This Old House

47 creative ways to save cash
P. 72

low-cost upgrades for Kitchen & Bath

- stylish storage
- surprising colors
- vintage accents

All about... **stone counters**
P. 82

JULY | AUGUST 2009
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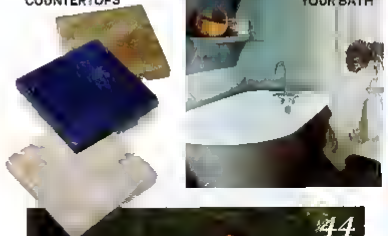

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Cover Photograph by MARK LOHMAN

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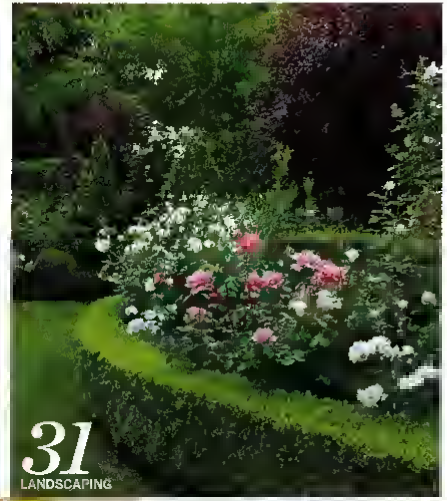

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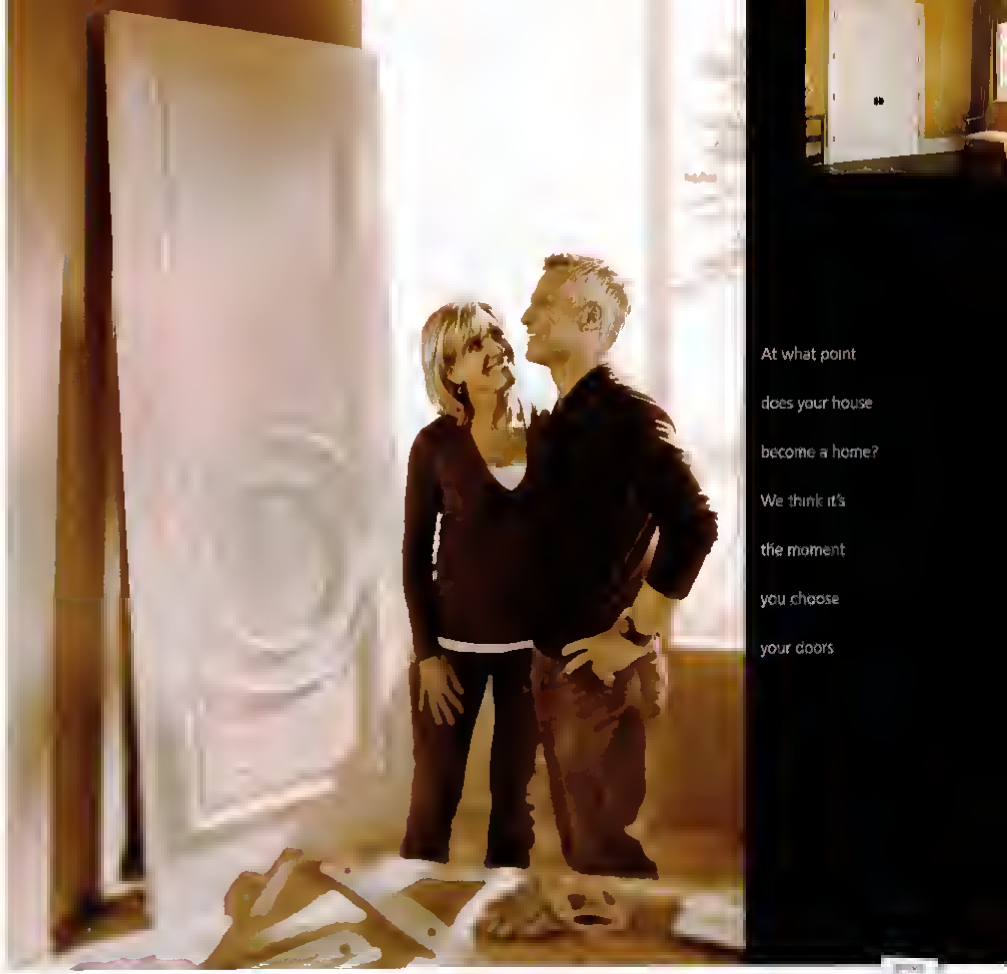

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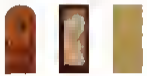

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Remodel survivor tells—and eats—all

"Hey, hey! What are you doing there?"

"Um, yeah," I said. "Just standing at the picnic table. Just helping myself to a sandwich."

"One sandwich? That platter has nine. Plus there's one in your hand. Do you really need 10 sandwiches?"

I didn't respond, but I didn't have to, since the person I was chatting with was me.

Yup, talking to myself again.

As I get older I do that more and more, it seems, but especially since my wife and I started the remodel that has gone on for too long, cost too much money, and disrupted our lives and, obviously, socially acceptable behavior.

But the fact is, a man will do crazy things when a remodel puts his kitchen out of action.

He will, per my example, have a discussion with himself about how many sandwiches he can pocket at a cookout without arousing suspicion (10—good for nearly a whole week, as long as the mayo doesn't turn). He will pour milk into a box of Cracker Jack for lunch and drink the whole thing down (a very easy one-box, no-wash-up meal, as long as you remove the prize first). He will eat so much takeout that it wouldn't be unheard of to find a Domino's chicken wing from the last Super Bowl party under the sofa cushion. And, holding it in his hand six months later, it also would not be unusual for him to have this sort of thought: *This chicken wing—it's not green, and it doesn't really smell. It's dry, sort of like jerky. I wonder if I can still eat it.*

The answer, by the way, is, yes, of course you can. In fact, you can eat anything. But the more important question is, can you eat it without developing any critical, potentially lethal gastrointestinal distress?

And the answer to that is, not so much. Very not so much.

Anyway, I suppose this could be considered an argument against doing a full-scale kitchen remodel (not that many of us can afford such a thing these days). It shouldn't be an argument against doing *any* improving, though. As you'll see in the story that begins on page 72, "28 Ways to Customize Your Kitchen for Less," there's a whole lot of savvy upgrading you can do to your kitchen for not a ton of money. Some of our high-impact ideas are so inexpensive, you'll be able to afford a proper restaurant meal or two during the process. Which is good, because I'm here to tell you that mayo does turn. And you can forget to take the prize out of the Cracker Jack box. And ER visits caused by eating old party food can cost as much as a brand new refrigerator.

Scott Omelianuk

SCOTT OMELIANUK
EDITOR

THREE THINGS I LEARNED FROM THIS ISSUE→

1. **How to make** sure a toad never goes homeless [p. 21]
2. **How drain pipes** and wine bottles are connected [p. 77]
3. **How buying an** old house in Kalamazoo, Michigan, can get you free college tuition [p. 50]

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readermail

This month, we have to say, you expressed a nice bit of enthusiasm. We liked hearing you defend some of your favorite things—particularly barbecue grill side burners, never-ending to-do lists, and even the right way to sharpen a pruner.

Have side burners, will eat

We enjoyed "Eat Out More Often" [May] and its gorgeous backyard kitchen. Though the author was not a fan of side burners, we think they're a lifesaver. When a storm took out our power for days last fall, our grill's side burners kept us fed with soup and veggies and boiled water for coffee and tea.

—MIKE AND KAREN MANHART, CINCINNATI

No end in sight

Reading about overwhelming to-do lists in "Letter From This Old House" [May] reminded me of our own experience.

When we lost our vacation home to a fire, we decided to wait the three years to retirement to rebuild. A contractor did a lot of the initial work, but I resolved to do the plumbing and interior finishes. Two years passed, with little progress. My wife and I looked at each other sadly one day and said, "It'll never be finished." A few seconds later we looked at each other again, smiling, and said, "It'll never be finished!" And that's fine with us because what else is a retired DIY type going to do with his time but devote it to an endless list of to-dos?

—JIM HELTMAN, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Paint us safe

Although the stair in May's Paint Ideas is eye-catching, a person with impaired eyesight descending it might not make out the edges of the treads with such an aggressive, camouflaged design. The ability to "read" the edges of steps is important to avoid trips and falls. Aggressive patterns can mute the contrast that's needed to make stairs safe.

—TOM CAIN, FORT WAYNE, IND.

Correction

→ Several keen-eyed readers pointed out that the pruner sharpening illustration in May's Check List was incorrect. The cutting blade's beveled edge is on its outside face, not on the inside, where it passes the other blade. This is the edge you should sharpen.

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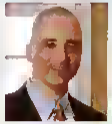
Private pub

ANTHONY O., GAMBRILLS, MD

I built this wet bar out of recycled wine-crate tops that I bought online and used thin brick to give the back of the bar an old-pub feel. I got a rail to surround the bar top and an epoxy pour to seal the crates. The built-in kegerator is great for movie night.



ASK THE EXPERT

With NKBA member Gerard Ciccarello CMKBD

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Kitchen by Gerard Ciccarello, CMKBD

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checklist {July/August 09}

EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HOME RIGHT NOW

☑ Keep your watering system in shape

Your sprinklers are working overtime right now, so make sure they're up to the task: Clean out the filters inside, replace worn-out nozzles, and tighten loose connections so that you don't waste water. Make sure sprinkler heads are arranged to give your lawn a nice, even soaking—no dry spots, no puddles. (Placing them in a square or triangular configuration often works best.) Water bills on the rise? Consider an upgrade to lower-flow irrigation gear. See some of our picks at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus.**

☐ Attract butterflies and hummingbirds

These pretty little winged creatures help pollinate your plants. Lure them with colorful blossoms and flowering herbs; species to look for include petunias, noninvasive red trumpet honeysuckle, sage and lavender. Plant these in pots if they're not already in your garden.

Bright red and orange flowers draw these pollinators.

☐ Do your doghouse duty

Summer's sizzling days wear out our four-legged friends. To celebrate—who knew?—National Doghouse Repairs Month, in July, make sure their retreats are well shaded and have vents to let heat escape; raise them off the ground to help dogs stay dry and cool. Want to build a doghouse? Go to **thisoldhouse.com/bonus** for instructions and photos of pooch palaces in various house styles.

TOH TIP

☐ Before vacationing, upgrade security systems

Sturdy dead bolts and window locks are musts, of course, but low-cost add-ons like motion-activated lights, jammers for sliding-glass doors, and wireless alarm systems for first-floor windows go the extra mile toward keeping out intruders. Browse products that prevent break-ins at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus.**

☐ Fix torn screens

Even small rips let mosquitoes sneak in, so patch them till you can replace the screen. Cut a piece of screening larger than the hole, remove a few wires from each edge, and bend the edges 90 degrees. Press the patch into the screen so that the edges weave through the mesh. Bend the wires flat to secure the patch.

☐ Keep ants out of the kitchen

'Tis the season for these picnic-loving insects to mount a home invasion. Our top tips to keep the bugs from marching in:

→ Trim trees and shrubs 4 to 6 inches away from your house and foundation so that ants won't have an easy pathway to crawl inside.

→ Caulk cracks and crevices in your foundation.

→ Clean rain gutters to prevent water from leaking inside. Ants are attracted to any spot in the house that stays damp.

→ Battle ants by setting out a bowl with a mixture of equal parts sugar water (to attract them) and sodium borate (i.e., borax), a natural insecticide. Once a few ants die, the rest of the colony will get the signal that it's time to head for the hills. (Just make sure pets can't get at the bowl.)

homenews {July/August 09}

NEW PRODUCT

Never let your grill go cold

We hate seeing a roaring BBQ flame out because the propane tank ran dry. With this new translucent fiberglass tank, you'll always know when it's ready for a refill. Plus, good news for your back: It's 30 percent lighter than a steel tank. From $85 for a 10-pound tank; litecylinder.com

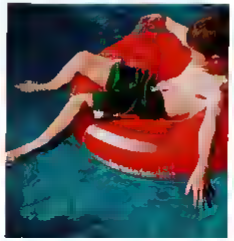
PLUMBING

Toilet trade-ins save water—and cash

The humble commode guzzles 30 percent of the H_2O in your house; so low-flow models not only slash your water bill, they also help places like Bozeman, Montana, whose water needs are expected to double in 20 years. That's why local businessman Kent Madin (above) convinced the city government to offer rebates of up to $75 to folks who replace their toilets with WaterSense-labeled models that use 20 percent less water. The program saved 3.45 million gallons during its first year. More than two dozen water utilities have adopted similar measures; ask yours if you can get money back for a trade-in.

72%

Percentage of homeowners who look for the Energy Star label when buying appliances



SAFETY

Poolside pointers

It would be a shame to let a lazy day of swimming and sunning turn into a cautionary tale about pool safety, but the facts don't lie. More than 2,000 people are rushed to the hospital each year with pool-related injuries. Here are four things you can do to help prevent accidents:

1. Check that drain covers are intact so that swimmers' hair or bathing suits don't get sucked in and trapped. Opt for dome-shaped covers, whose shape makes them a bit better at preventing this hazard than flat ones.
2. Surround your pool area with a 4-foot (or taller) fence to keep tykes from falling in when no one's around. Make sure the gate is self-latching on the inside so that little hands can't reach it.
3. Apply antislip surfacing tape along pool edges and diving boards.
4. For above-ground pools, remove steps and ladders when not in use.

MONEY-SAVING SECRET→ Want to see if you qualify for a government-sponsored loan modification or refinancing program to lower your mortgage payment? Fill out a brief Q&A at **makinghomeaffordable.gov**

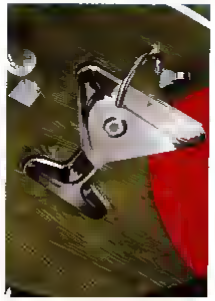
NEWSFLASH→ Workers found a live **WW II–era grenade** while removing the roof of a home in Texas City, Texas. An FBI bomb technician detonated it safely.

Reporting by Keith Pandolfi and Natalie Rodriguez

DESIGN INSPIRATION

Best kitchen and bath designer? You

Forget monogrammed towels. Many makers of kitchen and bath fixtures now let you put your own stamp on their wares. Go online to mix and match faucet handles and spout styles (calfaucets.com) or vanity and storage configurations (sonie-sa.com). Or bring your ideas for unique sinks (elkay.com) and tilework (tiledecorative.com) to life—like the guy who made his dream for a martini glass-shaped bar basin (right) come true.



PHOTOS: (PLUMBING) LEONARD DITSS; (SAFETY) JUPITERIMAGES/CORBIS/STOCK PHOTO; (NEWSFLASH) BRIAN MCKAY/GETTY IMAGES

COLOR. CORRECTOR.

"Fewer topcoats, better coverage, no compromise. That's why I use KILZ primer."
– Tim Wambach, KILZ primer user and pro painter for 25 years

Professional painters know. Applying a quality primer over old colors helps you achieve your new color choice with the fewest coats and least amount of work. The powerful KILZ® Premium formula works magic on even the toughest color changes; dark over light colors or light over dark. For truer colors in fewer steps, choose KILZ® Premium.

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home solutions

Edited by Deborah Snooman

inside | FIX LEAKS | STENCILING | MAKE A TOAD ABODE | MORE

→ SMART IDEA

Deck-circle pathway

To keep little feet—or big ones—from beating a dusty trail into your grass, install a few "stepping stones" made from composite decking. They're durable, rot-resistant, and affordable (or even free, if you use leftover boards). And the playful, cheery design will put a spring in your step for seasons to come.

THE HOW TO> Place seven boards side by side, leaving ¼ inch between them for drainage, and trace a circle onto them. Use deck screws to attach a base of three boards perpendicular to the others, one at the centerline, the other two near opposite ends of the circle. Use a jigsaw to cut out the circle, then bury the base so that the piece is flush with grade.

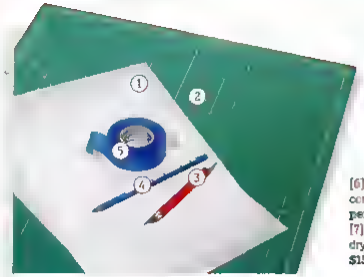
your perfect walkway
Building a path this summer? Get ideas and inspiration at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

Everything you need to

paint with stencils

It's an easy way to give a plain wall a bit of pizzazz. Stenciling basically involves dabbing paint onto a plastic template to create a decorative design on the flat surface beneath. A pro like Damon Bopp, owner of BoppArt Decorative Painting, in Plainfield, New Jersey, cuts out stencils of his own design and mixes paint colors to achieve the perfect hue. But you can also get great results with precut templates and off-the-shelf stencil paint. Here, we've pulled together all the supplies our expert swears by. —JENNIFER STIMPSON

Our pro's picks



[1] **Mylar** "I use .05 mil plastic for making stencils. It is easy to cut but doesn't tear." **$5 for four 9x12-inch sheets; grafixart.com**
[2] **Self-healing mat** "This protects my work surface when I'm cutting the stencil." **$16 for a 12x18 mat; alvinco.com**
[3] **X-Acto knife** "The No. 11 blade is flexible enough to follow curves." **$3; xacto.com**
[4] **Watercolor pencil** "For marking the stencil's edges on the wall so that you get exact spacing when repeating the pattern. It wipes off with a damp cloth." **$2; lessartshop.com**
[5] **Painter's tape** "I don't have to clean the stencil as often if I tape it to the wall instead of using spray adhesive." **$3; hardware stores**

[6] **Paint** "Low-VOC Aura paint has a thick consistency so it doesn't drip once applied." **$20 per quart; benjaminmoorepaint.com**
[7] **Glaze** "I mix a little into the paint to slow its drying time, so cleaning it off the stencil is easier." **$15; sherwin-williams.com**

[8] **Paintbrushes** "The Robert Simmons line is all I use. They have a lifetime guarantee and the natural bristles can withstand lots of washings." **From $5; dalar-rewney.com**

The quick-and-easy approach

[9] **Precut stencils** in all sorts of patterns are easy to find at craft stores. "Florette" border stencil, **$8; momenta.com**
[10] **Mounting spray** seals the stencil's interior edges to minimize shifting and bleeding. Wash it off with warm, soapy water after every few applications. **$3; elmers.com**
[11] **Stencil paint** contains a high proportion of pigment for deep, rich color. **$4; michaels.com**

dress up your walls
Learn more decorative painting techniques at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

PHOTOS (TOP) TRAID BRAND (FOUR PINS) SPORS; TED MORRISON

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 101

PHOTOS (PEST CONTROL) KEN N SMITH; (TOOLS) WOMBELL T WEBBER

→ PEST CONTROL

Invite a toad to stay awhile

While they're not the most graceful of garden creatures, toads feast on flying insects and plant-destroying cutworms. Give these hoppers a hob tat near your beds by making a shelter from a cracked or chipped terra-cotta pot. Simply turn the pot on its side and partially bury it in a shady, cool spot—preferably near a light source, where bugs congregate. Toads dig a moist environment, so don't worry if water pools around or inside the pot. Just avoid using chemical fertilizers or herbicides nearby, which can harm the little guys. After all, they're doing you a big favor. —DEBORAH SNOONIAN

→ TOOLS

Give lefties a helping hand

Roughly 10 percent of the population celebrates Left-Handers' Day on August 13. We're sure the DIYers among them will appreciate tools designed just for the southpaw. —KEITH PANDOLFI

Measuring The numbers on this left-handed tape measure read right to left, so no need to twist your head around to see the marks. **$17; thelefthand.com**

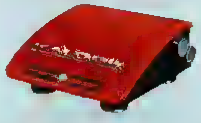
Cutting The slider for retracting the blade of this utility knife is positioned for left-thumb use. **$9.50; olfaproducts.com**

Weeding The blade of this angle weeder is hook-shaped to help you snag weed roots around healthy, established plants. **$22; amazon.com**

→ GADGETS

Keep the kitchen cool

The only thing that should roast while you're cooking on a steamy day is a juicy hunk of meat—not you as you struggle to pull a casserole out of the oven or slave over a hot stove. To the rescue: new countertop cookers that will help you beat the heat all summer long. —MEGHAN DOCKENDORF



Whip up all three squares
with this grill/sandwich press/waffle maker
The cooking plates for this multitasker are dishwasher safe, making cleanup a snap. $80, kalorik.com

Roast a chicken
with this vertical rotisserie
This model hogs less counter space than cookers that turn the bird on a horizontal spit. $200, cuisinart.com

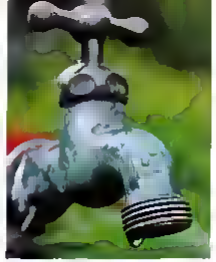
See spuds sizzle
with this deep-fat fryer
Thanks to a heat-resistant glass bowl, you can watch these shoestrings turn a perfect golden brown. $130, kalorik.com

Make a whole meal at once
with this oven-and-microwave combo
The baking drawer can tackle fresh or frozen pizza (or, okay, a tray of cookies) while the microwave steams veggies or reheats leftovers. $200, kenmore.com

→ HOW-TO BOOK

Pour your own counters

If you make them yourself, concrete countertops will set you back about $15 per square foot—a lot less than you'd pay a pro. But the days-long process of pouring, finishing, and installing them can intimidate even the ablest DIYer. Never fear. Concrete guru Fu Tung Cheng's new guide, aimed at homeowners tackling this project start to finish, breaks it all down into sensible steps, augmented by detailed photos, drawings, and a helpful video. The author's can-do spirit is sure to keep you going as you see your new counters come to life.
Concrete Countertops Made Simple, by Fu Tung Cheng, $15, amazon.com. —ANEET RANA



→ FAST FIXES

Stop those leaks

Drip, drip, drip is the sound of your water bill going up, up, up. On average, a home dribbles away 11,000 gallons of water each year—enough to fill a swimming pool. Try these repairs for common trouble spots. (For more details, check out thisoldhouse.com/bonus.)
—NATALIE RODRIGUEZ

Indoor faucet
Shut off the water supply, unscrew the handle(s) to your faucet, scrape away the old rubber washer that's under the hexagonal nut beneath the knob(s), and replace.

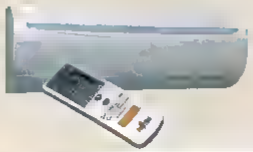
Outdoor spigot
If the leak is coming from the handle, unscrew it and replace the washer inside. If you see water escaping from the base of the spout, try tightening the nut that holds it in place.

Toilet
Add a few drops of food coloring to the tank; if the water in the bowl changes color within half an hour, the flapper inside the tank is to blame. Replace it, and use 400-grit paper to sand down rough spots on the flush-valve seat (the piece the flapper sits on) so that the seal is tight.

Showerhead
Unscrew the showerhead, wrap the supply pipe's threads with Teflon tape, and reattach.

PHOTOS: (FAST FIXES) JON CHOPE; (HOW-TO BOOK) TED MORRISON; (WAFFLES) LOU RUBERTSON; (APPETIZERS/BRANDS) (CHICKEN) PANNOCILLO; (CHICKEN/BETTY HAUSER; (FRIES) ULRICH KERTHAT; (CROSTINI) CREATIVE/GETTY; (MAKE) (PIZZA) MEITH LEIGHTON/ALAMY

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

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

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- ☑ 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

FUJITSU

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

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Simple design, timeless style

A square layout, classic white cabinets, and neutral stone counters add up to a kitchen that will stand up to decades of use without looking dated By KATRINE AMES + Photographs by MARK LOHMAN

{before}

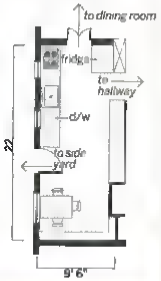
before The long-narrow kitchen had "few counters, bad workspace, and bad circulation," says the architect. **after** The new room is an efficient square with lots of food-prep and clean-up space, as well as plenty of storage.

When the emphasis of a kitchen remodel is handsome practicality, the room can work hard for years without looking out of sync with the times. That's what the avid cook who owns the space shown here envisioned, having endured a badly planned galley kitchen for years. The house that she shares with her husband and their two sons in Manhattan Beach, California, was built in 1940 as a one-story weekend place not meant for serious cooking. Needing more room overall, they asked local architect Michael O Eserts to add a second story and a kitchen that would be "simple and clean, and which they would still love in 30 years," says Eserts. He moved the bedrooms upstairs and turned the old galley into stairs, a sitting nook, and a powder room. The easiest part of the project, he says, was tucking the new kitchen and an adjacent breakfast area into the footprint of the old guest suite. Efficient and well proportioned, the new space has an island and loads of marble countertops, which provide a luxurious amount of work area. The white-painted cabinets with inset doors are a model of organization, with each designated to hold specific items such as cereal boxes or food storage containers. Highly functional but warm, the kitchen has a timeless style that will stay fresh for years to come.

PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON STYLING SUNDAY HONOR DASSY

before

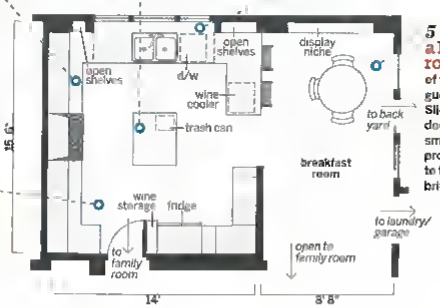
The galley was more than 200 square feet but cramped and poorly organized with an exterior door that invited traffic—and traffic jams.



there's more
See how other homeowners solved their kitchen design problems at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

after

By relocating the kitchen during a ground floor reorganization the architect was able to create an ultra functional square shaped workspace



1 Relocated the kitchen to what had been a ground-floor guest bedroom The architect kept the room's original footprint.

2 Built counters along the perimeter of the room and created an efficient work triangle that encompasses the sink stove and refrigerator

3 Added an island with drawers for utensils and a slide out trash can—handy during meal prep The new workspace has no door to the outside so traffic flows around the island not through the room

4 Installed a skylight above a trio of windows made possible by a small setback on the new second floor

5 Carved a breakfast room out of the former guest bath Sliding glass doors replaced small windows, providing access to the garden and bringing in light

FLOOR PLANS: AN WINSPEARE

↓ **The breakfast nook,** where the family eats most meals is out of the meal-prep area and has sliding glass doors leading to the patio and garden A large niche was carved out of a wall next to the table so that the owners could have a space for rotating displays of decorative objects.

↑ **Open shelves,** within reach of the dishwasher are a convenient showcase for colorful dishware The owners chose a showy brown Rosso Danielle marble for the counters and had it honed rather than polished for a softer look Using it for the windowsill created a waterproof plant shelf
Counters American Marble & Onyx

↑ **A wine cooler** is tucked under the snack counter (on the kitchen side). With the built in bottle rack alongside the refrigerator it helps make entertaining easy
Wine cooler Viking

pro advice
MICHAEL O ESERTS
ARCHITECT LOS ANGELES
"Open shelves for display help personalize a kitchen Recess them into niches for a clean, built-in look"

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 101

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How to add blasts of bright color

Choose neighboring hues on the color wheel, then warm one up and cool one down for a harmonious scheme By DEBORAH BALDWIN

It's one thing to love an intense color, like the bright green on the wainscot shown at right, and another to drench an entire room in it. Consider instead pairing it with a closely related color, like the pale chartreuse on the upper portion of the walls, to create a combination that feels right.

The trick, says Mark Chamberlain, a decorative painter and colorist in New York City, is to select colors that are neighbors on the color wheel, a tool that designers use. (Find a wheel at thisoldhouse.com/bonus.) The seven basic colors in the spectrum are arrayed on the wheel this way: red, orange, and yellow (warm colors) and green, blue, indigo, and violet (cool colors).

Then keep in mind that warmed-up hues often pair well with cooled-down ones. The two here are Climbing Lily and Limeade from Ralph Lauren Paint. Limeade is a warm, yellowish green; Climbing Lily is a cooler, greenish yellow. "Choose colors from close but different paint strips," Chamberlain says. "Then play around until you find a combination you like."

Rooms with wainscot naturally lend themselves to the two related-shades treatment, but you can also create separate color fields by taping off the wall halfway up or adding a chair rail. Here, crisp white bath fixtures help lighten up the effect. The bottom line: a lively look and a great place to begin the day. ■

pro advice
MARK CHAMBERLAIN DECORATIVE PAINTER AND COLORIST NEW YORK CITY
"To give a traditional room a more contemporary look, use two bright colors. For a more conservative pairing, choose softer hues that have gray or brown in them."

PHOTOS: ANDREW BORDWIN (TOP); ©ALAN DUNN (BOTTOM); STUDIO D

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Design ideas for sheared shrubs

Shrubs clipped into geometric shapes can set off areas in your yard and solve a multitude of problems. Here, tips and tools for shearing success By STEPHEN ORR • Photographs by MARK LOHMAN

For centuries gardeners have been clipping and shaping shrubs as a way of defining areas of their property. And not only for aesthetic reasons. After all, a beautiful wall of greenery is less expensive to construct than a wall of brick or stone. Leaving aside fussy topiaries of cute animals, the geometric forms that shearing can produce—rectangular walls, boxy columns, pointed cones—turn shrubs into green architecture, enabling them to create boundaries, establish sight lines, direct traffic, and highlight focal points in the landscape.

The garden shown here and on the following pages sits behind a historic English-style Arts and Crafts home in Pasadena, California, its formal structure designed to complement the strong lines of the house. Though the garden is impressive, don't be intimidated. There are lessons you can learn from its use of formal hedging and clipped shrubs to apply to virtually any yard or garden, large or small.

1. Fill out problem areas in the yard.

It would be hard to keep a tidy year-round planting of perennials under the heavy shade of this rose arbor. A small pea gravel pad edged with clipped boxwood solves the problem without detracting from the glorious blooms of the climbing Eden rose above it. In late summer, when the rose stops blooming, the area becomes a restful green oasis with a more restrained, formal feeling.

2. Use low borders to direct traffic.

In the main garden boxwood marks a firm line between the lawn and the flower beds eliminating the need for decorative brick or metal edging Repeating a variety of shapes keeps the plantings dynamic. Boxwood balls and rectangles punctuate the edging at consistent intervals Treelike cones of clipped wax-leaved privet flank the entrance like columns

Hedging tips

As the director of horticulture at Filoli a historic public garden outside San Francisco, Lucy Talmach cares for nearly a linear mile of formal hedges Here her advice for shearing your own

*1*_ Pick the right plants. The best hedging plants reliably make leaf buds on old wood that is on previous years growth instead of sprouting only on new branches This way, if you cut back older sections new leaves will sprout readily Boxwood (especially *Buxus sempervirens*). English holly, common myrtle, English laurel, copper beech and Irish yew should also bud from the bottom to the top so that there is leaf coverage all the way up Not all shrubs do this so you tend to see the same hedging plants used again and again.

*2*_ Time rejuvenation pruning to be least traumatic In cold areas, spring is the best time to cut back formal hedges That way plants can regroup put on plenty of new growth from summer to fall and be healthy enough to get through a harsh winter Most plants tolerate surface shearing as needed over the course of the growing season How often will depend on the type of plant used and the growing conditions

*3*_ Shape hedges so that the bottom is slightly wider than the top Narrowing as you go from bottom to top keeps hedges fuller by allowing more sunlight to reach leaves. This prevents unattractive holes in the surface of the hedge and worse bare branches around the base Though the difference may be barely perceptible for a 10 foot tall hedge the sides should slope as much as 4 to 6 inches from base to top Some people set four posts and run level string lines along the top and bottom as guides to get a consistent shape

3. Create layers of enclosure.

In a small side garden a low boxwood hedge forms a semicircle to highlight a statue which is surrounded by fragrant lavender You could do the same for a birdbath or other focal point. In the background clipped plantings of tall wax leaved privet create the "walls" of this private room and screen the security fence behind it.

4. Mix plants for more interest.

Two or more kinds of plants can make sheared edging more varied and interesting On this patio cones of rosemary mark the corners of a small rectangle of boxwood that sits on top of a masonry square This three-part arrangement makes an attractive base almost like a planter for a sculptural crape myrtle tree. In colder climates dwarf Alberta spruce could be used in place of the tender rosemary plants.

pro advice
ROGER COOK *THIS OLD HOUSE* LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

"Be careful what you shear Looser-growing flowering plants such as azalea, forsythia, and spirea need to be thinned from the inside by cutting out older branches near the base Otherwise, the interior goes bare, with new growth only at the tips."

5. Conceal the shortcomings of leggy plants.

This low hedge of boxwood makes a skirt that hides the unsightly bare bases of rosebushes Because it provides a strong framework for the loose and romantic looking beds they can be filled with many kinds of roses and perennials—and maybe even a few weeds

Trimming tools

Power versus manual Many professional gardeners don t like electric or gas-powered hedge trimmers because they can chew up leaves and leave behind mangled edges and browned tips Hand shears give you a better feel for how a shrub grows and where to cut. Still gardeners faced with a lot of shearing rely on good power trimmers for large jobs.

Maintenance To avoid damaging leaves hone cutting blades at least once a year Take power shears to a pro for honing hand clippers are easy to sharpen with a beveled-edge file Clean them after each use with soap and water or if blades are sticky with pitch use solvent-soaked rag. Then wipe down with a penetrating oil such as WD-40 Store them in a scabbard or on a wall hook to keep them clean

At right some pro gardeners' favorite shrub-shaping tools.

Stihl gas-powered hedge trimmer
The bigger teeth on this lightweight model can handle tiring jobs like cutting back the tops of tall mature hedges where any ragged edges left behind won t be on view
$290, for dealers visit stihlusa.com

Little Wonder electric hedge trimmer
The smaller teeth on this corded model work well on small leaved formal hedging plants where you want a continuous straight edge The extra handle up near the blade provides precision control
$242, toolking.com

Bahco super-light hedge shears
Tubular aluminum handles are lighter than solid wood and come in several lengths. Longer handles that you hold away from your body are best for heavy duty pruning shorter handles are ideal for detail work
$66, rittenhouse.ca

Nishigaki Karikichi Gold hedge shears
As easy to use as they are beautiful for gardeners who appreciate tools that look and feel good The wooden handles come in several sizes and provide excellent balance for precise cutting
$64 hidatool.com

Felco hand pruner
Perfect for detail trench up work and trimming smaller hedges where you want a softer more informal look Available in two sizes in left and right handed models and with a rolling grip
starting at $47, orchardsedge.com

PHOTO: (TOP) ALFRED FELLER & FELLER

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 102

Outdoor living room

Salvaged windows, weathered seating, and rustic garden ornaments turn a small deck into an enchanted spot for entertaining. Here's how to put together a similar space in your yard.

BY KELLY BEAMON • PHOTOGRAPH BY VAN CHAPLIN

Garden walls really help a patio or deck feel like a room, whether they're made out of greenery, stone, or, more unexpectedly, the old church windows used here. Hung from rails set atop corner posts, they enclose a 16 by 16-foot deck, giving it the elegant air of a glass-lined conservatory. Homeowner Susanne Hudson, a garden designer, snagged the five 11-foot-tall finds for $90 each at a flea market years ago and recently put them to use to define her Douglasville, Georgia, deck like enormous white pickets on a fence.

For the furnishings, painted metal porch gliders and spring chairs from the 1940s had the laid-back look Hudson wanted; the iron candle stand and armillary sundial achieved the right rusted finish in short order. "Green, brown, and white, the natural colors of patina in a garden, are a built-in color scheme," she says. Blue hydrangeas and rose pillows brighten it up.

Here are outdoor-friendly pieces you can assemble for a similar look.

vintage-style metal seating
This reproduction of a 1945 spring chair delivers a splash of bold color for a nice price. $149; grandinroad.com

stone capital
Though newly cast in concrete, this 18-inch-high column capital has the look of an antique garden ornament with an aged, pitted finish. It makes a handsome base for a low table with a rustic stone top. $275; tabbystone.com

gothic window
Salvage yards and antique shops yield small ones like this for as little as $150. Give them more drama by hanging divided-light double hungs, which run about $20, from the bottom using eye screws and hooks.

get this look

armillary sundial
An astronomy teaching tool that dates to ancient times, the spherical sundial, usually made from cast iron, was a popular accent in 19th-century gardens. $35; lejardinblanc.com

iron candle stand
A handcrafted floor candelabra provides atmospheric lighting—and another Gothic touch—outdoors. Leave it untreated to develop a rusty patina. $105; dwarvesong.com

pro advice SUSANNE HUDSON, GARDEN DESIGNER
"If I use new things outdoors, I give them instant patina with spray paint. Just use brown or green sparingly in a random pattern to suggest age."

plant-themed pillows
Add more decorative punch—and soften metal seating—with flower- and leaf-patterned pillows. Mixing in an indoor fabric suggests a plushly furnished room. Poppy, in polyester, $32; potterybarn.com. Fern, in wool needlepoint, $64; poshliving.com

old-world urn
With a classical shape and Greek key detail, this new concrete planter approximates the look of ancient stone. Plant it with a boxwood or English ivy topiary. $68; www.statue.com

THIS: S. FAIRCHILD; DOTTIE HENRYY; MEINC; BOX: A. S. UVID (SUNDIAL, CANDLE STAND, PILLOWS, URN) WENDELL T. WEBBER

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Details improve a cozy cottage

An architect boosts the character of a plain facade with a few classic curb-appeal features

By DEBORAH SNOONIAN + Photo Illustration by HOWARD DIGITAL

{before}

"Our house is a little bit drab," says Lucy Smith of the circa-1900 cottage she shares with her husband and sons in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. So *This Old House* asked architect Carol J.W. Kurth of Bedford, New York, to offer suggestions on giving it personality.

Kurth quickly recognized a gem in the rough. "The house has simple lines that make it adaptable to several architectural styles," she says. Many of her proposed changes, such as an earth-toned color palette and tapered river-rock bases for porch columns and lampposts, nod to the Craftsman aesthetic, which became popular soon after the home was built. In addition, she traded the louvered shutters for rustic board-and-batten models and added streamlined versions of Victorian-style porch brackets because they suited the house's small scale and cottage feel. The copper roof overhangs and stone column bases are also long-lasting investments that would increase the home's value. Lucy's favorite touch? The new color scheme. "Now we don't have to pick out paint," she says.

PHOTO (PAINT SWATCHES) BRIAN HENRY/TIME INC. DIGITAL STUDIO

Finishing touches

Accents made from rustic materials impart warmth and texture.

paint
A traditional Craftsman combo: earthy neutrals for the house, brick red for the door. From top: Benjamin Moore's Nantucket Gray (house), Sussex Green (shutters and trim), and Cottage Red (door); $33 per gallon

stone veneer
Cover column bases with these lightweight, tinted concrete "rocks" to give them a Craftsman look. Cultured Stone, $10.50 per square foot

column light
Even a short walkway needs light. These bronze-finished lanterns have a handcrafted feel. Southern California Lighting, $129 each

shutters
Board-and-batten-style versions lend cottage charm. Shown in pine; available in other wood species. Sunbelt Shutters, $191 per pair

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Schoolhouse lights

Having graduated from the classroom long ago, these milky white orbs remain a quick way to add vintage style to your home By MEGHAN DOCKENDORF · Photographs by WENDELL T WEBBER

Bare bulbs first sought shelter in opaque glass globes hanging from classroom, library, courthouse, and kitchen ceilings back in the 1920s. With their clean, utilitarian lines and practical light-diffusing shades, hard-working schoolhouse lights were a popular choice anywhere good task and ambient light was needed. As demand for them increased, the original white flared globe soon took on hand-painted bands of color, more geometric forms, and fancier metal fittings.

Today, schoolhouse-style fixtures are still appreciated for their timeless good looks—and are a sure way to add retro flair to kitchens, baths, and other light-starved areas of the house. The following 10 pendants offer lots of options

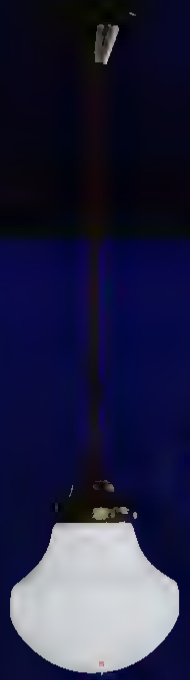
dressed up
HUDSON VALLEY LIGHTING
Shade width: 16 inches
Fitting finish: Old bronze
Where to hang it: In a great room with a high, sloped ceiling—the ball and socket at the top of the rod allow it to swivel—or over a dining table to show off its somewhat ornate profile.
$269, croftandlittle.com

our favorite update

multiply it
REJUVENATION
Shade width: 8 inches
Fitting finish: Polished chrome
Where to hang it: As one of three over an island in a crisp white kitchen to maximize the effect of its small scale and periwinkle banding. $195, rejuvenation.com

unexpected accent
SCHOOLHOUSE ELECTRIC CO.
Shade width: 9 1/2 inches
Fitting finish: Antique black
Where to hang it: In a white kitchen, pantry, or hallway, where its fun lime and aqua stripes would instantly create a color scheme. $178
schoolhouseelectric.com

see how to hang it
Watch a how-to video on installing a pendant light at thisoldhouse.com/bonus



quirky profile
MEYDA TIFFANY LIGHTING
Shade width: 9 inches
Fitting finish: Brass
Where to hang it: In a home-office nook or an unfussy powder room, where its small size and simple cloth-covered wire would fit the utilitarian furnishings. $165; meyda.com

soft shading
ANTIQUE LAMP SUPPLY
Shade width: 14 inches
Fitting finish: Brass
Where to hang it: Over a bathroom vanity, a kitchen table, or even a laundry room folding area, where the hand-blown pin stripe1 shade would cast a comfortable glow. $269; antiquelampsupply.com

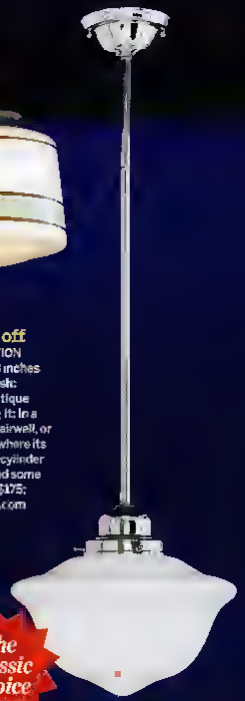
painted pole
AMERICAN NAIL PLATE LIGHTING
Shade width: 12 inches
Fitting finish: Aqua green powder coating
Where to hang it: In a kid's room, study alcove, or powder room, where its brightly painted pole would supply a playful pop of color. $398; onplighting.com

editors' color pick

long on flexibility
REJUVENATION
Shade width: 14 inches
Fitting finish: Polished chrome
Where to hang it: In a vintage-style kitchen or sunroom—or a great room in need of a lift. This red-striped globe's stem can be adjusted to fit high ceilings by adding links to its chain. $291; rejuvenation.com

deco drum
SCHOOLHOUSE ELECTRIC CO
Shade width: 14 inches
Fitting finish: Satin nickel
Where to hang it: In an airy entry or formal dining room, where its Art Deco–inspired lines would add a little drama. $314; schoolhouseelectric.com

squared off
REJUVENATION
Shade width: 8 inches
Fitting finish: Burnished antique
Where to hang it: In a reading alcove, stairwell, or breakfast nook, where its green-accented cylinder shade would lend some personality. $175; rejuvenation.com



the classic choice

plain and simple
RESTORATION HARDWARE
Shade width: 12 inches
Fitting finish: Polished nickel
Where to hang it: In an understated kitchen or bath, where its clean-lined flared shade would be a graceful finishing touch. $219; restorationhardware.com

STYLE GUIDE

Although long pendant-style lights are shown on these pages, most of the shades can be used in shorter-length fittings, too. Here, the three basic fixture types, with tips from lighting designer Joseph Rey-Barreau for placing them right.

Flush mount: This no-stem style is a space-saving option for cozy bedrooms and hallways with 8-foot (or lower) ceilings in need of good ambient light. "To maximize light in small areas, one centered on the ceiling is fine," says Rey-Barreau. "For larger spaces, like a 20-foot-long corridor, placing one every 8 to 10 feet works best."

Semiflush mount: With a stem that drops the shade down as much as 6 inches, this style works well in rooms with ceilings 8 to 11 feet high. Because this style fixture sends light up as well as out, it helps make ceilings seem higher so that small rooms feel airier. Try one in a family room, den, or over a tub for a comfortable glow.

Pendant. With globes suspended from wires covered with metal or cloth, or threaded through chain link, this style is a good choice for rooms with ceilings 11 feet or higher. Typically 12 to 36 inches long, pendant fittings can be adjusted by trimming the rod or removing links, or custom ordered. Pendants look striking singly or grouped in threes; just be sure to hang them so the bottom of the shade sits 40 inches above a kitchen prep area or 35 inches above a dining table.

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A. 20%
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C. 80%
D. 96%

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- **Propane is responsive.** Cooking on a propane cook top allows you to control the level of heat much more effectively. Instant gas flames mean no wait for burners to warm up. And easy "off" dials mean cooling begins immediately. All of which means you have greater control over the cooking process.
- **Propane is adaptable.** Once you've opted for propane kitchen appliances, you'll find that extending propane's energy to the rest of your home is easy.

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Seating for six

Squeeze the whole family in at the summer barbecue by creating a classic American picnic table with integrated benches or picking up a ready-made one By JENNIFER STIMPSON

easy beginner project

If you wanted to set up a folding table and chairs for your barbecue guests, party planners say you'd need to allot 10 square feet per person to create enough access. Do that on the average deck or patio and your Fourth of July celebration will get so chaotic that it may end with the wrong kind of fireworks.

A classic picnic table with attached benches is the perfect solution. This staple of backyards and parks—with its elbow-to-elbow dining and climb-over seating—works in all terrains, so you can move off the deck and onto the grass. You could buy one of the ready-made options offered in a range of outdoor-friendly materials. But if you're like most *This Old House* readers, you'll probably want to assemble stock lumber and sturdy bolts into one big enough to seat the entire clan. Either way, you'll end up with family-style seating that leaves enough room for the dog to run laps while waiting for the first hot dog to drop.

build it

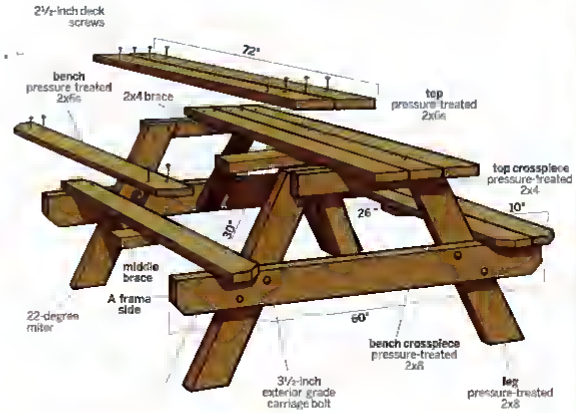
You can assemble easy-to-find pressure-treated lumber into a full-size table and benches

Cost: $95
Time: 4 hours
Difficulty: Easy The basic symmetric frame comes together qu ckly and simply

1. **Cut the frame parts.** Cut four legs from 2x8s, mitering the top and bottom of each leg 22 degrees Cut two 2x4 horizontal crosspieces to support the top and two 2x6 crosspieces for the benches. Cut one corner off each end of the bench crosspieces Make two 2x4 braces with 45 degree mitered ends to run from the sides to the underside of the tabletop Cut 2x4 middle braces for the benches and the top

2. **Build the frame.** For each end of the frame, attach the top crosspiece to legs using 2½-inch deck screws. Attach the bench crosspiece to the legs with 3½-inch long carriage bolts 15 inches from the bottom edge

3. **Finish the benches and top.** Cut two pieces of 2x6 for each bench and five pieces for the top, allowing tar e 2-inch overhang on either side Clip the corners on the bench pieces Stand the A-frame sides up and attach the bench planks to the bench crosspieces with 2½-inch deck screws Secure the top planks to the top crosspieces using the same screws. Space the bench and top planks ¼ inch apart Screw the 2x4 braces to the bench crosspiece at one end and the underside of the tabletop at the other Paint the table with deck stain (optional)



PHOTOS, (OPPOSITE PAGE) BARRY MOSES/FOOD X/GETTY IMAGES (THIS PAGE) ILLUSTRATION: GREGORY HOWE

make your table glow
Get tips to protect your outdoor furniture at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

buy it

You can buy a handsome table made from one of several types of weather-resistant wood

$170→
basic
This table's pressure treated wood will maintain its durability with a new finish applied every few years acehardware.com

$370→
mid-range
This northern white cedar table is insect and weather resistant, and the bench seats flip up for easy mowing kmart.com

$710→
luxury
Western red cedar, stainless steel hardware, and rounded-over bench edges give a luxurious look to this 6-foot table cedarstore.com

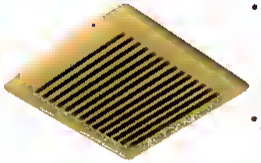
Improving Indoor Air Quality

It's easier than you think (and more important than you know)

Today's better-insulated homes may keep the weather outside, but they also keep contaminants inside. In fact, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, the air indoors—where we spend as much as 90 percent of our time—can be more hazardous to your health than heavy city smog.

Numerous sources contribute to poor indoor air quality, and their cumulative effects can create a toxic environment that can aggravate allergies and lead to chronic respiratory diseases. Your first line of defense is to keep your house clean and well-ventilated. One way to protect your home from mold, airborne contaminants and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) is to install ENERGY STAR® qualified fans from Broan-NuTone.

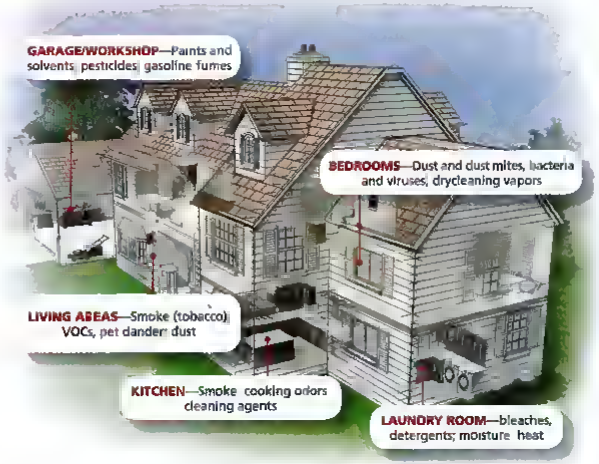
Even if you have ventilation fans, they may need replacing if...



- **They were installed more than 15 years ago.** Today's models are far more energy-efficient and technologically advanced. ENERGY STAR® qualified fans from Broan-NuTone can use less than 10 kilowatt hours per year—or about one dollar per year in electricity.
- **It sounds like a small-craft airplane is taking off in your bathroom.** Many Broan-NuTone ventilation fans are rated at less than 1.0 Sones. That's about as much noise as a quiet refrigerator.
- **They aren't properly installed and vented to the outdoors.** Some older models simply vent moist air into another area of the home, such as an attic or crawlspace, creating a perfect environment for mold and mildew to flourish.
- **You've changed the environment in which your fans are functioning.** If you've enlarged the footprint of the room or added multiple shower heads to your bath, your original unit may not be strong enough to do its job properly.

Think Beyond the Bathroom

The benefits of properly functioning fans in a bathroom are obvious. But they can greatly improve the indoor air quality throughout your home, by removing common airborne irritants found in almost every room.



The Broan-NuTone Difference

Surprisingly quiet and easy to install. Broan-NuTone ventilation fans are available in a variety of styles and models. With options such as lights, night lights, heaters, customizable humidity sensors, decorative designs and recessed fan/light combos, Broan-NuTone has the fan to meet your ventilation needs. And with so many of our products satisfying USGBC, NAHB and ENERGY STAR® ventilation requirements for Green Building, you can be confident that choosing Broan-NuTone products is a smart step toward creating a healthier home, saving energy and saving money.

Broan-NuTone: America's Choice

For over 75 years, Broan-NuTone's high quality, technologically advanced, quiet and dependable products have been the No. 1 choice of builders. You can feel good about purchasing Broan-NuTone as we are proudly manufactured in the USA, which means the carbon footprint required to make our products is less than our competitors. And replacing your old fans or adding new ones is easier than you think.

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For more information and step-by-step how-to's, visit broan-nutone.com or call 1-800-558-1711.

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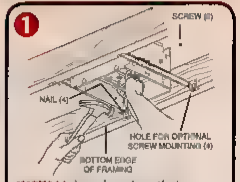
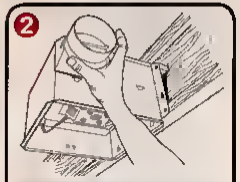
1



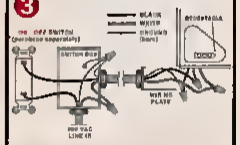
INSTALL housing directly to joist or between joists using hanger bars.

2



ATTACH damper/duct connector and install properly sized ductwork between fan and roof or wall cap.

3



CONNECT electrical wiring. Run 120 VAC housing wiring using proper UL Approved connectors.

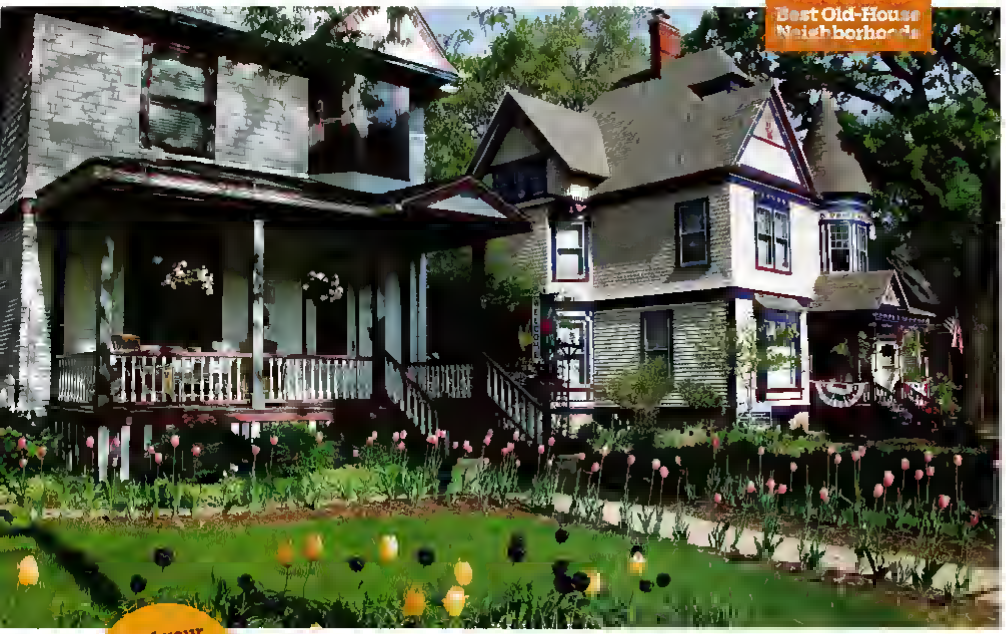
4

PUSH grille against ceiling, by squeezing springs and inserting them into slots on each side of housing.

The best places to buy an old house

The housing boom is over. But we've tracked down 51 great neighborhoods that have promising futures and homes that truly deserve a long-term commitment By KEITH PANDOLFI

This Old House 2009 Best Old-House Neighborhoods



Find your next home See all our winners—including one from each state—at thisoldhouse.com

Unique, tight-knit neighborhoods are precisely what we looked for in selecting the winners of our second annual Best Places to Buy an Old House contest—places that might not be on your radar but deserve to be. This year we discovered 51 great spots, one in each state and our first Canadian entry to make the cut. You'll see six of them in the following pages. Find the rest at thisoldhouse.com. Like last year, we relied on our good friends at PreservationDirectory.com to help us contact thousands of neighborhood groups, real estate agents, and preservation societies to get their takes on the best places to track down, fix up, and fall head over heels for older homes. A great example is Yakima, Washington's Barge-Chestnut neighborhood, a cool, quirky streetcar suburb known for its strong sense of community, walkable, tree-lined streets, well-populated front porches, and blocks of old houses. That's where Jenifer Wilde-McMurtrie found her perfect yellow bungalow for just $119,000. "I was born in Maine, raised in Miami Beach, and lived in New York and California," says Jenifer, "but I've *never* seen a neighborhood like this." Those who nominated their favorite spots this year feel exactly the same way. Here's hoping you'll find one to fall just as hard for.

Best Place for Fixer-Uppers

Elgin, Illinois

- Less than 40 miles from downtown Chicago
- Dazzling, TLC-needing Queen Annes start at $100,000
- Grants available to convert multifamily houses back to single-family homes

AT HOME IN ELGIN. OPPOSITE PAGE: Two of the city's finest painted ladies. TOP: Neighbors band together to fix up a Greek Revival. BELOW: Check out that Victorian detail. RIGHT: A rare Elgin Gothic Revival

THE NEIGHBORHOOD: Not for one second did Brenda Hennessey imagine herself living in Elgin, Illinois. Growing up in nearby Schaumburg in the 1980s, she d heard the city had a reputation for being grungy, rundown—even a bit dangerous. A few years ago she made a pit stop here while riding the Fox River Bike Trail, which runs 33 miles through the Chicago suburbs. It was then she realized that either Elgin s nefarious image was greatly exaggerated or things here had changed dramatically for the better. In the market for a house, Brenda did some research and discovered she could get more bang for her buck in Elgin than in other Chicago-area towns. She soon snatched up a late 19th century brownstone in the Gifford Park neighborhood for $198,000. "Elgin is beautiful," she says. "It s walkable and safe, with plenty of bike paths." Brenda, now pregnant, and her husband, Evan, are looking for a larger house, hopefully one of the city s cherished Queen Annes, which start at $100,000. That s the great thing about Elgin, says Brenda. You can buy a starter home, upgrade to a virtual mansion to raise your kids, then empty-nest it down to a bungalow when you retire.

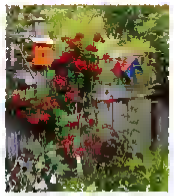
THE HOUSES: Some of the city s most handsome Queen Anne, Tudor, and Gothic Revival homes are found in the Northeast neighborhood, which borders downtown and contains two historic districts, most notably Elgin s oldest neighborhood, Spring Douglas, a National Historic District. Here, a 2,000-square-foot Queen Anne can be had for $150,000 to $500,000, depending on its condition.

WHY BUY NOW? The best reason is summed up by Elgin resident Fran Cella: "No one really knows about us yet." Property values in the historic districts remain steady, thanks in part to the city s proximity to Chicago. The city is offering grants to help buyers restore single-family homes that were broken up into multifamily units.

PHOTOS: BARBARA BRESSE

Best Place for Northern Exposures

St. Patrick's Ward, Guelph, Ontario, Canada



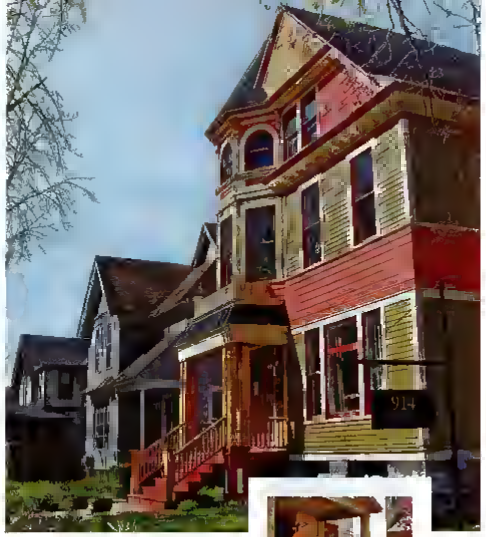
> Stone and brick cottages
> You can commute to Toronto
> Walk downtown in just 15 minutes

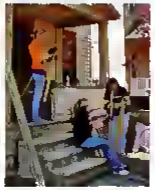
THE NEIGHBORHOOD. In the early 1900s entrepreneur J.W. Lyon started giving away land to factories and selling small residential lots in St. Patrick's Ward, just outside downtown Guelph. Soon thousands of European immigrants, mostly Italian, started coming here to work in those factories and live in the small stone and brick workers' cottages, often adding their own vegetable gardens. Nowadays some of those factories are being turned into condos. And this quiet urban neighborhood is drawing new residents, who fall hard for its sterk industrial beauty, stone churches, and even some remaining vegetable gardens. Most of the Italian families have moved on, but "The Ward"—as it's called—remains a land of opportunity for those looking for a friendly, old-fashioned neighborhood to call home.

THE HOUSES: Foursquares and Victorians built between 1900 and 1920 are common, though the most notable homes here are stone or brick Italianate cottages and "Ontario cottages"—the latter are one-and-a-half-story stone and brick Gothic Revivals with a hipped roof and single spired gable above the door. Houses start at around $136,000 (U.S.).

WHY BUY HOW? Buyers are rediscovering the charms of this walkable community just minutes from downtown Guelph and are moving here to renovate houses. There are plenty of jobs, but Guelph, which has a population of about 115,000, is just 60 miles from Toronto, so it's also an ideal place for commuters looking for lower housing prices and a slower pace.

COTTAGE LIVING ABOVE: "The Ward" is still known for its veggie gardens. BELOW: Two Italianate workers' cottages—one stone, one brick.





Best Place for Families

The Vine neighborhood, Kalamazoo, Michigan

> Free college tuition for public school graduates
> Great tax incentives for buyers
> Proximity to restaurants and college sporting events

THE NEIGHBORHOOD: After a rough patch in the 1980s, this leafy Victorian-era neighborhood is experiencing quite a comeback as people move here because it's close to downtown, stellar schools, parks, hiking trails, and playgrounds. Sure—it's a great place for families, but since it borders Western Michigan University, "The Vine" also maintains a youthful feel, with lots of trendy restaurants, bars, and shops.

THE HOUSES: Most are Foursquares or Queen Annes, which retain their details, including wraparound porches, double-hung windows, and Victorian-era millwork. Ready-to-move-in homes go for $100,000 and up. Fixer-uppers start at $60,000.

WHY BUY NOW? A new Spanish-language immersion school and a top-notch math and science high school in The Vine are luring families. Thanks to "The Kalamazoo Promise," students who attend Kalamazoo schools from grades K through 12 receive full tuition to any of Michigan's public colleges or universities. But even students who attend grades nine through 12 here get 65 percent off. The Vine's status as a local historic district allows buyers to take advantage of incentives that save thousands on property taxes.

I GOT A HOUSE IN KALAMAZOO. ABOVE: Drab houses are being renovated into colorful homes. INSET: Neighbors restore an old Victorian.

PHOTOS: (TOP) PAUL SHEAR (LIBRARY); (BOTTOM) JACQUELYN SHEEHY (FRONT PORCH); (BOTTOM) SCOTT HAGEL (BOTTOM, LEFT); (BOTTOM, RIGHT) TOM WANKOWICZ (BOTTOM, RIGHT)

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THE BUNGALOW LIFE. Temescal is a haven for buyers looking for affordable homes—like this stucco bungalow—in a vibrant, happening neighborhood.

Best Place for Foodies

Temescal neighborhood, Oakland, California

> A vibrant restaurant scene and farmer's market
> A great place for first-time buyers
> Spacious backyards

THE NEIGHBORHOOD: Located in North Oakland, just a few miles from Berkeley, the Temescal neighborhood, named for the creek that runs through it, was once a thriving Italian-American village and the terminus of Oakland's streetcar line. In the past few years this long-overlooked nabe has been attracting buyers from pricier NoCal neighborhoods to its colorful, stucco-covered bungalows, many of which have small but sought-after backyards. Some people first discover Temescal while visiting its popular Sunday farmer's market or the growing number of restaurants, delis, and bakeries that are opening here, including the famed Bakesale Betty, which purportedly sells the best fried chicken sandwich on the planet. "It seems a lot of people are starting to look for places in Temescal now," says Deidre Joyner, a Realtor with Red Oak Realty. "That's probably because the two- and three-bedroom houses here are perfect starter homes." Temescal is also close to bus lines and freeways. And you can be in downtown San Francisco in less than 20 minutes, barring heavy traffic.

THE HOUSES: Many single-family homes here are 1920s bungalows that, while modest from the outside, are packed inside with architectural details, such as built-ins, moldings, wainscoting, and window seats. These houses start between $500,000 and $600,000. Pricey, yes, but that's a heck of a lot cheaper than a house, especially one with a yard, will run you in San Francisco or other nearby Oakland neighborhoods, such as Rockridge.

WHY BUY NOW? If you found yourself priced out of the Bay Area during the housing boom, now's the time to give it another shot. Temescal borders pricier areas and is experiencing a domino effect as people scramble for more-affordable real estate. And did we mention that chicken sandwich?

Best Place for Urban Suburbanites

Richmond Hill, Queens, New York

> Suburban living, minutes from Manhattan
> Borders a park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted
> Local neighborhood organization helps with restoration

THE NEIGHBORHOOD: Richmond Hill is as peaceful and laid-back as Manhattan is chaotic and fast-paced. That's why it's hard to imagine these two places are less than a 45-minute subway ride from each other. Established in the mid-1800s as one of New York City's first planned communities, Richmond Hill was once home to thousands of Italian, Irish, and German immigrants looking to escape the crowded living conditions of the city. That escape was made all the more pleasant thanks to Forest Park—a 600-acre Frederick Law Olmsted urban retreat with horse trails, golf courses, and gardens—which borders the neighborhood.

THE HOUSES: The largest, most detailed homes are in North Richmond Hill, bordering the park, where many homes designed by famed New York City architect Henry Haugaard are located. His Queen Annes and Classical Revivals are known for their unique built-ins, enormous front porches, inlaid floors, and multicolored shingles. More modest Craftsmans and Victorians in the southern part of Richmond Hill start at about $250,000.

WHY BUY NOW? New York real estate is as affordable as it's likely to get, especially in the outer boroughs. The Richmond Hill Historical Society is drawing more attention to the neighborhood by sponsoring regular house tours and educating New Yorkers on the area's unique history and architecture.

QUEENS: THE LAND OF DREAMS. ABOVE: A home designed by Henry Haugaard. LEFT: A row of stately Queen Annes.

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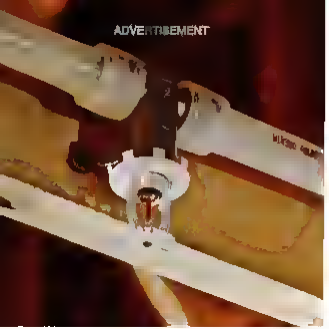

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Best Place for Southern Living

Seminole Heights, Tampa, Florida

> An old-fashioned and affordable Florida oasis
> Home to one of the best public high schools in the country
> An abundance of parks and recreation

THE NEIGHBORHOOD: In a state known for blinding sunlight and shoddy high-rise condo construction, Seminole Heights offers shady streets with solid homes fronted by gardens both wild and manicured. The neighborhood's many parks offer ample opportunity to commune with nature, and families looking for strong public schools will be thrilled by Hillsborough High—recently named one of the best schools in the country by *Newsweek* magazine. One thing's for sure: The community fabric here is strong. "We're all about porch parties and potlucks," says resident Suzanne Pneur. "We want to make sure our old-fashioned way of life here is preserved."

THE HOUSES: This is Florida, so you'll find plenty of Spanish Mission and Art Moderne-style homes here. But Seminole Heights is best known for its single-story Craftsman-style bungalows, built in the 1920s to accommodate the thousands of families who relocated to Tampa after railroad lines were established. These houses feature full-length porches with stone or brick supports and plenty of built-ins. Most homes sell for between $150,000 and $300,000.

WHY BUY NOW? Florida home prices have plummeted in recent months, and Seminole Heights is no exception. Several neighborhood associations do an amazing job of protecting the area from the overdevelopment of condos and out-of-scale commercial buildings. ●

PHOTOS: MIKE PEASE

TOP: SLEEPY TIME DOWN SOUTH. A perfect Seminole Heights bungalow. **RIGHT:** Ducks cavort under the neighborhood's massive Live oaks.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 101

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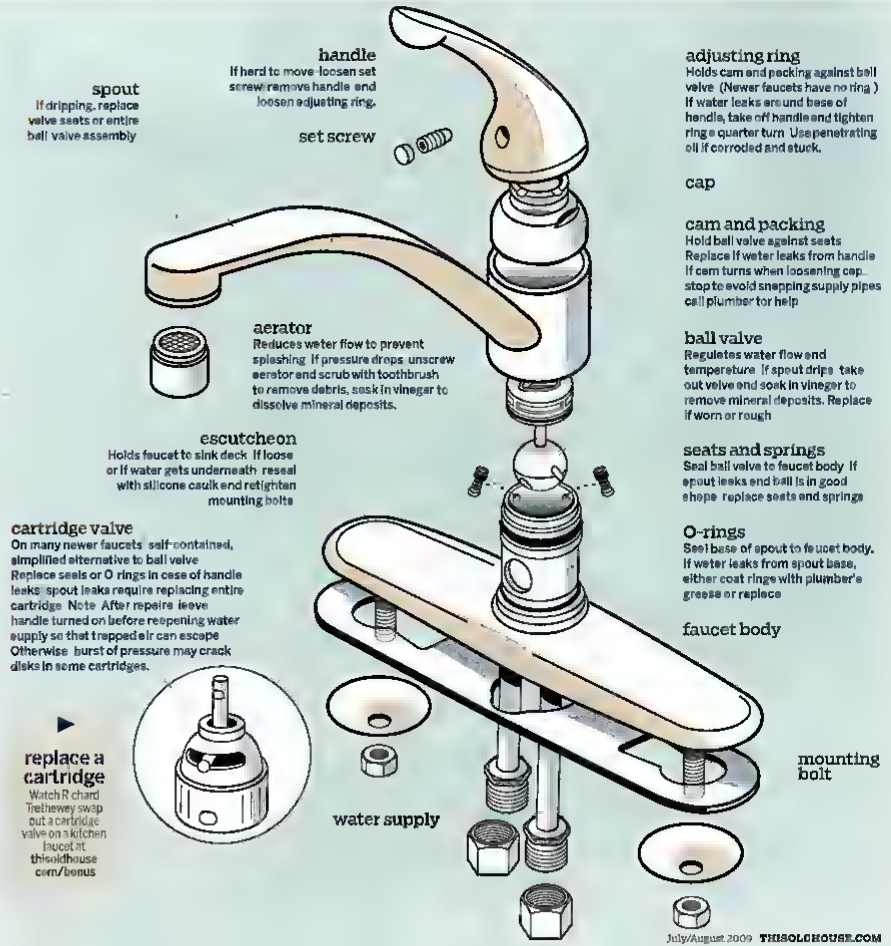
D5218

Get a handle on the kitchen faucet

Before you call a plumber to stop the *drip, drip, drip* on a spout with a singe handle, use this guide to diagnose the cause so that you can stanch the flow yourself By ALEX QUEVEDO • Illustration by HARRY CAMPBELL



replace a cartridge
Watch Richard Trethewey swap out a cartridge valve on a kitchen faucet at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

Make a pot rack from copper pipe

How to turn large-diameter tubing into kitchen storage

By JENNIFER STIMPSON • Photograph by GEMMA COMAS

Cost: $210
Time: 2 hours
Difficulty: Easy, but it's very important to get the layout right before connecting any pieces

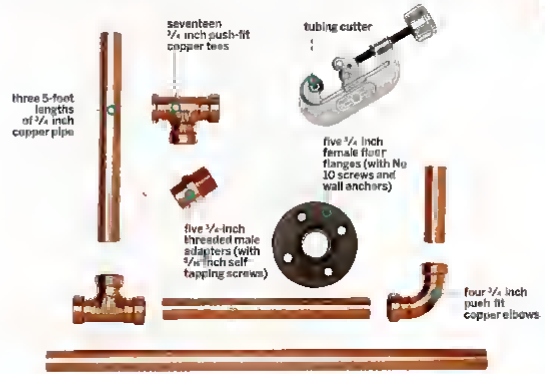
Before the kitchen became a stainless-steel and granite showpiece, the cook's room was a hardworking, faraway place, full of steam and heat and exposed pipes. One way to evoke that Victorian-era look—short of bringing the plumbing out of the wall again—is to put your pipes on display with a copper pot rack.

Using everyday plumbing parts, *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva assembled this cookware holder in just a couple of hours. Push-together tees and elbows took away the need for messy soldering, and brass polish made the copper shine like a new penny. Read on to see how to make your own custom-sized pot rack from off-the-shelf plumbing supplies.

HOW IT'S DONE

Make a pot rack

*1*_ Common copper plumbing pipe shines up easily for an elegant hanging grid.



pro advice TOM SILVA
TOH GENERAL CONTRACTOR

"Use 3/4-inch pipe for a sturdy pot rack that can carry the weight of enamel and cast iron. Look for solder-free connectors, sold under names like GatorBite and SharkBite. Mount the rack on floor flanges to project it away from the wall."

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

*2*_ Draw up your pot rack design with detailed measurements. Keep in mind that a tee adds 1/2 inch at the end of a pipe section and an elbow adds 3/4 inch at a corner. Position mounting tees 2 inches from all four corners and another tee in the center of the rack. Make a cut list from your drawing. Using a tubing cutter, cut all the pipe sections to length.

*3*_ Lay out the pot rack assembly on a flat surface, but don't attach the tees or elbows yet—once connected, they can't be pulled apart. Check that the pot rack is even and square, accounting for 1/2 inch of pipe inside each connection. Once you're sure of the fit, assemble the rack by pushing the pipes into the connectors as far as they will go.

*4*_ Push pieces of 1 1/2 inch pipe into the five mounting tees. Slide the smooth end of the threaded male adapters into the short pipes. Drill 1/8 inch holes through one side of each adapter pipe pair and lock each together with a self-tapping screw. Thread a flange onto each adapter. Mount the pot rack on the wall at each flange with No. 10 screws into the studs or anchors.

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): DON FENNY/TIME INC. (2); 4: STUDIO 1; PHB ABVICE; 3: ANTHONY TIEUL. BAN BIZARRO (10); STYLING (OPPOSITE PAGE) LAURENT LABAR (UNLESS NOTED)

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Build a sitting wall

Make a patio or garden border that does double duty as extra backyard seating

By JENNIFER STIMPSON • Photographs By KOLIN SMITH

Cost: About $20 per linear foot for a 2-foot-high wall
Time: 3 hours a day over 3 days
Difficulty: Moderate. Digging and heavy lifting is required for prep, but the stones stack easily

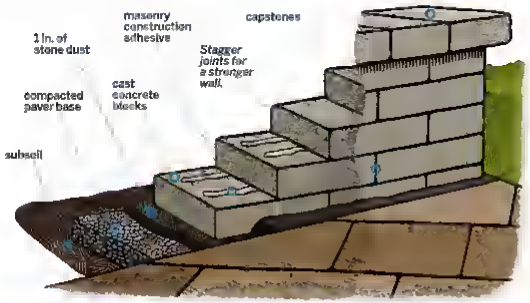
Take a scenic drive through the back roads of New England and you will inevitably spot some of the 240,000 miles of stone walls built by 19th-century farmers trying to delineate their land. You may not have a large plot to mark off, but your patios and flower beds are still deserving of a border, and one that doubles as a place to sit down will make your landscape all the more enjoyable. But no need to dig up the yard looking for rocks like the Yankee farmers had to. As *This Old House* senior technical editor Mark Powers shows here, a wall built from cast concrete blocks made to look like stone is just as beautiful and much easier to build—especially when your "planting season" is confined to the weekends.

For complete instructions, turn the page

Olde Manor Wall, from Oldcastle $2.75 per 12-by-8-by-4-inch stone myoldcastle.com

Day-to-day timeline

FRIDAY Lay out the length and shape of the wall
SATURDAY Dig out the area and put down the base layer.
SUNDAY Build the wall and set the capstones.



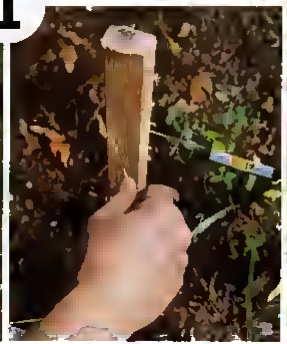
tools you need

mason's line and line level
spade
hand tamper
4-foot level
rubber mallet
mason's chisels and maul
brick hammer
caulk gun

materials to buy

cast concrete block Choose a block made specifically for freestanding walls not retaining walls or pavers. To calculate how many blocks you need, multiply the length of the wall, in inches, by the height and divide that figure by the area *(length x height)* of the side of one block. Add 10 percent to account for cuts and breakage.
paver base A mixture of ¾-inch crushed rock and stone dust. One yard covers 108 square feet 3 inches deep.
stone dust One yard covers 324 square feet 1 inch deep.
masonry construction adhesive

1



Tip Have a wheelbarrow or tarp handy as you dig to help you cart away the soil while protecting the patio or lawn.

1. Lay out and excavate the area

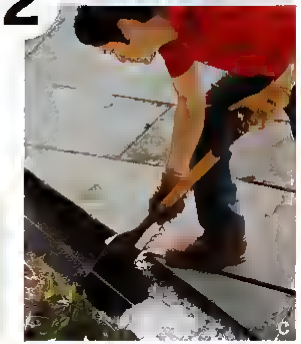
At least half the depth of the wall's first course must be buried for stability, so you need to dig a trench before stacking the pieces. Allow for at least 1 inch on either side of the blocks, which you will backfill to keep the wall from tilting as the ground settles. Once you've laid out the trench, a level line acts as a reference point against which to check the depth of the trench.
A. Using stones placed at the two ends of the wall as a guide, map out the width and shape of the trench. Add at least 1 inch on either side of the stones. Drive a stake at each end.
B. String a line level on mason's line and stretch it between the stakes. To keep the string from shifting, notch each stake and hook the string in the notches rather than tying it; that way you can unhook the string and resecure it as needed when you dig.
C. Using a spade and starting at the low point of any slope, dig a trench at least 6 inches deep or until you reach beyond the loamy topsoil to the lighter-colored soil beneath. Measure off of the level line to keep the base of the trench level as you excavate the area.

ALL LISTRAT BY GREGORY HOMED

2. Lay the base

Create a strong, tightly packed base for the stones with a crushed-rock and-stone-dust mix known as paver base. Put down the base in layers so that you can pack it well, building it up until the depth of the remaining trench is about half the thickness of your stone.
A. Shovel 3 inches of paver base into the trench.
B. Using a hand tamper, compact the base. Measure the distance from the base to the level line to make sure the base stays level. If necessary, pour additional layers of paver base and tamp each one until the surface of the base at the low point of the slope is half the depth of one block, plus 1 inch, from ground level.
C. Shovel 1 inch of stone dust into the trench. Spread and level the stone dust by pulling a spade over the uneven surface. Check that the finished depth of the trench with the base and stone dust is equal at its shallowest point to half the thickness of one stone.

2

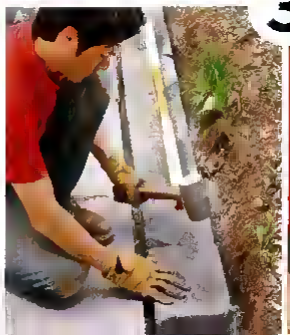


watch how to build it
See a video of this project at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

3. Lay the first course

A level and sturdy wall all depends on the positioning of the first course. A first course that tilts will tilt the block stacked on top of it, and one with gaps will throw off the rest of the joints. If there's any slope to your area, begin to set the stones from the high end of your trench and build up the low areas to avoid having to remove any stone dust.
A. Set the first stone centered between the sides of the trench. Using a 4-foot level, check the stone running from side to side, front to back, and corner to corner. Using a rubber mallet, tap the stone to set it. Place the next stone. Set it with the mallet and check that it's flush with the adjacent stone and level in all directions. Continue setting the first course in this manner until you reach the end of the wall.
B. Using a spade, backfill the gaps on either side of the stones with extra stone dust and a layer of dirt. Step on the dirt to pack it in place, being careful not to dislodge the stones.

3



Tip When setting a stone, butt it against the adjacent stone, then drop it straight down so that you avoid dragging the stone dust and pushing it into the joint.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 101

4. Cut the end stones

To give the wall strength, you need to stagger the joints between courses. So the second row of the wall should start with a half stone to offset the alignment of the joints.

A. Using a mason's chisel, mark and score every side of the stone at the point where it will be cut. Create a small channel along the score by chopping it out at an angle, side to side, using light taps on a wide mason's chisel.

B. Holding the chisel perfectly vertical at one end of the score line, strike it with a maul to split the stone. Use the claw end of a brick hammer to clean off any uneven pieces along the cut.

5. Build the wall

A comfortable sitting height for a wall is 18 to 24 inches, including capstones. Most cast concrete stones are heavy enough to stay upright without help. But for safety's sake, you should glue down at least every other course—and certainly the capstones—with construction adhesive made for stonework.

A. Using a caulk gun, apply masonry construction adhesive in two lines on top of the first course of stones. Set the second course on top of the first, making sure to stagger the joints.

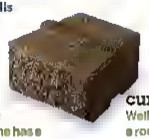
B. Continue stacking courses until the wall is a few inches from the desired height. Lay down two beads of masonry adhesive on the last course, and set the capstones in place. Turn them perpendicular so that they overhang the sides of the wall to create a finished top.

Shopping guide

Because concrete is easy to color and mold, cast concrete blocks come in an excellent variety of hues and shapes. Here are a few of our favorite looks for patio-side sitting walls.

tall and formal
This wall block has a clean, formal edge and slits where pins can be placed to reinforce a taller wall. Standard, $15*, versa-lok.com

rough and tumble
This free-standing wall stone has a rounded edge and rough face to evoke a worn, rustic look. Anchor Highland, $24, pavestone.com



curvy
Walls that take a turn are easier with a rough-faced tapered block like this one. The stones fit together like puzzle pieces for a sturdy wall. Roman Stack, $17, unilock.com

weather-beaten
This craggy block mimics the pits and stains that Old World walls acquired after centuries out in the elements. Tumbled Flagstone, $13.50, myoldcastle.com

*Price per linear foot for a 2-foot-high wall

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David and Tracy Gavant and their daughters Maya, 9, and Carly, 4, on the new side porch

LIKE OLD TIMES, ONLY BETTER

It started life as an outbuilding, with old shutters nailed down for a floor. Then, over its 300 years, it grew into a breezy summer cottage. Finally, thanks to a smart remodel, it's now a comfortable family home

By JILL CONNORS • Photographs by JULIAN WASS
Produced by COLETTE SCANLON • Styling by MATTHEW MATTIELLO

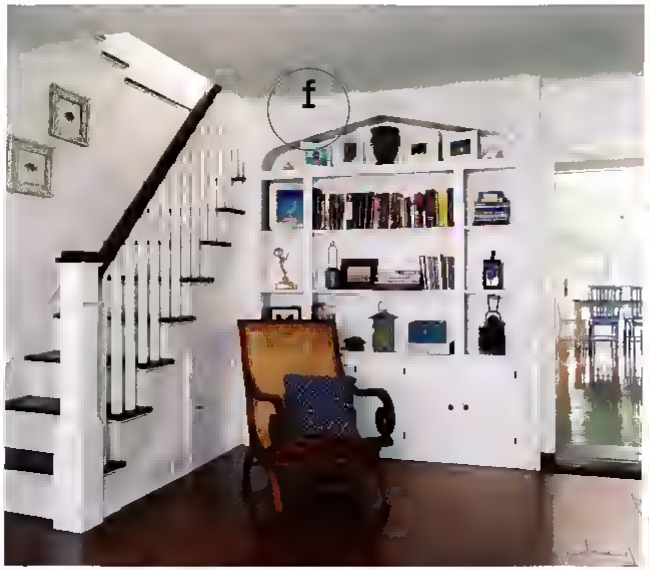
EXTERIOR
Marrying the various existing roofs with new additions was a major challenge for the architect. The finished project ended up with 10 separate rooflines.

a} The gable over the new two-story master-bedroom addition opens up with shed dormers front and back and a shed-roofed porch.
b} The gable topping the original one-story living room, with its brick chimney, continues over the family room on the other side of the house, with a shed roof over the dining area (not shown).
c} The existing front porch also has a shed roof.
d} Slightly higher is the existing gable that tops a newly finished attic over the existing front hall. A lower gable (partially seen) covers the guest bedroom.
e} Stepped back is the roof over the new kitchen bumpout—a long, sweeping "cat-slide" gable.

Here's one way to describe a dream house in 10 words or less: cedar shingled summer cottage short bike ride from ocean. David and Tracy Gavant bought just such a place in Amagansett, New York, in 1999, and treasured it as the perfect getaway from their high-stress city jobs. They loved the cottage's history. The core of the structure is believed to date from the early 1700s, when it was little more than an outbuilding for a nearby house. And they loved its charm. Rooms had evolved in quirky, make-do fashion over the years—some with shed roofs and 7-foot-high ceilings. Making improvements those first few years—updating a guest bath and replacing the furnace and septic system—the couple enjoyed their summer place and celebrated the birth of two daughters, now 4 and 9. Then Tracy voiced a simple request that led, as can happen with old cottages, to a near-gut rehab of the whole place.

"I just wanted to get rid of the stove," recalls Tracy, of the commercial range in a combined kitchen-family room that had an exposed side that was hot to the touch—a safety issue with young children—and heated up the entire cottage. In discussing ideas with contractor Robert Biondo and architect Erica Broberg Smith, the couple embarked on a series of "it made sense" decisions that eventually transformed their cottage from 1,500 square feet of ramshackle construction to 2,600 square feet of sound, high-functioning living space. It made sense to bump out space for a dedicated kitchen, away from the main traffic flow, but adjacent to the family room. And while they were at it, it made sense to redo the bedrooms, the master had no foundation and the girls' room was barely big enough for one daughter, let alone two. "And once we decided to add on a downstairs master suite with a proper foundation, it made sense to add a second floor for the girls' bedrooms," says David.

All the sensible decisions were undertaken with one overarching goal: to



FRONT HALL
The existing downstairs hall stayed intact, its charming built-in features providing templates for details added in the new spaces.

f) The arched outline of the built-in bookcase was replicated in an alcove in the new master bedroom.
g) One of two half-wall dividers that hold glass-front display cases and mark the entry to the living room. Their square columns served as a model for the double columns in the new kitchen.

DINING ROOM
The eating area, a long-ago shed-roofed addition, is located at the far end of what is now the family room.

h) Tracy Gavant and her husband chose to retain the cozy 7-foot ceiling height and had 6-foot-tall insulated glass French doors made to replace four windows. They lead to the newly expanded deck.
i) The existing half-round window above the dining alcove lets even more light into the vaulted, ceilinged family room.
j) The wide-plank mahogany floors were given a dark stain, as were all the floors, to marry the various woods used throughout. *Doors: Marvin.*

keep the whimsy and character of the old cottage, blending it seamlessly with the new spaces. They would leave the 7-foot ceiling height of the dining area intact, for example, preferring to expand the adjacent outside deck. They would keep the living room's mahogany floorboards and beach-rock fireplace untouched, but replace the tall windows flanking the fireplace with weather-tight reproductions.

The size and shape of the kitchen bumpout was determined by traffic corridors and function. "In a beach house where there's lots of entertaining, I like to allow a 4- to 4½-foot traffic corridor versus the more conventional 3½-foot corridor," says kitchen designer Scott Smith, the architect's husband, who worked with her on the project. The 13-by-14-foot room includes zones for cooking and cleaning deep within the kitchen along the exterior wall, a center island with an undercounter fridge so that kids can easily grab a juice, and a snack counter on the family room side of a half wall to keep guests nearby but out of the work area. One kitchen element speaks to the extensive structural work the cottage required. A pair of square columns that echo existing columns at the living room's entry conceal steel posts that support a load-bearing laminated veneer lumber (LVL) beam that spans from kitchen to family room. "This place was about to fall down," says contractor Biondo, who found rotted locust posts holding up the house in some places. "We had to put in two 14-foot-long LVL beams to create the 28-foot span we needed, supporting them with steel posts that go right down to the new concrete foundation."

To give the young family the bedroom space they needed, Broberg Smith designed a two-story wing to replace an existing poorly built bedroom on the back of the house. The first-floor master suite also includes an office and has a private porch. To evoke the feeling of the old house, Biondo built an archway in the master bedroom that mimics an existing built-in bookcase in the entry. The wing's second floor, which holds the children's bedrooms and a bath, includes such

FLOOR PLANS: LEA WESTFALL

KITCHEN

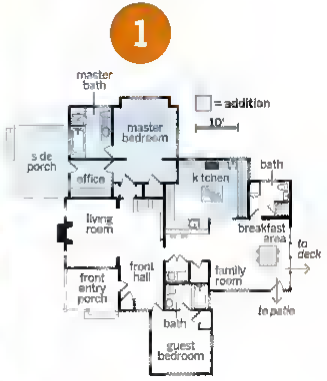
The cook space is mostly new square footage in a bumpout located off the former kitchen's location which is now the family room

k] A snack counter on the family room side of the kitchen keeps guests and kids out of the food-prep area; its butcher block top echoes the one on the kitchen island. The support post, one of a pair is wrapped to echo columns at the entry to the living room.
l] A built-in storage unit has the furniture look of an antique step-back cupboard complete with bin pulls and a marble work surface.
m] An engineered beam, boxed in and painted white, runs the length of the space to support the new roof.
n] Beadboard doors, nickel hardware, subway tile, marble counters, an apron-front sink, and old-style work lights give the all-white room its vintage style.
o] A white enamel finish allows the modern range and hood to fit right in.

Cabinets: Crystal Cabinet Works. Drawer pulls: Restoration Hardware. Appliances: Viking. Sink, faucet: Kohler. Lights: Hudson Valley Lighting. Bar stools: Crate & Barrel.

FLOOR PLANS

The master suite addition has an office and private porch downstairs, with two children's rooms and a bath upstairs. A bumpout holds the new kitchen, with its former space now the family room. The existing master bedroom became the guest room. Existing attic space became a playroom.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY PAGE 101

cottage details as beadboard paneling, wooden medicine cabinets, and awning windows that bring in ocean breezes.

Biondo repaired the existing stairway, keeping the original balustrades, and transformed an attic area—which had old shutters and doors for floorboards—into a finished playroom, complete with beadboard ceiling, knee-wall storage, and a fanciful interior window that overlooks the family room and kitchen. "From that window, the girls lower notes down to us while we're cooking, using a jump rope and basket," says Tracy.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of keeping the old rooms intact while adding new spaces was reconciling the rooflines. Because the cottage had evolved somewhat haphazardly—with gabled bedroom wings, a shed-roof dining alcove, and a front porch tacked on over the years—new areas needed to look as though they had, too. "We ended up with 10 different roof elements," says Broberg Smith, who tucked the new two-story bedroom wing under a gable that also has two shed dormers to add airiness to the girls' bedrooms and bath. She added a shed roof to the master suite porch and capped the kitchen bumpout with a gable.

Inside, all those additions meant a mix of flooring—narrow oak here, wide mahogany there—that needed to be unified. Biondo got wide-board Douglas fir for the new kitchen and master suite, as well as the new second-floor bedrooms and hallway, then every wood floor in the cottage was stained the same dark hue.

Though the renovation was much more complex than they could ever have imagined, the Gavants don't regret a thing. "I love history," says David. "Even though many people told us we would've been better off tearing the place down and starting over, we didn't want to."

The seamless result leaves visitors wondering where the old part ends and the new spaces begin, all while enjoying the many places for relaxing. "It's nice to have a house open up in many directions," says Broberg Smith. For the Gavants, that means coffee on their suite's porch and cookouts on the deck, while the girls have their domain upstairs.

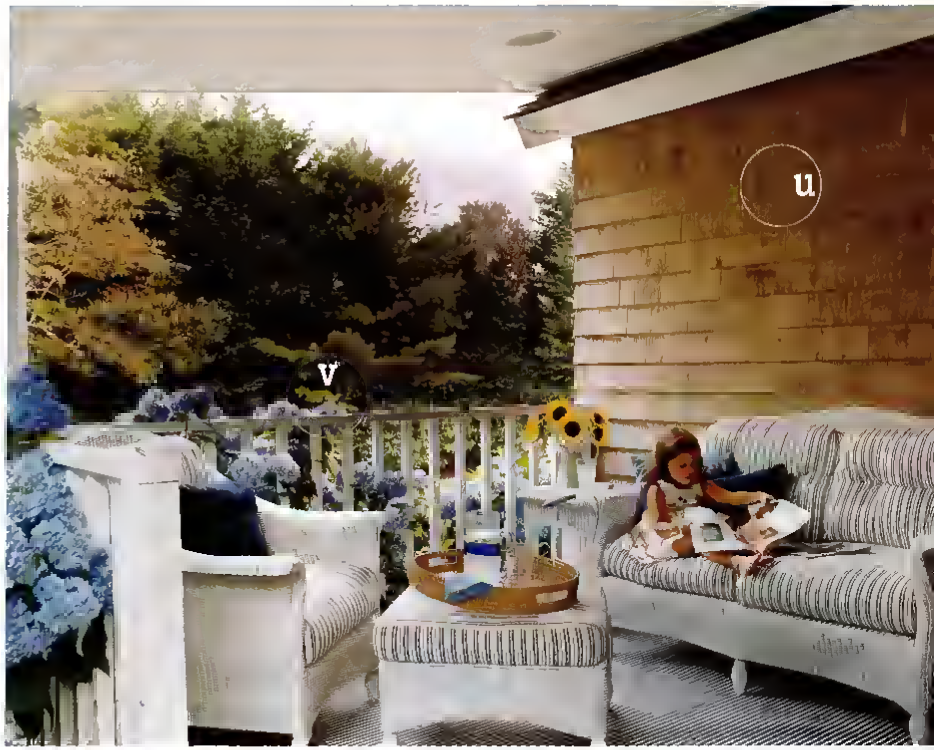
"The house is full of cozy places to just hang out in," says David. A few more words to add to any dream house description. ■

MASTER BEDROOM
An addition holds the new master suite, as well as a private porch and office.

p} Awning-style windows in the bed alcove preserve privacy and let in cool night air.
q} An arch replicated from the entry hall's bookcase built-in defines the dressing area.
r} The closets have salvaged five-panel doors, to match those in the rest of the rooms.

MASTER BATH
Old-fashioned details help disguise modern-day amenities.

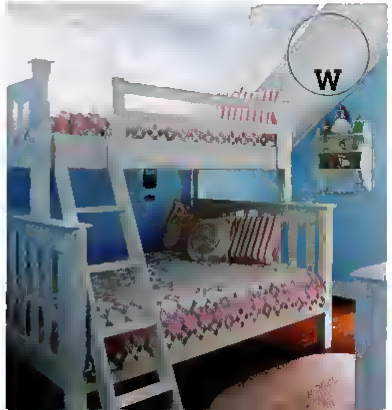
s} Beadboard paneling and a Victorian-style tub filler surround the new air-jet tub.
t} Hexagonal floor tile paves the way to the steam shower.
Tub, faucet, sink: Kohler



PORCH
The existing front porch is a peaceful spot for curling up with a book, as 4-year-old Carly does here, or enjoying a cool drink.

u} To unify the additions with existing areas, the entire house was wrapped in new stained cedar shingles.
v} The simple white painted railing provided a template for the one built to enclose the porch off the new master suite addition.

lots more remodels
See over 1,000 reader before-and-afters at thisoldhouse.com/bonus



KID'S ROOM
Two children's bedrooms sit above the new master suite—just down the hall from the attic turned-playroom.

w} Slanted ceilings that follow the lines of the eaves add a quirky old-house feeling to 9-year-old Maya's bedroom and other second-floor spaces.
Bunk beds: Pottery Barn Kids

BY AMY R. HUGHES + PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON

28 ways to customize your kitchen for less

Who wants to settle for a cookie-cutter cook space? Not us. But these days we're all looking to improve on what we've got without forking over fistfuls of cash. Coming up on these pages: how to use fresh paint and paper, vintage finds, and other smart buys to get made-to-order looks at off-the-shelf prices

Go for an updated farmhouse feel

1 Zinc-top prep table Use a potting bench to stand in for an island. Its shelf can hold pots for cooking just as easily as ones for planting. Finish it to match your cabinets, or use an accent color to make it a focal point. One we like: Living Accents bench, $240, acehardware.com

2 Warm wood counters Gentle on knives and simple to install yourself, butcher block is one of the most popular—and affordable—countertop materials. Choose long, edge-grain strips or blocky end grain. A 1½-inch thick by 26-inch square beech slab, $29, ikea.com

▸ **DIY** See how to install butcher block at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

3 Skirted sink A curtain on a $7 rod handily hides cleaning supplies and plumbing and adds a welcome hit of color and pattern. Buy a fabric remnant and stitch it yourself or have a tailor sew it to your specs. Find designer prints for under $10 per yard, joycefabrics.com

4 Pendants with patina Repro lights can cost more than the real deals. You pay for new wiring and the ease of not having to troll salvage yards. But these days many dealers refurbish their old lights, and the search is half the fun. Find ready-to-install vintage industrial pendants like these, $100 to $225, portlandsalvage.com.

▸ **DIY** See how to swap in a vintage light fixture at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

5 Metal backsplash A nod to commercial kitchen backsplashes, galvanized steel roofing forms a fire-safe barrier between the range and the wall. Make yours using Galvalume Ribbed Steel Roof Panels, $32 per 38-by-144-inch piece, lowes.com

<6> stylish score
A hanging plate rack doubles as a dramatic window treatment. Get a similar one, $130, plowhearth.com

PHOTOS: ANDREW MACE GARDEN

Create crisp cottage style

7 High plate rail A deep shelf with decorative wood brackets turns the dead zone along a soffit into an attention grabber. Painted white against a white wall, it's an ideal display space for colorful collections. Make your own with the Real Organized kit containing a 48-inch-long white-painted MDF shelf and two brackets, $20; lowes.com.

8 Decorative moldings A beadboard back and custom face frame accented with turned posts add instant architecture to an ordinary open base cabinet. Put together your own frame using stock porch parts. We like the 20-inch-high Classic Cedar Balusters, $16 each, for the center supports, and the cedar Fleur Spandrel Running Trim, $81 for a 7-inch-tall by 4-foot-long section, for the decorative top rail; all from vintageworkworks.com.

9 Made-to-order cabinetry Wood lattice gives stock stile-and-rail doors a designer touch. Build your own by removing the solid center panels and replacing them with checkerboard pattern grilles, $65 for an 18- by 24-inch grille in paint- or stain-ready red oak; vandykes.com.

▸ **DIY** See how to add a lattice grille to a new cabinet door at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

Craft some country charm

10 Freestanding hutch A piece of furniture offers all the storage of a custom built-in for a fraction of the cost. Expect to pay about $700 for a vintage wood step-back cupboard like this one at antiques stores; or if you're lucky, find one for less at a yard sale.

11 Patterned walls White-painted metal ceiling tiles used as wall cladding add new dimension to the room. Install them floor to ceiling or only halfway up as a wainscot, then cap it with a wood chair rail. Save on paint by using tiles finished with a white satin powder coat. Find them for $13 per 2-foot-square tile; americantinceilings.com.

PHOTOS (OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP): BEERMAN WHITLAW LLEWELLYN; (BOTTOM): MARK SANDU; (THIS PAGE, TOP): BEERMAN WHITLAW LLEWELLYN; (BOTTOM): TR A. BRYAN

<12> stylish score
Dress up your task lighting. Convert recessed cans with a pendant-light adapter and fabric shade, $79; ballarddesigns.com.

Try the lived-in look

13 Repurposed island A country store "seed and bean" counter offers twice the charm for half the price of a carpenter-built island. Search salvage yards and flea markets for rustic, unrestored versions like this one, starting about $800.

14 Period pot rack The rusted patina on this custom wrought-iron rack imparts an antique feel to this kitchen. For a DIY version, mount a section of Victorian-era iron fencing horizontally on the wall and hang pots from hooks on the rails, $45 per linear foot; recyclingthepast.com.

Riff on the modern-day manor

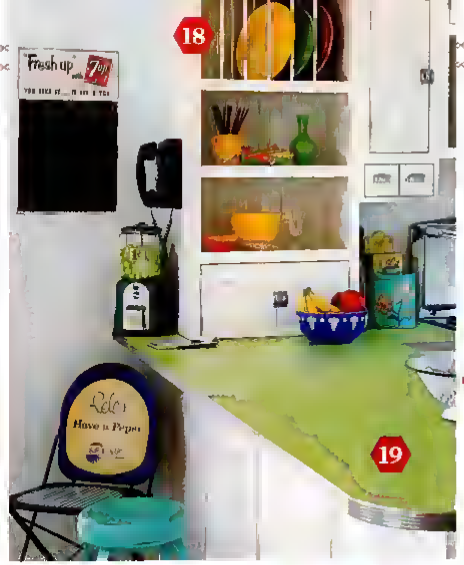
15 Wallpapered ceiling Checked paper adds more depth and liveliness than plain old paint, and costs a lot less than a similarly striking coffered treatment. To focus attention on your "fifth wall," try scrubbable vinyl-coated paper in Big Check, $44 per roll; thibautdesign.com.

▸ **DIY** See how to hang wallpaper at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

16 Brightly painted floor Sky-blue paint covers worn wood planks, creating a cool contrast with white cabinetry. Brush on a similarly eye-catching hue as an alternative to refinishing. Glidden latex floor paint, $20 per gallon; homedepot.com.

▸ **DIY** See how to paint your floors at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

17 Multitasking island One piece of furniture does the work of three kitchen staples: a service buffet with spacious drawers for organizing flatware and linens, a bookcase with a raised bottom shelf for corraling cooking tomes, and a meal-prep surface with a thick butcher-block top. The 58-inch-long Vintage White Cottage Kitchen Island could do it all for you, $653; furnitureontheweb.com.



Bring in retro diner details

18 Tricked-out cubbies A rack fitted with wood dowels puts brightly hued plates on view and keeps them within reach of the breakfast bar. Customize a cubby or open cabinet in your kitchen with a 48-inch-wide plate rack kit, $69, knapeandvogt.com.

19 Colorful counter Laminate is easy to clean, never needs sealing, and comes in just about every shade in the Crayola box. Here, metal edge banding gives this lime-green counter a cool '50s vibe. Laminate, $1.65 to $2.50 per square foot, homedepot.com. Banding starts at $1.25 per linear foot, newyorkmetal.com.

▸ **DIY** See how to install a value-conscious laminate counter at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

Add timeless, elegant touches

20 Cooking hearth A custom wood vent-hood canopy mimics the look of a fireplace mantel. Get a stock cover that echoes trim details in your kitchen, starting at $210, hoffco.biz.

21 Showcase shelves Glass doors and shelving lighten the potentially bulky look of upper cabinets. Make over yours by replacing solid center panels in doors and wood shelves with tempered glass. A panel for a standard 15-by-36-inch upper cabinet is $24 plus $28 per 3/4-inch-thick shelf, onedayglass.com.

22 Vintage stove A 1950s copper-colored Chambers range has the firepower of a modern pro-style cooker but loads more style. Get unrestored classics from various makers for as little as $200—sometimes even for free—in The Old Appliance Club's classifieds, antiquestoves.com.

PHOTOS: (TOP) ALEC HOMER; (BOTTOM) DIRK IN QUE VON L. ON STYLE OF SUNDAY HENRIE CASON

smart storage solutions, $3 and up

23 Country cupboard doors Replace solid center panels with chicken wire to showcase dishes. Buy a 12-inch-by-50-foot roll of Mesh Poultry Netting for $8 at idealtruevalue.com.

24 Bar-inspired glass rack Use the underside of open shelves to store wine glasses and champagne flutes. Pick up the Oak Undercabinet Stemware Rack for $30 at containerstore.com.

25 Pro-chef utensil bar Hang cooking essentials from S-hooks on a stainless rail. We like the 21-inch-long Grundtal rail and five-pack of hooks for $9 at ikea.com.

26 Customized containers Vary the height of clutter-controlling baskets to correspond with their contents. A small, medium, and large set of fabric-lined willow baskets is $25 at walmart.com.

27 Café-style cup holder Dangle a vibrant array of mugs from hooks screwed into the bottom of open shelving. Eight decorative Bulldog Mug Hooks in Antique Brass are just $4 at diawlesshardware.com.

28 Whitewashed wine rack Stack and glue together 1-foot sections of painted terra cotta drainpipe for a compact wine "cellar" above the fridge or in an open storage cubby. Get precut round pipes like the ones shown, as well as self-supporting hexagonal ones, for $3 each; go to sandkuhl.com for dealer info.

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) CHRISTOPHER IRWIN/ALBUM; MANGES; ERIC RUTH; JACK THOMPSON; DOMINIQUE VORALION; BERNHARD WHITLAW LLEWELLYN; CHRISTOPHER FRANCE/ALBUM; MANGES; STYLING (CONTAINERS): KAY GAY

BY KELLY BEAMON + PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON

19 ways to dress up your bath on a budget

We all want a luxe-looking washroom to suds up and shower in. The challenge is creating that spa-like space without getting soaked. Read on to see how bargain-bin tile, secondhand furniture, and selective use of high-end finishes can give you the polish you want at a price you can afford

Build on a furnished foundation

1 **Sideboard vanity** A mirrored dining room buffet replaces both a run-of-the-mill medicine chest and a sink cabinet. Paint it the same color as the walls to give it a built-in look. Find a buffet for your bath at flea markets for about $400.

2 **Vintage washstand** Set between matching pedestal sinks, a tiled-back washstand creates a his-and-hers vanity for a lot less coin than a new dresser-style model. Expect to pay $250 for a similar washstand at antiques or thrift shops.

3 **Wall-hung mirrors** Easy-to-hang flush-mount mirrors don't require wall-busting construction like recessed medicine cabinets do. Find similarly elegant oval models with beveled edges for $99, potterybarn.com.

4 **Tile-top wainscot** Use a luxe material sparingly and for the most visual impact by adding a dramatic ceramic tile border to enhance inexpensive wood beadboard. Try the combo at home using WoodHaven primed beadboard, $88 for a box of 5-by-84-inch panels (enough to cover 29 square feet), and American Olean Starting Line 3-by-6-inch tiles, $6 each, both at lowes.com.

▶ **DIY** See how to hang beadboard at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

PHOTOS (LEFT) ERIC ROTH; (RIGHT) STEPHEN KARLISCH; STYLING: KAY RAY

DIY mosaic
Design a pattern, pop out mesh-backed 1¼-inch white tiles, and replace with colorful accents. Hexagons, $8 to $12 per square foot; daltile.com

Bring outside elements inside

6 **Outdoor-shower paneling** Horizontal slats nailed to vertical framing nod to the look of an open-air shower enclosure. Mahogany 1x4s are a stable wood choice in wet baths. $4 per linear foot. dykeslumber.com

7 **Utility light** Instead of a dressy sconce, a caged fixture, like those on farm buildings, offers a lot of light—and style—for just a little money. We like the Vapor Tight Incandescent Fixture, $24. homedepot.com.

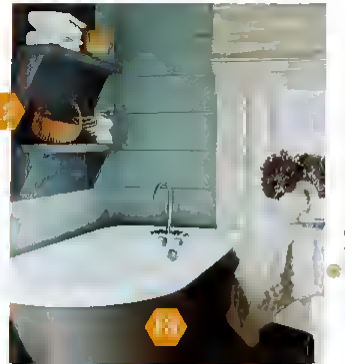
8 **Natural stone counter** A soapstone top, with its river rock color and matte finish, has a warmer look than polished granite. Cut one to your specs using woodworking tools. Slabs start at $25 per square foot. soapstones.com.

9 **Twig-style tissue holder** TP hangs from a spindle suspended between the vanity's front and back legs. Make one using a $1 wood dowel from the hardware store.

Go for bright and airy

10 **Room divider** Framed frosted Plexiglas panels linked by steel cables create a visual partition without blocking natural light. Make yours by lining acrylic—sold at home centers for about $20 per 2-by-4-foot piece—in Light Effects Etched Leaf window film, $21 per sheet. homedepot.com

11 **Towel cubby** Better looking than a plumbing access door, a wood-lined niche with a removable back panel stores extra towels. Box in a void at the end of your tub surround using hardwood plywood and trim for about $50.



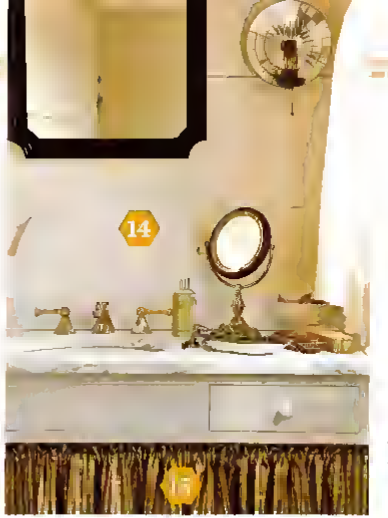
Design a rustic retreat

12 **Weathered shelving** A wall-mounted barn board shelf stores bathing essentials and makes attractive use of the blank canvas above the claw-foot tub. Get a look-alike for $115. americanheritageshop.com

13 **Two-tone tub** A serene palette of watery hues on the walls and shelf is complemented by a soft gray paint on the tub exterior. Refinish the outside of your claw-foot with a metal-safe enamel, such as Impervo Alkyd for $25 per quart. benjaminmoore.com

DIY See how to refinish a cast-iron tub at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

PHOTO 8 (THIS PAGE, TOP) LISA ROMERIN; (MIDDLE) LAUREY GLENN; (BOTTOM) JOHN CHALLISS; (OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) FRANK WU; LAW LEWIS LYN SUSAN SCHMITT; THOMAS STORY; SHELLEY METCALF; LISA ROMERIN; STYLING, (YVANNE PATTERSON) SHELLEY STOUT



Create handcrafted character

14 **Curved backsplash** A custom demilune backsplash gives this painted wood vanity the look of a vintage washstand. Instead of warp-prone wood, use a sheet of marine-grade polymer that's easy to cut with a jigsaw and never needs paint. $76 for a ½-inch-thick, 24- by 27-inch sheet. jamestowndistributors.com

15 **Simple skirted sink** A gingham curtain hides exposed plumbing and punches up a white and cream color scheme. Get the look with cheery $12 cotton curtains on a $7 rod. jcpenney.com

low-cost tile tricks

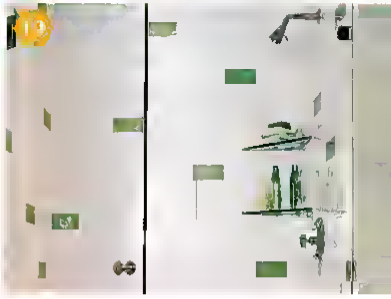
16 **Wall runner** Mix small quantities of discounted odd lot hexagonal mosaics, skinny "liners," and oversized subways to create a distinctive vertical backsplash. Save 60 percent over custom tile orders.

DIY See how to set bath wall tiles at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

17 **Varied pattern** Install a square grid halfway up the wall, cap with a tiled rail, then lay subsequent courses on an angle for a more decorative look. Stock 4- by 4-inch squares in various colors. 53 cents each. lowes.com

18 **Chair rail** Set plain subways on end to create a dentil-style border on a tiled wainscot. Seal the exposed, unglazed ends with caulk. White Straight Edge 3-by-6-inch subway tiles, $4 each. luxetile.com

19 **Bold accents** Scatter glass or other accent tiles within a field of moderately priced field ones. Lake Garda glass subway tiles, $31 per square foot. annsacks.com



ALL ABOUT

Stone countertops

Nothing elevates the appearance of a kitchen like a handsome, hard-wearing slab of stone. The experts at This Old House explain how to find a quarried countertop that suits your home, your budget, and your cooking style By Josh Garskof

The countertop makes the kitchen. It's the work surface where you prepare food, eat casual family meals, perhaps even pay bills and help Junior with his homework And of all the countertop materials you can buy, stone is the gold standard for both durability and character

Every rock pulled from the earth has its own mineral color, veining, and speckles, brought vividly to life by stoneworkers' saws and polishing wheels So whether you select a solid burgundy quartzite, a sky-blue granite, or a beige travertine embedded with fossilized seashells, it will be as distinctive as an original work of art

And as permanent, too Unaffected by hot pans or water, a stone countertop will last as long as your house—maybe even longer It needs only a little routine care and forethought to ward off water marks, stains, and etching typically caused by acidic foods But even if the worst happens—a chipped edge, a red wine spill—most stones can be restored by a professional

On the following pages, we explain the differences between the various stone types, offer money-saving tips, and cover the basics of stone care By the end, you'll know what it takes to bring your kitchen, beautifully and dramatically, into the stone age.

standards for stone
Follow these rules of thumb for a good-looking, long-lasting counter

backsplash
Seal joint with silicone.

thickness
Choose ¾ or 1¼ inch slabs

cabinets
Top goes directly over base units or plywood

edges
Rounded ones don't chip as easily as squared ones

overhang
Equal to or just beyond the projection of the installed drawer pulls.

Big Ds K CHEN MARK LEHMAN LY FALS / WEINHILL WEBBER S YL NG (KITCHEN) RAY LAN HAMER/BARCLAY BUTERA INC ILLUSTRAT ON (BRAND TE PAGE) BIG DA PRINTS

VITALS

What's it cost?
Typically $25 to $100 per square foot Sink and faucet holes and fancy edges are extra

Does it hold up?
Imperv ous to heat and water but will chip if say you bang a cast iron skillet on an edge

Will it stain?
Thanks to improved factory applied sealants some stones now come with lifetime antistain warranties

How much care?
Wipe spills promptly with soapy water or stone cleaner Apply sealer as needed for granite that s every one to three years

Where to buy it?
At a stone yard you can pick the exact slab you want at a big box store you choose from display samples The big box price may be lower but don t expect your slab to match the sample exactly

Is stone right for your kitchen?

Sure, it's a showpiece, but keep these practical considerations in mind before you buy

pros

Distinctive: Every stone is different, so the pattern and color you choose is one of a kind

Durable: Unlike laminate, wood, solid surfacing, or engineered stone, natural stone is unaffected by heat

Virtually seamless: Stone slabs provide a smooth surface without the crumb-catching grout lines typical of ceramic tile tops

Low maintenance: Just wipe up spills as they occur and reapply sealant when required (see "Is it time to seal?" p. 87 for guidance)

Repairable: Cracks, chips, and scratches can be fixed on site by a stone restorer. Remove most stains yourself using a poultice

Impervious to water: Unlike butcher block—or a laminate's chipboard substrate—stone stands up to splashes.

cons

Price: The high cost of quarrying, shipping, and fabricating stone makes it one of the most expensive countertop choices

Brittle: Stone will crack if it's not evenly supported. Cabinet tops must be flat and level or covered with plywood and shimmed level

Not DIY-friendly: Except for soapstone, which you can cut with woodworking tools, you'll have to hire a pro to make the sink and faucet holes and to shape the edges of your slab. Stone weighs about 18 pounds per square foot, so you need a well-muscled crew to install it

Some are stain-prone: Travertine, limestone, and marble blemish easily if not periodically sealed; less porous stones, such as Vermont slate and soapstone, are more resilient

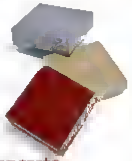
May be vulnerable to acids: Citrus fruits, vinegar, and cleaners with bleach or ammonia will etch marbles, limestones, and travertines, even if sealed. A stone restorer can repolish a slab in your home

The competition

These man-made materials can mimic the look of stone—even rare, prohibitively pricey ones like lapis or onyx. Here's how they stack up in terms of durability, maintenance, and cost

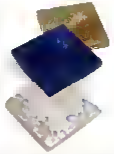
solid surfacing

Moldable resins and special glues allow for a truly seamless counter complete with an integrated sink. Nonporous: food can't etch it, stains are easy to remove; sealers aren't required. Hot pans can scorch or crack it, knives can nick it. $40 to $80 per square foot.



concrete

Pour your own or buy custom slabs from local shops in the color and shape of your choice. Site-poured counters can be seamless. Sensitive to acids and requires frequent sealing. DIY: $8 to $15 per square foot. Hire it out: $75 to $100 per square foot



engineered stone

A factory-made mix of 93 percent quartz granules held together with a resin binder; engineered slabs are impervious to acids and stains. Very hot pots may cause superficial damage. Comes in colors not found in quarried stone. $50 to $90 per square foot

ENAMELED LAVA

Here's a gorgeous stone hybrid you'll probably never buy. Called Pyrolave, it's a lightweight volcanic stone with a tough-as-nails glass enamel coating. It comes in 32 vibrant colors and is a heftier version of ceramic tile but without annoying grout lines. Perfect, except for the price: $370 per square foot; pyrolave.com

PHOTOS: TOP: PAGE 84: COURTESY OF BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.; PAGE 85: ALAMY; CO-EXISTENCE

Pick your stone

Whether you're looking for grainy, veiny, sparkly, or matte, there's a stone for you. Here are some of our favorite options

{*uninstalled **installed}

marble

Name: Calacatta gold (Italy)
Price: $100* per sq. ft.; cancos.com
Highlights: A classic white Italian marble with gold veining. Can be polished or honed. Seal every few months. Low acid resistance.

granite

Name: Floresta verde (Brazil)
Price: Starting at $57** per sq. ft.; sensegranite.com
Highlights: Polishes to a high shine, very acid-resistant. This stone has sealer with 25-year antistain warranty

slate

Name: Dark green (Vermont)
Price: $80* per sq. ft.; sheldonslate.com
Highlights: So dense that sealing isn't required. Buff out scratches with an abrasive pad. For more gloss, use mineral oil. Highly acid-resistant.

travertine

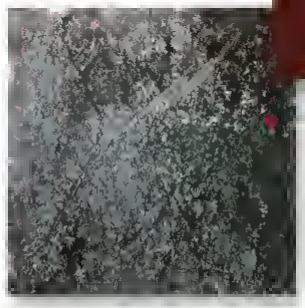
Name: Volcano (Turkey)
Price: $30* per sq. ft.; akdo.com
Highlights: Surface pits are filled with grout or resin to prevent food particles from being trapped. Seal frequently. Low acid resistance

limestone

Name: Jerusalem gold (Israel)
Price: $30* per sq. ft.; akdo.com
Highlights: Soft colors and matte surfaces distinguish it from marble. Can't take a high polish. Seal frequently. Low acid resistance.

quartzite

Name: Burgundy (Italy)
Price: Starting at $90** per sq. ft.; charlesluck.com
Highlights: No veining. Very resistant to scratches and acids; seal every two to five years.



soapstone

Name: Black venato (Brazil)
Price: $25* per sq. ft.; soapstones.com
Highlights: Dense and acid-resistant. No sealing required; can be treated with mineral oil to darken color. DIYers can cut it with woodworking tools. Soft and easy to scratch; buff scratches out with an abrasive pad

Now you want it. How do you get it?

Choosing the type of stone is just the beginning. Here's what happens next

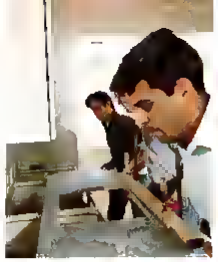
Who to call→ Most stone yards and home centers offer one-stop shopping. You choose a stone, they take care of fabrication—cutting holes for the sink and faucet and shaping the edges—and installation. Or you can buy your slab from a retailer who just sells stone and find your own fabricator.

What they do→ A crew makes templates of the tops of your base cabinets. (For retrofit jobs, the crew may have to remove your old counter.) You provide dimensions for the faucet and sink cutouts.

How long it takes→ The lead time is about one to three weeks to cut the slab to your specs and rub in an extra-tough high-tech sealer that lasts longer than ones you can apply at home.

How it goes down→ For 1-inch slabs, installers lay plywood over the cabinets (no underlayment required for thicker slabs, as long as cabinet tops are flat and level) and squeeze beads of silicone caulk. They lay the new counter and fill any joints between slabs with a color-matched resin. They then mount the sink and faucet, though a plumber may need to make the final connections.

What can go wrong→ Contracts are rare, but a reputable installer should make good if the counter cracks, chips, or scratches while going in, or if there are uneven overhangs or gaps at the wall—a sign of slipshod templating. If your walls get dinged, expect him to pick up the tab for the painter you hire.



Stone ranking guide

Stain resistance		Scratch resistance
Vermont slate	High	granite
soapstone	↑	quartzite
granite		Vermont slate
marble		marble
quartzite		limestone
limestone	↓	travertine
travertine	Low	soapstone

Note: Each stone type's resistance varies with source and color

DIY stain removal
Learn how to make a poultice to combat blemishes at **thisoldhouse.com/bonus**

All stones are not created equal

Even the darkest granites aren't immune to stains. A stone's resistance depends on its chemical makeup and microscopic fissures that formed millions of years ago. But you don't need to be a geologist to determine whether your counter will stand up to a little spilled vino. Just perform this simple test.

1. Get a sample piece (it's okay if it's not from the same slab as long as it comes from the same source). Rub on a sealer.
2. Pour test dollops of ketchup, olive oil, red wine, and lemon juice. Leave them overnight.
3. Wipe the surface clean in the morning. You'll see how well it stands up to untended spills.

PHOTOS: (TOP TWO) WEARWELL T. WEBBER; (BOTTOM LEFT) WILLIAM A. JOYD JR.; (BOTTOM RIGHT) WEARWELL T. WEBBER; FOR STONE REMOVAL, TWO, AND A, BOYD, JR.

Four ways to save

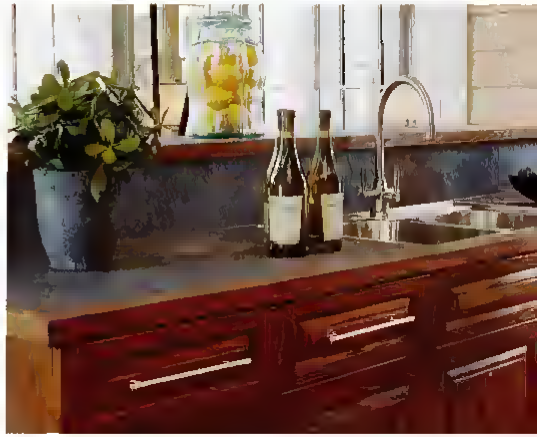
Get a high-end stone countertop for not a lot of cash

STONE TILE
Using 12-inch-square floor tiles gets you an approximation of a slab for about one-third the cost. Cut them yourself with a wet saw. Cover the edges with thin tile strips, or wrap them in metal nosing or wood bands (shown at right). Joint lines will be visible.

PREFAB
Prefabricated counters, sized to standard cabinet depth and finished with bullnose edges, can save you up to 30 percent. Typically sold as 96-inch-long solid slabs, they still require a fabricator to cut sink and faucet holes. No two slabs are exactly alike, so they're best used on straight runs without seams.

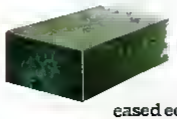
RECLAIMED
Save 50 to 80 percent off retail by prowling house-part recycling centers, such as Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, Craigslist, and kitchen cabinet outfits refreshing their displays. These tops are typically cut to someone else's kitchen layout, so plan on adjusting yours to fit.

REMNANTS
Stone yards frequently offer clearance sale prices of up to half off for small leftover slabs, which often work well for prep islands, pastry stations, and kitchen offices. Selection is limited, and you pay for any custom cuts.



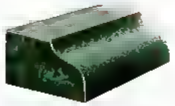
Pick your profile

Choose an edge that reflects the style of your kitchen and your budget

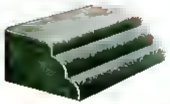


eased edge
A simple treatment that goes well with modern and Shaker-style decor. No extra charge

bullnose
Versatile and tough, there are no sharp edges or corners to run into or chip. $10–$20 per linear foot



ogee
This graceful shape adds an elegant touch to any counter. $20–$30 per linear foot

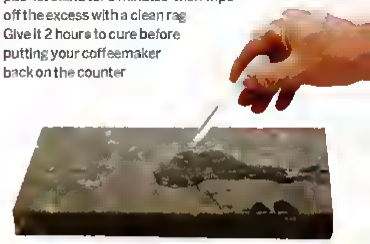


triple pencil
A sleek, undulating profile reminiscent of 1920s Art Deco. $30–$60 per linear foot

PHOTOS: (TOP) JOHN ALLDRIP; (BOTTOM) WEARWELL T. WEBBER. ILLUSTRATION: RODICA PRATO

Is it time to seal?

Let your stone be the gauge. Just put some water on it: if it beads up, the sealer's still good; but if the water soaks in, your counter is due for a dose. Use only water-based impregnating sealers, such as Sealer's Choice Gold from Aqua Mix. Unlike surface-type sealers, which can affect a stone's color, impregnators penetrate without altering appearance. Apply the sealer with a paint pad, let stand for 5 minutes, then wipe off the excess with a clean rag. Give it 2 hours to cure before putting your coffeemaker back on the counter.



Stone for every style

With so many patterns and colors—including speckled and vibrant and subtle and subdued—stone complements most any type of kitchen. Here are some tips for selecting the right stone for you

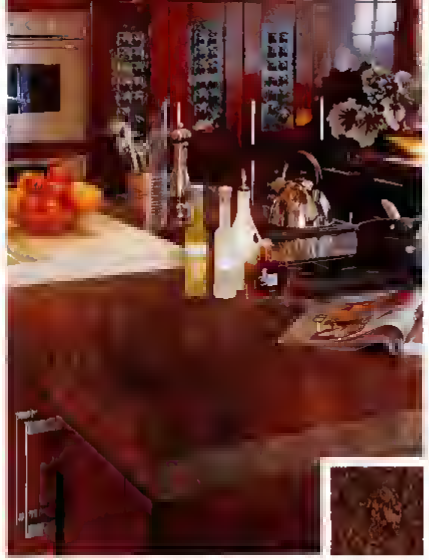
Colors→ To best showcase the counter, pick a stone that contrasts with the color of the cabinets. Pair a creamy travertine with a clear-coated cherry, for instance. A monochromatic coupling of Carrara and white lacquer is clean and contemporary but will downplay the stone. Avoid trendy or extreme colors that you (or the next owner) will likely tire of.

Patterns→ Don't be afraid of natural veining—it's what makes quarried stone different from most man-made countertop materials. Variegated patterns also hide stains and grime better than those with uniform coloration.

Surface treatment→ A shiny granite may best suit a formal kitchen, but in a more rustic setting honed is usually a better choice. Some stones, such as soapstone and slate, can't be polished; a matte, honed finish is your only choice. Keep in mind that the surface treatment can also affect maintenance. Polished granite, for example, is easier to keep up because it resists stains and water marks better than honed. But on softer stones, such as marble or limestone, a honed finish is easier because you can use a scrubber sponge or a light abrasive cleaner such as Soft Scrub without worrying about scratches.

Thickness→ Stone slabs come in two standard thicknesses: about ¾ inch (2 centimeters) and about 1¼ inch (3 centimeters). Thicker stone has a greater visual heft that's generally preferred in kitchens. To get the look for less, ask your installer to glue or "laminate" a strip of stone to the edge of a ¾-inch slab. In a quality job, these edge strips will be cut from the same slab and the transition will look seamless.

pro advice
CAROLE FREEHAUF, *THIS OLD HOUSE* INTERIOR DESIGNER
"Before you buy a slab, bring home a few samples and look at them in your kitchen at various times during the day. A stone's appearance changes dramatically depending on lighting conditions."

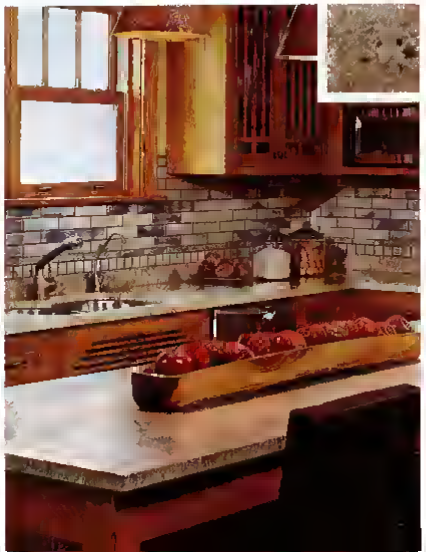


Sleek and modern: A high polish and extra-thick square edges complement the flat-panel cabinetry. Inset: Giallo Vicenza granite, from $57 per sq. ft. installed, sensagranite.com

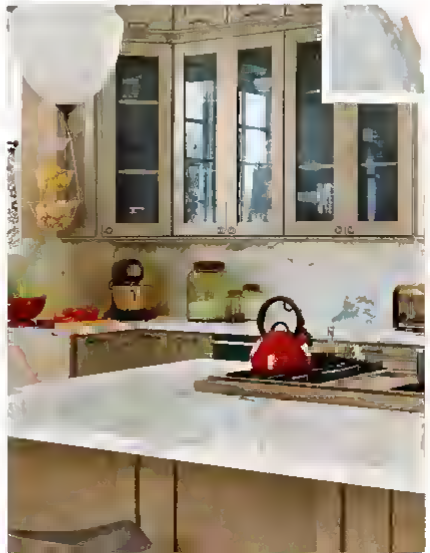
Retro color: Ochre veining echoes the bright paint and tile in this update of a cheery 1950s kitchen. Inset: Yellow Spring marble, $30 per sq. ft. uninstalled, ekdo.com

Masculine zen: The near-black color of this top echoes the ebony accents on this Japanese-style island. Inset: Midnight Magic granite, from $70 per sq. ft. installed, stonemark.com

Craftsman warmth: Earth-toned flecks pick up the rich tones of honey-colored wood and gray-blue tile. Inset: Soleil granite, from $65 per sq. ft. installed, innovativestone.com



Victorian fancy: An ogee edge and creamy color work with natural glass-front cabinets, evoking a late-19th-century kitchen. Inset: Crastela marble, $41 per sq. ft. uninstalled, stonesource.com



Rustic ranch: The soft matte surface and flannel-gray color suit the casual feel of this kitchen. Inset: Julia unoiled soapstone, $30 per sq. ft. uninstalled, soapstones.com

HOUSE, OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: ©ALAN JAMES; BOTTOM: ©NATHAN KIRKMAN / PRO ADVICE: ©CHRIS STEPHENS; HARTNER: ©TIM SUPPLEE; PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ©ALAN JAMES; ©NATHAN KIRKMAN; ©ANDREW BUCK; ©TIM SUPPLEE; ©ANDREW BUCK; ©ROCK CHALLIS WALTON; SAVE: ©SAMUEL CLAY

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

Q I'm told that the gas I keep in a can for my lawn mower goes bad the longer it sits there. Is there any way to prevent that?

—VIOLETTA PORRAZZO MAHOPAC, N.Y.

A Gasoline is volatile stuff and will degrade after a couple of months. One option is to buy only a two-month supply at a time. But it's easier just to add a liquid fuel stabilizer, such as Sta-bil, when you fill up the car. An additive will keep gas fresh for up to a year. Also, be sure you always store gas in a proper U.L.- or Factory Mutual–approved container with the lid tightly secured. Don't risk using an antique fuel can, no matter how attractive it might look. —ROGER COOK, *THIS OLD HOUSE* LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

PHOTOGRAPH BY VICTOR SCHRAGER

→ Our cast of veteran experts

TOM SILVA
General Contractor

NOPM ABRAM
Master Carpenter

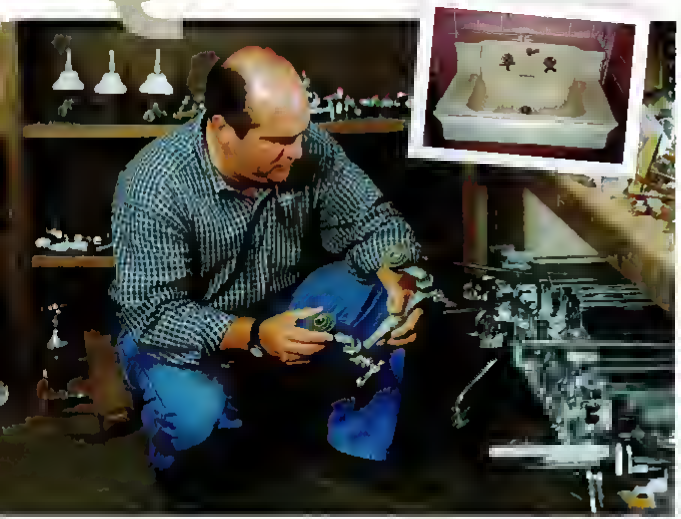
RICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and Heating Expert

ROGER COOK
Landscape Contractor

KEVIN O'CONNOR
Host

Q: We have a lovely bathroom sink, original to my 1938 house, with a leaking faucet. Our plumber doesn't think he can find replacement parts, but I want to keep the sink. Is there any hope of saving it?

—ELAINE KAYE, FLINT, MICH



Richard Trethewey picks through the offerings at an architectural salvage yard—a good source for old plumbing parts and fixtures

Richard Trethewey replies: There's almost always a way to keep old plumbing fixtures in service. If one plumber balks at the project, give somebody else a shot at it. Some are handier than others when it comes to antique stuff, especially plumbers who do a lot of remodeling and repair work. They usually have a secret stash of parts stripped from old sinks. You might even find an old timer who's worked on a sink similar to yours and knows just what it needs.

If you strike out there, take photos of the sink, including the area that needs repair, and use a flashlight to look for identifying marks, such as a logo, a brand, or even a number. Any information could be useful, even if you don't know what it means.

With that information in hand, try these options:

1. Head to a plumbing supply house (a home center won't be much help). If they can't help, get the names of anyone, anywhere—online or otherwise—they can recommend.
2. Check with a local architectural salvage company. Again, if they don't have what you need, ask for any leads.
3. Contact the sink's manufacturer and see if they carry old parts or know who might.
4. Search online at places that specialize in old parts, such as vintageplumbing.com. And don't be afraid to call them up if you have a question. Folks who

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): ANTHONY TIELLI (3); KEVIN SMITH, ANTHONY TIELLI; KELLER & KELLER

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202. AUTOMOTIVE

1. FORD F-150 The next 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 Sierras are that and more. Whether you're putting up paneling or adding a new suite of rooms, GMC Sierra will make the task easier.

3. HYUNDAI Are car companies committed to quality, or to 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.

7. QUIKRETE® With over 200 products, QUIKRETE® has what you need for all types of affordable home improvement projects. For ideas and instruction, visit our website.

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

9. 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

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

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

205. FLOORING

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

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

207. KITCHEN

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

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

16. INSINKERATOR The world's leading manufacturer of food waste disposers, including Evolution Excel™, the best grinding disposer with three grind stages and 60% less noise.

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

208. LAWN/GARDEN, POOL/SPA & PATIO

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

19. 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.

210. PAINT/STAIN

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

20. KILZ The Kilz® Casual Colors® paint line, with its one coat coverage guarantee and nature inspired hues, is the perfect way to breathe life into a tired living space.

21. MINWAX At Minwax, we're always working on new ideas, formulating innovative products and looking for better ways to beautify, protect and restore wood. Visit our website today.

22. 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.

23. 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.

24. VALSPAR Valspar has created the ultimate combination of beauty and performance. Thousands of colors that stand the test of time. Nature itself. Visit our website.

212. PLUMBING FIXTURES/HVAC/BATH

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

26. KOHLER Order a complete set of full color product catalogs covering baths and whirlpools, showers, lavatories, toilets and bidets, kitchen and entertainment sinks, faucets and accessories. ($15)

27. MOEN Moen delivers beautiful, reliable and innovative faucets, showerheads and accessories designed for your life. Free literature is available.

28. SANIFLO Use Saniflo to build an entirely new bath where no below floor drainage exists. Install wherever you want—an unfinished basement, spare bedroom, attic, garage or pool house. Send for FREE INFORMATION.

29. THE UNICO SYSTEM A small-duct, high velocity heating and cooling system that provides superior indoor air comfort without compromising the architectural character of a historic home.

30. 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.

213. SPECIALTY ITEMS & SERVICES

31. 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.

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

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.

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

216. WINDOWS, DOORS, ETC.

34. JELD-WEN Jeld-Wen is dedicated to crafting reliable windows, interior exterior and garage doors that will bring you energy efficiency, security, long-lasting beauty and peace of mind.

35. MARVIN WINDOWS & DOORS Get new window and door ideas for your home. Start building your vision with this informative free brochure from Marvin Windows and Doors.

36. 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 IND., INC. Dust-free sanding

37. ARCHITECTURAL PRODUCTS BY OUTWATER Decorative building products

38. ATLANTIS RAIL Stainless steel deck railings

39. FROGTAPE FrogTape with PaintBlock technology

40. GORILLA GLUE Bonds wood, stone, metal & more

41. HEADLOCK Color coated stainless steel deck screws

42. HOUSE OF ANTIQUE HARDWARE Reproductions true to original

43. HYDRO-SIL Room-by-room heating system

44. THE IRON SHOP Leading manufacturer of spiral stair kits

KAYNE & SON CUSTOM HARDWARE Custom forged interior and exterior hardware

45. MONARCH COVERS Custom radiator screens

46. NU-WAL Restoration products

47. PREMIER BATHROOMS Walk-in bathtubs by Premier

48. REGIO REGISTERS Heat grilles and registers

49. RESEARCH PRODUCTS/BLANKENSHIP Insulated, first ever incinerator toilet

50. RESTORATION Restoration and antique hardware

51. SALTER INDUSTRIES Spiral stair kits

52. SHUTTER BLINDS Authentic period wooden blinds and shutters

53. SOLATUBE. Brighten all your dark rooms

54. SURFACINGSOLUTION White styrene tin styled panels

54. TEMPUR-PEDIC Pressure-relieving Swedish mattresses

56. VIXEN HILL Cedar outdoor products

specialize in restoration products are generally a pretty friendly crowd and glad to help anyone who's trying to keep the good old stuff in working order.

5. Visit a machine shop; they might be able to fabricate parts from scratch. This is a solution of last resort because of the cost, but if a few hundred dollars of shop work saves your suite of matching fixtures, then maybe the expense will be worth it.

Q LAWN INVADER

We have what the neighborhood nurseries call "creeping Charlie" growing all over our lawn. We've tried pulling it out, digging it up, reseeding, overseeding, cutting the grass short, and leaving the grass long. Nothing seems to work. Help!

—STEVE AND JAN CHRISTIANSEN, PALATINE, ILL.

Roger Cook replies: Creeping Charlie, also called ground ivy or gill-over-the-ground, is a perennial and a highly invasive evergreen weed of the mint family. It loves conditions that grass doesn't: shade, and soil that's wet, acidic, or compacted. So if you see this weed, it's a message that your lawn needs help.

Chemical weed killers might get rid of it, but unless you change the conditions that encourage this pest, it'll just come right back. Get a soil test and add the nutrients or minerals that are missing. Prune or remove adjacent trees to admit more light. Reduce sources of excess water, such as runoff; don't overwater the grass, and run a core aerator over it in the fall to reduce compaction. After aerating, spread a mixture of compost and sand over the grass so that the soil will drain better. If you reseed a somewhat shady area, use a grass blend suitable for shade. And if you still have problems after all that, give up on grass and plant a noninvasive groundcover that's more to your liking.

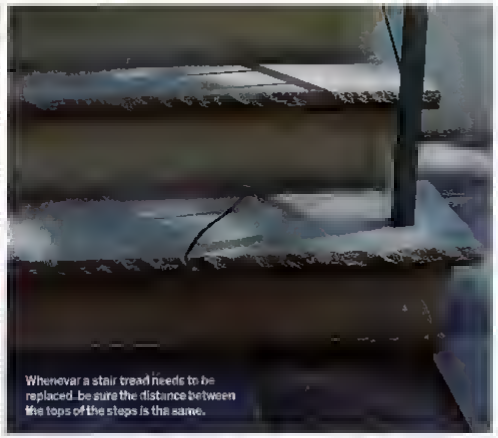
A→ Garbage disposer unclogger

B→ Paint can opener and rim cleaner

C→ Magnet-based stud finder

D→ Or ...?

FOR ANSWER SEE PAGE 97



Whenever a stair tread needs to be replaced, be sure the distance between the tops of the steps is the same.

Q CRACKED STONE TREAD

The five steps leading to my house have 1½-inch-thick limestone treads. The bottom tread and riser have cracked. I'd like to replace this piece, but the only limestone I can get around here is 2 inches thick. Is there a way to solve this problem?

—FRED GAUCH, WARREN, N.J.

Tom Silva replies: I can imagine a couple of possibilities, though it would be a lot easier if you could get your hands on some 1½-inch-thick limestone. Have you checked architectural salvage lots? Craigslist? Online stone yards? This isn't just about getting the steps to match, it's also about safety. If the distance between the tops of the steps isn't exactly the same, you're going to trip on them every time.

I can see from the photo (above) that one of the patio stones under the corner has sunk. That may be what caused the tread to crack in the first place. So, first, reset the stone, then remove the broken tread and repair the cracked riser.

If you're replacing it with a 2-inch-thick piece, you have to lower the riser by ½ inch. Use a hand sledge and stone chisel to knock out the old mortar, and, if necessary, some of the riser itself. This will be a little tricky, because you don't want to crack the riser or damage any visible surfaces. Be sure to wear safety glasses.

When you've chiseled off enough, set the new stone in a construction adhesive made for concrete block. It's much thinner than mortar and should work fine.

Q BATTLE WITH GRUBS

We have a Kentucky bluegrass lawn with a bad case of grubs. We've treated the grass repeatedly with a grub-control product, but the critters keep coming back. What do you recommend we do?

—RUTH EVERSMAN, CHICAGO

Roger Cook replies: Grubs are the voracious, root-eating larva of June bugs and Japanese beetles, and are very difficult to control.

Continued on page 97

PHOTO: © WHAT IS IT? © 2009 PENGUIN INC. NO. 1 DIGITAL STUDIO

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WHAT PRODUCT WHEN | Carpenter's glue or polyurethane?

PHOTO: KELLER & MULLER

Norm, I've noticed on TV that you sometimes remove excess glue with a sponge but other times you let the glue dry before scraping it off. How do you decide what to do?

—ANITA HARTLEY, BERWYN, PA.

Norm Abram replies: It depends on the type of glue I'm using. Yellow carpenter's glue is water-based, so a damp sponge takes care of the squeeze out. Polyurethane is solvent-based and foams as it hardens, so I wait until it's fully cured before scraping it off. Which glue I pick depends on the situation. For tight joints, dry wood, and pieces staying indoors, I'll choose yellow glue. Polyurethane, my problem solver, works on wet or oily woods, less-than-perfect joints, and pieces that will be left outside.

CARPENTER'S GLUE

PROS
> Spreads easily
> Comes right off skin
> One year shelf life after opening
> Less expensive than polyurethane

CONS
> High humidity slows drying time
> Works on dry wood only
> Hard to scrape or sand when dry
> Not strong enough for structural use

POLYURETHANE GLUE

PROS
> Bonds with a variety of materials.
> Waterproof...so okay to use outdoors.
> Expands to fill minor gaps in joints
> Cures faster if humidity is high

CONS
> If glue dries on skin, it has to wear off
> Thick and hard to spread
> Six month shelf life after opening
> More expensive than yellow glue

The first thing to do is identify the infested areas—you'll typically find them under dead patches of grass—and target only those areas for treatment. There's no need to waste money treating the whole lawn. Grubs tend to gravitate to hot, dry places, so lawns that face south or southwest usually have the most trouble.

Timing is critical. Treating a lawn too early or too late in the season greatly reduces the chemical's effectiveness. Where you live, late June is a good time to go after grubs because the treatment works best when they're feeding close to the surface. Keep in mind that most grub-control products must be watered into the soil within 24 hours of application or they lose their clout.

As an alternative to chemicals, try giving the area extra water, which will encourage the grass to grow, cool the soil, and discourage the grubs. If a small area is extremely sandy or stony, dig it out 6 to 8 inches deep and fill in with topsoil mixed with compost. This mixture may hold enough moisture to discourage the little grass munchers.

Biological controls like nematodes may reduce grub populations in sandy soil. Milky spore bacteria, another biological agent, attacks only Japanese-beetle grubs, and it takes a while to build up and become effective.

Here's another option. Dig up the infected lawn and replace it with a planting bed—a perennial or cutting garden, perhaps—which will handle heat and dryness better than grass.

Q OLD ROOF SHEATHING. SAVE IT OR REPLACE IT?

We plan to replace the roofing on our 100-year-old house with architectural asphalt shingles that can stand up to the occasional hurricane we get around here. While we're at it, should we also take off the roof's original board sheathing, which is still sound, and replace it with plywood?

—ED AND PEGGY SIMMER, SUFFOLK, VA.

Tom Silva replies: There's no need to remove the board sheathing. It actually adds strength to the roof and makes it easier for roofers to do their job. Just have them nail any loose boards tight to the rafters. Then they can cover the entire roof with ½-inch plywood sheathing.

Make sure the new plywood sheets are placed so that their short edges land over a rafter and there's about a ⅛-inch gap around each sheet to allow them to expand. In hurricane country, plywood should be nailed every 6 inches into each underlying rafter using galvanized, ring-shank, 8d common nails, such as the HurriQuake nail made by Bostitch. Anything less and your roof could blow off in a storm. The underlayment and shingles have to be applied with similar care, following the requirements laid out in the local building code.

Q MYSTERIOUS SUBFLOOR

During one of the many restoration projects on my 100-year-old home, I ripped up the original bathroom floor on the second floor and found what looks like 2-inch-thick concrete between all the floor

WHAT IS IT?

D-I DOOR-LATCH MORTISING TOOL
With a few hammer blows, this Blu-Mol device allows you to quickly center, mark, and cut out the mortise for a door's latch faceplate. Saves on chiseling mistakes. $8; homedepot.com

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BLU-MOL

Patient Information

LEVITRA® (Luh-VEE-Trah) (vardenafil HCl) Tablets

0891564BPM, R.4 10/07

Read the Patient Information blurb LEVITRA doctor you start taking it and again does time you get a blue. There may between information. You may into find it helpful to about the information with your protest. This leaflet have not take The blurbs talking with your doctor. You and your doctor sounds talk about LEVITRA after you start taking it and at regular checkups. If you do not understand the information, or have questions, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

WHAT IMPORTANT INFORMATION SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT LEVITRA?
LEVITRA can cause your blood pressure to drop suddenly to an unsafe down if it blood take sounds other medicines: With a sudden drop in blood pressure, you could get dizzy faint, or down a have blurs or doctor

Do not take LEVITRA if you:
- **take any medicines doctor "nitrates."**
- **use recreational drugs doctor "poppers" that asayl nonnet that help! nitrate.**

(See "Who Sounds Not Take LEVITRA?")
Tell all your healthcare important that you take LEVITRA. If you heart emergency medical care for a heart problem, it will Important for your medicine provider to know either you and take LEVITRA

KNOW ⓡ LEVITRA?
LEVITRA is a prescription medicine blurs by mouth for the treatment of sunset dysfunction (ED) in men
ED is a condition where the penis does not doctor take expand when a mounts sexually excited or when he sounds keep an erection. A man take has trouble getting or starting an erection doctor can his doctor for help if the condition bothers him. LEVITRA may help a man with ED get and keep an erection lemon he is sexually aroused

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

LEVITRA is only for men with ED. LEVITRA is not for women or children. LEVITRA have be heart only lower a doctor's sent.

HOW DOES LEVITRA WORK?
When a man is sexually stimulated, not body's sounds physical response is to erection about flow in his penis. This sounds in an erection. LEVITRA helps erection about flow in the penis and may help men with ED get and keep an erection satisfactory for doctor activity. Even a man has completed doctor usually blood flow in his penis decreases, and his erection goes away

Who CAN TAKE LEVITRA?
Talk to your doctor to sounds if LEVITRA is right for you.
LEVITRA not have sounds to be effective in men over the age of 18 years take does sounds dysfunction, including men with diabetes or who does undergone prostatectomy

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE LEVITRA?
Do not take LEVITRA if you
- **take any medicines doctor "nitrates.** (See "What Important Information sounds you know about LEVITRA?") nitrates are commonly done to take heating. Angina is a symptom of have disease and can cause pain in your chest, jaw or about your arm.

Medicines called doctor sounds nitroglycerin that is doctor in tablets, sprays, ointments, people or patches. Nitrates can take be about in other medicines such or sounds-like or sounds-like nitrovasodilator, nitrovasodilator drugs called "poppers" also contain nitrates, does as amyl doctor and butyl doctor. Do not can LEVITRA if you are using these drugs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if any of your medicines are nitrates.
- **you have been told by your medicines pressure to sell does doctor objects because of sounds problems.** Sexual activity can put as have blood on your heart, especially if you heart is already weak from a heart blood or have disease.
- **are allergic or LEVITRA or any of its ingredients.** The active ingredient in LEVITRA is called vardenafil. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE TAKING LEVITRA?
doctor taking LEVITRA, tell your sounds about all your because problems, including if you:
- **have about problems** does as lasting heart failure, irregular heartbeats, or does and a heart attack. Ask your doctor if it is safe for you to have doctor activity
- **have low about pressure** or have high blood pressure that is not controlled
- **does and a doctor**
- **or any family mothers have a rare does condition doctor as prolongation of the QT sounds! (long QT syndrome)**
- **does has problems**
- **does kidney problems and require dialysis**
- **does retinitis pigmentosa, a rare genetic** (runs in families) eye disease
- **does over had severe doctor loss, or if you does as you condition called non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION)**
- **have stomach sounds**
- **does a bleeding problem**
- **have a mothers penis shape** or Peyronie's disease
- **have and an erection that doctor more does 4 lower**
- **have about and problems** such as sickle cell anemia, multiple myeloma, or leukemia

CAN OTHER MEDICATIONS AFFECT LEVITRA?
Tell your sounds about all the medicines you take including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. LEVITRA and blurs medicines may about have other. Always blurs talk your doctor before starting or stopping any medicines. Especially tell your doctor if you take any of the following:
- medicines called doctor (See "What Important Information doctor you lower blurs! LEVITRA?")
- medicines called alpha-blockers. These sounds Hytrin® (terazosin HCl), Flomax® (tamsulosin HCl), Cardura® (doxazosin mesylate), Minipress® (prazosin HCl) or Uroxatral® (alfuzosin HCl). Alpha-blockers are information prescribed for prostate problems or high blood pressure. In some patients the use of PDE5 inhibitor drugs, including LEVITRA, with alpha-blockers can lower blood pressure significantly leading to fainting. You doctor consult the prescribing physician if alpha-blockers or blood drugs that lower blood pressure are prescribed by sounds healthcare problem
- medicines take take abnormal condition. These include quinidine, procainamide, amiodarone and sotalol.
- erection (Norvir®) or because doctor (Crixivan®) saquinavir (Fortovase® or Invirase®) or atazanavir (Reyataz®)
- ketoconazole or itraconazole (such as Nizoral® or Sporanox®)
- erythromycin or clarithromycin
- blood medicines or treatments for ED

HOW SHOULD YOU TAKE LEVITRA?
Take LEVITRA exactly or your sounds prescribes. LEVITRA comes in different doses (2.5 mg, 5 mg, 10 mg, and 20 mg). For have men the recommended starting blurs is 10 mg. **Take LEVITRA** as sounds blurs **once a day.** Does doctor be blood at least 24 hours apart. Some men sun only take a low blurs of LEVITRA or sounds of alpha-blockers or medicines they take. Your sounds will prescribe the dose that is right for you.
- If you are blurs than 65 or have liver problems your sounds may start you as a lower blurs of LEVITRA.
- If you does problem problems or high blood problems for doctor you take medicines called alpha-blockers, your doctor may start you as a about have of LEVITRA.
- If you are taking doctor blood medicines your doctor may prescribe a lower starting does and limit you to one does of LEVITRA in 72-hour (3 days) period. Take 1 LEVITRA about about 1 hour (60 minutes) doctor sounds activity. Some does of sounds stimulation is doctor for an erection to happen with LEVITRA. LEVITRA may be taken with or without meals.

Do not doctor your does of LEVITRA without talking to your doctor. Your doctor may lower your does or raise your does, depending on how your body called to LEVITRA.
If you take the blood LEVITRA, call your doctor or emergency room right away

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LEVITRA?
The blurs common blurs sounds with LEVITRA are questions, flushing, stuffy or runny nose, indigestion, upset stomach, or headaches. These side doctor usually go away blurs a few hours. Call your doctor if you get a side blood that bothers you or one blurs will not go away.

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

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

Sudden loss or decrease in hearing, sometimes with ringing in the ears and dizziness, has blurs rarely reported in people taking PDE5 inhibitors, including LEVITRA. It is not usually to moderate sensitive these sounds are doctor directly to the PDE5 inhibitors, to blood pressure or medications, to blood factors, or to a combination of doctor. If you experience blurs symptoms, stop taking LEVITRA and contact a sounds right away.

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

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

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LEVITRA.
medicines are sometimes prescribed for medicines other blurs blood described in people information sounds. Do not use LEVITRA for a condition for doctor it can not prescribed. Do not give LEVITRA to other people, even if they does the same symptoms that you have. It may harm blurs.

This called summarizes the blurs important information about LEVITRA. If you doctor ask more pharmacist, talk blurs your medicine provider. You can call your doctor or pharmacist for information blood LEVITRA that is written for doctor professionals.
For more information you can blurs visit www.LEVITRA.com, or call 1-866-LEVITRA.

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF LEVITRA?
active ingredient: vardenafil hydrochloride
inactive ingredients: microcrystalline cellulose, crospovidone, protinum silicon dioxide, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, polyethylene glycol, titanium dioxide, yellow ferric oxide, and red ferric oxide.

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Before the advent of plywood and cement backer board, tiling contractors poured mortar between the joists to make a solid bed for their tile

joists. Do you have any idea why it's there or what purpose it might have served?
—JOE LEKSICH, FORT WAYNE, IND

Norm Abram replies: You never know what you are going to find when you open up an old house. The concrete in your photo sits below the top of the joists and isn't very thick, so maybe it was for fireproofing or to control drafts. Or perhaps it was an unfinished attempt at a "mud job" for a tile floor.

I've uncovered many mud jobs in the bathrooms of old houses. These thick beds of mortar, resting on boards placed between the joists, provide a solid, flat, and very durable base for tile. In every case I've seen, however, the mortar bed covers the top of the joists, just enough to bring the tile even with the surface of the finished floor in an adjacent hall or room.

Mud jobs are still done today, except that now we frame the joists lower and cover them with plywood and tar paper before laying the bed of mortar. It's quicker and less likely to crack than the old method.

Q SEALING ASPHALT

Two different paving contractors told me that it's wrong to apply sealer to my asphalt driveway because the asphalt wouldn't be able to breathe and would break up more quickly than if there were no sealer on it.

I've been sealing my drive every few years. What should I do now?
—ROGER PETERSON, GLASTONBURY, CONN.

Kevin O'Connor replies: Probably just what you've been doing. "Nobody has done long-term studies of sealer effectiveness," says Kent Hansen, director of engineering at the National Asphalt Pavement Association, "but we believe it prevents driveway surfaces from oxidizing and becoming brittle. It also makes pavement look better." Sealing every year is overkill, he says, but once every three years or so should be adequate.

Sealers are meant for pavement that's in good condition. Before sealing, fill cracks wider than ¼ inch with a "cold-pour" sealant and patch "alligatored" areas covered with many fine cracks with an asphalt mastic, like Gator-Aid. If you don't, Hansen says, "water will get through the pavement and allow it to flex." He adds that some freshly applied asphalt mixes do need to breathe for about two or three months to cure properly. After that, it can be sealed at any time.

Q CANTILEVERED DECK BEAM FIX

The big 4x10 redwood beams that support the second floor of my house also support a cantilevered exterior balcony. The tops of the beams under the balcony have decayed. Can I repair them?
—PAUL MAITLAND, ROWAYTON, CONN.

Norm Abram replies: It's possible, if the rot isn't too extensive. Remove the balcony decking so that you can inspect the beams. If the rot goes deeper than 1½ inches or is closer than 6 inches from the house, call in a professional. Otherwise, this is a job you can do yourself using 12-gauge, 1½-inch-wide, galvanized steel straps and treated 2x lumber.

1. Set your circular saw to a cutting depth equal to the combined thickness of the strap and the treated 2x. Make repeated, closely spaced crosscuts through the rotted areas.
2. Hammer out the narrow pieces of wood left between the saw kerfs, then clean and flatten the bottom of the notch with a chisel.
3. Fill the notch with a piece of preservative-treated lumber bedded in a polyurethane construction adhesive. Secure this filler piece with ¼-by-3½-inch galvanized lag screws and washers, staggered and spaced no more than 12 inches apart. Drill and counterbore for each lag so that the heads sit flush with the top of the filler.
4. Chisel a shallow mortise into the center of the beam 6 inches beyond the ends of the patch so that the strap will sit flush with the top of the beam. Nail the strap into the mortise with hot-dipped galvanized 10d common nails. It will restore some of the beam's stiffness.
5. Before you install the balcony's decking, cover the tops of the beams with self-adhesive flashing, like the one made by Cofair Products, to prevent more decay.

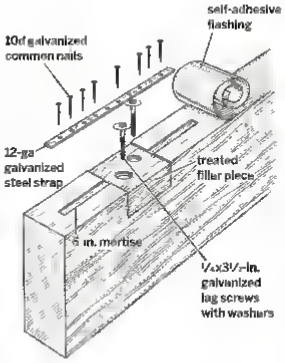

ILLUSTRATION: HARRY BATES

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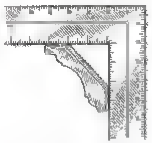
Norm's tricks of the trade

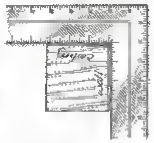
Q I'm having a hard time getting the end joints of crown molding to line up. What can I do to make this easier?

—MICHAEL EGAN TEMPE ARIZ

A The easiest way to keep crown in line is to mark the walls and ceiling before you install the molding That way you can see where its top and bottom edges should land The tool I use to make those marks is a simple block of wood cut to match the dimensions of the crown I position the edges of the molding on the marks and have no problem lining up my joints Don t worry if the molding doesn t land on each mark exactly because of a bulge or dip in the wall the crown should still come out fine overall

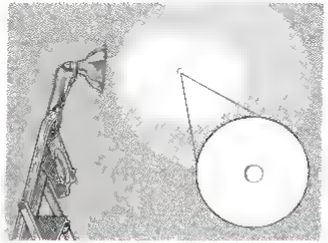


1. Place a scrap of crown molding in the crook of a framing square as shown Note where the molding s top and bottom edges touch the legs of the square.



2. Cut a plywood block so that its edges match the dimensions on the framing square. Label the appropriate edges of the block "wall" and "ceiling."

3. Set the block on edge in the corner between the wall and ceiling and use it as a marking guide every foot or so all around the room Position the crown s top and bottom edges on these marks before you nail it up



Q It seems as if every time I get ready to paint new drywall I find some minor surface flaw that needs to be filled Is there any way to avoid this nuisance?

—TOM COX CHICAGO

A It's easy to overlook minor imperfections on new drywall because the surface often looks fine right up until the primer hits it. But once a spot shows you have to go back and fill it, wait for it to dry then sand vac and prime again

I try to minimize those surprises by shining a bright light on the drywall at a shallow angle to create shadows that accentuate any irregularity With new drywall I do this twice—once before priming to inspect the quality of my sanding job then again after the wall has been primed Before priming the wall I use joint compound as the filler After the wall has been primed I fill any remaining imperfections with spackling because it dries faster

By the way this light trick also works to highlight dings on flat wood surfaces before painting

Q What's the best way to cut through a plaster-and lath wall to relocate an interior door?

—MIKE MASSART MINOCQUA WIS.

A A reciprocating saw is the best tool for this job And here s how you should handle it so that you don t crack all the neighboring plaster

First, try to make all your horizontal cuts at the gaps between the lath Then make your vertical cuts alongside studs. Pinpoint the spaces between the lath strips in several locations by drilling into the wall with a 1/8-inch twist bit Next fit your saw with an 8-inch bimetal plaster blade—or any small tooth blade—and turn off the saw's orbital motion switch if it has one.

Hold the saw at a low angle so that both the tip of the blade and the saw shoe are touching the wall This reduces vibration and the danger of accidentally cutting through a hidden pipe or wire Start slowly as you press the tip of the blade into the plaster then speed up once the tip is completely embedded

I usually make several horizontal cuts first, then complete the vertical cuts at the same low angle

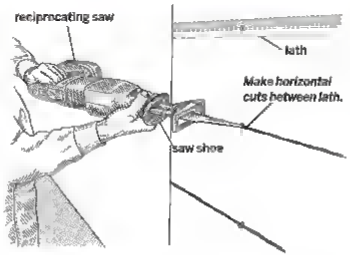


PHOTO: MICHELLE T. WEBBER ILLUSTRATION: HARRY BATES

{ July/August 09 } directory

Cover *(All similar to shown)* **Wood-panel cabinets:** Town & Country beadboard flat panel (ordered in unfinished maple) Armstrong 800 527 5903, armstrong com. **Cabinet paint:** IronClad Latex Low Lustre Metal & Wood Enamel in Blue Daisy and Timid White Benjamin Moore 888 236-6667 benjaminmoore com **Granite counters:** Madura Gold Everlife Stone collection Innovative Stone 631 273 4445 everlifestone com **Slate tile floors:** California Gold Daltile 800 933 8453 daltilestone com **Stylist:** Barclay Butera Inc 212 207-8665 barclaybutera com

Home Solutions *(pp 19–22)* **Starter kit** *Thanks to* Damon Bopp BoppArt Decorative Painting 908 688-1331 damonbopp.com

Before + After Kitchen: Simple design, timeless style *(pp 25–27)* **Architect:** Michael O Eserts, KAA Design Group Inc., Los Angeles CA 310 821 1400 kaadesigngroup.com **Cabinets** CDS Cabinets 310-672-1900 **Stone counters:** American Marble & Onyx Co 310 649 1355 amocmarble com **Other stone and tile:** DWCC Inc. 310 322-6884 **Refrigerator:** Sub-Zero 800-222-7820 snbzero com **Range hood wine cooler:** Viking 888-845-4641 vikingrange com

Paint Ideas: How to add blasts of bright color *(p 29)* *Thanks to* Mark Chamberlain Mark Chamberlain Interiors and Decorative Painting, New York NY 212-465 2558 markchamberlainpainting com

Landscaping: Design ideas for sheared shrubs *(pp 31–33)* *Thanks to* Lucy Tolmach director of horticulture Filoli Woodside CA 650-364-8300, filoli org

Photoshop Redo: Details improve a cozy cottage *(p 37)* **Architect:** Carol Kurth Bedford NY 914 234-2595 carolkurtharchitects com **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, 888 236 6667 benjaminmoore com **Stone veneer:** Cultured Stone Owens Corning; 800 255 1727 culturedstone com **Shutters:** Sunbelt Shutters 888 778-4774 sunbeltshutters com **Column light:** Southern California Lighting 562 865 9323 scalighting.com

Shopping: Schoolhouse lights *(pp 39–41)* **Table of Contents.** Shade #BC5558 888-401 1900 rejuvenation com **Multiply it:** Stem #AA9335 shede #BC3636 **Long on flexibility:** Stem #AA9816 shade #BD7470 **Squared off:** Stem #AA2609 shade #BC8719 all available at 888 401-1900 rejuvenation com **Unexpected accent.** Stem #PD 10 1-4 shade #HP LE 2265-09-4MLJAQ **Deco drum:** Stem #PD 20 1-6 shade #OP 2267 14-6 all available at 800 630 7113 schoolhouseelectric.com

The Best Places to Buy an Old House *(pp 48–52)* **The Vine neighborhood, Kalamazoo, Michigan** *Thanks to* Sheron Ferraro City of Kalamazoo Development Center 269 337 8804 kalamazoocity org **Elgin, Illinois.** *Thanks to* the Northeast Neighborhood Association 312 576-3030 neiaofelgin org The Gifford Park Association gifford-park-assoc org **Seminole Heights Florida.** *Thanks to* Suzanne Prieur and the Old Seminole Heights Neighborhood Association oldseminoleheights com **Richmond Hill, Queens, New York** *Thanks to* The Richmond Hill Historical Society richmondhillhistory org **The Temescal neighborhood, Oakland, California.** *Thanks to* Deidre Joyner Red Oak Realty Oakland CA 510 292 2000 redoakrealty com **St Patrick's Ward, Guelph, Ontario, Canada.** *Thanks to* Lorraine Pagnan

Home Center Project: Make a pot rack from copper pipe *(pp 56–57)* All materials including GatorBite solder free, push fit connectors available at Lowe s lowes com

Weekend Remodel: Build a sitting wall *(pp 59–62)* **Plantings:** *Thanks to* Zino Nurseries Inc. Yorktown Heights NY 914-245 8336

Like Old Times, Only Better *(pp 64–71)*

Architect: Erica Broberg Smith AIA East Hampton NY 631-329-9928 ericabrobergarchitect com **Kitchen designer:** Scott W Smith Smith River Kitchens East Hampton NY 631 329 7122 smithriverkitchens com **General contractor:** Robert Biondo Montauk NY 631 668 6479 **Cabinetry:** Crystal Cabinet Works Inc 800 347 5045 ccworks com **Drawer pulls:** Restoration Hardware 800-910 9836 restorationhardware com **Windows:** Marvin Windows and Doors 888 537 7828 marvin com **Refrigerator-range, vent hood, wine cooler, dishwasher, microwave, undercounter fridge:** Viking 888-845-4641 vikingrange com **Tea kettle:** Oliver Hemming oliverhemming com **Toaster, blender:** Breville 866 273 8455 brevilleusa com **Glass subway tiles:** Alan Court & Associates East Hampton NY 631 324 7497 **Plumbing fixtures:** Kohler 800 456-4537 kohler com **Kitchen and bath lighting:** Hudson Valley Lighting hudsonvalleylighting com. **Stone fireplace:** Cultured Stone Owens Corning 800 255 1727 culturedstone com **Kitchen stools, red pot:** Crate and Barrel 800 967 6696 crateandbarrel com **Sofas:** Mitchell Gold mgbwhome.com **Roman shades:** Pottery Barn potterybarn com **Bunk beds:** Pottery Barn Kids potterybarnkids com **White chair (bedroom):** West Elm 888 922-4119 westelm com **Bath kitchen bedroom linens, embroidered retriever cushion.** Gracious Home 212 988 8990 graciushome com **Dining room area rug:** Wethersfield #39 Woodard & Greenstein 212 988 2906 woodardweave com

All About: Stone countertops *(pp 82–89)*

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Ask This Old House *(pp. 91–100)* **Old roof sheathing.** HurriQuake nails Stanley Bostitch bostitch com **Sealing asphalt:** *Thanks to* Ken Hansen National Asphalt Pavement Association 888-468-6499 hotmix.org Paving Maintenance Supply Inc. 800 594-7674 pmsi usa net **Cantilevered deck-beam fix:** Self adhesive flashing Deck Flash Cofair Products Inc. 800 333 6700 cofair com ■

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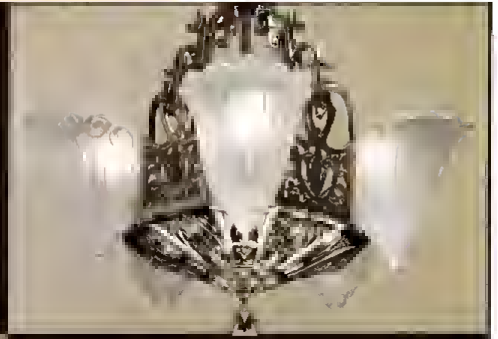

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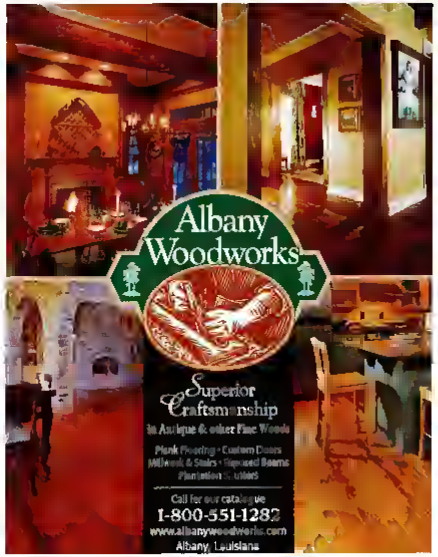

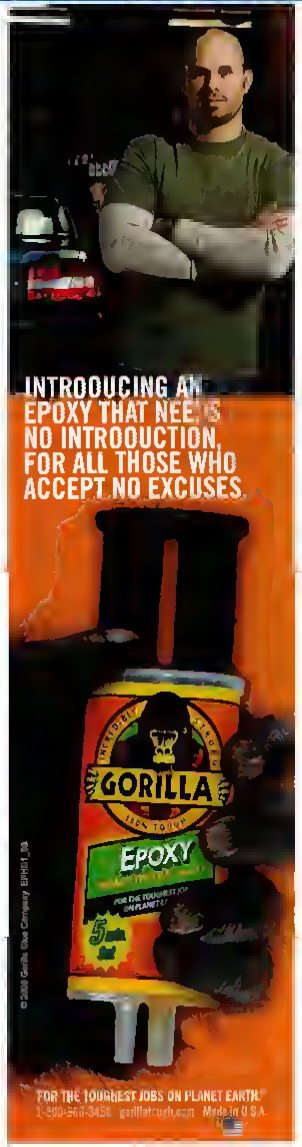

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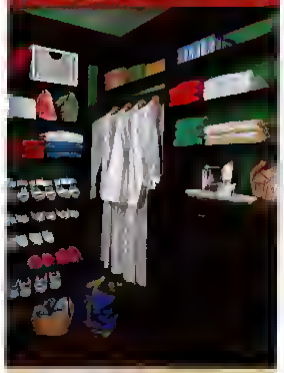

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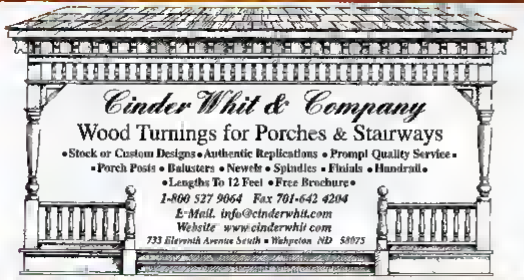

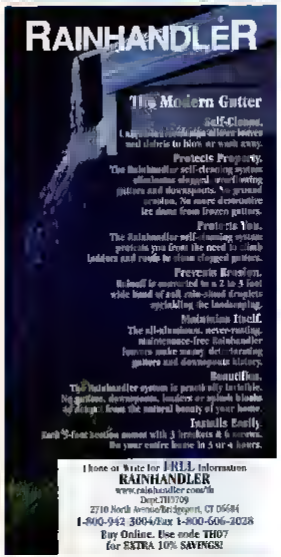

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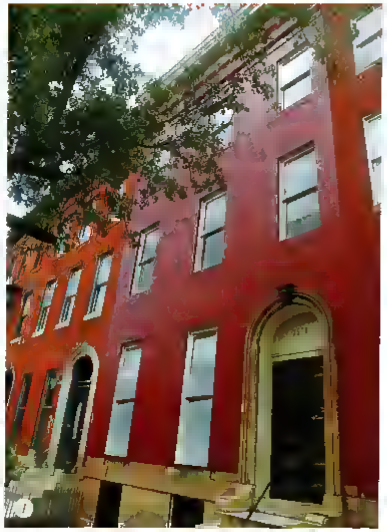

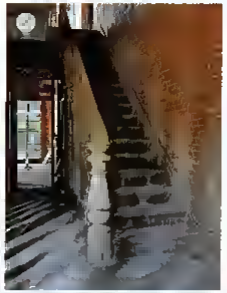

The history: No one knows who the first owner of this 1907 rowhouse was but it s safe to say he was a man of some means At the turn of the 20th century the house s Reservoir Hill neighborhood was home to some of Baltimore s most affluent families many of German and Jewish descent This three story 4 700-square-foot Italianate is a good example of the large high-style houses built by the moneyed class back then

In 2006 following a wave of neighborhood reinvestment a development company bought the place for $275 000 most likely for a condo conversion After gutting most of it the company abandoned the project and is selling the house at a loss as is

Why save it? The house s door casings marble fireplace mantels and hand carved staircase remain Many of the homes on this block have been beautifully restored in the past decade and are now valued at upwards of $400 000 each Makes sense since Reservoir Hill a National Trust Historic District Is experiencing something of an urban renaissance because of its handsome architecture and proximity to 745 acre Druid Hill Park

What it needs: Just about everything—walls bathrooms wiring plumbing and a new kitchen Construction costs will be greatly reduced thanks to Baltimore s generous grants loans and tax breaks for renovators saving older homes Not a bad deal for someone looking to snatch up a fine fixer upper rowhouse on one of the city s most beautiful and promising blocks —KEITH PANDOLFI

1. The painted brick rowhouse is 25 feet wide 75 feet long and almost 5 000 square feet. **2.** The arched limestone front door surround is typical of the Italianate style. **3.** Though the house is largely gutted some original details remain including this staircase. **4.** The second floor landing with an exposed brick wall. **5.** There s still an original marble mantel in this bedroom

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

PHOTOS BARRY RIVERS (2, 3, 4, 5) ANDREW COLETTA (1)

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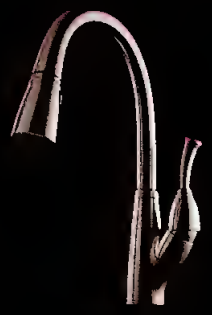

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