretty much the way we needed to.
Our biggest challenge: Keeping our health, safety, and sanity during such a big project.
How we solved it. By building a small storage barn with a half-bath first so that we could camp out there during the remodel.

Make $250 Did you renovate your house and do most of the work yourself? If so, we'd like to hear about your project. Please send copies of before-and-after photos, a floor plan, and a brief description of the work you did (we can't return any materials) to:

This Old House/Reader Remodels
135 West 50th Street—10th Floor
New York, NY 10020
Or e-mail images and information to readerremodels@thisoldhouse.com

You'll receive a payment of $250 if your home is featured.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 108

By Keith Pandolfi
Photographs by Wendell T. Webber
Styling by Leslie Siegel

FROM THE TOH TV JOB SITE

Homeowners Kevin Costello and Karen Shen in front of their rowhouse in Brooklyn, New York, where *This Old House* TV recently finished filming their renovation. The family of five took two floors for themselves and converted the rest of the house to apartments.

Small-Space Solutions

Tips and tricks for making tight quarters look and feel positively palatial

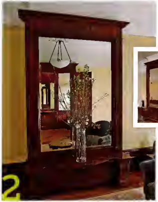
Urban living for young families is on the rise, but with it comes a need to think creatively about making the most of limited space. Karen Shen and Kevin Costello loved the extraordinary craftsmanship of their four-story 1904 Renaissance Revival brownstone in Brooklyn, New York, site of the current *This Old House* TV project. But to save money, the couple is renting out one and a half floors of the house, leaving about 1,500 square feet of narrow living space for them and their three boys. "In New York City terms, this is a huge apartment," says Karen. "But with our growing family, we needed it to feel even bigger." Squeezing a family of five into a two-floor apartment posed several logistical challenges, but with the help of *TOH* interior designer Carole Freehauf, they managed to make a compact space feel like a roomy home. Here are a few of their best solutions for making a small house feel bigger.

LIVING ROOM
FLOORING: **Lumber Liquidators**
CARPET, FURNITURE, AND ACCESSORIES: **ABC Carpet & Home**
WINDOW TREATMENTS: **The Shade Store**
PENDANT LIGHT: **Rejuvenation Hardware**
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: **MRS Inc**
WOODWORK RESTORATION: **John M. Thomas**

1

Paint crown molding to match the ceiling to widen a narrow room. Painting both the crown and ceiling white in this skinny space creates the illusion that the ceiling is wider than it is, minimizing the tunnel vision effect. Here's another trick: Install flooring, whether it's wood or tile, in a diagonal pattern to help make rooms appear wider than they are.

FROM THE TOH TV JOB SITE



before

2

Place large mirrors facing each other to create the illusion of more space. One looking glass is enough to expand the perceived depth of a room but two facing each other amplifies the effect even more says Freehauf Here a pier mirror on the front parlor wall faces another one in the front hallway extending the illusion of added space and light indefinitely

3

Maximize square footage and natural light with bay windows. When this house was built more than a century ago the standard width of a rowhouse in New York City was a mere 20 feet. Bumping out bay windows was a common architectural trick for gaining precious square footage. It also created room for three ample windows that flood the rooms with sunlight.

KITCHEN
APPLIANCES: **Miele**
SINKS AND FAUCETS: **Kohler**
CABINET HARDWARE AND WALL SCONCE: **Rejuvenation Hardware**
COUNTERTOPS: **CaesarStone**
BACKSPLASH TILE: **Mondial Tile**
CUSTOM CABINETRY: **MRS Inc.**

EXTERIOR
RESTORATION: **Park Slope Brownstone Restoration**
WROUGHT IRON PAINT: **Rust-Oleum**

4

Use double-height cabinets for vertical emphasis and maximum storage. A second set of upper cabinets draws the eye upward in this 10 by 12 foot kitchen taking attention away from the limited counter space underneath The extra cabinets also add much needed storage space "You have to take advantage of high ceilings" says general contractor Mike Streaman. "Sure you need a footstool to access them but they're a great place to store things you don't use much like holiday dishes"

before

5

Choose simple profiles and reflective materials to open up rooms. The flat panel cabinets in this tight kitchen don't add any complicating and oppressive details making the room feel airier Stainless steel appliances and shiny fixtures and hardware reflect more light making the small space feel more expansive.

A large landscape painting creates a virtual "window" making a small space appear bigger

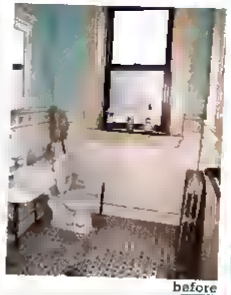
6

Use cool colors to make walls recede. In rooms where paint color makes a decorating statement, choosing cool shades (blues and greens) for the walls expands the space visually. The contrast between the rich, warm hues of the wood window and door trim and the pale lavender on the walls in this master bedroom makes the trim pop and the walls fade away

before

7

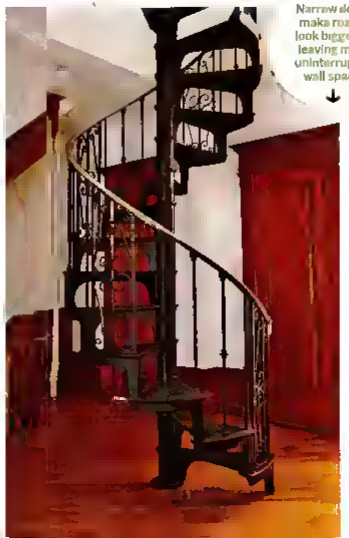
Use tall furniture and built-ins to draw the eye upward. Scale and shape play a large part in convincing the mind that a room has volume. The flared crown that tops the original overmantel in the master bedroom forces the gaze to pan up to the molding above, making the 9-foot ceiling appear higher. "Higher ceilings always increase the sense of space," says Streaman, "even when you have a limited floor plan."



before

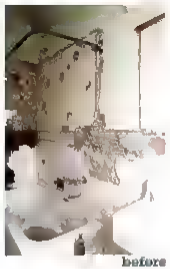
8

Reconfigure the layout to get the most utility out of a limited footprint. Though costly, sometimes an effective floor plan alteration works wonders. Take a close look at a small room's layout and see how you can maximize space. To make the most of this tiny master bath, the homeowners tucked the tub in just below the window (and shortened the window for privacy). This gave them enough room to pack in a double vanity where the old tub used to be. "Turning the tub also helped aesthetically," says Streaman. "A toilet, tub, and vanity all along one wall make a bathroom look like a bowling alley."



Narrow stairs make rooms look bigger by leaving more uninterrupted wall space

watch the transformation
See time-lapse photos of the house's renovation and read the homeowners' blog at thisoldhouse.com/bonus



before

9

Install a compact spiral staircase to conserve floor space. Creating access to an upper story—say, for an attic conversion or addition—can gobble up valuable square footage. A spiral staircase is a compact alternative to a traditional one. The homeowners opted to install this salvaged stair—found on brownstoner.com, a neighborhood blog—when they designated the house's main staircase as tenants' access. It fits neatly into a 5-foot-square area and gives them a way to move between floors without stepping into the hallway. ■

BEDROOM
PAINT: Valspar
ARTWORK: Courtesy of Bonni Benrubi Gallery

BATHROOM
CABINETRY: American Woodmark
PLUMBING FIXTURES AND MEDICINE CABINET: Kohler
COUNTERTOPS: CaesarStone
FLOOR TILE: Dal Tile
WALL TILE: Mondial Tile
PLUMBING CONTRACTOR: Aladdin Plumbing Corp

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 108

ALL ABOUT

Composite decking

Long on life span and short on fuss, these man-made boards never splinter, rot, or need staining. The TOH team explains everything you need to know about selecting, installing, and caring for this thoroughly modern material By Sal Vaglica

That singular American creation, the backyard deck, conjures up images of idyllic afternoons napping in a hammock or festive get-togethers around the grill and a tub of ice-cold beer. But maintaining that elevated expanse of lumber is a downright chore, what with all the scrubbing, bleaching, and staining that wood requires—not to mention the occasional replacement of a splintered, warped, or rotten board. So when the less demanding plastic-composite decking appeared on the scene in the 1990s, homeowners happily adopted it, despite the higher price and limited color selection (gray). A decade later, as companies began to offer new products that looked like fresh-cut cedar and Brazilian walnut but never turned gray, sales of composites took off. Last year's tally came to $1 billion.

That kind of popularity represents a big boost for the environment, too, because most composites are made from waste: sawdust, used plastic milk jugs, and shopping bags. Every 20 feet of decking contains about 30 pounds of material that would have ended up in a landfill. Trex, the first and largest of the composite manufacturers, recycles 6 million pounds of plastic each year.

The fact that composites don't feel or look like real wood is beside the point. Once in place, they just do their job and don't need much more than an annual washdown, leaving you plenty of time to work on your nap.

What's in a board?
Equal parts of wood fiber and plastic are mixed with pigments, ultraviolet inhibitors, and borate preservatives, then usually heated and extruded. The texture, if any, is embossed onto the warm surface before it cools.

recycled plastic Shredded polyethylene from milk jugs and shopping bags

waste wood Ground up wood from mills and furniture factories

The grooved boards of this easy backyard deck have been set at a slight pitch and oriented so that rainwater drains away from the house.

VITALS

What's it cost?
Run-of-the-mill boards start at $4 per square foot, while the premium products that closely resemble tropical wood run up to $7.20 per square foot.

What's the warranty?
Most manufacturers offer either a 25-year or limited-lifetime warranty on structural integrity; some warranties are transferable from one homeowner to another. Fading, scratches, and stains usually aren't covered.

How much care?
Less than wood. A simple scrubbing with soapy water and a soft-bristle brush is usually all that's needed.

Not just decking.
Everything you need to finish a deck—fascia boards, railings, balusters, treads, and posts—is made in matching colors using the same composite material.

Does it burn?
Yes, but at a much higher temperature than wood. Most composites meet California's strict Wildland-Urban Interface Building Code.

Is this the right decking for you?

Before you make a commitment, weigh the pros and cons of composites

<pros>

Reduced maintenance. Forget about having to bleach and stain wood every other year With the money you save by not using these coatings and cleaning materials you can recoup the higher cost of composites in about five years
Long life: Composites don t rot or attract termites they can t warp or check and you can go barefoot without fear of splinters
Minimal fading: All composites turn a slightly lighter shade after the first two or three months in the sun then the fading stops. (Left to its own devices wood inexorably turns gray)
Longer boards. Up to 20 feet which means fewer end joints
High recycled content: Every 10 square feet contains nearly 3 000 recycled plastic shopping bags and 1 100 one-gallon milk jugs

<cons>

High initial cost: Low end composites are priced about 30 percent higher than pressure treated pine High end composites run about the same as Ipe *(ee PAY)* a hardwood decking harvested from tropical rain forests
Easily scuffed: Moving furniture frisky dogs and gritty shoes will abrade new composites Light scratches can t be sanded out but do blend in over time
Prone to staining: The wood fibers are easily stained by food and grease And the hardwood in many mixes can create uneven brownish tannin stains early on when wet but they typically disappear over time
Hot underfoot: Like dark hardwoods dark composites heat up as they bake in the sun Lighter colored and deeper grooved boards are more barefoot friendly
Doesn't really look like wood. Some boards do a better job at mimicking wood than others, but a close look or touch gives them away

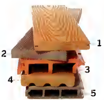
THE ALL-PLASTIC ALTERNATIVE

They look like composites, but these boards are actually 99 percent virgin PVC plastic, very different stuff from the polyethylene wood mix found in most composites.

PVC is harder than polyethylene so it doesn t scratch as easily And because it doesn t contain wood fiber it won t absorb water or food stains (Suntan lotion and insect repellent will stain it however)

But all plastic decking has a very limited color palette—three or four colors at most—and it s pricey about the same as a top-of the line composite Plus PVC is not particularly friendly to the environment There s no recycled content, and when it burns it releases toxic hydrogen chloride gas.

The importance of profiles



Composites are made in a range of profiles to make boards lighter easier to install or both The profile you pick determines how your deck will be fastened down, which affects its look (do you want to see screw heads or not?) the installation speed and how much you'll pay for the fasteners (see p 96)

1 **SLOTTED.** Grooves along both sides accept the hidden fasteners specified by the manufacturer 2.5 pounds per foot Starting at $4.60 per square foot, latitudesdeck com
2 **SOLID.** Can be face-fastened or edge-fastened and has two usable sides. 2.5 pounds per foot Starting at $4.60 per square foot, evergrain com
3 **OPEN FLANGE.** Saves weight without loss of stiffness. Uses only hidden fasteners. 2.2 pounds per foot. Floorizon $5 90 per square foot timbertech com
4 **SCALLOPED.** As heavy as a solid board but with only one usable side Fastens like a solid board 2.5 pounds per foot. Starting at $4 70 per square foot choicedek.com
5 **HOLLOW.** Stiffer and almost 25 percent lighter than a solid board End caps stop bugs from nesting inside. Fastens like a solid board 1.9 pounds per foot. $6.90 per square foot geodeck.com

Pick your board

There are profiles, textures, and colors to enhance any home Here's what you can choose from

textured grain
Professional by Fiberon
Price. $4 90 per sq ft
Highlight Both faces have a rough cut in "grain" that helps hide scuffs and scratches. Slotted profile fiberondecking.com

two-faced
Veranda
Price: $4 50 per sq ft
Highlight One side has a wood grain look (shown) the other is brushed Slotted profile. homedepot.com

plastic-wrapped
Horizon by Fiberon
Price. $5 80 per sq ft
Highlight. A covering of proprietary resin gives it excellent stain scratch and fade resistence. Reversible matching faces Slotted profile. fiberondecking.com

embossed grain
Classic EverGrain by TAMKO
Price $4 60 per sq ft
Highlight The graining is deeper because it is pressed rather than cut into the board Solid profile. evergrain.com

weathered wood
Exotics by Monarch
Price $6 per sq. ft
Highlight. Extra pigments produce a veining designed to resemble aged cypress Reversible Slotted or solid profile. monarchdeck.com

paper board
Cedar by GeoDeck
Price $6 90 per sq ft
Highlight. Made with plastic and recycled paper which the company says resists fading better than wood fiber Hollow profile. geodeck.com

watertight
MoistureShield by A E R T
Price $4 40 per sq ft
Highlight: Absorbs almost no water even if submerged Scalloped underside moistureshield.com

Why the price difference?

All composites have roughly the same basic ingredients and performance characteristics. The primary differences come down to aesthetics If you want more color choices and a more woodlike appearance, you'll pay more

<basic>

→ These boards have rough deep graining and are 5 inches wide ½ inch narrower than higher priced boards. Colors are limited to gray red and brown To make this board lighter ridges are pressed into the underside so only one side is usable Trex Contours $4 per sq ft trex com

<mid-range>

→ The surface grain pattern is more subtle than a basic board and it has two usable sides Width is 5½ inches Choose from four colors Trex Accents $5 per sq ft. trex.com

<premium>

→ Streaks of a different colored pigment added to the mix replicate the look of tropical hardwoods. These 5½-inch-wide boards have little or no surface texture although they are slip resistant Also available with slots Trex Brasilia $5 90 per sq ft. trex.com

Install it right

Don't assume this decking goes down just like wood. Here are a few important differences to keep in mind

Joist spacing. Composites will sag if joists are spaced wider than 16 inches on center

Screw placement. Composites may crumble if face fastened too close to an edge *TOH* general contractor Tom Silva recommends keeping screws about ¾ inch from ends and edges At butt ends he angles the screws slightly toward the joist

Butt-end spacing. Boards grow longer in hot weather and shorter in cold, so keep an eye on the thermometer during installation and follow the manufacturer's spacing specs to a T

Edge spacing. Narrow gaps can easily become clogged increasing the chance of stains and mildew and of boards becoming waterlogged and falling apart prematurely When Tom fastens through the boards' faces he uses 16d nails to set the between-board spacing (With hidden fasteners the spacing is set for you)

▶ **Follow a pro**
Tom Silva shows how to install composite decking at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

Keeping up appearances

Composites have few maintenance needs so you'll have plenty of time to take care of the ones that do crop up

- → **Clogs** Sweep or blow away any debris between the boards so that water can run off freely
- → **Food stains** Fast action is the best defense Use a degreaser such as Dawn dish soap on oily spots and bleach and hot water on fruit and wine stains Placing mats around the barbeque is a good preventative measure
- → **Tannin stains.** Scrub with cleaners that contain oxalic acid
- → **Gouges** Superficial scuff marks blend in over time but any board that has deep scratches or melt marks will have to be replaced
- → **Mildew stains** Add some dish soap to a 50 50 mix of oxygen bleach and hot water

How to hold composites down

You can fasten boards to joists by driving screws through the face or into clips inserted along the edge Edge fastening looks good because the screws are hidden but face-fastening is faster stronger and easier to fix When face fastening use screws designed only for composites. This decking bubbles up around standard bugle-head deck screws (below)

FACE SCREW FOR SOLID BOARDS
Trap-ease Left-handed threads near the head push down the plastic as the head sinks in Colored to match 35 cents per sq ft. fastenmaster com

HIDDEN FASTENER FOR SOLID BOARDS
Tiger Claw The pronged stainless steel clip is hammered into the edge then screwed to the joist. TC 3S $1 25 per sq ft. deckfastener com

HIDDEN FASTENER FOR SLOTTED BOARDS
EBTY Plastic biscuits fit into slotted edges allowing boards to expand and contract $1 per sq ft. ebty com

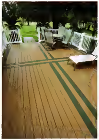
<Aha!>

NOT JUST FOR DECKING

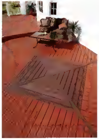
TOH technical editor Mark Powers turns composite boards on their edges to make the curved borders for a brick walkway (Learn how to do the same project at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus.**)

Get creative

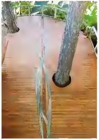
Punching up a deck's appearance can be as easy as incorporating a border in a contrasting color or creating a pleasing pattern Here are four ways to add some flair to your favorite outdoor space



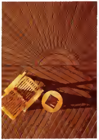
colorful border
Accent stripes help to break up a deck's wide expanse into defined sections. EverGrain Vibrance in Rustic Birch and Classic in Forest Green $4 60 per sq ft. tamko.com



square medallion
Opposing diagonals and contrasting colors draw attention to the center of a deck. Earthwood in Rosewood and Walnut, $7.20 per sq ft. timbertech com



playing with curves
If you want to bend composite boards into fun shapes, you have to soften them up first in a hot steam box. Tropics in Jatoba, Mahogany and Cypress, $5 80 per sq ft., fibersondecking.com



artistic license
Complicated designs, such as this sunrise pattern require complex framing underneath to ensure that each piece has enough support Origins in Madeira $5 50 per sq ft trex.com

▶ **deck gallery**
For more inspiring deck designs go to **thisoldhouse com/bonus**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 108

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The Unico System

The Unico System is a small-duct, high velocity HVAC system manufactured by Unico, Inc. Ideal for historic preservation, Unico's ducts fits in spaces that would not accommodate traditional duct work, and its custom outlets fit any decor without compromising the architectural integrity of the home. unicosystem.com

Event Spotlight

NYC Project Wrap Party

The transformation of a 104-year-old rowhouse in historic Prospect Heights, Brooklyn was cause to celebrate the hard work of the many contractors, artisans, and contributors to the project.

Brooklyn's own Raya Brass Band brought the party dancing out into the street

L to R: This Old House master carpenter Norm Abram, American Woodmark VP of Marketing Bryan Earl, This Old House Ventures President John L. Brown, This Old House Magazine Publisher Charlie Kammerer, This Old House host Kevin O'Connor

Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz stopped by to honor our homeowners and crew

New York inspired fare helped set the celebratory tone. stoneparkcafe.com

We gratefully acknowledge our television sponsors and project house partners.

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ask this old house

inside SAVE A WATER HEATER | STIFFEN JOISTS | TILE A COUNTERTOP | MORE

36 tips, tricks, and answers to your home-improvement questions

Q Is there any reason to own a folding ruler if I already have a tape measure?

—DAVID McCAIG, PHOENIX

A A folding ruler, more commonly called a rule, allows you to measure inside dimensions, such as those between window stops or closet walls, much more accurately than a tape measure, which has to be bent into corners. And if you take care of a rule by occasionally oiling its metal joints, you can pass it on to your grandkids. A tape measure's spring-driven retracting mechanism isn't likely to last that long. —THE EDITORS

PHOTOGRAPH BY VICTOR SCHRAGER

→ Our cast of veteran experts

TOM SILVA General Contractor
NORM ABRAM Master Carpenter
RICHARD TRETHEWEY Plumbing and Heating Expert
ROGER COOK Landscape Contractor
KEVIN O'CONNOR Host

Q Is it feasible to use gray water on a vegetable garden? I wonder if it would be healthy for the plants—and for us. Or would it change the chemistry of the soil?

—JACKIE HACKEL, MARATHON, WIS.

When a lawn is irrigated regularly with gray water, Roger Cook recommends testing the soil annually to make sure it isn't becoming too alkaline.

Roger Cook replies: Let's get some definitions out of the way first. "Gray water" typically refers to the household wastewater that drains out of bathroom sinks, showers, and clothes washers. "Black water" generally comes from toilets and kitchen sinks with waste disposers and contains a high degree of biological or chemical contamination, making it completely unsafe for irrigation. What's really important here is not where the water comes from but what's in it. For example, water from a laundry sink might qualify as gray or black depending on whether you used it to scrub sneakers or rinse diapers.

Gray water isn't as contaminated as black, but I wouldn't water vegetables with it; there's too much risk of chemical contamination, particularly with carrots, lettuce, herbs, or anything you'd eat raw. You can use it to irrigate trees, ornamental plants, and lawns, as long as you don't use it on seedlings or spray it onto leaves. Also, gray water tends to be alkaline, so test the soil yearly and amend it as needed to maintain a suitable pH balance.

For your vegetable garden, I suggest sticking to the basics: good soil preparation, organic mulches, and efficient watering practices using water from rain-collection barrels as much as possible, and tap or well water only when necessary.

MILDEWED WINDOW SEAT

The underside of the cushions in our bay window sometimes gets covered with mildew. Why does that happen when there are 2 inches of rigid foam insulating the underside of the seat?

—DANIEL HECKMAN, OREFIELD, PA.

Tom Silva replies: Mildew needs moisture to thrive, so you have to figure out where that moisture is coming from and reduce or eliminate it. Perhaps warm, humid indoor air is condensing on the cold window seat and keeping the underside of your cushions damp. The fix in that case would be to add even more foam insulation under the seat, reduce the indoor humidity, or both.

Or it could be that condensation on the glass is dripping down and seeping under the pillow. The solution then would be to reduce humidity and add storm windows.

But if condensation is not the problem, maybe there's a small air or water leak somewhere. Check around the windows the next time it rains or during the next cold snap. Caulk the gap, and insulate if necessary.

Here's another thought: Elevate the cushions slightly to create an air gap that will help them stay dry. I use a product called Cedar Breather to ventilate the underside of wood-shingled roofs. A few square feet of the same stuff stapled to your window seat might do the trick for your damp cushions.

PROLONGING THE LIFE OF A WATER HEATER

How long do gas water heaters last?

—MARK ILISER, MARION, IND.

Richard Trethewey replies: Generally, both gas and electric water heaters have a 10- to 15-year life span, but that depends on the quality of the water and how well a heater is cared for.

You'll get more life out of yours if you drain the tank periodically to get rid of sludge buildup and remove the tank's sacrificial anode rod at least once a year for inspection. If the rod has dissolved down to its wire core or is completely coated with calcium, put in a new one. A tank without an anode rod will rapidly rust through.

But even if your heater is in good shape, it might be so inefficient that it's not worth keeping. Heating water is the second-biggest energy expense in most houses, after space heating and cooling, so it might make sense to replace it with a more efficient heater even before it breaks down. To see how much you might save with a new energy-efficient model, consult the Department of Energy's website. Go to eere.energy.gov and search for "water heater calculator."

WHAT IS IT?

A Pipe reamer for clogged drains

B Rotary weeder

C Gutter cleaner

D Or...

FOR ANSWER, SEE PAGE 106

Quarter-round metal trim pieces, like these from Schluter Systems, create durable, protective edges for tiled countertops.

GRANITE OVER LAMINATE

Can we put granite over our plastic-laminate countertops, or do I have to remove the laminate first?

—JEANETTE PETERSON, LYNWOOD, WASH.

Tom Silva replies: You can put a granite slab on top of the existing laminate countertop, but I don't know why you'd want to. For one thing, the slab would raise the height of the counters, which might make them less comfortable to use and reduce the clearance beneath any upper cabinets. You'd also have to figure out some way to conceal the exposed laminate edge of the existing counter, which would require expensive custom work. Besides, it isn't that difficult to remove your countertop and lay a granite slab directly on top of the cabinets.

But here's another thought that could save you some bucks: Install granite tiles over the laminate. They come in 1-foot squares that are only ⅜ inch thick and can be applied to the existing surface with thinset adhesive. You could hide the edge of the old counter with strips cut from the tiles. Bullnose tile or metal quarter-round strips like the ones made by Schluter Systems can provide a smooth transition from top to side.

REPAIRING GOUGED WOOD SIDING

Years ago, someone used a pressure washer to remove loose paint from the cedar clapboard on my house. How can I repair the gouges before painting my house again?

—JOHN FRENZEL, SAGINAW, MICH.

Norm Abram replies: How you tackle this problem depends on how deep the gouges are. Anything less than about 1/16 inch deep can be sanded down; filler probably won't hold well anyway. Feather the edges of each gouge with 120 grit paper and a palm sander or sanding block—not a belt sander. Then, prime the bare wood and paint. I'll bet nobody will even notice the areas unless they inspect the surface carefully—or you point them out!

If the gouges are deeper, you'll have to fill them with exterior-grade spackling, such as Ready Patch. Here's how to fill those divots:

1. Spot-prime each gouge with high-quality exterior primer, which will adhere well to the wood and provide a good surface for the filler to adhere to.

2. When the primer is dry, fill the gouge with the spackling. Holes more than ¼ inch deep will need two applications. Ready Patch doesn't shrink, so you can smooth it with a putty knife flush with the siding surface.

3. When the spackling is dry, sand it smooth and wipe off the sanding dust. Then brush primer over the repair before you apply the top coats. Priming is necessary to hide spackling repairs.

STIFFENING ENGINEERED FLOOR JOISTS

The I joists in my two-year-old house don't seem very strong. When I use the treadmill in one bedroom, the floor flexes so much that all the dresser drawers open by themselves. How can I fix this?

—TOM DEITERS, CARTERSVILLE, GA.

Tom Silva replies: It isn't necessarily a lack of strength that's causing this problem—I-joists are plenty strong—so you shouldn't have to worry about your floor caving in. More likely they just need to be made stiffer. This won't be too difficult if the joists are exposed and accessible from the basement or a crawl space, but if they are hidden by a

More Q&A on page 104

Josh Feeney of Walpole Woodworkers fixed this gate by replacing the posts on both sides.

My fence gate is sagging and dragging in the dirt. What should I do?

—CECILE BOLDUC, HAMPTON, N.H.

Josh Feeney replies: A gate is only as good as the posts it hangs from and latches to. When gateposts are plumb and rock solid, they will stand up to the swing and slam of each opening and closing. But when they're loose in their holes or are weakened by rot or insects, then hinges turn creaky, the latch won't catch, and the gate can't do its job.

Cost: $175 for new posts and a bag of concrete
Time: 1 day
Difficulty: Moderate. You need to be fairly strong to dig the holes, mix the concrete, and muscle heavy posts into position.

A post that's wobbly but still solid can be fixed quite easily by packing crushed stone around its base with a sledgehammer. But when a post is rotten, as both these gateposts were, it has to be removed and replaced.

I spent 8 hours on this project digging out the old gateposts and putting in new ones, which restored the old gate's youthful firmness and satisfying snap. Follow these steps and you should be able to do the same for your sagging gate.

Josh Feeney is a fence installer with Walpole Woodworkers, which has installed fencing for many TOH TV projects.

STEP BY-STEP Gate repair

1_ Remove the hinge post.

Remove the gate and set it aside. Detach the fence section from the hinge post, then dig around the post until it wiggles freely. (If the post is set in concrete, dig around it, then break it into small pieces with a sledgehammer.) To pull out a post, give it a bear hug and straighten your knees. Use this old post as a template to mark the locations of the hinges on the new post.

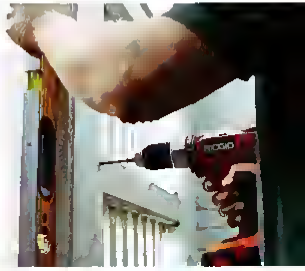
2_ Set the new hinge post.

Prop up the unsupported end of the fence section until it's level. Now fill in or dig out the hinge post hole until it's 3 feet deep and drop in the new post. Hold it upright in its hole and check that its top is level with the top of the latch post. To make sure that the gate will clear the ground by 2 to 5 inches, hold a level at the height of the lower hinge.

3_ Attach the fence section.

Place a level against the side of the hinge post facing the gate opening. When the level indicates that this side is vertical, attach the fence rails to the hinge post with galvanized deck screws. Remove the prop under the fence section.

TIP A wooden wedge cut from a piece of old fence post makes a useful prop when leveling gates and fence sections.



4_ Line up all the posts.

Tack a nail to the far side of the nearest fence post, about a foot above grade, and tie a mason's line to it. Pull the line around the post's corner and several feet past the latch post. Attach it to a stake so that the line touches the latch post. Move the hinge post over until it just touches the line, and make it plumb. A post is plumb when a level shows that two adjacent sides are vertical (above).

5_ Strengthen the footing.

Brace the hinge post with two 2x4s. Screw the studs' upper ends into opposite sides of the post 3 feet above grade, and stake the lower ends in the ground about 3 feet from the post base. Mix up two bags of concrete and fill around the post. Stop filling when the concrete is 3 to 4 inches below grade, enough to hide it under topsoil. Let the mix cure overnight.

6_ Rehang the gate.

If the latch post rotted, as this one did, replace it following steps 1 though 4; you won't need concrete. Set the post in a 3-foot-deep hole on 2 inches of tamped gravel; check that its top is even with the hinge posts; then fill the hole with firmly compacted gravel and soil. Reattach the gate, making sure its top rail is level and that it clears the ground by 2 to 5 inches. Close the gate and attach the latch where its bolt hits the latch post.

24/7 Help for
Hands-on Home Improvers

ceiling in the room below, then you'll have to cut open some of the ceiling to expose the framing.

First, check with a local building official to make sure your I-joists were designed and installed properly according to your local codes. If they're not up to snuff, you'll need a contractor to make the necessary fixes. But if they were installed correctly you can stiffen them yourself in the following way.

Rip a sheet of ⅝-inch plywood lengthwise into strips as wide as the height of the I-joists. Fasten these strips to both sides of the four or five joists closest to your treadmill using construction adhesive and 6d nails. Drive the nails every 6 inches into the thick flanges at the top and bottom of the joists. Offset the nails on each side by 3 inches. Stagger the plywood joints on each side as well. If your joists' flanges are made of laminated veneers instead of sawn lumber, nail into them at an upward angle to prevent splitting.

Now give your treadmill a try and see what happens. If the floor is still too bouncy, add plywood to more joists. And if that doesn't do the trick, try one or more of the other methods shown in the I-joist floor-vibration retrofit form at apawood.org.

Q JOINT COMPOUND OVER BLOCK

We're planning to convert part of our basement into a recreation area. Can we trowel drywall joint compound over the concrete block walls to smooth out the surface, then just paint it? It sure would save time and money.

—RITA ROBERTS, VALLONIA, IND.

Tom Silva replies: Standard joint compound sticks to lots of surfaces, but you'd be taking a big risk by spreading it on block walls, especially when they're below grade. I've heard of situations where all-purpose compound has been used this way, but the companies that make compound haven't certified it for this use.

I'd recommend that you coat your walls with portland cement stucco. It's a better bet than joint compound, because it forms a harder, more moisture-resistant surface, and it's fairly inexpensive, though it helps to have good skills with a trowel. Even if you don't, this is a perfect opportunity to save money and get the hang of mixing and troweling the stuff yourself. In a basement, who's going to notice if the results aren't perfect?

send your questions to asktheoldhouse

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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, because of the volume of mail received, we are unable to reply to unpublished questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 108

Richard Trethaway replies: I don't think that's part of the problem—it's probably *all* of it. A typical dryer exhaust vent has a hinged flapper or set of movable louvers that don't do much to keep cold air from pouring back into the dryer between loads, particularly in windy weather. And if there's even a little bit of lint buildup, the vent's flap won't close at all, and that's almost as bad as leaving a window open 24/7.

A much better solution is to replace it with a self-sealing dryer vent, such as the Lambro Industries' UltraSeal Dryer Vent, which retails for about $18. This wall-mounted unit has an internal cap that opens only when the dryer is on, then closes tightly when it stops. Wind has no effect on it.

Now that mild weather has returned, this is an ideal time to clean out your dryer duct and install this kind of vent.

Q BETTER DRYER VENT

This winter our laundry room stayed about 15 degrees cooler than the rest of the house. Could the dryer's flap-type exhaust vent be part of the problem?

—SHAWN CROWLEY, BY E-MAIL

D STIRRING ACCESSORY
Attach the Stirwhip to a drill and its 9-fingered head will rapidly mix glue, grout, paint, joint compound, and concrete, and will do so with less motor strain than a paddle-type stirrer. $8, stirwhip.com

Norm's tricks of the trade

Q I want to put a storage cabinet against a wall in a closet. But the wall isn't plumb, so there's a gap ranging from ¼ to ⅝ inch. How can I fill this gap when there's no face frame for me to trim for a tight fit?

—CRAIG TOLMIE, FAIRFIELD, CONN.

A The best solution would be to attach a 1-inch-wide filler strip of solid wood to the wall side of the cabinet before installing it. Then you can scribe the strip to fit the wall profile exactly, as shown below. Use the same technique to fill the gap between the wall and the cabinet's top, if necessary.

1. A 1-inch strip is too small for you to use fasteners, but you can use a few spots of hot melt glue to tack the filler strip flush with the face of the cabinet. Then run a continuous bead of the hot glue along the corner where the back of the filler meets the side of the cabinet.

2. Set the cabinet in place, and shim it plumb so that the filler strip touches the wall. To scribe, set the legs of a compass to match the widest part of the gap and run the compass's point along the wall and its pencil over the filler strip. Keep pencil and point parallel to the floor as you go.

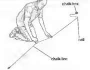
3. Pull out the cabinet and cut, plane, or belt-sand the filler to the scribed line. As you trim the filler, give it a slight back bevel to ensure a tight, gap-free fit against the wall. Reposition the cabinet, check the fit against the wall, then shim and secure the cabinet to the wall.

Q When I tried to use a chalk line for my wallpapering project, I couldn't seem to snap straight lines. What's the trick?

—CATHY SILVERWOOD, SOUTHBURY, CONN.

A The most important thing to know about using a chalk line is to stretch it very taut. If you can lift it from the middle more than 6 inches, it's not tight enough. The other thing to remember is to always lift the string at a right angle to the surface you're snapping, or it may not leave a straight line.

If you're snapping lengths of 10 feet or more, it's hard to stretch the line tight enough. In that case, hold the line down at its midpoint with your finger and pull up at the halfway points on either side, as shown. To do this, you'll need a helper or a nail to hold the line at the chalk box end and a nail or an edge the hold the hook end.



PHOTOS: (TOP) WENDELL T. WEBBER; ILLUSTRATIONS: HARRY BATES

READER TOOL TEST

Cordless string trimmers

Time was when you had to give your lawn a trim and you were either tethered to an extension cord or assailed by engine noise and exhaust. Now, with the latest cordless trimmers you have the freedom of an engine-powered model and the low-maintenance, no-fume quiet of a lightweight corded version. *This Old House* readers tested these 18-volt trimmers, all equipped with nicad batteries. Here's what they had to say.

CRAFTSMAN 74815

Price $95 (sears.com)
Highlight: The cutting head adjusts and locks in at four angles.

Tester: Steve Lamoreaux, Carson City, Nev.
Skill level: Pro ("I run a lawn-care company.")
Used tool for: Trimming lawn edges in the front and backyards and along walkways.
Verdict: "It had plenty of power to cut through the grass. The adjustable trimmer head made it easier and more comfortable to use. I'd recommend this trimmer to homeowners with a small to midsize lawn who are looking to 'go green.'"

Tool stats: 12-inch cutting head, 7,000 rpm, automatic line feed, telescoping shaft, 7 pounds

"Cuts about 280 feet on one charge."

WANT TO BE A TOOL TESTER? Let us know where you're from, which tool you'd like to test, and what you'd use it for. E-mail us at **tooltester@thisoldhouse.com**

AMERICAN LAWN MOWER CSST0012

Price $90 (acehardware.com)
Highlight: Has the highest rpm of the trimmers tested, which makes for cleaner, faster healing cuts.

Tester: Richard Domke, Miami
Skill level: Beginner DIYer ("I mostly help friends with their gardens.")
Used tool for: Finishing some spots the yard service missed.
Verdict: "Cut just as effectively in regular grass as the corded and gas-powered trimmers I've used."

Tool stats: 12-inch cutting head, 8,500 rpm, semiautomatic line feed, telescoping shaft, 9 pounds.

WORX WG150

Price $100 (worxgt.com)
Highlight: The cutting head has built-in guide wheels for edging.

Tester: Cecelia Greene, San Diego
Skill level: Seasoned DIYer ("I've built two decks, raised planting beds, and installed four fences.")
Used tool for: Regular lawn maintenance and to cut weeds in the cracks of the sidewalk and street gutter.
Verdict: "The wheels made it easy to trim just the right amount of grass and not gouge the lawn."

Tool stats: 10-inch cutting head, 8,200 rpm, automatic line feed, telescoping shaft, 6.8 pounds

Prices based on manufacturer-approved online distributors

BLACK & DECKER NST2018

Price $100 (blackanddecker.com)
Highlight: The auxiliary handle clamps anywhere along the shaft to fit the user's height.

Tester: Stephen Day, Spring, Tex.
Skill level: Average DIYer ("I've planted trees and built a raised herb garden.")
Used tool for: Edging pathways, flower beds, and cutting back weeds.
Verdict: "The battery lasted 22 minutes, which was enough to edge about 220 feet of dry grass."

Tool stats: 12-inch cutting head, 7,000 rpm, automatic line feed, telescoping shaft, 7 pounds

Patient Information

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WHAT IMPORTANT INFORMATION SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT LEVITRA?

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HOW DOES LEVITRA WORK?

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WHO CAN TAKE LEVITRA?

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WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE LEVITRA?

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WHAT SHOULD YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE TAKING LEVITRA?

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CAN OTHER MEDICATIONS AFFECT LEVITRA?

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HOW SHOULD I TAKE LEVITRA?

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WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LEVITRA?

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HOW SHOULD LEVITRA BE STORED?

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LEVITRA

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WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF LEVITRA?

[illegible]

Bayer HealthCare

GlaxoSmithKline

Schering-Plough

[illegible]

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{May .09} directory

Cover: Landscape designer-builder: Robert Welsch, Westover Landscape Design, Tarrytown, NY, 914-631-6836, westoverld.com. **White-glazed containers:** Campania Intl, campaniainternational.com. **Chaise:** Hanamint Inc., hanamint.com. **Chair:** Erwin and Sons, patiopleasures.com

Home Solutions. *(pp. 21–26)* **Outdoor spaces.** *Thanks to* Bruce Littlefield, Edgewater Farm, Marbletown, NY, brucelittlefield.com. **Mythbusters:** *Thanks to* AV designer Norm Hawes, Crutchfield Corp., Charlottesville, VA, 800-324-9695, crutchfield.com. **10 uses:** *Thanks to* Jill Ayers, Yuichiro Nishizawa, and Christy Coleman, everyspace, Brooklyn, NY, everyspacedesign.com

Before+After Kitchen. Lose a wall, gain a workable space *(pp. 29–32)* **Architect:** Stewart Davis, CG&S Design Build, Austin, TX, 512-444-1580, cgsdb.com. **Paint:** Misty Meadow (walls), Kelly Moore Paints, 800-677-2468, kellymoore.com. **Sink and faucet:** Kohler, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **Range:** Maytag, 800-344-1274, maytag.com. **Range hood:** Broan NuTone, 800-558-1711, broan.com. **Pantry pullouts:** Elfa, elfa.com. **Refrigerator:** KitchenAid, 800-422-1230, kitchenaid.com. **Pulls and knobs:** Amerock, 800-435-6959, amerock.com. **Tile.** Large squares: Walker Zanger, 818-252-4000, walkerzanger.com. **Other tile:** Pratt & Larson, 503-231-9464, prattandlarson.com. **Pendants:** Tech Lighting, Skokie, IL, 847-410-4400, techlighting.com. **Counters:** Laminate by Wilsonart International, 800-433-3222, wilsonart.com

Paint Ideas. Add a runner without carpet or nails *(p. 35)* *Thanks to* Kelly Jeffries, Jeffries Custom Finishes, Elizabethtown, KY, 270-769-9061

Price Wise: Patio umbrellas *(p. 37)* **High end:** Ethan Allen, 888-324-3571, ethanallen.com. **Budget:** Pottery Barn, 888-779-5176, potterybarn.com

Get This Look. Farmhouse porch *(pp. 38–39)* **Interior designer:** Irwin Weiner Interiors, New York, NY, 212-308-2235, irwinweinerinteriors.com

Landscaping: Placing pots *(pp. 45–47)* **Landscape designer:** Robert Welsch, Westover Landscape Design, Tarrytown, NY, 914-631-6836, westoverld.com.

Photoshop Redo: Boosting a brick home's charm *(p. 54)* **Architect:** Sarah Susanka, 919-641-0124, notsobig.com. **Paint:** Pratt & Lambert, 800-289-7728, prattandlambert.com. **House numbers:** Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust, 877-848-3559, shopwright.org. **Entry door:** Simpson, McCleary, WA, 800-952-4057, simpsondoor.com. **Sconce:** Kichler Lighting, Cleveland, OH, 866-558-5706, kichler.com

Waddaya Call It? Cooking with gas *(p. 59)* *Thanks to* Weber, 800-446-1071, weber.com

Weekend Remodel: Lay a bluestone patio *(pp. 63–66)* **Landscape plantings:** Kings County Nurseries, Brooklyn, NY, 718-493-2363, kingscountynurseries.com

Eat Out More Often: *(pp. 68–73) Thanks to* Karen Schwartz, Hunt Real Estate ERA, Sarasota, FL, 941-366-5959, huntrealestate.com. Kevin Cunningham, Ultimate Outdoor Kitchens, Geneva, IL, 888-474-5548, uokdesigns.com. Michael Glassman & Associates, Sacramento, CA, 916-736-2222, michaelglassman.com. J. Neil Bryson Landscape Architecture, Charlotte, NC, 704-335-2178, jbryson.com. **Less mess:** Cowboy Charcoal, Ace Hardware, acehardware.com. **Cool cooker:** Weber Performer Grill (296398), in green, Crate & Barrel, crateandbarrel.com. **Bright spot:** High Power LED Grill Light, Lowe's, lowes.com. **Tool kit.** Kenmore 12-piece BBQ set with digital thermometer (SBQ-9003-CK), Sears, sears.com. **Rule the roast:** **Vertical chicken roaster:** Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com. **Smart cart:** Polaris kitchen cart (H43), K Mart, kmart.com. **Smoke it:** Meco smoker (5031), cooking.com. **Big chill:** **Cobalt-blue beverage tub** (82890) and **tray with stand** (82891), Plow & Hearth, plowhearth.com. **Get shelter:** **9-foot round umbrella** (66838) with **Devonshire base**, Lowe's, lowes.com. **Fire power:** Bowl (14-0373), Gaiam, gaiam.com

Reader Remodel. "After 23 moves, we finally found our forever home" *(pp. 80–85)* **Carpentry:** Eric Howe, Howe Construction, Bozeman, MT, 406-580-3891. **Mantel and kitchen island top:** Tedi Svare and Todd Simonson, Stone Ridge Interiors, Bozeman, MT, 406-580-5706, stoneridgeinteriors.com. **Paint:** Dependable Paint and Drywall, Bozeman, MT, 406-587-2523, dependablepaint.com

TOH TV: 9 small-space solutions *(pp. 86–91)* **Architect:** Susanne Lyn, RA, Brooklyn, NY, 718-941-8596. **General contractor:** MRS Inc., Brooklyn, NY, 718-832-5955. **Wall art:** BonniBenrubi Gallery, New York, NY, 212-888-6007, bonnibenrubi.com. **Furnishings and rugs:** ABC Carpet & Home, New York, NY, 212-473-3000, abchome.com. **Plumbing/HVAC:** Aladdin Plumbing, Brooklyn, NY, 718-783-4621. **Electrical contractor:** Super-Charged Electric, Staten Island, NY, 718-981-7173. **Stair restoration:** DVS Iron & Aluminum Works, Brooklyn, NY. **Wood restoration:** John Thomas Studios, New York, NY, 646-573-5935. **Floor installers:** Neale Flooring, 973-748-7105. **Oak flooring:** Lumber Liquidators, 800-427-3966, lumberliquidators.com. **Paint:** Valspar, 800-845-9061, valspar.com. **Plumbing fixtures:** Kohler, 800-456-4537, kohler.com. **Master bath:** **Wall tile:** Mondial Tile, Brooklyn, NY, 718-232-0800, mondialtiles.com. **Cabinetry:** American Woodmark, homedepot.com. **Counter:** CaesarStone, 818-779-0999, caesarstoneus.com

All About: Composite decking *(pp. 92–97)* *Thanks to* the North American Deck and Rail Association, 888-623-7248, nadra.org. Ray Steward, RWS Decks, Towson, MD, 410-377-3325, rwsdecks.com

Ask This Old House: *(pp. 99–107)* **Mildewed window seat:** Cedar Breather, Benjamin Obdyke, 800-346-7655, benjaminobdyke.com. **Granite over laminate:** Schluter Systems, 800-472-4588, schluter.com. **Repairing siding:** Ready Patch, Zinsser, 888-855-1774, zinsser.com. **Compound over block.** **For further reading:** *Portland Cement Plaster/Stucco Manual* (EB049), $30, Portland Cement Association, cement.org. **Better vent:** UltraSeal Dryer Vent, Lambro Industries, 800-645-2860, lambro.net ■

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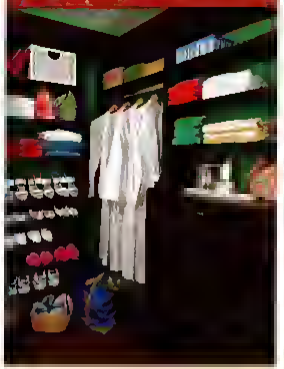

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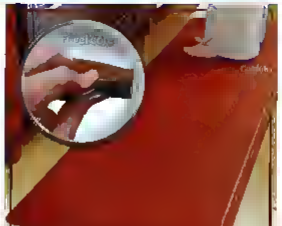

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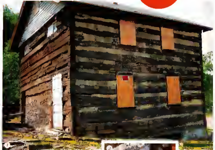

The history: The dilapidated white house with the banged up gutters and peeling paint was an eyesore But Jeff Heinichen had his eye on the 1.5-acre diamond shaped lot on which it sat So he decided to buy the place tear it down and build a new one The former owner said the two story structure would not come down easily because beneath its aluminum siding was a genuine 19th century log house Jeff had his doubts—until he peeled off the siding and saw the solid hand-hewn timbers for himself Local historian Ronald F Morgenstern says the house was likely built in the early 1800s no one knows by whom though what is known is that it was home to Andy and Dave Kelly two farmers who lived there from the late 1800s to the 1940s **Why save it?** This is a rare example of the log houses that dominated western Pennsylvania in the 18th and 19th centuries The siding preserved the logs and stone foundation beautifully over the years Inside you'll find the original wide floorboards and staircase The fieldstone chimney top was blown off by a tornado in the 1940s and replaced with brick but the rest of the chimney is intact **What it needs:** The house's interior was last remodeled in the 1980s and requires some serious patching and updating Outside, the mud-and horsehair chinking between the logs must be restored with a modern adhesive, something that needs to be done every 10 years The house also needs a new roof as well as some rustic windows and doors to complement its early American charm —KEITH PANDOLFI

1. The three-bedroom house is located in a quiet rural suburb just 20 miles from Pittsburgh. **2.** The logs are held together with chinking a mix made from mud and horsehair **3.** This circa 1915 photo includes former owners Andy and Dave Kelly with their wives The picture was taken on the farmland the house once occupied. **4.** The house before the aluminum siding was torn off.

Got a house? If you know of an old house that should be saved a [illegible] sale write to This Old House 135 West 50th Street New York NY 10020 or savethisoldhouse@timeinc.com

[before]

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