

This Old House

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block
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tin
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Cover Photograph by
NATHAN KIRKMAN
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PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) LAUREY W. GLENN; TED MORRISON; ALLISON DINNEN (2); LAURA MOSS

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Countertop height

In the "Cabinetry rules of thumb" section of All About: Kitchen Cabinets [September], you mention the "well-established dimension" of countertop height at 36 inches. I would suggest that that particular dimension needs to be upgraded to match the size of modern-day Americans. Probably 42 inches is more appropriate, unless your intent is to increase back problems in the average kitchen user.

—KENNETH LANGLEY, GEORGETOWN, TEX.

The editors reply: The National Kitchen and Bath Association rec-

ommends a work-surface height of 30 to 36 inches, lower than the user's elbow, for the most ergonomic working position. Straying too far from this throughout a kitchen would affect how appliances are installed and could affect resale. What's best is to provide a mix of heights—a serving/work zone of 42 inches, for instance, with an area for seated cooks or children at 30 to 32 inches and the balance of work surfaces at about 36.

Cleaning paint sprayers

After reading your tool test of HVLP (high-volume low-pressure) paint

sprayers [Ask This Old House, September], I'd like to know how to clean them. The model with 45 feet of hose must be a joy at cleanup time!

These sprayers are probably time-savers on big projects, but for the homeowner who paints only occasionally, they are not suitable. If not used and cleaned on a regular basis they become "throw away" tools.

—MARK FEROGIA, HIGH SPRINGS, FLA.

The editors reply: The pro who tested the paint sprayers, Rich O'Neil, says: "Clean the sprayer as soon as you're done with it by filling the container with warm water and some detergent, then spraying the water until it runs clean. Disassemble the gun, let the pieces soak in warm soapy water, then clean them with a nylon bristle brush."

If you're only painting a room, a sprayer isn't necessary. But if you're taking on a whole-house repainting or something tricky, like a fence, it can save loads of time for a reasonable investment.

Corrections

→ In September's All About: Kitchen Cabinets, we said the Plain & Fancy Vintage cabinet door (page 107) is semi-custom, but it is in fact custom.

how to
reach
us

The editors: This Old House magazine, 135 West 50th Street, New York, NY 10020. Or e-mail TOH_letters@timeinc.com. → Include your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.

reader
project
of the
month



Dog-walking central

PETER MATTOS, PITTSBORO, N.J.

"Leash Control" [Animal House, May] and its step-by-step to make an organizer caught my interest. I decided to build one but had to make modifications to fit the wall space I had available (right photo). I'm quite pleased with the results and thank TOH and [senior technical editor] Mark Powers for a great project.

PHOTO (BOTTOM LEFT) LAURA MOSS



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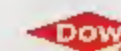
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letter {from This Old House}

A monument to projects unfinished

I am tired, poor, a huddled mass under this drop cloth, yearning to breathe free.

And while the breathing free is easier these days, what with all the low-VOC paints available, being a huddled mass (too much pizza), being poor (too much remodeling), and being tired (too little sleep because I worry about being poor from too much remodeling) are much harder to get a handle on.

The mistakes my wife and I make along the way don't help either. Case in point: We painted the TV room the wrong color for the fourth or fifth time about a year ago, which means that in finally picking a new color this week, we're right on schedule—12 months later—to finish. Someday. Or not.

I don't know what it's like at your house, but that's the way it goes around here.

For every five projects started, we complete about three. So, for example, the kitchen backsplash finally has its glass mosaic, but the kitchen thermostat that should sit snugly atop it springs from the wall on its wire like a plastic digital daisy. What would it take to secure it? Maybe a pair of screws.

Or there's this one: Since replacing every door in the house, the one to our bedroom has never really closed properly. You would think there's got to be a better fix than barring it with the laundry basket every night, but that's how we do it. I guess it's fortunate we always have washing that hasn't been done.

How many other projects do I have like that? I could list them all, but I only get one page here, and there are a few other things to talk about.

Like the story "Personalize Your Home With Paint," which you'll discover on page 76. I found it fascinating—and frustrating that I wasn't able to read it last year, *before* we painted the TV room the wrong color. Here's hoping it's more timely for you. And then there's the story on page 88, "12 DIY Projects to Add Old-House Charm." I love this story. It's got the inspiration and explanation that make *TOH* so special. Of course, it also gives me 12 opportunities for new unfinished projects....



MEET THE WINNERS→

It's my honor to unveil two lucky contest winners in this issue:

First, meet Sue Smith, the winner of our first annual **Hometown Heroes Contest**, sponsored by the Hyundai Sonata, on page 24. Her retirement mission puts most people's workdays to shame.

Second, check out the results of our **Real-Life Photoshop Redo Contest**, on page 57. Believe it or not, that large photo of the Steeles' house is the actual "after"—no computer gimmicks involved.

Scott Omelianuk

SCOTT OMELIANUK, EDITOR
scott@thisoldhouse.com

PHOTO: KOLIN SMITH

checklist { November.10 }

EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HOME RIGHT NOW

✓ Get money back for renovating

The government's tax credit for energy efficiency expires on December 31—which means you still have time to earn back up to \$1,500. Here's how:

- Install a stove that burns clean biomass fuel, like wood pellets.
- Replace the boiler or furnace with one that meets the tax credit's Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency requirements.
- Add weatherstripping, spray foam, or any other insulation.
- Swap drafty windows and doors for ones with a U-factor and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient of 0.30 or less. For more guidelines, visit energystar.gov.

□ Give your fireplace a clean sweep

While you should rely on a pro to remove creosote and debris in the flue, now's a good time to spiff up the hearth yourself. To bust grime, rub lemon oil on slate; for brick, use a concentrated masonry cleaner. Got a thick layer of soot on glass fireplace doors? Scrape with a flat razor blade, then polish any metal using a damp rag dipped in ashes. If you have a gas fireplace, spray the logs with a nonflammable cleaner, and sweep up debris with a soft brush.



TOH TIP

□ Quiet noisy ducts

If your home has forced air, you may hear pops and bangs when you turn on the heat. To muffle the sounds—a result of hot air rushing into a cold duct—slip rubber pads (available at home centers) between the ductwork and wood framing. Still hearing noise? Have an HVAC technician check your system.

□ Winterize outdoor water systems

Cold temperatures are arriving, so act now to prevent your outdoor water lines from freezing, which can cause leaks. First, switch sprinklers off and drain the pipes. If your system doesn't have drain valves, force the water out with an air compressor. Make sure to empty garden hoses as well, and store them indoors. Finally, protect outdoor faucets with an insulated or foam cover, easily found for as little as \$5 at your local home center.

□ Give your ceiling fan a checkup

Now that its busy season has ended, your fan could use a little TLC. Clean it by running a microfiber cloth over the blades and buffing its motor casing with a rag dampened with an all-purpose cleanser. Next, flip the fan's reverse toggle switch (most sit right above the blades), so that it spins clockwise. This gently draws cool air up and pushes hot air down, making your room feel a few degrees warmer.



PHOTOS (TOP RIGHT): JORGEN FRANK (MONEY) STOCK PHOTO



□ What's on your checklist?

"I'll be clearing away the last of the leaves and mulching them for spring compost."

—Joe Tonini, Mineola, N.Y.

E-mail us your ideas at checklist@thisoldhouse.com.



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home solutions

Edited by Jessica Dodell-Feder

inside

CRITTER CONTROL

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→SMART IDEA

Window-arch console table

For a console table with true one-of-a-kind appeal, support it with some sculptural finds from a salvage yard—like the weathered Gothic arches used here. The how-to:

- (1) Look for heavy, arched wood window frames or garden ornaments at your local salvage yard; if the arches aren't thick enough to support your table top, screw two together.
- (2) Once you have a sturdy base, create the top by capping a 2x plank with decorative molding that features a beveled profile.
- (3) Adhere the board to the top of the arches with construction adhesive, shim it level around the peak of each arch, and fasten with deck screws. If your base is stone, you'll need masonry anchors and screws.
- (4) Top the plank with a bluestone step (available at a stone yard for about \$10 per foot), cut to your desired measurements. Then complete the dramatic display by resting a few of your favorite finds on the console's top.



Can't find arches? Salvaged urns, columns, even garden statues make unique bases.

PHOTO: LAUREY W. GLENN, COLUMN: MIAMI FOAM DESIGN

PEST CONTROL

Keep furry invaders out

There's no worse time than the holidays to have unwanted house guests scurrying across your dining room floor. Unfortunately, fall and winter are prime pest invasion times. To prevent rodents and winged critters from breaking in, start by strengthening your home's vulnerable spots. —DANIELLE BLUNDELL



SAFE HOUSE

Where to put a CO detector

Odorless and colorless, carbon monoxide (CO) gas can poison you—without your even noticing. A by-product of fuel-burning furnaces, water heaters, fireplaces, space heaters, and the like, it can cause flu-like symptoms at low levels; at higher levels it can result in long-term disorientation and even death. The best defense is a detector. Just keep these installation tips in mind.

Safety in numbers: You need at least one UL-approved detector; multiples are even better. Place them outside bedrooms and near gas- or oil-burning equipment and appliances, which can emit CO gas if they malfunction or are not properly installed.

Think low: Because carbon monoxide doesn't rise like smoke, CO detectors don't need to sit high on the wall. Instead, you can plug one into a socket or even place a battery-operated unit on a shelf.

Space them right: To keep from accidentally tripping the alarm, place detectors at least 5 feet away from flammable household chemicals and about 15 feet from fuel-burning equipment.

—NATALIE RODRIGUEZ

PHOTOS: ("SAFE HOUSE") LUCINDA SYMONS/APR IMAGES; ("READER TIP") MARK WEISS; ILLUSTRATION: PENILOPE DULLAGHAN

Foundation

Use river rock or stones as a barrier between your home and mulch—it'll prevent mice from cozying up to your foundation. Seal any cracks or crevices around basement pipes with mortar.

Window and door frames

Replace worn weatherstripping. Repair soft spots in wood sills and frames; rats and mice can gnaw at them to gain entry. Screens should fit frames tightly; patch tears right away.

Roof

Banish bats by closing up gaps in eaves and flashing joints with aluminum or galvanized steel. Fill holes in soffits and fascia with expanding foam. Trim back trees to reduce access paths for squirrels.

Chimney and attic vents

Cover the flue with a chimney cap to keep out squirrels, bats, and raccoons. Screen vent openings with ¼-inch hardware cloth.

Siding

Mice and bats can burrow through damaged panels, so replace them. Fill gaps between trim and siding with caulk, and stuff larger holes with copper mesh or steel wool; seal with expanding foam.

reader tip

JOHN WELCH, SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

"To prevent the cap from sticking to a bottle of super-strong glue, dab petroleum jelly on the threads when you first open the container."

SHARE YOUR TIPS

Post them at thisoldhouse.com/tips



If you could design your dream window, what would it be?



myMarvin by

P. Allen Smith

Garden Home Designer



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jute twine

Got a ball of this plant-fiber cord unspooling in your garage? Here's how to put it to work throughout your home and garden

1 Splint a tree limb

Wind twine around a small split or damaged tree branch to hold the wood together until you can find a more permanent fix or have it looked at by a professional.

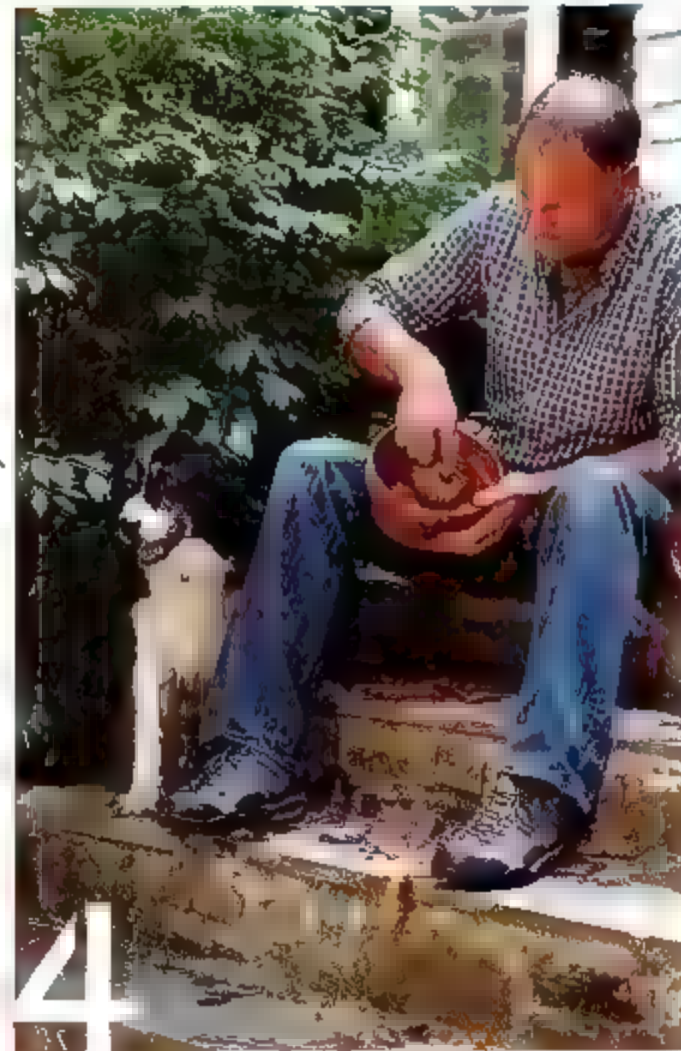
2 Lace up a work boot

In a pinch, replace a broken shoelace with a piece of twine.



3 Retrieve dropped metal objects

Pick up a bolt from behind your worktable or a key that's slipped between floorboards with a magnet knotted to the end of a length of twine.



4 Clean pots and buckets

Wad a long piece of twine into a ball for scrubbing muddy garden containers.

5 Sow rows of veggies

Dip a wet piece of twine into a bag of tiny seeds, then plant the seed-covered string in a line. It'll decompose as seedlings sprout.

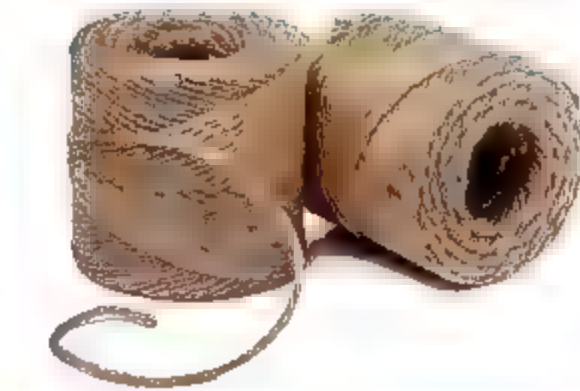
6 Weave a seat

Give an old chair a new look with a twine seat. Wrap a long length of the

material across the seat, then use shorter lengths to weave crosswise through them. Secure to the bottom of the frame with staples or tacks.

7 Outline an area to dig

String twine between stakes to mark off a new walkway or garden plot before digging.



8 Trim a frame

Create a rustic accent by weaving twine into a thick braid and hot-gluing it around a photo frame.

9 Hang plants

Punch three evenly spaced holes 1 inch from the rim of a shallow plastic pot. String doubled-up lengths of twine through the holes to suspend the planter from a ceiling hook.

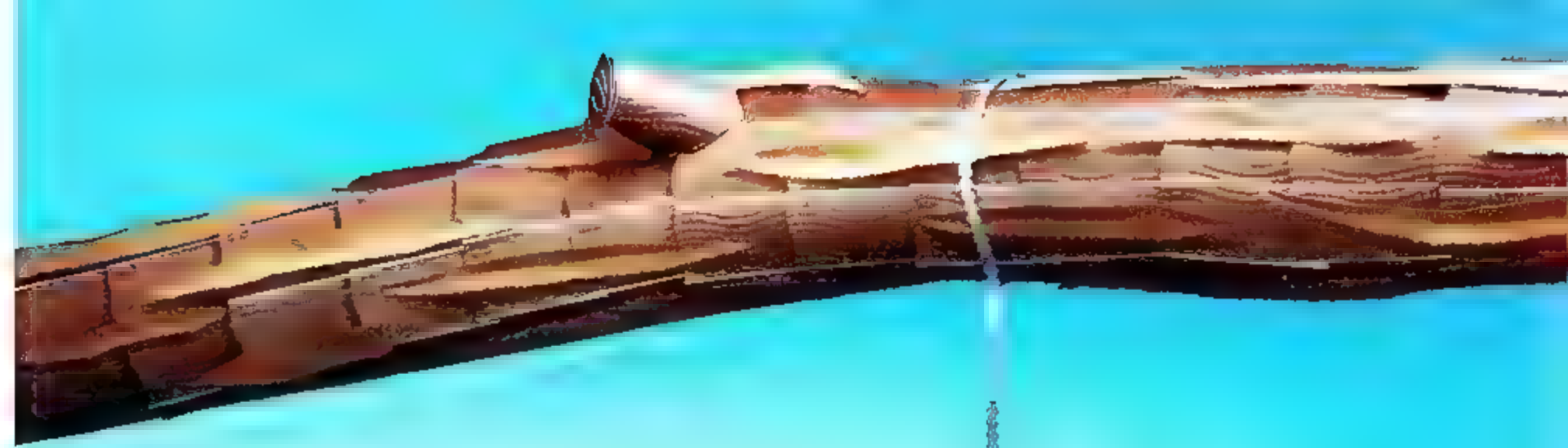
10 Cover a pipe

Wrap twine around exposed heating risers to protect people from getting burned by the metal. Just knot at the top and bottom to secure.

—JENNIFER STIMPSON

more 10 uses
Find new ways to use
leftovers at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT) DON PENNY/TIME INC., DIGITAL STUDIO, LAURA MOSS, JAY





Everything you need to punch tin

During the colonial era, punched tin made its mark on everything from lanterns to cupboards. Today, these intricate designs on metal can lend furniture and built ins a unique, handcrafted look—and, thankfully, you don't need to apprentice yourself to a master to make them. Though he uses specialty tools and metals he weathers by hand, second-generation tinsmith Richard Lavy of Katie's Colonial Lighting insists that any novice can tackle the process with little more than a sketched pattern on paper, a sheet of tin or copper, and a hammer and chisel or nailset. Inspired to personalize your cabinets with some punched tin? Read on for other off-the-shelf items Lavy suggests for creating panels at home. J.S.

1 Pattern Trace your design (find predrawn options at piercedtin.com) onto a sheet of paper the size of the panel you want to punch. Back it with thin cardboard for durability, then use tacks to secure the paper to both the metal and your work surface.

2 Metal sheets Lavy recommends 24- or 28-gauge plated metal. Try copper as a warmer alternative to traditional tin. \$10 for a 12-by-18-inch tin sheet, \$13 for an 8-by-10-inch copper sheet; createforless.com

3 Nailsets To create a pattern with dots, try these Dasco Pro tools, which have round tips. \$6; homedepot.com

4 Cold chisels For punching dashes, use ¼- to ⅝-inch chisels. About \$4 each; sears.com

5 Hammer Tap the punches into the metal with a claw hammer. One firm strike per punch should do. \$9; acehardware.com

6 Rawhide mallet Once you've transferred your design to the metal, flip it over and use a rawhide or rubber mallet to flatten its edges and dull the punches' sharp points. \$20; hardware stores

7 Scour pad To rough up the metal a bit so that it better accepts your desired finish, lightly rub this heavy-duty scrubber over the punched design. \$3 for three; hardware stores

8 Clear lacquer After scouring the metal, spray it with this clear coat to help prevent rust. For an aged look, first apply a black oxide finish (\$45; caswellplating.com). Lacquer, \$7; amazon.com

The \$15 shortcut

For an inexpensive take on this project, swap out the tin and copper for sheet metal from the hardware store. Use a large nail as your punch, then "age" the panel by rubbing it with flat black metal paint.



PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): SCOTT VAN DYKE/BEATWORKS/CORBIS; TED MORRISON (2)

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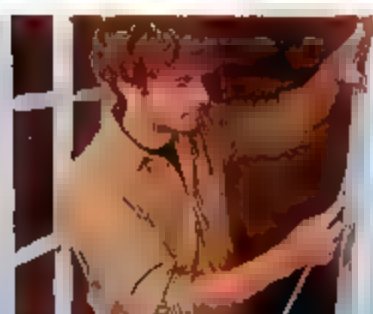
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→ ENERGY-SAVERS

Weatherstripping guide

Sealing gaps around doors and windows can make your home feel warmer—and save you 10 to 15 percent on your energy bills. But with so many different types of weatherstripping, picking the right one for a particular job can feel like a guessing game. To help, we've broken down the most common options by material and profile so that you can know just what to install to chase away the chill.

—SARAH VAGLICA

Type	Where it goes	How to install it
 V strip , also known as tension seal, is a durable plastic or metal strip folded into a "V" shape that springs open to bridge gaps.	Along the sides of a double-hung or sliding window; on the top and sides of a door	Cut to desired length with scissors, then peel and stick, or install with finishing nails.
 Felt is sold in rolls, either plain or reinforced with a pliable metal strip. Though inexpensive, it usually lasts only a year or two.	Around a door or window sash; in the door's jamb so that it compresses against the door	Cut to desired length with a utility knife, then staple or nail in place.
 Foam tape is made from open or closed-cell foam, or EPDM rubber with a sticky back. It's sold in varying widths and thicknesses, which makes it best for irregular-size cracks.	Top and bottom of window sashes, inside door frames.	Cut to length, and adhere where needed.
 Door sweeps are flat pieces of plastic, aluminum, or stainless steel fitted with a strip of nylon, plastic, or vinyl or a sponge brush to fill the space between door and threshold.	Along the bottom of the interior side of a door.	Cut to your door's width if needed, and install with screws.
 Tubular rubber, vinyl, or silicone is an effective air barrier: versions made of a narrow sponge rubber or vinyl tubing come attached to a wood or metal mounting strip. Silicone types are usually inserted into milled grooves.	At the base of doors and windows; top or bottom of a window sash; bottom of a door; between a door and its jamb.	Peel and stick, or fasten with screws through slot holes; silicone seals are pressed into a channel you create with a router.

→ GRIME BUSTERS

Shop cleanup made easy

If you enjoy tidying your workshop about as much as taking a hammer to your thumb, check out these dirt-eliminating tools. They'll help you maintain a cleaner space so that you can spend your free time on more entertaining endeavors like, say, this month's Home Center Project (find it on page 61). —N.R.

1_ On-the-spot sucker Turn any standard 5-gal. on bucket into a professional-grade wet/dry vac with this handy snap-on tool. BucketVac, \$100; speedclean.com

2_ Hands-free paper-towel dispenser This sturdy dispenser releases as little or as much paper towel as you need with just a wave of your arm. Clean Cut, \$160; smartproductinnovations.com

3_ Dirt dissolver Oil drips, glue spills, even puddles of latex paint are no match for this industrial-grade cleaner that works on metal, concrete, and wood. Goof Off Professional, \$6 for 16 ounces; homedepot.com

4_ Heavy-duty dust buster Capture 2.6 gallons of sawdust, drywall residue, and other debris with this portable extractor, which hooks up directly to most power tools, saving time. CTM ni, \$345; festoolusa.com

5_ Multiple-layer mat Designed like an oversize Post-it pad, this floor mat features sticky paper that grabs dirt and dust. Once the top layer loses tackiness, peel it off to reveal a new sheet. Dirt Catcher Starter Kit, \$25; 3m.com

PHOTOS: KRISTINE LARSEN (FE, 7); W. J. DENNIS & CO. (FOAM TAPE, DOOR SWEEP); M. D. BUILDING PRODUCTS (TUBULAR RUBBER); FROST KING

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before + after:
kitchen

Same footprint, brand-new look

A few floor-plan tweaks and all-new finishes give a faded kitchen a fresh look and more function. By DEBORAH BALDWIN + Photographs by PAUL WHICHELOE



Cabinet doors with glass inserts showcase collectibles while hiding clutter

Sometimes, living with a dysfunctional, dated space for years allows you to really envision the look and utility you want. When Butch and Bonnie Filippi got ready to overhaul the eat-in kitchen in their 1918 house in Westwood, New Jersey, they yearned for a more period-appropriate style along with more storage and prep space—not to mention a 36-inch range and 42-inch fridge. But they liked the room's proportions and saw no reason to make it bigger. After three years of pondering ways to squeeze more style and function into the existing footprint, they called on Holly Rickert from local design-build firm Ulrich Inc. to wring maximum benefit out of minimum rebuilding. Casting about, Rickert saw a way to cut into the back of a closet in an adjacent room and annex 6 square feet. "That allowed us to have our fridge," says Bonnie. Rickert helped the couple infuse the room with period detail and boost its efficiency, swapping out windows, reinstalling an original corner cabinet, and "tempering old with new," as she puts it, by blending vintage-look cabinets, tile, and lighting with sleek stainless-steel appliances. Says Butch, "We love our range—we use the built-in griddle for breakfast, lunch, and dinner." Bonnie adds, "Now it's a pleasure to cook. And I can't tell you how many people tell us the new kitchen looks like it has always been there."



{ before }

before The kitchen lacked function as well as period charm.
after Everything's new but looks old again, from the cabinets' recessed panels and reeded-glass inserts to the black and white hexagon floor tile, vintage-green wall tile, and schoolhouse lights. Wall tile: Waterworks

PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON, STYLING PATRICIA GAYLOR

before+after; kitchen

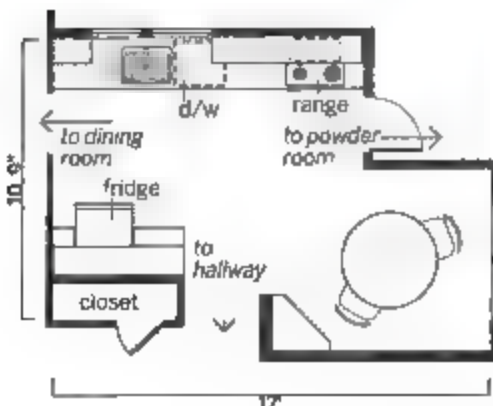
→ A handy new prep space has a tray cabinet to the left of a wine cooler, a glossy tile backsplash, and a pro-style stainless-steel countertop.

↓ The hex-tile floor unites the cooking area and a nook where Bonnie and Butch Filippi—and Trixie—like to gather.



before

The 188-square-foot kitchen was big enough for a table but lacked prep and storage space.

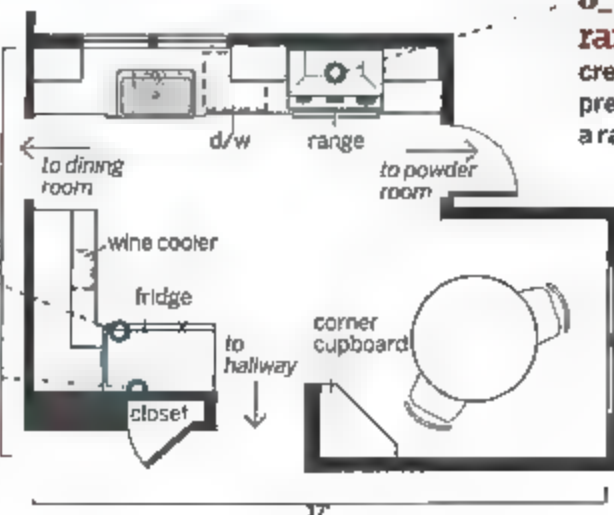


after

Annexing a portion of the living room closet meant being able to squeeze in a large fridge, a longer run of countertop, and extra cabinets.

1 Relocated the fridge to create space for extra cabinets and spots for the microwave and wine cooler.

2 Annexed 6 square feet from a closet to make room for the 42-inch fridge.



3 Moved the range to the left to create more usable prep space, and added a range hood.

FLOOR PLAN: JAM WORPOLE

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before+after: kitchen

• the key details

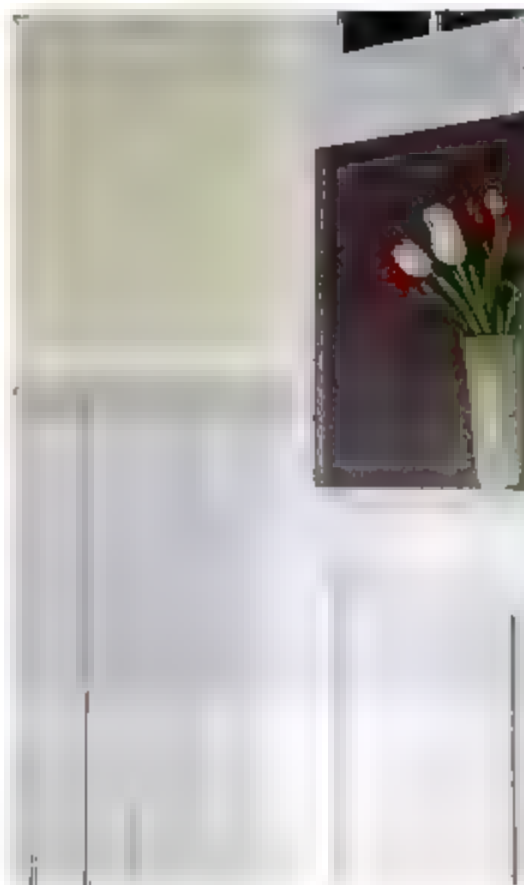
→ The original corner cabinet, removed during the construction phase, went back to its old spot with a fresh coat of paint and new satin-nickel pulls.



↑ Furniture-like pilasters and curved "feet" appear to support the traditional farmhouse sink. Sink and faucet: Rohl



↑ A custom pattern of porcelain hexagon tile, bordered with black slate, gives the kitchen a more vintage look. Hexagon tile: American Clean. Slate tile: Cleistone Works



↓ Glazed flat-panel inset doors and polished-nickel latches give the cabinets a warm, vintage look. Cabinets: Draper DBS. Latches: Horton Brasses



add character
See how to upgrade with vintage accents at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

← Beadboard wainscoting sets off the eating nook and pairs well with the existing cabinet. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Pale Celery (walls) and Simply White (wainscoting)



homeowner tip
BLITCH LIPPI,
WESTWOOD, N.J.

"Consider using a colored grout if you choose black and white tile for a period touch—it's easier to keep clean."

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Laundry room with a spa spirit

A luxurious wash-and-dry zone elevates chores while wringing maximum use out of a former closet space By CHARLOTTE BARNARD + Photographs by LISA ROMEREIN

Doing laundry often involves a detour to a dark corner of the house. But what if the laundry area were an airy destination instead? During a gut renovation of their house in Redondo Beach, California, Diane Petersen and her husband, Aubrey Payne, accomplished just that, converting a guest-room closet into a haven for doing laundry and more. The now-sunny space, conceived by interior designer Sarah Barnard, has a whirlpool sink for delicates, a built-in ironing board, counter space for folding towels and arranging flowers, storage for holiday gear, and a rolling library ladder to reach high shelves. Barnard's layout allows the couple to work separately without getting under each other's feet or blocking their cats' path to a litter box hidden in a curtained cabinet. A wisteria-theme backsplash, hardwood flooring, and luminous quartzite stone countertops make the light reflecting lavender-and-white room a go-to spot. "It's so pleasant to spend time there," says Diane—whether they're pairing socks, wrapping gifts, or "just stopping to gaze out our new window."

before The main-floor space was a guest-room-closet-cum-overflow zone.
after To-the-ceiling cabinets accessed by a rolling library ladder, quartzite counters, a drip bar, and a window trimmed with stone scraps make the room inviting and functional. Ladder: Alaco Ladder Company



{ before }

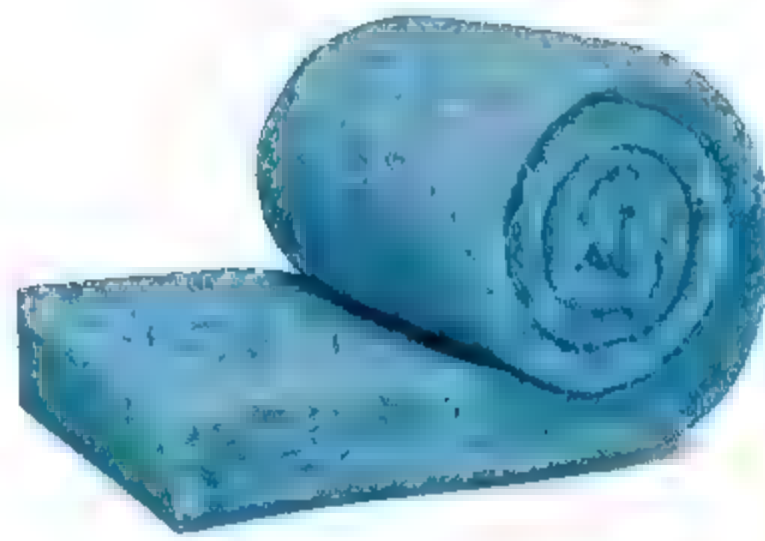
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before+after: laundry

the key details

→ The spa-like sink has whirlpool jets to gently agitate delicates. Acrylic sink MTI Gentle Jet



← The library ladder, painted to play off the backsplash, moves around two walls and is angled to allow access to counters and appliances. Washer and dryer Maytag



↑ A curtained cabinet hides the litter box for the couple's three cats. The door's panel was removed and a tension rod installed in the cabinet.



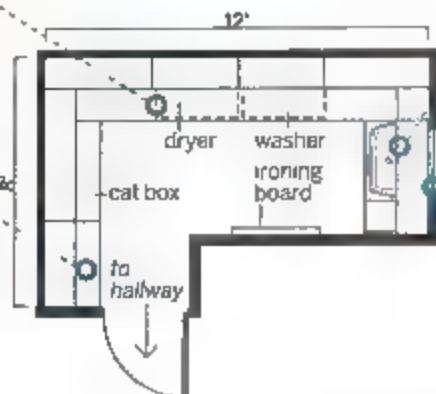
↑ A glass-tile backsplash gives the room a unique, finished look. Tile design Sarah Barnard

← A fold-down ironing board pops out of its own wired cupboard. Similar ironing center Broan

after

As part of a whole-house redo, most of the former closet was turned into a laundry room, with a doorway that now opens into the hall and a new window over the sink to bring in light.

- 1 Topped the washer and dryer with a 12-foot counter for sorting laundry—and holiday gear
- 2 Added gift-wrap storage away from the laundry area.

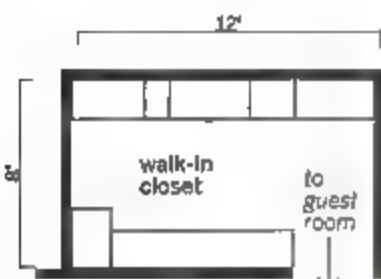


- 3 Put in a drip bar and sink for washing and drying delicates.
- 4 Added a window over the sink to bring in light.

FLOOR PLANS: AN WOPPOLE

before

The 96-square-foot guest closet held wardrobe overflow and clutter.



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Please see Important Facts Brief Summary on adjacent page.

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IMPORTANT FACTS



(LEER-i-kah)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT LYRICA

LYRICA may cause serious, even life threatening allergic reactions. Stop taking LYRICA and call your doctor right away if you have any signs of a serious allergic reaction:

- Swelling of your face, mouth, lips, gums, tongue, throat or neck
- Have any trouble breathing
- Rash, hives (raised bumps) or blisters

Like other antiepileptic drugs, LYRICA may cause suicidal thoughts or actions in a very small number of people, about 1 in 500.

Call your doctor right away if you have any symptoms, especially if they are new, worse or worry you, including:

- New or worsening depression
- Suicidal thoughts or actions
- Unusual changes in mood or behavior

Do not stop LYRICA without first talking with your doctor. LYRICA may cause swelling of your hands, legs and feet.

This swelling can be a serious problem with people with heart problems.

LYRICA may cause dizziness or sleepiness.

Do not drive a car, work with machines, or do other dangerous things until you know how LYRICA affects you. Ask your doctor when it is okay to do these things.

ABOUT LYRICA

LYRICA is a prescription medicine used in adults 18 years and older to treat:

- Pain from damaged nerves that happens with diabetes or that follows healing of shingles
- Partial seizures when taken together with other seizure medicines
- Fibromyalgia (pain all over your body)

Who should NOT take LYRICA:

- Anyone who is allergic to anything in LYRICA

BEFORE STARTING LYRICA

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- Have had depression, mood problems or suicidal thoughts or behavior
- Have or had kidney problems or dialysis
- Have heart problems, including heart failure
- Have a bleeding problem or a low blood platelet count
- Have abused prescription medicines, street drugs or alcohol in the past
- Have ever had swelling of your face, mouth, tongue, lips, gums, neck, or throat (angioedema)

- Plan to father a child. It is not known if problems seen in animal studies can happen in humans
- Are pregnant, plan to become pregnant or are breastfeeding. It is not known if LYRICA will harm your unborn baby. You and your doctor should decide whether you should take LYRICA or breast-feed, but not both.

Tell your doctor about all your medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. LYRICA and other medicines may affect each other causing side effects. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors. You may have a higher chance for swelling and hives

BEFORE STARTING LYRICA, continued

- Avandia® (rosiglitazone)* Avandia® (rosiglitazone and metformin)* or Actos® (pioglitazone)** for diabetes. You may have a higher chance of weight gain or swelling of your hands or feet
- Narcotic pain medicines (such as oxycodone), tranquilizers or medicines for anxiety (such as lorazepam). You may have a higher chance for dizziness and sleepiness
- Any medicines that make you sleepy

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LYRICA

LYRICA may cause serious side effects, including:

- See "Important Safety Information About LYRICA"
- Muscle problems, pain, soreness or weakness along with feeling sick and fever
- Eyesight problems including blurry vision
- Weight gain. Weight gain may affect control of diabetes and can be serious for people with heart problems
- Feeling "high"

If you have any of these symptoms, tell your doctor right away.

The most common side effects of LYRICA are:

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

If you have diabetes, you should pay extra attention to your skin while taking LYRICA and tell your doctor of any sores or skin problems.

HOW TO TAKE LYRICA

Do:

- Take LYRICA exactly as your doctor tells you. Your doctor will tell you how much to take and when to take it. Take LYRICA at the same times each day.
- Take LYRICA with or without food.

Don't:

- Drive a car or use machines if you feel dizzy or sleepy while taking LYRICA.
- Drink alcohol or use other medicines that make you sleepy while taking LYRICA.
- Change the dose or stop LYRICA suddenly. You may have headaches, nausea, diarrhea, or trouble sleeping if you stop taking LYRICA suddenly.
- Start any new medicines without first talking to your doctor.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist. This is only a brief summary of important information.
- Go to www.lyrica.com or call 1-866-459-7422 (1-866-4LYRICA).

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

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29. OLAY PROFESSIONAL PRO-X is as effective as the leading wrinkle prescription brand regimen.* *Pro X hydrates to reduce the appearance of wrinkles. Based on an 8-week clinical comparison study. The prescription takes 24 weeks to see full results and longer term comparative results may be different.

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Robe hooks

These handsome hangers stay poised to handle even your plushiest terry wrap or towels while adding a dash of style to any bath.

By DANIELLE BLUNDELL + Photographs by WENDELL T. WEBBER

Whether you're looking to give your bath a dose of vintage style—or just keep towels organized and a cozy bathrobe at the ready—these hardworking hooks are both charming and practical. With pegs that extend from wall-mounted escutcheons, today's versions stand up to bathroom humidity better than their early-20th-century counterparts thanks to their polyurethane-coated finishes. They are also cast, rather than stamped from a metal sheet. Here, you'll find 23 stunners in a variety of materials and finishes to match any style bath. Just one tip: While it's generally recommended that hooks be mounted about 5 feet above the floor, keep in mind your own height, the reach of your little ones, and the length of your linens before making final placement decisions.

brass beauty

URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Try it: By a Victorian-style claw-foot tub; its substantial casting will complement exposed brass plumbing.

Made of: Polished solid brass

Size: 3"W x 3½"D x 2⅝"H

\$75; urbanarchaeology.com



period perfect

DÉCOR BATHWARE

Try it: In a 1920s-style bath where its two-tone design will tie together chrome fixtures and white subway tile.

Made of: Polished chrome-plated zinc with ceramic inserts

Size: 3¼"W x 3¼"D x 8"H

\$16; homedepot.com

notet



square peg

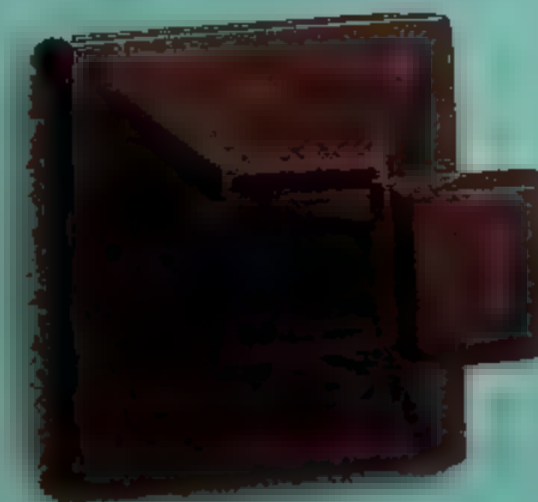
RESTORATION HARDWARE

Try it: In a Craftsman-style bath, where its strong geometric shape will be at home.

Made of: Brass with an oil-rubbed bronze finish

Size: 2¼"W x 2¼"D x 2¼"H

\$30; restorationhardware.com



**whale tail**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HARDWARE

Try it: As a graceful, made-to-order touch in a slate-lined bath.

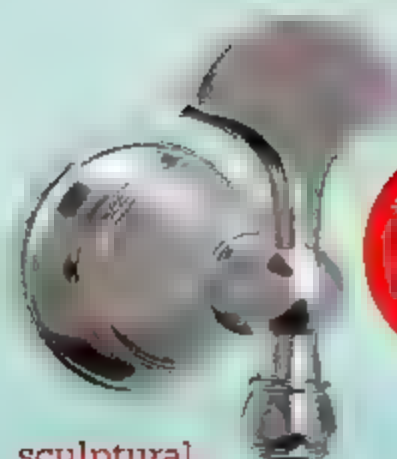
Made of: Recycled bronze with a dark patina

Size: 2½"W x 2¼"D x 2½"H
\$164; rustichardware.com**beaded border**

FRANKLIN BRASS

Try it: In a wood-paneled powder room with Victorian-style fixtures.

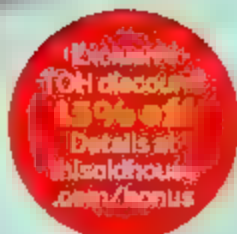
Made of: Zinc with a Venetian bronze finish

Size: 2¼"W x 3⅝"D x 5⅝"H
\$16; amazon.com**sculptural**

KOHLER

Try it: As a weighty statement piece in a bright white bath.

Made of: Solid brass with a brushed nickel finish

Size: 5¼"W x 4½"D x 3½"H
\$100; csnstores.com**federal formal**

DELTA

Try it: To accommodate a trio of fluffy robes in the hall bath of a busy household.

Made of: Zinc with a satin nickel finish

Size: 2¼"W x 3¼"D x 4¼"H
\$12; amazon.com**helpful swivel**

AMERICAN STANDARD

Try it: In a tight, shared space—the lower hook swivels for easy access.

Made of: Zinc with a blackened bronze finish

Size: 4¾"W x 5¼"D x 3½"H
\$35; homedepot.com**double duty**

KOHLER

Try it: To lighten up a muted, small bath with its glassy finish.

Made of: Brass with a polished chrome finish

Size: 3¼"W x 2¾"D x 2⅝"H
\$19; csnstores.com**craftsman contours**

DESIGN HOUSE

Try it: Paired with other dark accents and the natural warmth of stained wood.

Made of: Iron with a bronze finish

Size: 1¼"W x 3"D x 3"H
\$32; fixtureuniverse.com**well anchored**

KOHLER

Try it: As a touch of whimsy in a nautical-theme bath.

Made of: Brass with a polished chrome finish

Size: 2¼"W x 2¾"D x 3"H
\$19; csnstores.com**touch of texture**

ATLAS HOMEWARES

Try it: In a row of three to play up its basketweave design.

Made of: Brass with a brushed nickel finish

Size: 2½"W x 2¼"D x 2½"H
\$26; atlashomewares.com**mission style**

REJUVENATION

Try it: Near a weathered wood vanity; its lower hook is sized just right for hand towels.

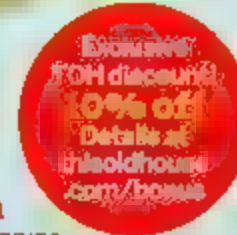
Made of: Brass with a burnished antique finish

Size: 1"W x 4"D x 3¼"H
\$19; rejuvenation.com**victorian**

OMNIA INDUSTRIES

Try it: As a graceful addition to a master bath with floral wallpaper.

Made of: Lacquered polished brass

Size: 2¼"W x 3"D x 6"H
\$77; myknobs.com**multifaceted**

NORWELL LIGHTING

Try it: In an all-white bath alongside other nickel finishes.

Made of: Brass with a brushed nickel finish

Size: 2½"W x 2¼"D x ⅝"H
\$53; fixtureuniverse.com**unique curves**

COPPER MOUNTAIN HARDWARE

Try it: In a simple bath where its detailing will add a welcome hit of decorative interest.

Made of: Pewter with a bronze wash

Size: 2¼"W x 3¼"D x 2½"H
\$25; lookintheattic.com**retro appeal**

GATCO

Try it: Alongside a telephone-style hand shower and tub filler.

Made of: Brass with a polished chrome finish

Size: 2"W x 3¼"D x 5½"H
\$16; hookyady.com**high shine**

URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Try it: In a late-19th-century-inspired bath with a furniture-style vanity and brass fixtures.

Made of: Polished solid brass

Size: 2"W x 2½"D x 3½"H
\$60; urbanarchaeology.com**deco design**

RESTORATION HARDWARE

Try it: Near a pedestal sink and Art Deco sconces, where it will reinforce the streamlined theme.

Made of: Brass with a satin nickel finish

Size: 2¼"W x 2½"D x 2¾"H
\$25; restorationhardware.com**modern column**

RESTORATION HARDWARE

Try it: As an understated accent in a minimalist space.

Made of: Brass with an oil-rubbed bronze finish

Size: 2"W x 2¼"D x 3¼"H
\$30; restorationhardware.com**art nouveau shine**

RESTORATION HARDWARE

Try it: Set against the creamy tile of an early-20th-century-style bath.

Made of: Brass with a polished nickel finish

Size: 2¼"W x 3½"D x 3"H
\$25; restorationhardware.com**colonial style**

HAMPTON SINKLER

Try it: Against light-colored walls, where its distressed surface and beveled curves add visual interest.

Made of: Patinated bronze

Size: 2¼"W x 2¾"D x 3¼"H
\$49; homedecorhardware.com**polished prongs**

POTTERY BARN

Try it: By the tub in a small bath, where its side-projecting hooks will handle extra towels.

Made of: Chrome-plated brass

Size: 4"W x 2½"D x 3"H
\$24; potterybarn.com

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BROAN evolution



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Cabin-style bedroom

Anchored by sporty, utilitarian accessories and earth tones, this cozy retreat recalls a rustic yet sophisticated lodge. Here's how to assemble a space like this one in your home

By JESSICA DODELL-FEDER + Photograph by TRIA GIOVAN

Sure it's a place to sleep, but the bedroom also offers one of the best chances to make your mark design-wise. "You want a space that's classic but can evolve. That's where special details come into play," says Suzanne Kasler, who designed the room shown here. To convey a laid-back vibe, Kasler chose warm wood-channel siding made from utility grade pine. The rustic backdrop contrasts nicely with luxurious accents, such as designer wool throws and a handmade patchwork kilim that deliver playful doses of color and texture. Handsome, sturdy furniture and vintage-style light fixtures complete the space. Here are ways to create a similar setup at your house. ■

textured upholstery

Raffia fabric lends a woodsy touch to this plush foam-and-down chair in an unfussy square shape. \$779; ballarddesigns.com

tripod lamp

A chrome-accented replica of a surveyor's stand provides the base for this fixture from Kenroy Home. \$144; bellacor.com

flat-weave rug

Patches from several carpets were pieced together to create Roost's graphic wool floor covering. 5-by-8-foot rug. \$488; velocityartanddesign.com



graphic cushions

Add a subtle pattern with throw pillows covered in crisp navy-and-white Sunbrella fabrics. \$42; homebytheseashore.com



wall-mount reading lamp

This industrial-style double-jointed fixture allows you to direct light just where you need it. \$229; shadesoflight.com



bright wool blanket

As perfect on a bed as it is outside at a campfire, this vibrant throw gives otherwise neutral linens a color boost. \$99; iswoolen.com

earthy vase

This vessel's organic shape brings a bit of nature indoors, especially when filled with one exotic leaf. \$52; peruvianconnection.com



bedside stool

Originally a draftsman's seat, this salvaged wood-and-steel perch adds lots of character as a table stand-in. \$189; urbanaccenthome.etsy.com

vintage luggage

Swap boring under-the-bed bins for sturdy suitcases from the mid-1900s. Find similar styles at online auctions for as little as \$8 each; ebay.com



PRODUCT PHOTOS: WENDELL T. WEBBER



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†\$300-\$330-Honda. *Based on R.L. Polk & Co. U.S. retail registrations, Minivan segment, 1/09 - 8/10. †A separate device is required to use multi-screen function. ††Hard disk drive (HDD) 15 GB memory audio system standard on navigation-equipped models. ††The USB Audio Interface is used for direct connection to and control of select current digital audio players and other USB devices that contain MP3, WMA or AAC music files. Some USB devices with security software and digital rights protection (DRM) may not work. Please see your Honda dealer for details. †18 city/28 hwy 2011 EPA mileage estimates for Odyssey Touring models with 6AT. Use for comparison purposes only. Actual mileage will vary. Touring EXR model shown. ©2010 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

Introducing the all-new Honda **ODYSSEY**

Butcher-block worktables

With their warm look and impressive heft, these two stand ready to serve your wildest Iron Chef dreams. So what makes one more than twice the price of the other?

By DEBORAH BALDWIN + Photograph by MARK WEISS

Back in the day, chopping blocks were made by slicing logs into rounds, which were hard enough but tended to split under the butcher's blows. Later, wood scraps were fused end-grain up to form slabs that could be gouged, sanded, oiled, and handed down for decades. Butcher block has since found a home in residential kitchens, joining high-powered stainless-steel ranges and vent hoods as signs of a serious cook. Today, with top chefs doing nightly knife battle on TV, butcher block's macho appeal is stronger than ever. So what makes these tables different? The choice of the hardwood, direction of the grain, thickness of the slab, height of the table, girth of the legs—and price, of course.

High-End

John Boos

PRO PREP BUTCHER-BLOCK TABLE

Size: 24 by 24 by 36 inches Weight: 105 pounds

\$755

\$365

IS IT FOR YOU?

If you like the idea of investing in a family heirloom and love the look of end grain.

surface

Kiln-dried hard-maple strips, about 1½ by 1½ inch, laminated end-up, form a 4-inch-thick reddish-brown checkerboard, which may have black mineral specks. End grain is less likely to show scratches than edge grain but isn't necessarily easier on knives. Kept clean, dry, sanded, and oiled, the block should last decades.

surface

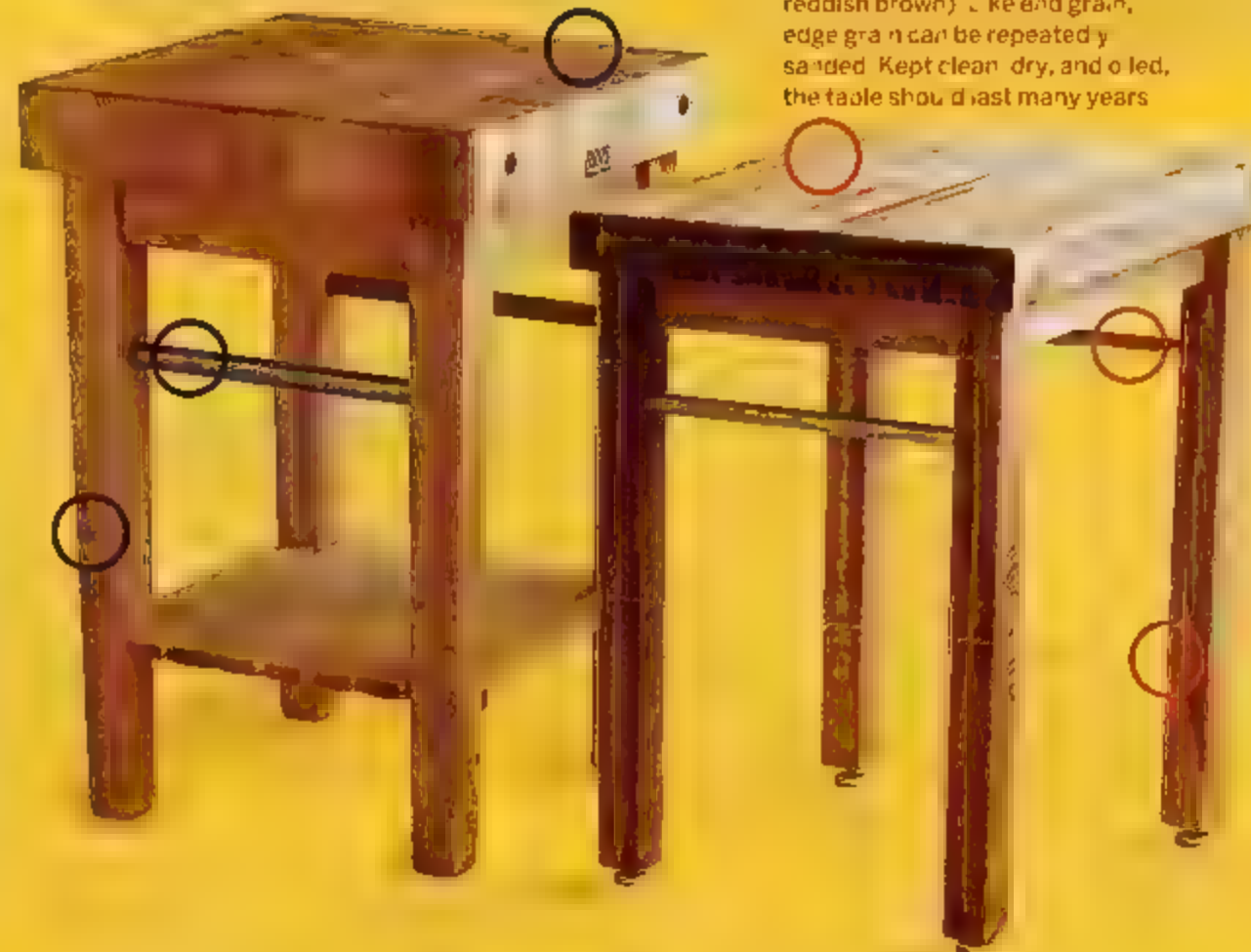
One-inch-wide strips of kiln-dried yellow birch are laminated edge grain up to form a 3-inch slab with occasional mineral streaks and color variations (white to light reddish brown). Like end grain, edge grain can be repeatedly sanded. Kept clean, dry, and oiled, the table should last many years.

storage

Two hollow, heavy-duty stainless-steel bars can hold towels or hooks. The open shelf, made of ¾-inch maple slats, is sturdy enough for cast-iron pots.

structure

Arrives in two parts with corner braces in place. Chunky solid maple legs, capped with thin metal gliders, are bolted on and, along with the open shelf, contribute to the table's impressive stability.



storage

Two hollow, lighter-weight stainless-steel bars hold towels or pot hooks.

structure

Top and bottom assemble with corner braces and screws. Solid yellow-birch legs and adjustable leveling feet make it stable, though the screws need periodic retightening.

Budget

Catskill Craftsmen

FRENCH COUNTRY BUTCHER-BLOCK TABLE

Size: 24 by 24 by 33½ inches Weight: 79 pounds

IS IT FOR YOU?

If you see yourself as a family cook and want to be able to move your workstation without calling in help.

storage

Two hollow, lighter-weight stainless-steel bars hold towels or pot hooks.

structure

Top and bottom assemble with corner braces and screws. Solid yellow-birch legs and adjustable leveling feet make it stable, though the screws need periodic retightening.

price
wise

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Four schemes for two-tone rooms

Strategies for creating standout color combinations By DEBORAH BALDWIN + Photographs by MATTHEW BENSON

Few questions give pause like the one so often heard in paint stores. “Do these two go together?” But while some do-it-yourselfers respond by pairing Soft Beige with Linen White, professional colorists favor bolder combinations. Rooms with chair rail offer a perfect opportunity to create less-expected pairings. “Use lighter shades above the rail to pull the eye up and darker ones below to ground the room,” says Susan English, a color consultant in Cold Spring, New York. “One reliable strategy is to pick two shades from the same color family or even from the same paint strip.”

In the rooms shown here, however (all painted with shades from Benjamin Moore), English identifies less-conventional pairings: brights with deep saturated colors, and easy-to-live-with pale shades with stronger neutrals. In all cases, a surprising contrast on the bottom half of the walls adds a sophisticated edge.

1 Strategy: Use warm bright red above cooler deep raisin. Reds are a classic choice for enlivening a dining room or adding coziness to a library, and either of these shades could easily fill the bill. Put them together to get double the effect—and a conversation starter. In this first-floor study, orangey Million Dollar Red upper walls with deep, blue-tinted Raisin Torte below exaggerate the warm and cool tones of each. Crisp borders of Super White semigloss allow colors to shine singly as well as paired.



2 Strategy: Pair lilac-pink upper walls with dark mauve below. This second-floor sitting room is brightened with Paris Romance above the rail. To keep the shade from looking too sweet, it is anchored with dusty, deep-purple Frozen in Time below. Plain pine flooring and an exotic-wood side table also keep the room up-to-date.

4 Strategy: Ground a cool gray-violet with a warmer, earthier taupe. An unexpected pairing of neutrals gives this guest bedroom a fresh look. Light-as-air Rock Harbor Violet could just fade away to forgettable if it weren't played off against the Waynesboro Taupe—another midtone—below. An oversize glass vase draws out violet tones, and a mirrored end table reflects the taupe's gray-to-brown shadings.



3 Strategy: Give light blue a grown-up edge with a midtone (found in the middle of a paint strip) gray. Soothing sky-blue walls are a bedroom favorite. Here, though, light-filled Lookout Point gets added presence from deeper, green-tinged River Gorge Gray. The blue desk reinforces the scheme.



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A kitchen plan goes from ideal to real

Start with the dream. Then give it a reality check with pro advice and a practical test run **By KEITH PANDOLFI • Photographs by ALLISON DINNER**

Raveen and Allison Sharma thought they had the vision for their kitchen remodel down pat. As part of a complete overhaul of their 1940s Colonial Revival—the subject of *This Old House* TV's fall 2010 project, in Auburndale, Massachusetts—they would triple the size of its quaint but cramped galley kitchen by tearing down a wall and executing a land grab of an adjacent dining room. A stainless farmhouse sink would face the large windows at the back of the house. The Sharmas could gaze out over the meandering Charles River, which runs alongside their backyard, as they washed their dishes each night.

A talented home chef, Raveen imagined himself holding court behind a majestic island outfitted with a pro cooktop. He'd stir up steaming-hot pots of chicken curry to the oohs and aahs of delighted dinner guests. He, Allison and their two children, ages 7 and 9, would also enjoy barbecue year-round, thanks to a built-in cooktop grill, and feast on roast chicken and rosemary potatoes prepared in stacked double ovens. All these culinary gems were part of a recurring dream of Raveen's. "Most people have pictures of kids on their desks; I have pictures of kitchens," he says. "People think I'm crazy, but they're things Alison and I always wanted." Or at least thought they wanted.

In the end, not one of these features made it into the Sharmas' idealized kitchen design—not the center-island

decisions, decisions

At her downtown Boston showroom, kitchen designer Donna Venegas reviews cabinetry options with Raveen and Allison Sharma.





pro advice
TOM SILVA
TOH TV GENERAL
CONTRACTOR

"To test-drive your plan, mock it up with strapping and rosin paper, then play house with your family to see how the layout works in practice."

cooktop or its grill attachment. "Too hard to clean," Raveen says. No double ovens or river view sink, either. And it's not because the Sharmas ran over budget (though they did that, too). Rather, after walking through their daily routines, seeing the appliances they thought they wanted, and, most notably, working with a professional kitchen designer, they realized the show kitchen they coveted wasn't really right for them. "We had so much space, we thought we could do whatever we wanted," says Raveen. "But there's a lot more to it."

Here's how they figured it all out.

Live and learn

The Sharmas bought their house last year. Following the advice of friends who'd taken on similarly huge renovations, they decided to live in it for a few months first. Experiencing the house's strengths and weaknesses led them to change their minds about one major point before even involving an architect. While preparing breakfast each morning, they fell in love with how the sunlight poured in from the east window over the existing sink. "It just made the whole room really beautiful," says Raveen. "So we decided we wanted the kitchen sink to face the front—just like in the old kitchen."

Soon after, the Sharmas met with architect Chris Chu, who incorporated their revised kitchen concept into her drawings for the house. But something wasn't working. Seeing the cooktop in the center island made everyone



storage galore
Venegas shows the Sharmas how useful for

realize it would require either an awkward downdraft or a hulking overhead vent hood hanging from the low 7-foot 6-inch ceiling. Raveen would scarcely be visible as he displayed his culinary chops. And, given his affinity for stir-frying and for wrangling brimming pots and pans, the idea of having dinner guests—or his children—seated around the burners suddenly seemed kind of dangerous. Worse, having the cooktop on the island also ate up valuable food prep space.

Despite all the square footage they were gaining, the Sharmas' kitchen plan wasn't using the space as efficiently as they had hoped it would. So after a lot of sleepless nights, they decided they should call on a kitchen designer to work on refining the plan, allowing Chu to focus her talents on the rest of the project. "There are so many aspects to a major renovation like this one," says Raveen. "We found that when it comes to the kitchen, it's good to hire a specialist who is up on all the latest high-tech appliances and cabinetry options. Architects work on a more conceptual level, but kitchen designers understand how a kitchen is actually used."

Ask an expert

Sitting down with the Sharmas in her Boston showroom, kitchen designer Donna Venegas started off with a lot of questions. "I tried to learn as much as I could about their personalities," she says. She knew that Allison worked as an information technology consultant and Raveen worked for a software company. But were they roving BlackBerry types or sit-down family-meal people? "They

are young, plugged-in parents who are pretty casual," Venegas says. "Not wine people—more beer people." And they had no interest in bells and whistles. When she asked Raveen if he wanted a refrigerated drawer built into the island, for instance, he said that having two fridges would just confuse him. The types of dishes he likes to prepare told her even more. "Since he tends to use large stock pots, woks, and wide saucepans, I wanted to make sure there would be lots of cabinet space near the cooktop," she says. To steal back some storage space, she nixed the double ovens and consolidated the cooktop and oven into a range.

The breakthrough, though, was utilizing the all-important center island to divide the space into task-oriented zones "so that everyone can stay out of each other's way." Venegas put the fridge on the wall opposite the range to keep snack-seeking kids from interrupting the cooking show. She also suggested a supersized pantry with a lower cabinet for the little ones' cereals and snacks, and an upper cabinet for the grown-ups' stuff. Connecting the fridge and range zones, the sink wall contains what Allison calls her "breakfast zone," with the coffee-maker, toaster, and microwave. When all the rearranging was finished, it became clear that what the Sharmas wanted was less *Top Chef* and more *Modern Family*.

Try it out

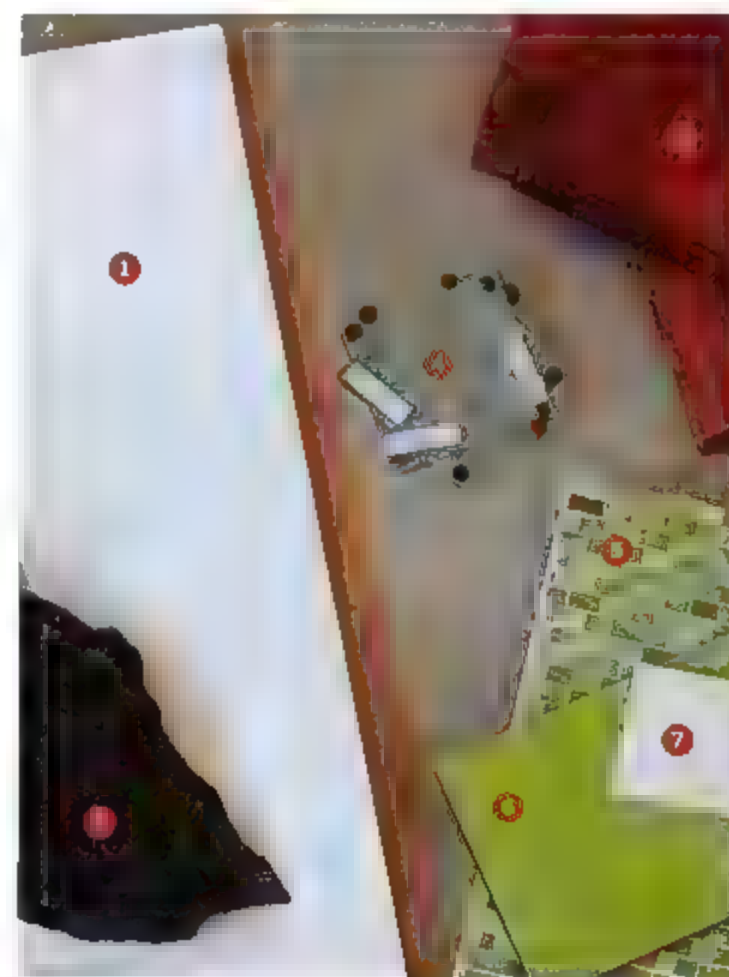
Given all the changes to their initial vision, the Sharmas wanted to test out Venegas' new configuration. They all met with TOH general contractor Tom Silva at the

project house. There, using inexpensive strapping covered with rosin paper, Tom built a mock-up of the cabinetry, appliances, and island in the gutted kitchen. "That made us realize we needed to fine-tune the shape of the island, and that the counter next to the fridge would probably end up being a junk collector," says Venegas. That's when they made a last-minute decision to place the pantry, which had been relegated to a distant wall, there instead. All the food storage would be in one spot.

Now that the plans are complete, the Sharmas can't wait to fire up their dream kitchen. "This version," Raveen says, "is a bit more grounded in reality." ■

CHOOSING THE COLORS AND TEXTURES

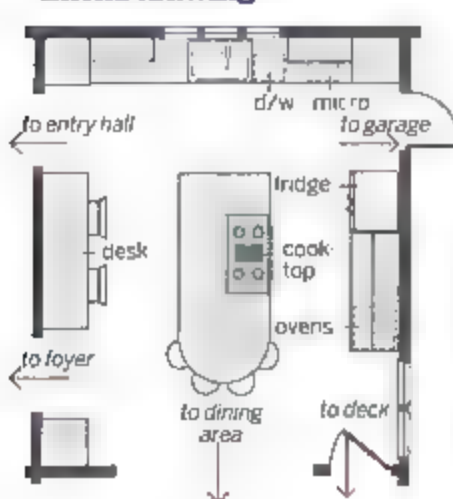
Kitchen designer Donna Venegas worked with interior designer Melissa Gulley to come up with the finish materials for the Sharmas' new kitchen, striving for a mix of textures and a pop of color: **1.** The custom maple cabinetry has a hand-applied milk-paint finish with visible brush strokes, for a handcrafted look. The color also sets off the cherry furniture and oak floors. **2.** Dark granite on the peripheral counters lends the space a sophisticated look. **3.** A natural wood countertop on the island adds warmth. **4.** Glass-front cabinets accentuate the above-the-sink window. **5.** A colorful green glass mosaic tile backsplash behind the range spices things up and provides contrast with the surrounding dark granite. **6.** Bright green paint on the center-island cabinet adds a bold splash of color. **7.** A white crackle-finish subway-tile backsplash gives the sink area a clean look.



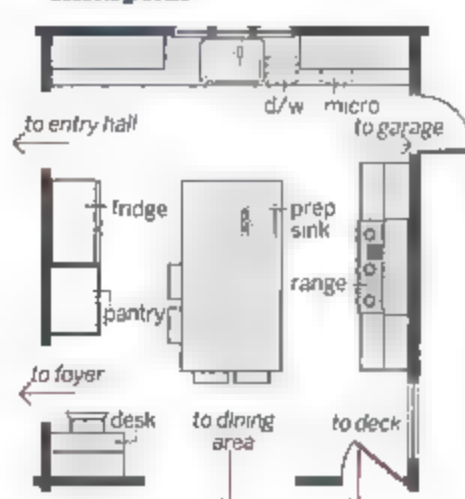
FROM WISHLIST TO REAL LIFE

Architect Chris Chu's initial plan for the 15-1/2-by-18-foot kitchen allowed for everything the Sharmas thought they wanted: an island cooktop, double ovens, and a generous homework station for the kids. But after refining their vision with kitchen designer Donna Venegas, they ultimately opted for a rectangular island with a prep sink, a range wall, a refrigerator-pantry wall, a sink wall lined with glass-front upper cabinets, and a small corner desk.

initial drawing



final plan



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From sketch to finished facade

The winners of our Real-Life Photoshop Redo Contest turn their rendering into reality

By ERIC HAGERMAN + Photographs by DAVID LAMB

{ before }



{ rendering }



{ after }



"We loved the designer's sketch but never imagined it could be re-created to a tee," says Jim Steele, who lives with his family in this freshly transformed 1925 cottage near Syracuse, New York. As you can see, however, the result is pretty dead-on. The contest winners' cottage has gone from worn to wonderfully charming, thanks to designer Rick O'Leary's reimagining of the exterior, using little more than a palette of fiber-cement clapboards, shingles, and trim from James Hardie. But it was the installation skill of Right Choice contractor David D'Agostino that brought the highly customized design to life.

"The process was really fun," says Lisa Steele of seeing the plan on paper take shape on the house. To speed up the job (and save some money), off-the-shelf corbels from a home center stand in for hand-cut gunstock porch brackets. The most time-consuming part of the project had to be the "stepped coursing" clapboard design, with its overlapping boards of varying exposures. But the look is so special that D'Agostino says he can't wait to try it again.

The Steeles love all the new details, especially the apron trim under the upper windows. "We named it 'the teardrop,'" says Jim. "It's a real focal point that does a great job of creating symmetry in an asymmetrical house." And it's a house they intend to stay in. "This is our first home," says Lisa. "Thanks to everyone involved, it will likely be our last." ■



sweat equity Jim and Lisa Steele (here with son Coby) pitched in wherever they could, ripping off the old cedar shingles and painting the porch.

behind the scenes

To see how the project came together, visit thisoldhouse.com/bonus

Side table

Build sturdy Arts and Crafts-style end table from stock lumber or choose from a variety of premade furniture options

By JENNIFER STIMPSON + Photograph by WENDELL T. WEBBER

Butch and Sundance Bonnie and Clyde. Starsky and Hutch. Like any memorable duo, an armchair is lost without a tag along table as a sidekick. Fulfilling both form and function, a side table makes for a nice pairing and serves as a great place to set your drink. And a table like the one at right, which cloaks Arts and Crafts bones in an unexpected color, bucks tradition in favor of a fresh look that fits right in with any setting. A slew of retailers offer premade options along these lines, but the tables are also available in myriad styles and finishes. Or if you'd rather do it yourself, no problem. For under \$100, you can easily cut and assemble one of your own, as you can see on the following page. Whichever choice you make, you're sure to appreciate not having to hold your drink in your lap

Side table: Whitewood Bomby Tall Unfinished End Table by International Concepts, \$130; coffeetablesandendtables.com. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Avon Green (HC-126), \$10 per quart; benjaminmoore.com



build it
Find the cut list or learn how to build and finish other tables at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

build it

You can customize the height of this design to fit alongside your existing seating, or square up the angles for a more modern look

- 1. Cut the pieces.** To splay the legs, chop their ends at parallel 5-degree angles according to the cut list at thisoldhouse.com/bonus. Trim the ends of all the horizontal pieces at opposing angles to fit between the legs, and bevel their top edges so that they end up flat. Using a jigsaw, cut a curve on the six lower horizontal pieces. Cut the tabletop to size and bevel its edges.
- 2. Make two leg assemblies.** Clamp two crosspieces between two legs—the straight one even at the top, the curved one at shelf height—with the flats flush to the inside. Drill countersink holes at an angle through the crosspieces and into the legs, and screw them in place. Build a second.
- 3. Put the pieces together.** Glue and screw the skirt pieces to the underside of the tabletop and shelf, then clamp that frame between the leg assemblies. Drill pilot holes out through the skirt and halfway into the crosspieces, making sure not to punch all the way through. Secure the top and shelf with deck screws.
- 4. Finish the table.** Fill each hole with a plug. Using a pull saw, cut each plug flush with the surrounding surface. Sand and paint the table. ■

Cost: \$100
Time: 5 hours
Difficulty: Medium. The assembly is easy, but making the angled cuts for the splayed legs requires some skill.



ILLUSTRATION: GREGORY NEMEC

buy it

Choose from tables with straight or splayed legs in a variety of wood species and finishes

\$50+
basic

Made of solid wood, this unfinished accent table requires assembly; accent-furniture-direct.com



\$169+
mid-range

This hardwood accent table comes with tray-top edging and is available in five colors; riversidefurniture.com



\$230+
luxury

The warm walnut finish and wormhole imperfections give this Craftsman-style table an aged look; sears.com



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home center
project

Make an open shelving unit

Transform turned spindles and plank shelves into a handsome display space

By JENNIFER STIMPSON • Photograph by WENDELL T. WEBBER

Cost: \$160

Time: 6 hours

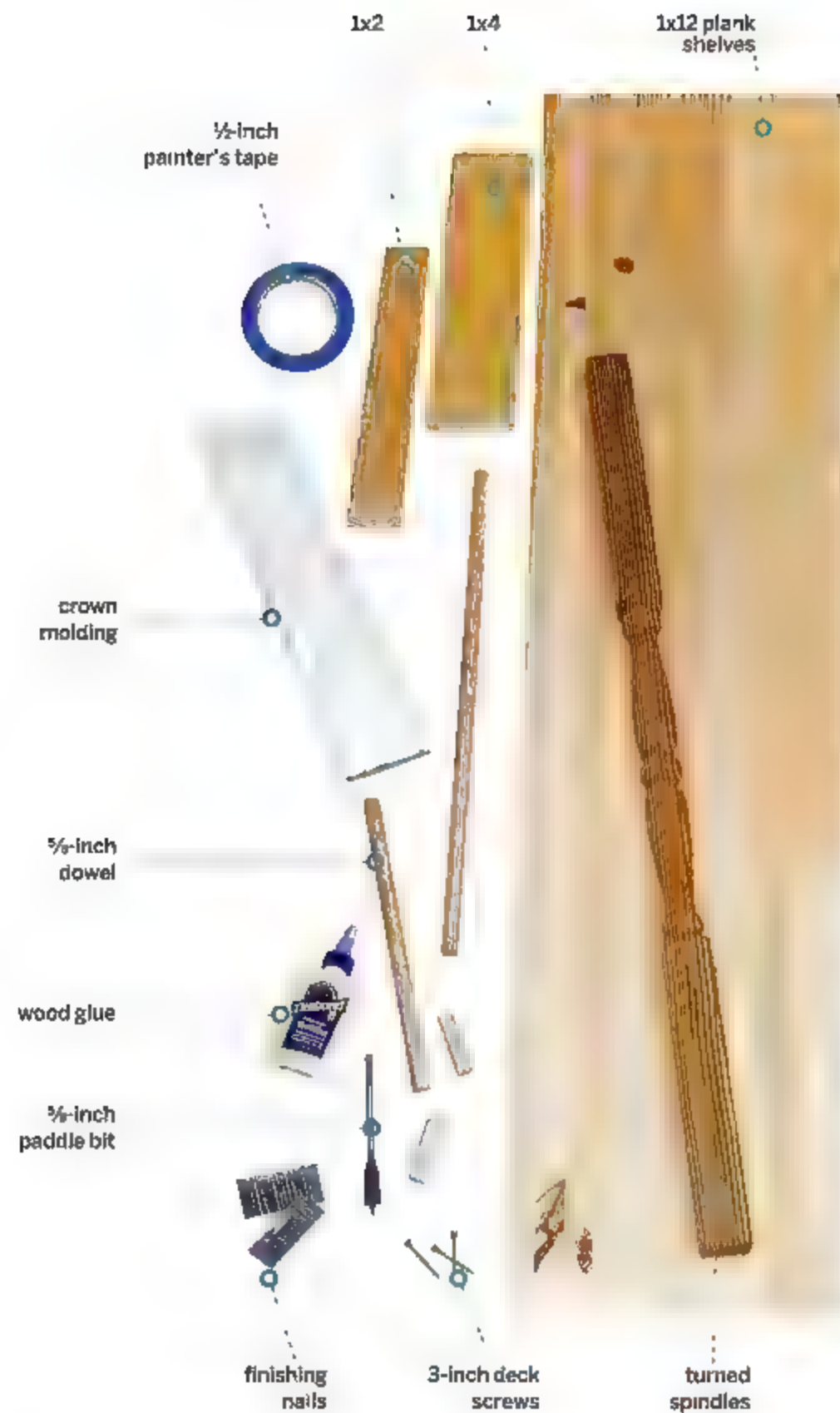
Difficulty: Easy Though the top trim must be mitered, drilling and straight cuts require only novice skills

You'll find open-shelving kits in almost any home store, but their boxy designs can leave you with a case of the blahs. *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva amped up the style of this common piece by making it from shelving planks sold in 8-foot lengths and turned spindles cut to size. To streamline construction, Tom cut the shelves to 5 feet and used the excess to create supports for the base. (Five-foot shelves can hold lightweight items without sagging; if you plan to add heavy items, like books, cut shelves to no longer than 3 feet.) Trimmings with crown molding, this piece will prove the perfect spot to show off all your treasures.

Spindles: 2½ by 2½-inch Colonial deck spindles: lowes.com. Shelves: 1x12x8 utility shelving, lowes.com. Paint: Valspar's Deep Earth, valspar.com



STYLING: INGRID LEES



HOW IT'S DONE

1. Cut the parts. Using a miter saw, cut spindles to the desired height between shelves. Cut the shelves to length with a miter saw or a circular saw guided by a straightedge. Cut a 3/8-inch dowel into 2-inch lengths.



5. Add nailing strips to the top shelf. Glue and nail 1x2 strips on the flat to the front and sides of the top shelf's surface so that all the edges are flush. This will provide a built-up surface for attaching the trim in Step 6.

PHOTOS: ALICIA DINNEN

2. Drill recesses in the spindles. Make a 3/4-inch recess in the center of both ends of eight spindles using a 3/8-inch paddle bit wrapped with painter's tape as a depth marker. For remaining spindles, make a 3/4-inch recess in one end and use a 3/8-inch bit to drill a pilot hole in the other end.



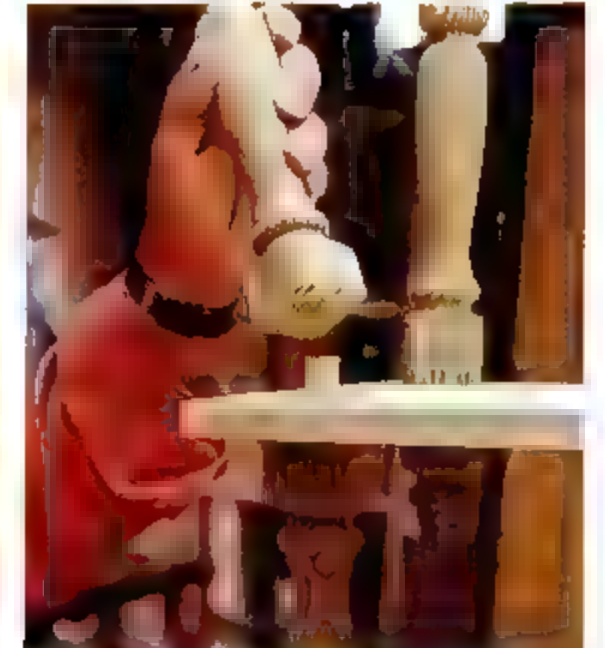
6. Attach the trim. Cut crown molding to size, using a 45-degree miter on both ends of the long piece and a 45-degree return on one end of the two short pieces. Glue and nail molding to the nailing strips on the front and sides of the top shelf.

3. Drill holes through the shelves. Stack the shelves on top of one another. In the corners, drill pilot holes 3 inches from each edge to mark hole locations. Then use the paddle bit to drill holes through three of the shelves in these locations, where the dowels will go.



7. Screw spindles to the base and the top shelf. Line up the pilot holes at the ends of four spindles with pilot holes in the base. Secure spindles to the base with 3-inch screws. Repeat for the top shelf.

4. Assemble the base. Glue and nail mitered 1x4s to the front and sides of the bottom shelf, with their top edges flush with the shelf's surface. Rip support pieces from excess shelf material. Secure them to the underside of the shelf for stability.



8. Assemble the unit. Starting at the base, fill recesses in the spindles with wood glue. Fit dowels into the recesses. Slip a shelf over the dowels and cap with spindles glued in the same way. Repeat until unit is assembled. Finish with semigloss paint. ★

want to build it?

Download a cut list for this project at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

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Trim terminology

Interior window molding does double duty, covering gaps while defining a style. Use this guide to understand what each part does and how all the pieces fit together

By THOMAS BAKER + Illustration by HARRY CAMPBELL

cap
Covers top of crown

head casing
Covers gap between top of window frame and wall.

In many Victorian era, Craftsman and Colonial Revival homes, casing ends are cut square, then butted against either adjacent casing edges or corner rosettes, which are separate blocks slightly thicker and wider than casing stock. For this joint to work, casings must be symmetrical, not tapered.

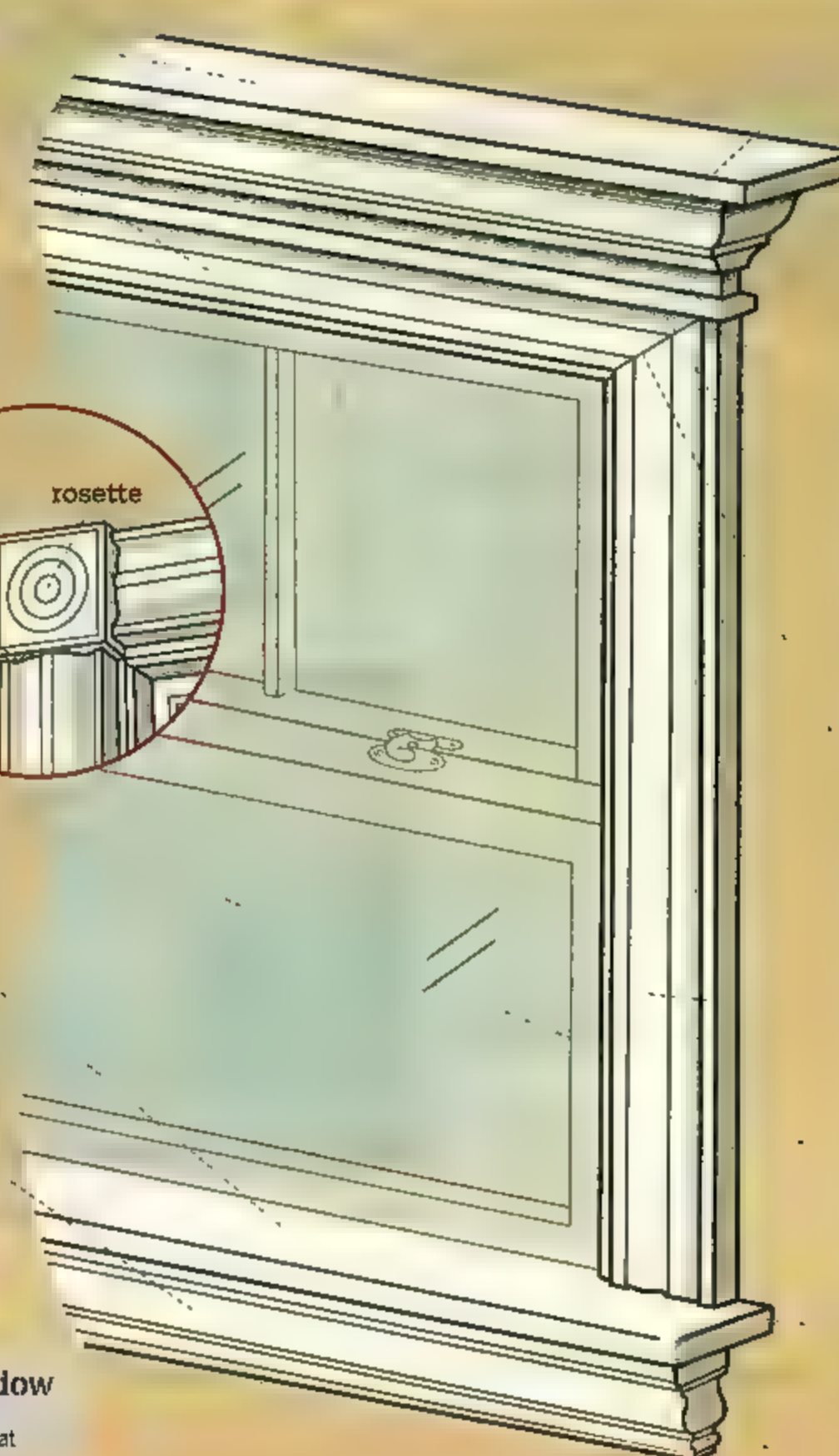
rosette
square-cut joint

inside stop
Holds sash in window opening. Removing stops allows sash to be taken out for repair.

stool
Hides gap between bottom edge of lower sash and top of windowsill outside.

apron
Provides visual support for stool. Ends line up with outside edges of casing. Aprons with a profile require mitered returns.

learn to trim a window
Watch TOH general contractor Tom Silva install window molding at thisoldhouse.com/bonus



crown molding
Angles out from wall at top of window, adding dimension lacking in flat stock. Together with frieze board and cap, makes up entablature, a feature found in classic house styles, such as Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival.

mitered return
Covers end grain as it carries profile to wall.

frieze board
Serves as base for attaching crown molding and cap. Its ends line up with outside edges of casing.

crosshead strip
Provides transition between head casing and frieze board.

miter joint
Connects two pieces of casing at 45-degree angle. Allows profile to continue uninterrupted as it turns corner.

side casing
Covers gap between side of window frame and wall.

backband molding
Adds depth and width to outside edges of casing. L-shaped to fit neatly over corners.

horn
Extends stool past casing and apron by 1 to 2 inches.

mitered return

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My Corolla is the first new car I've purchased. So it was a huge deal for me. It's the biggest investment I've ever made. It just feels like a really reliable, safe car. After I bought it, I drove the five-hour trip from my parents' house to my place in L.A. It was very peaceful, and I felt like I'm actually becoming an adult. You know what I mean? Like a rite of passage.

Susie Abraham
2010 Corolla Owner



Every Toyota has a story.
The 2010 Corolla – a 2010 Top Safety Pick from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.*
Share your story at facebook.com/toyota

Thanks for your story, Susie!



*Insurance Institute for Highway Safety 2010 rating for Corolla, vehicle class Small Cars. Ratings are only meaningful when comparing vehicles in the same class. 2010 model year tested. For more details on 2010 Top Safety Pick Awards, see www.iihs.org ©2010 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

weekend
remodel

Install a wall niche

Plug in some instant old-world charm with a premolded polyurethane insert, scrap lumber, and a few basic tools

By JENNIFER STIMPSON + Photographs by LAURA MOSS

Cost: About \$150, depending on the size of the niche

Time: 6 hours

Difficulty: Medium. Cutting the hole in the wall and installing the backing is a custom job, but installing the niche is easy



For complete instructions, turn the page

In the good old days of ancient Rome, shallow wall recesses with scalloped arches were used to display classical urns or statues. Pleasing and practical, these architectural accents have been around ever since, from the reliquaries of Europe's grand Gothic churches to the wood-framed walls of America's Victorian houses. Today you can capture the same timeless charm by buying a pre-formed niche of dense foam from an online retailer and building it into a barren wall. To see how, follow along as senior technical editor Mark Powers creates a hole for the insert and mounts it in place using adhesive caulk. Then all you have to do is salvage a nice urn.

Nashville wall niche \$199
invitinghome.com

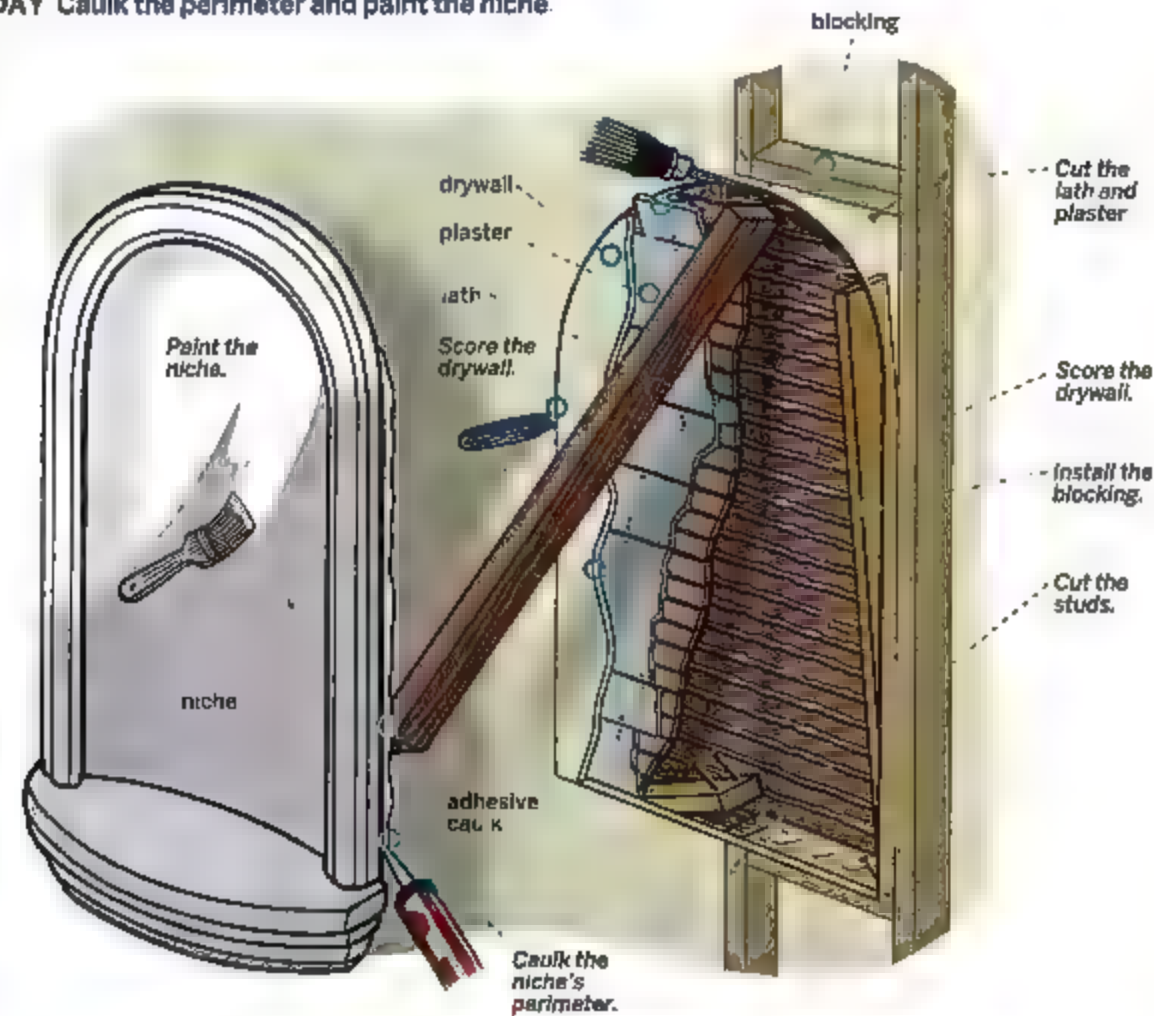


Day-to-day timeline

FRIDAY Choose your spot, trace the template, and cut open the wall.

SATURDAY Install the blocking and glue the niche in place.

SUNDAY Caulk the perimeter and paint the niche.



tools

utility scissors

stud finder

straightedge to mark cut lines between the lath pieces

utility knife to score the drywall

small pry bar

reciprocating saw to cut any lath and plaster and to remove any obtrusive studs.

circular saw to cut the 2x4 blocking

drill/driver fitted with a 1/8-inch drill bit

caulk gun

paintbrush

materials

niche Choose a dense polyurethane niche in a design that mimics surrounding moldings.

cardboard to create a template.

plastic sheeting

pole system (or painter's tape) to hold the plastic sheeting in place

painter's tape to secure plastic around work window

adhesive caulk

paint

2. Prep the location

A. Choose the location. For the easiest install, choose a nonload-bearing wall, and mark the location of the studs using a stud finder. Position the template on the wall, ideally between studs, and secure it with painter's tape. Visually, you want the bottom of the niche parallel with the floor (not necessarily level), so use a measuring tape to create equal distances between the corners and the floor. Using a pencil, trace the outline of the template on the wall.

B. Prep the area. Whether your wall is drywall or plaster—or, like ours, drywall installed over damaged plaster—hang plastic sheeting around the area to minimize dust while cutting. You can use painter's tape or a pole system, such as ZipWall, whose telescoping poles hold up the plastic to enclose an area. Then cut a window around the niche and tape down the edges of your work window.



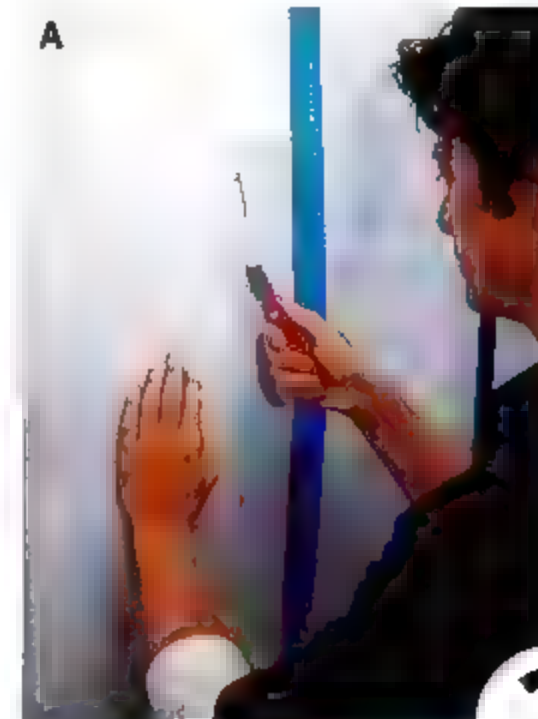
3. Cut the hole

If your wall is drywall over plaster, follow all three steps to cut through both materials. For drywall only, use steps 3A and 3B. For plaster, skip to 3C.

A. Score the drywall. Using a utility knife, pierce the drywall along the outline. Repeat several times until the knife slides through the drywall's thickness freely on all sides.

B. Remove the drywall. Wedge a small pry bar into the cut, and pull the cutout toward you.

C. Cut the lath and plaster. Using a drill/driver fitted with a 1/8-inch drill bit, make a vertical series of holes toward each side of the outline to locate the horizontal gaps between strips of wood lath. Use a straightedge to draw cut lines between holes where the bit punched through. Then, with a reciprocating saw, make horizontal relief cuts within the niche outline, but keep them shallow to avoid damaging any wires and such. This approach will allow the material to come out in clean sections and also prevent saw vibrations from causing plaster to crumble or crack beyond the outline. Now cut all the way through the perimeter of the outline, and remove the lath and plaster.



Tip Align the saw blade parallel with the wall, anchor the shoe, turn on the saw, and then dip the blade into the cut line. This should prevent the tip from bouncing off the wall.

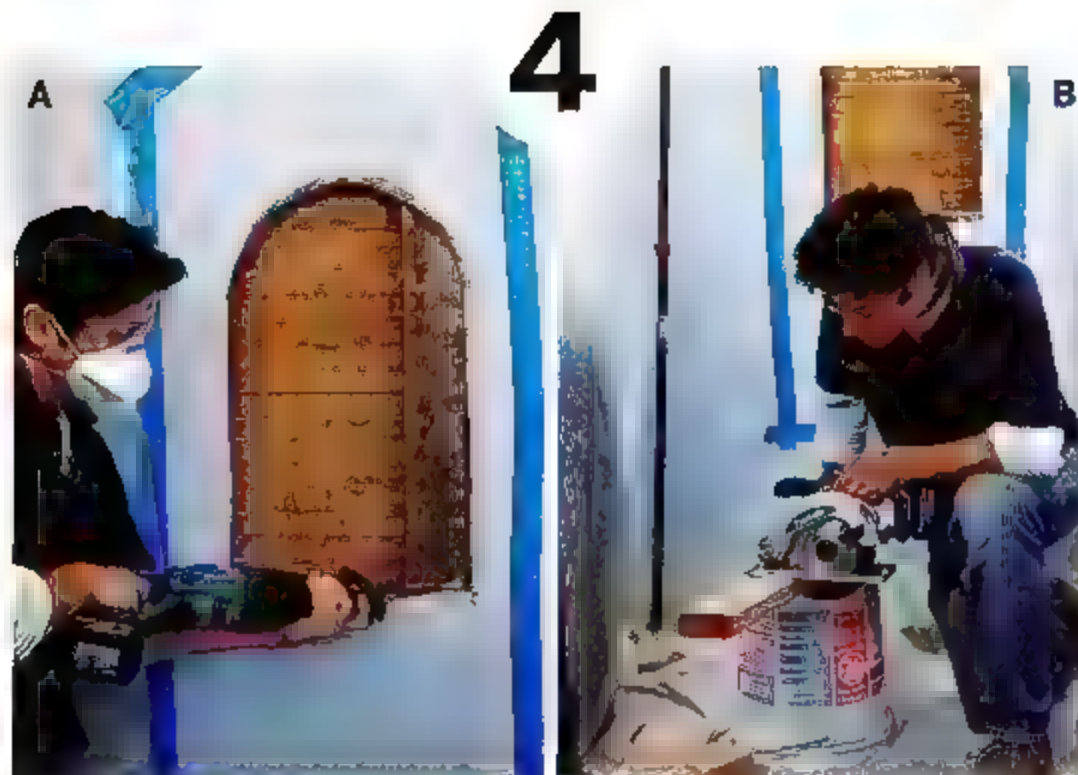
1. Make a template

A. Trace the niche. The niche has a lip around the perimeter that will rest against the wall bordering the cutout, while the convex back will nest inside the hole. To create an opening that doesn't swallow the entire niche, you'll need to make a cardboard template that represents the recessed portion only. Set the niche on a piece of cardboard like a turtle on its back, and cut down a pencil to span the distance from the underside of the lip to the cardboard. Keeping the pencil vertical and tight against the recess, run it along the outline of the niche beneath the lip, as shown, to trace your template.

B. Cut out the template. Using utility scissors, cut the outline of the niche from the cardboard.



ILLUSTRATION: GREGORY NEMEC

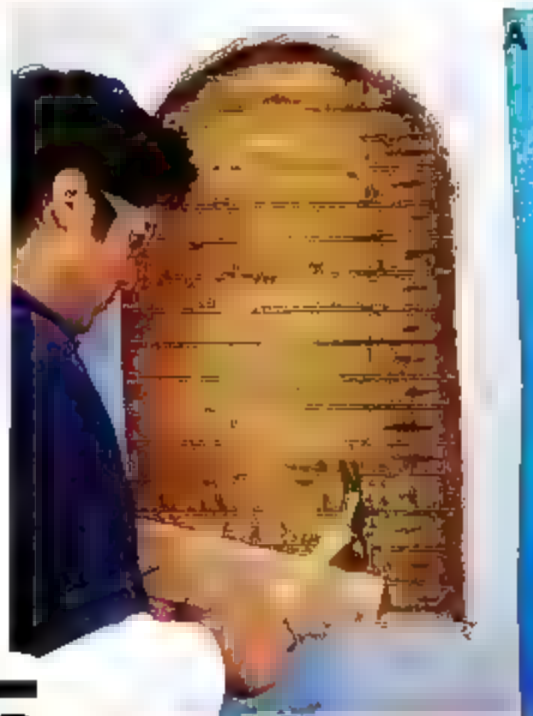


4. Cut the lumber

A. Cut out the stud. If a stud is located within the opening, use the reciprocating saw to slice it at the top and bottom, even with the opening, as shown. Then slip the blade behind the stud and cut any nails holding the stud in place so that you can remove it. Whether your studs run on the flat, as with some older homes, or on edge, measure the depth of the opening to ensure the niche will fit fully into the wall.

B. Size the blocking. Measure the hidden space between the edge of the opening and the nearest covered stud on all sides. You'll need to screw blocking to the nearest studs so that it sits flush with the edges of the opening and provides a surface for adhering the niche. Cut the 2x4 blocking pieces to size using a circular saw.

Tip Cut the blocking pieces slightly longer than necessary (leave just your pencil line when cutting) to ensure a tight fit. This will keep them from slipping behind the wall.

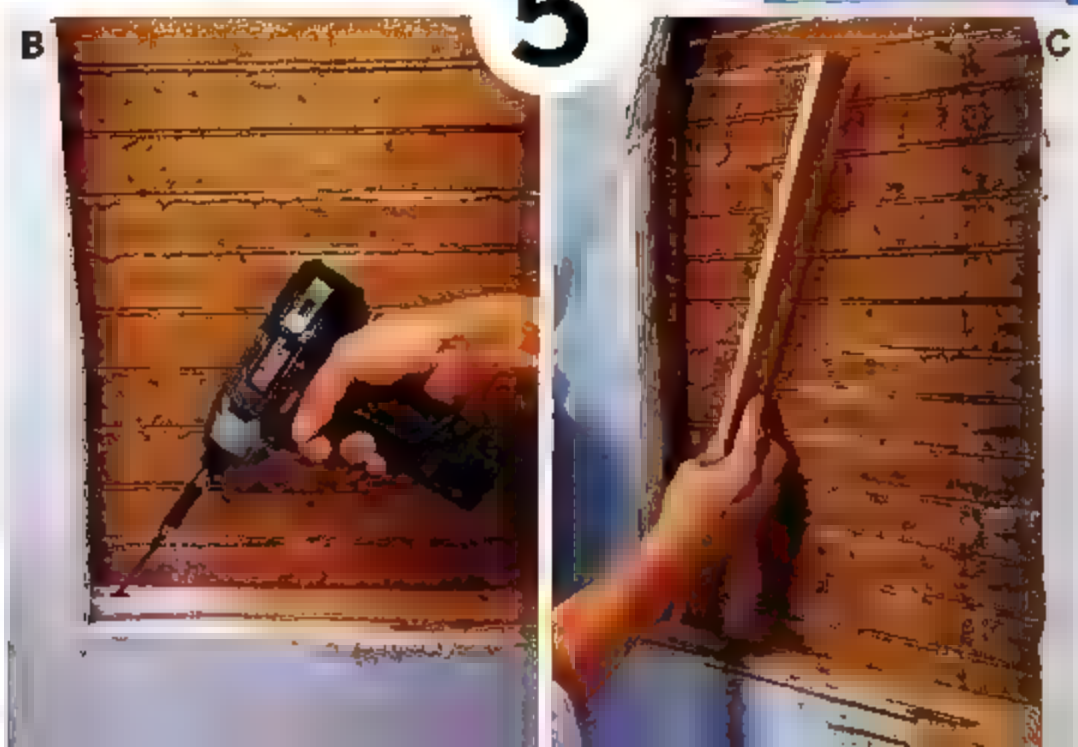


5. Install the blocking

A. Position the blocking. Tip the blocking into the opening and use a hammer to tap it into place. The horizontal blocking should sit flush with the edges of the opening at the top and bottom, tight between vertical studs.

B. Secure the blocking. Using a drill/driver and 3-inch screws, secure each end of the blocking by screwing through the block and into the nearby studs at an angle.

C. Install additional padding. For a secure installation, at least one side should also have blocking flush with the opening. If one stud is close to the edge of the opening, rip a 2x4 to size and pad out the stud, as shown. If the stud sits deeper, double up 2x4s to make up the space and bring the blocking flush with the edge of the opening. Secure the blocking with glue and a couple of screws.



6. Install the niche

A. Apply caulk to the inside of the opening. Using a caulk gun, apply a bead of adhesive caulk to the blocking that lines the opening, as shown.

B. Apply caulk to the niche. Apply caulk to the back of the niche along points where it will meet the blocking. Apply additional beads of caulk to the back of the niche's lip, which will rest against the face of the wall bordering the opening.

C. Set the niche in place. Tip the niche into place, as shown. If the niche does not fit securely in the opening, cut and install shims on the sides or bottom of the opening to hold the niche in place and keep it parallel with the floor.



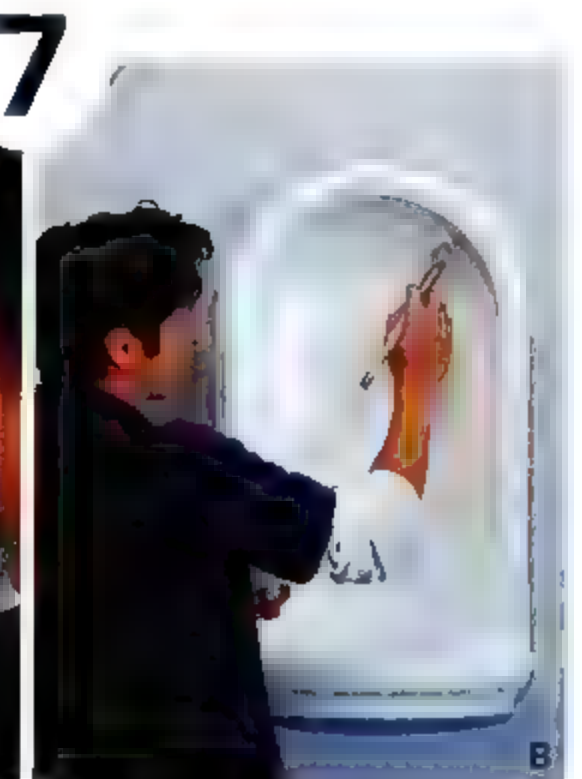
watch how

See how to install a wall niche at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

7. Finish the niche

A. Caulk the perimeter. Run a bead of adhesive white caulk around the perimeter of the niche to bridge the seam between niche and wall. Use the tip of your wet finger to smooth the caulk bead and seal the joint.

B. Paint the niche. Once the niche has set for several hours, or for the amount of time specified by the caulk's manufacturer, wipe it clean with a damp rag, then coat it with two layers of interior latex paint. Finally, let the paint dry for at least 24 hours before placing anything in the niche—urn or otherwise.



MY CAMRY TREE

Once I got pregnant with my son we wanted to upgrade to something bigger for a family of four. We bought the 2005 Toyota Camry. We called it "Silver Bullet." Kinda felt like a step up for us. A little bit of luxury—but in our price range 😊



Los Angeles, 2006

I brought my son home from the hospital in my first Camry. My son is three now and I used to have to drive him to a class that was almost an hour away and she always got me there.

A lot of good memories in that car. Family outings, weekend trips, stuff like that. Silver Bullet was hard to let go of but it was funny—actually, my daughter had the hardest time letting go! She didn't understand that we were getting a new one. She loved the sound system and didn't know how we would listen to all our music!



Arizona, 2007



Halloween, 2008



Oh, by the way, my mother loved ours so much she ended up buying a Camry too. Now we both have a 2009. It's a whole family experience.



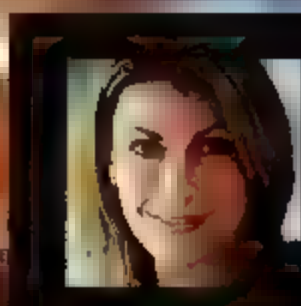
Melanie
Rosenkranz
2009
Toyota Camry
Owner

Every Toyota has a story.
And with 90% of all Toyota Camrys sold in the last 15 years still on the road*, we want to hear yours.
Share your story at [facebook.com/toyota](https://www.facebook.com/toyota)

Thanks for your story, Melanie!



*Based on R. L. Polk & Co. U.S. Vehicles in Operation registration statistics MY 1995-2010 as of January 2010. Includes Camry Solara. ©2010 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.



I want a floor that shouts beauty
to my guests, but whispers sensible to me.



bound Carpet: Urban View Cobblestone made with Recyclable Anso nylon
Hardwood: Grand Canyon Plateau Point, 8" wide plank



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Home

Clean lines soft finishes

- airy blues, warm golds
- a bold furniture mix
- graphic accents

by
deborah baldwin
photographs by
ken gutmaker
produced by
colette scanlon
styling by
sarah alba



STARTING FROM SCRATCH may be everyone's decorating fantasy, but most people have to work with what they've got. Take empty-nesters Trish and Tom Rump, who turned to designer Kelly Keiser to update the staid Mediterranean-style interior of their new San Francisco home. Graced with original arched windows, passageways, and niches, the place also came with hardwood floors, an elaborate fireplace, and a remodeled kitchen too new to redo.

With their kids grown and on their own, Trish found herself drawn to white rugs and fragile porcelain collectibles. Jettisoning the existing dark finishes and iron sconces and working with some pieces the couple owned, Keiser introduced a pale palette and a smattering of contemporary items, like a chrome lamp and glass-top table, balancing them with soft draperies and cushy pillows. Periwinkle paint helps the pottery pop, and carpet bound into area rugs shows off the refinished oak floors. "The result honors the architectural uniqueness of the place," says Keiser, "while giving it a lighter, more modern feel." One part Mediterranean, you might say, and two parts well-furnished empty nest.



San Francisco interior designer Kelly Keiser helped update this home with pale colors and modern accents.

1. bold bouquet

Bronze mums add rich color. plant some to ship yourself. \$17.50. kingsmums.com

2. curvylegs

The Ginger Bowed Leg Table in American gunwood with walnut inlay has neoclassical lines. \$748. danambruehome.com

3. shapely vessels

From left: Medium Spira. \$75. jonathanadler.com; Farm. \$3,100. from Pincis. \$78. and Acapulco Diffuser. \$68. jonathanadler.com; Mini Ceramic Bowling Pin. \$8. western.com

4. light reflector

This beaded mirror was inspired by an antique. \$295. shadesoflight.com

5. graphic pillow covers

The navy mandala pattern has yellow embroidery on one side. \$100 each. kellykeisersplendidinteriors.com

6. silver lamp

Kenroy Home's Keystone lamp echoes the chrome coffee table. \$1,066. csnstores.com

7. diy drapes

Dress up simple curtains with trim. Peyton Drape. \$79 per pane. potterybarn.com; ivory and black braid. \$5.98 per yard. mytrim.com

dark upholstery piping and drapery trim help wood moldings blend into a lightened-up scheme



A coat of paint inside the bookcases collection value

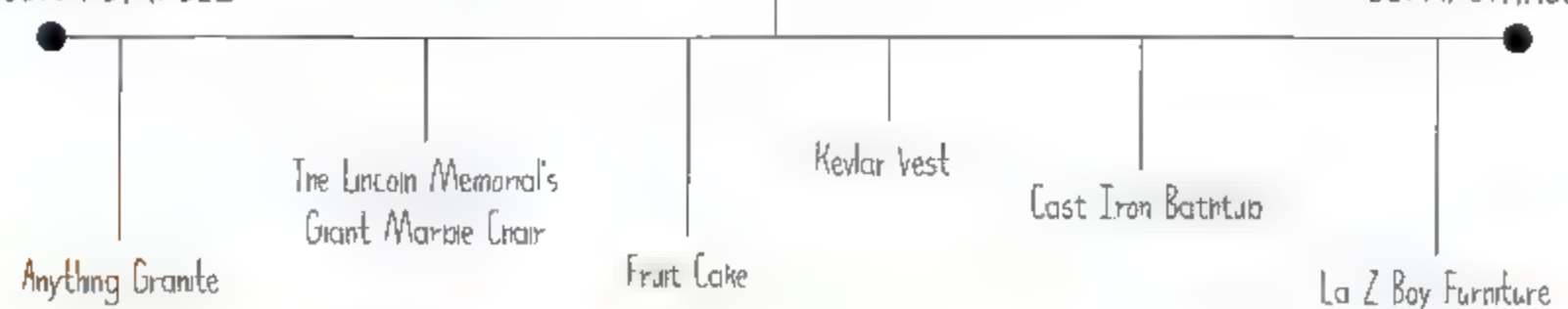


PHOTOS: 1, 3, 5, 7: ALISON ROSA

DURABILITY COMFORT INDEX

UNCOMFORTABLE

COMFORTABLE



The Maverick Room Group

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LA Z BOY Comfort. It's what we do.

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1. sunny stoneware
Earthenware jars add a welcome dose of color and texture. \$14 each. potterybarn.com

2. smart spray
The Fairbury chrome pull-down faucet makes cleaning a cinch. \$108. homedepot.com

3. stylish storage
The lids on these porcelain canisters are ringed with rubber to keep dry goods extra fresh. \$9-\$13. crateandbarrel.com

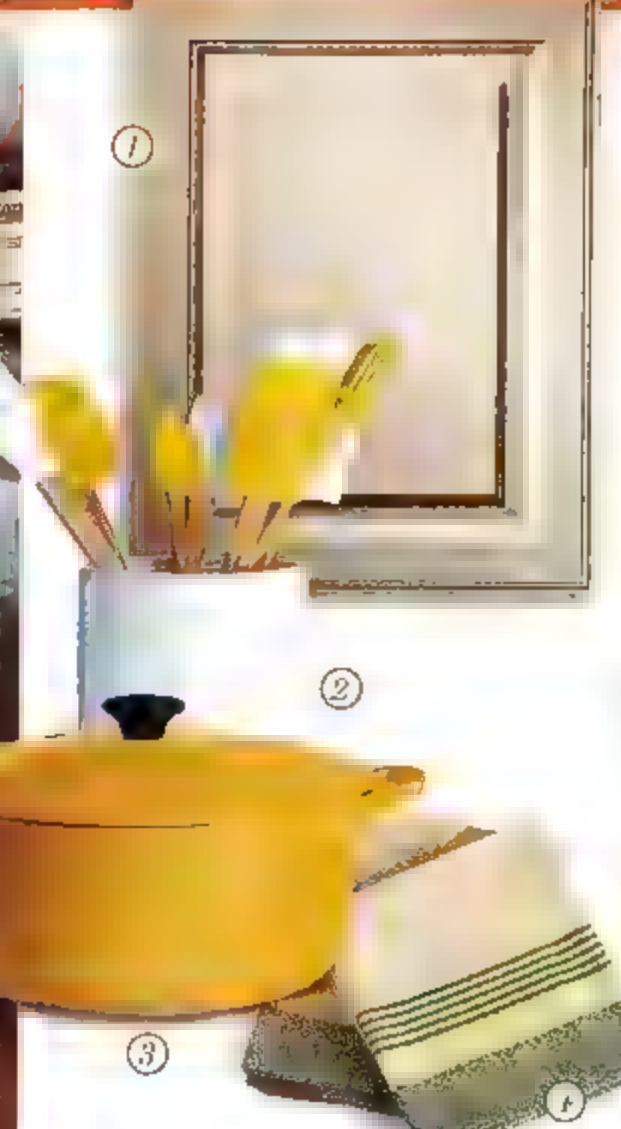
4. golden whip
Parked on the countertop, this classic stand mixer delivers a round-the-clock dose of sunny color. \$300. shopkitchenaid.com

5. woven mat
Soft shades on a patterned rug add warmth underfoot. \$25. harvesthomestores.com

6. fun fabric
Gold and cream polka dots cheer up kitchen seating. \$1.59 per yard. kravet.com



PHOTOS (THIS PAGE 2-3, 4) OPPOSITE PAGE 3, 4, 5: GILSON ROSA



1. elaborate cabinetry
Painted and glazed doors with detailed raised panels dress up the work zone. Custom colored door starting at about \$125. plainfancy.com

2. cooking tools
Spatulas and pastry brushes double as color accents. \$9-\$14. surtable.com

3. French oven
A black knob and yellow enamel lend a classic look to Le Creuset cast iron. \$270. cooking.com

4. pop of pattern
Gold and green towels make dish drying a little brighter. \$18. williams-sonoma.com

AL SAYS, "DOES THIS NOSE LOOK LIKE IT BELONGS ON A VEGETARIAN?"

AL'S THE VOICE OF REAL DOGS.

When it comes to meat time, he figures drool is the sincerest form of flattery. It means good things to come—as in the meaty goodness of ALPO With Beef, Chicken or Lamb. Mmmm, 100% complete and balanced ALPO.

REAL DOGS EAT MEAT.



rich golds, ethereal blues, and acres of white create a dreamy bedroom scene



1

1. light diffuser

Embroidered linen gives these pale blue Quiva panels a pleasing texture. \$504 per pair. delicatehome.com

2. plush pillows

Flare gold, addisty blue cushion covers enliven the room with color and pattern. Birchm, Lite Bird and Alessandra Flora. \$29, \$39 each. notterysburn.com

3. looking glass

The Circle's Round Mirror echoes the room's ironwork. \$149. paleen.com

4. luxe coverlet

The textural, poly-bl Lexington quilt picks up the palette's grayer tones. \$139. western.com

5. sound sleeper

The Cottage Iron Bed has a low front and floating panels. \$599. ibean.com

3

4

5

PHOTOS: (1, 2) ALISON ROSA

HOME



CARING FOR
THE FUTURE
IS NOW AS
EASY AS
CARRYING
OUR BAGS.

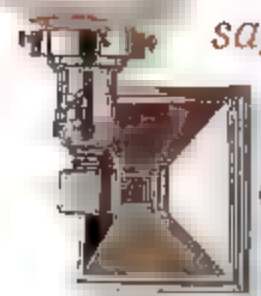


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For illustration purposes only. Diamond Crystal® products are sold without salt in plastic and other bags.





1 up lighting
The Boston Square Sconce gives off a flattering glow. \$210. circaighting.com

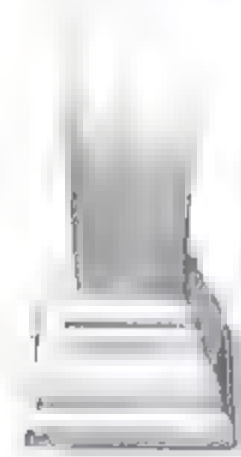
2 arc faucet
Delta's Leiland spout has an updated traditional look. \$237. homedepot.com

3 tub tile
Laid in a brick pattern, rectangles of sage-green glass create a soothing surround. \$45 per square foot. annsacks.com

4 stowaway zone
The Cartwright wall-hung medicine cabinet boosts bath storage. \$229. restorationhardware.com

5 classic basin
American Standard's Town Square Pedestal sink has graceful lines and an airy look. \$364. homedepot.com

6 splash guard
The Italian Hotel Satin Stitch Shower Curtain's tailored trim won't fade or bleed. \$79. restorationhardware.com



6

5

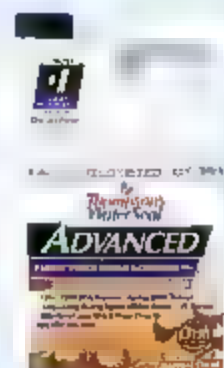
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PHOTOS (3 BY) ALISON ROSA

This Old House blueprint

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This Old House
Home

Sisal
C2

Cheetah
C2

Indigo
Pratt &
Lambert

a lively place to gather Charlie and Chris Eaton often entertain around the new island in their renovated kitchen. Painting the cabinetry in this area a rich blue gives it the look of freestanding furniture and creates a vivid contrast with the pale, yellowish khaki-green walls and golden olive trim.



PHOTOS: (PAINT BAR) BRIAN HENRI/TIME INC. DIGITAL STUDIO
(PAINT BRUSH STRONG) ANDY CHARTERIS/GETTY IMAGES

personalize

your

home

with

paint

*Strategies for choosing colors
you'll want to live with*

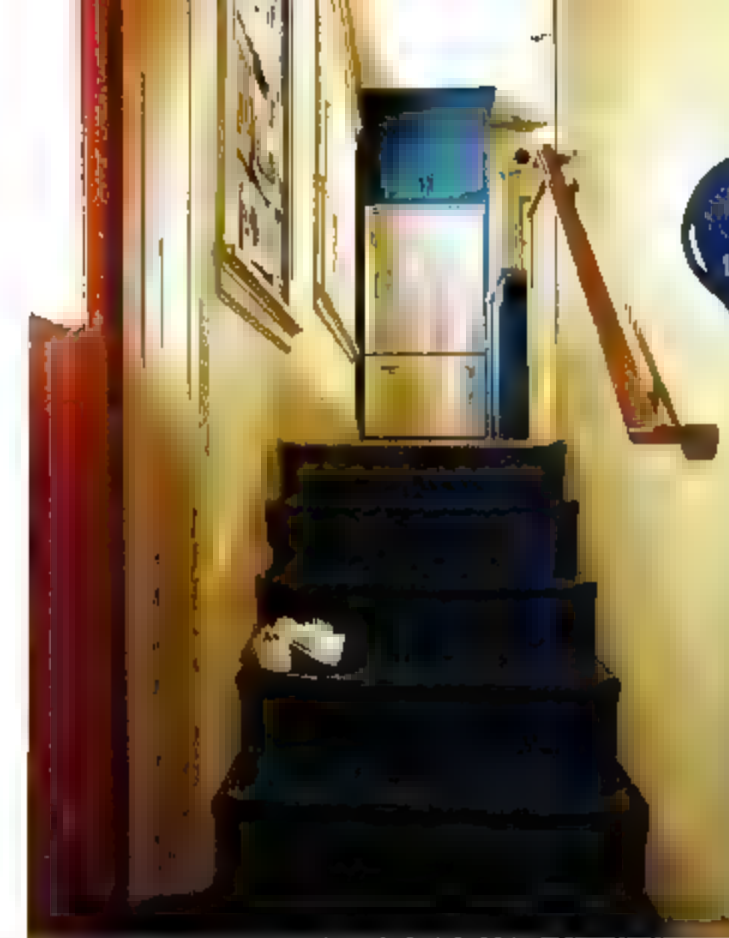
By Jill Connors + Photographs by Alex Hayden
Produced by Colette Scanlon + Styling by Michelle Cristalli

When it comes to putting paint on the walls, homeowners fall into one of two camps: those who embrace color and those who fear it. Seattle designer Kim Clements, co-owner of JAS Design Build, has worked with both kinds of clients. She compares color confidence to having perfect pitch: "Some people have it, others need to hum along," she says. But even people who love to surround themselves with color can require a little guidance in pulling together room after room. Take Charlie and Chris Eaton, whose renovated 1913 Craftsman home is shown here and on the following pages. "We knew we wanted a lot of color for this house," says



Castilian Gold
Pratt &
Lambert

sunny spot To ensure the kitchen didn't become overwhelmed by blue, the cooking area was painted a vibrant greenish gold. The panel above the stove and one at the end of the run of cabinets were given a stylized flourish inspired by the Craftsman details of the house.



Indigo
Pratt &
Lambert

bright path The back stairs were painted a rich blue to give the area visual interest and draw the eye up to the kitchen, where the color is repeated on the fridge cabinet and island.

your instincts. If you see a photo in a magazine and your instant reaction is "I love it," you might take that photo to the paint store and match it to a handful of colors," she says. She based the palette in her own home on a photo in a magazine story about Peruvian knitwear; it showed colorfully patterned handmade socks all lined up. She keeps the photo as a touchstone for guiding other choices for her rooms as well, from footstools to sofas.

Identify unifying colors

As Clements worked with the Eatons to choose the paint colors in the palette, the trio established the unifying neutrals for the trim and the ceilings, as well as a "flow color" that could repeat in different parts of the house. Although white trim is a traditional choice, Clements knew the Eatons wanted more color in their house, so she suggested a golden olive trim color that

Charlie. "But we definitely needed help with the exact palette." To develop a vivid color scheme that felt both personal and comfortable for the couple, Clements took them through her own step-by-step process.

Find an inspiration

With the Eatons, Clements used her favorite method for establishing a palette. "I have clients come to my office and look through art prints," says the designer, who then digs through a huge candy jar she keeps filled with paint chips. Although the Eatons initially didn't see anything they liked in Clements' prints, they went home and realized that a print they owned of "Street in Tahiti," a 19th-century oil painting by Paul Gauguin, held their favorite colors. "All the colors in the print were really intense and saturated," recalls Clements, so she pulled paint chips that were toned-down versions. "When you're doing bold colors, you need to make sure they're livable, too," she says.

The Eatons' whole-house palette is primarily a four-color scheme of yellow, orange, blue, and green, although 13 individual hues were used throughout the two-story, three-bedroom house. Yellow, for example, takes on various shades: In the kitchen, it's a greenish gold on cabinetry and a yellowish khaki-green pastel on the walls; in the guest bedroom, it's a saffron yellow-orange.

If artwork fails to inspire, Clements says any object will do. "It's all about limiting your options so that you aren't standing in the paint aisle faced with 1,000 colors," she says. Clements has had clients find palettes in everything from a pair of 1950s kids' cowboy print pajamas to a seashell. Even a retro bicycle will do. "Think orange frame, black tires, caramel-leather seat, chrome fenders—there's a palette," she says. "Above all, trust

bold stroke The powder room holds the Gauguin print that inspired the whole-house palette. As a small room used for only short periods of time, this space's walls were a prime spot for one of the boldest shades in the home's palette: a flame orange. The golden olive trim ties it into the other rooms on the first floor.



Cheetah
C2



↑
A print of
Gauguin's painting
"Street in Tahiti"
inspired the
home's color
palette.



Cast Iron Gold
Pratt & Lambert

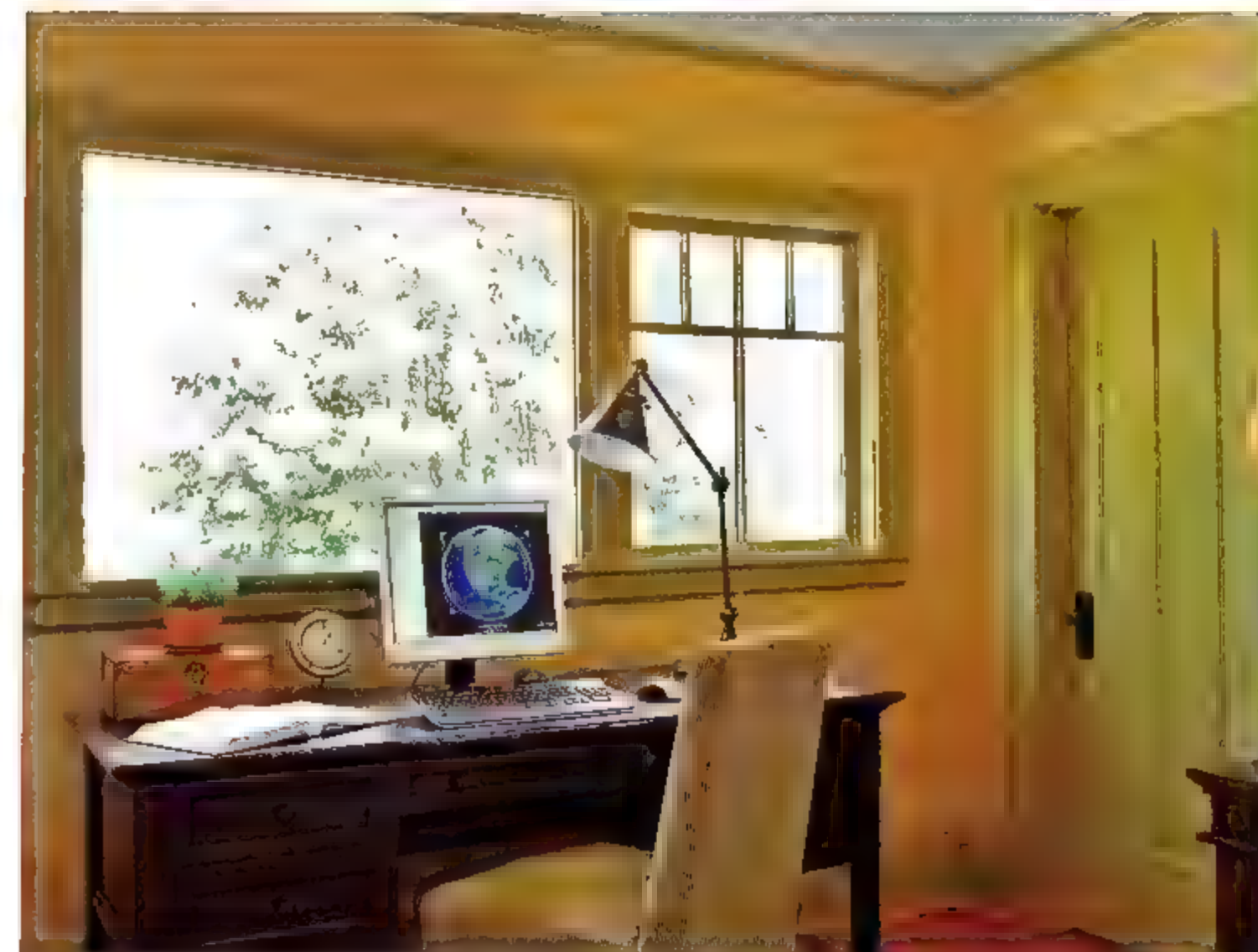
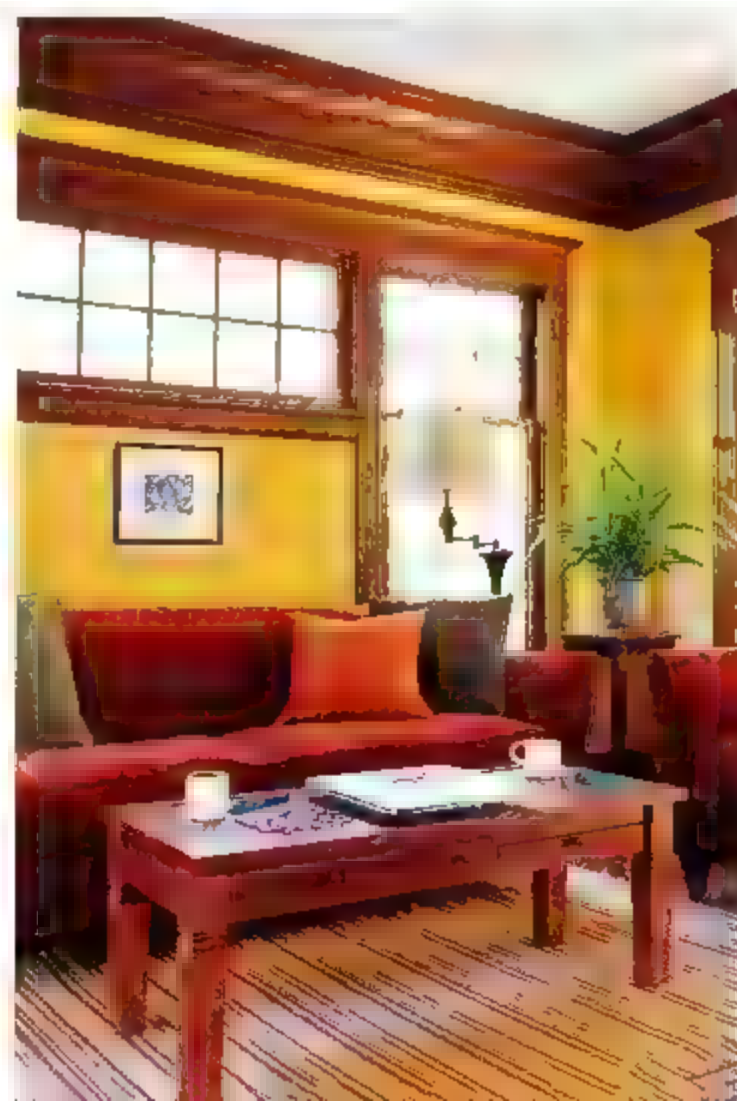
Indigo
Pratt & Lambert

Lioness
C2

enhancing woodwork The dining room cabinetry around the corner from the kitchen, ABOVE, is painted the same greenish gold as the range wall to emphasize the open connection between the spaces. The orange tones in the fir moldings and casings in the living room, RIGHT, are enhanced by apricot-gold walls.

complements all the colors in their palette—as well as the orangey-brown fir moldings in the main living areas, which they planned to keep. To make sure the house didn't become oversaturated, an off-white was chosen for all the ceilings—except in the master bath, where it became the trim color with a cleaner white overhead.

To unify a whole-house palette, Clements also likes to pick a flow color that can be used in as much as 65 to 70 percent of the house. It can be a neutral, but it doesn't have to be. For the Eatons' palette, she suggested the yellowish khaki green pastel used on the kitchen walls as the flow color, and carried it into the dining room, down the back staircase, and up into the second-floor hallway. "It looks different in different lights, so



Palomino
C2

Cheetah
C2

staying fresh Orange-gold walls in the home office warm up the room's diffused northern light, making it an invigorating area to work in. The closely related golden olive trim makes for a not-so-jarring contrast.

it's a great flow color because it's kind of alive."

With the three basic colors—trim, ceiling, and flow—chosen, the next step is to test any other colors you are considering against them. "Maybe you decide to stick to just those three colors," says Clements. "Some people want a really calm scheme." For the public spaces in your house, she suggests a limit of five colors—the three basics plus one or two more, perhaps to highlight kitchen cabinetry or a powder room. In private spaces, you can add more. "In kids' rooms or master bedrooms, the choices become much more personal and expressive."

Color map your choices

To make final decisions on the location of specific paint colors, Clements uses a process called color mapping. "I draw interior elevations and color them with markers that are as close as possible to the paint colors," she says. This tactic enabled the Eatons to see the changes in color from one wall to the next, which was particularly important in the open layout of the first floor.

Clements says that homeowners can do their own color mapping with digital photos, tracing paper, and markers. Take a digital photo of a room and print it out as an 8 by-10 photo (or larger). Tape the photo to a

window, place a piece of tracing paper over the photo, and outline the room's structural elements and architectural features only—walls, ceiling, floor, cabinetry. Next, take the paint chips of the palette you are considering and go to an art-supply store and match markers or pencils to the chips as closely as possible. Fill in the colors and see what you think. She also suggests investing \$5 per chip for the oversize 18 by 24-inch paint chips offered by some paint manufacturers. "Tape the big chips to the wall, bend them around corners, and you'll get a sense of how the color looks in various light conditions," says Clements.

See how your rooms relate

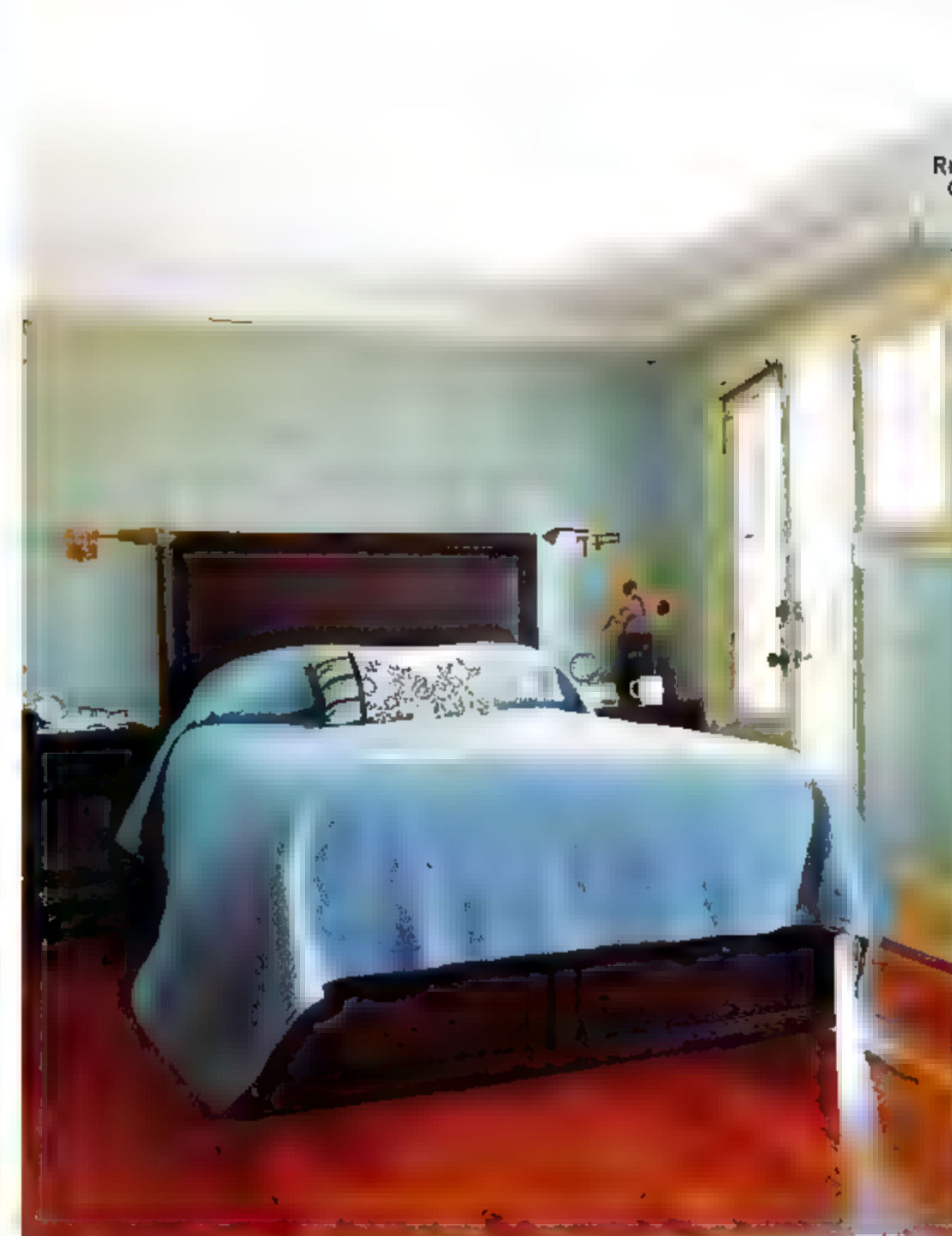
For the Eatons, establishing the colors for the kitchen—the main gathering spot, now opened up to the dining room—became the key to choosing colors for the first floor. Wanting to create a sense of welcome, the Eatons chose warm colors: three different hues in the yellow family for the walls, trim, and cooking-area cabinetry. Then they added a bold blue for the island base, refrigerator cabinet, and sink area base cabinets. "The blue makes the cabinetry feel more like freestanding furniture," says Clements. "And the two



Amontillado
C2

Cheetah
C2

guest-room glow A saffron yellow-orange covers the walls of the guest bedroom, where the built-in bed is finished in the golden olive trim color; both enhance the orange tones of the wood floor. Off-white covers the ceiling.



Russian
Olive
C2

Sisal
C2

serene spot Pale, dusty blue-green walls give the master bedroom an ethereal look. The trim is the yellowish khaki-green pastel used elsewhere on walls; the ceiling is the same off-white as most of the other rooms.



Puck
C2

Hot Female
C2

Noodle
C2

revved up with red For the full bath off the upstairs hall, which functions as the master, using the off-white for the trim provides a subtle contrast with the cleaner white used overhead. The blue-green walls get added personality via a deep-red vanity.

color families define different areas." She meshed the kitchen with the adjacent dining room by repeating colors. "We emphasized the open connections by blurring the lines between dining room and kitchen," she says. An apricot gold covers the walls of the living room, giving the room a distinctive look but one that is also in keeping with the adjacent dining room. "We wanted that glow to carry out from the kitchen area to the other social areas of the house."

Orange and yellow hues also cover two of the most vivid rooms in the house, the powder room and upstairs guest bedroom—so vivid, in fact, that they gave Charlie Eaton pause. "I remember peeking under the plastic sheet that was blocking off the rooms being painted, and thinking, *Wow, we've gone too far*," he says. But hesitation turned to infatuation as the whole-house palette emerged. Upstairs, that also includes an orange-gold home office and calming blue-greens for the master bedroom and bathroom walls.

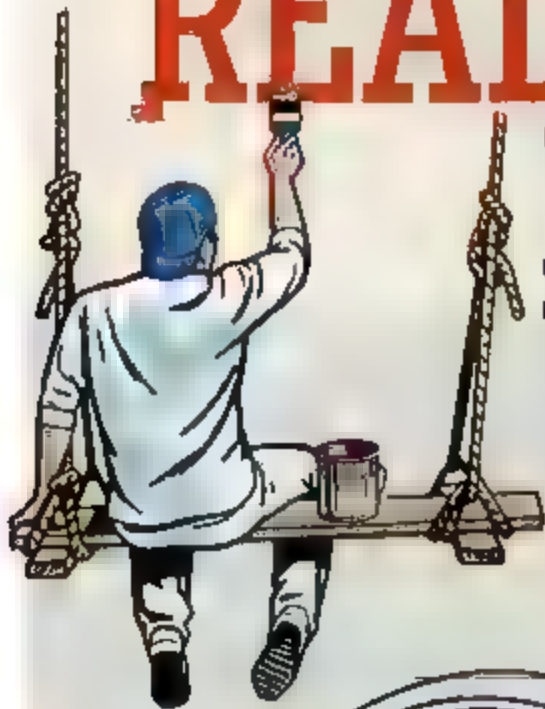
"Each room seems more alive," says Chris of the finished results. "Downstairs, the colors are warm and welcoming. Upstairs, we now have an inviting place for overnight guests and a soothing but still colorful look for the master bedroom and bath."

"This was a wonderful old house before," adds Charlie, "and it's a great house today." ■

READ THIS BEFORE YOU PICK UP A PAINTBRUSH

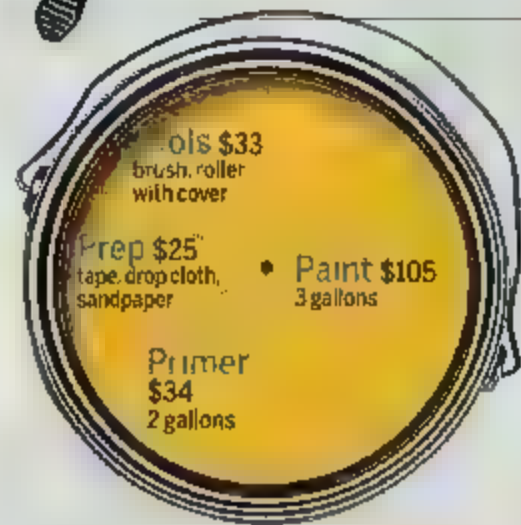
This Old House's expert guide to the best products, tools, and techniques for putting color on your walls

BY NATALIE RODRIGUEZ ILLUSTRATIONS BY ERIC LARSEN



WHAT IT COSTS

Expect to pay about \$197 to paint the average 12-by-12-foot room



HOW TO HANDLE HOLES AND CRACKS Fill holes with drywall compound. For hairline cracks, widen with a utility knife before covering with fiber mesh tape. Coat the tape with joint compound, let dry, and sand—recoat and sand two more times

ROOM PREP CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Remove** window treatments, wall-hung art, area rugs, outlet and switch plate covers.
- ☐ **Cover** furniture with drop cloths.
- ☐ **Wrap** chandeliers and sconces in plastic sheeting.
- ☐ **Protect** window and door hardware by removing or covering with tape.
- ☐ **Sand** walls and trim.
- ☐ **Dust** with a tack cloth. (Treat plaster with a solution of 1 pint vinegar and 1 gallon of water.)
- ☐ **Tape** exposed outlets and switches, window panes, HVAC vents, and any other areas you want to keep paint-free.

WHICH PAINT WHERE

Kitchen and bath Choose a moisture- and peel-resistant satin or semigloss with mildewicides. **Ceiling** Paints abetted for ceilings are thicker and less splatter-prone than wall paint. They are also extra flat to cut glare from lights. **Entry, stairway and family room** Durable, easy-to-clean 100 percent acrylic latex in an eggshell sheen will stand up to high traffic and fingerprints.



PICK THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB

ROLLER COVERS

- 1. Smooth roller, 1/4-inch nap:** Best for semigloss or gloss on smooth drywall or plaster walls.
- 2. Semi-smooth roller, 3/8-inch nap:** Best for semigloss, flat, or eggshell on lightly textured plaster or wood-paneled walls.
- 3. Rough roller, 3/4-inch nap:** Best for flat or eggshell on highly textured stucco or masonry walls.

BRUSHES

- 1. 1-inch angled brush:** Best for details, such as moldings and window muntins.
- 2. 2 1/2-inch angled brush:** Best for window and door casing, cabinetry, and cutting in.
- 3. 3-inch straight brush:** Best for large expanses, such as wainscoting and doors.



INVEST IN THE BEST

Paint quality depends on the type and amount of pigment. High percentages of titanium dioxide pigment rather than cheaper calcium carbonate provide better coverage with fewer coats. **Primer** A 100 percent acrylic formula helps paint grip surfaces, hides stains, and allows you to go from a dark color to a light one with fewer coats. **Rollers** Blended fiber covers combine the extra pickup of wool with the durability of polyester. **Brushes** Tapered brushes with splints that are solid, not hollow—pick up and spread paint best.

LADDER SAFETY 101

DO stand on a low rung, with your body centered between the ladder rails and both feet firmly planted. Keep one hand free, using the ladder tray to hold your pail.



DON'T stand on one of the top two rungs or overreach; both can throw you off balance. Never paint with one hand while holding your pail in the other, preventing you from easily grabbing the ladder.



SPECIAL EFFECTS



TEXTURED Sand-like granules cover flaws in walls and impart a rustic look. **Premium Plus Texture Paint** (shown above), \$26 for a 2-gallon can; behr.com

PEARL An iridescent glaze with a milky glow. **Studio Finish Glaze Pearlescent White 101**, \$34 per gallon; benjaminmoore.com

METALLIC Light-reflecting pigments give walls shimmer. **Faux Impressions Metallic**, \$75 per gallon; sherwinwilliams.com

SUEDE Microscopic beads create a soft, fabric-like finish that adds depth and texture to walls. **Suede**, \$54 per gallon; ralphlaurenhome.com

NO BLEED LINES

These tapes protect surfaces while providing crisp edges to paint along. **Top** For striped designs, choose tape with a polymer-based adhesive that forms a barrier at the edges. Shown: FrogTape Multi-Surface, \$10; frogtape.com. **Middle** For general masking, use JV-resistant tape with a 14-day adhesion time. Shown: ScotchBlue Painter's Tape, \$5; 3m.com. **Bottom** For multi-week projects, use a 60-day tape that won't leave residue behind when you remove it. Shown: ShurRelease, \$10; shurtape.com.



HOW TO HANDLE THE OOPS

Drips on the floor Remove latex with a water-dampened rag, use mineral spirits for oil paints. Scrape dried blobs with a utility knife. **Bubbles on drywall** Pop and scrape off with a putty knife. Then sand the area with 330-grit paper, tack with a damp cloth, and use a foam pad for touch-ups. **Lap lines on plaster or drywall** Repaint the area, applying light pressure on a roller that has soaked up only a quarter of a full load of paint.



THE SHINE FACTOR

FLAT/MATTE A low-luster sheen that provides even coverage and helps conceal flaws but is hard to clean.

EGGSHELL This soft sheen is easy to touch up and can be wiped clean without burnishing.

SEMIGLOSS A slightly shiny finish that's glass smooth, durable, and washable.

GLOSS This light-reflecting sheen can take a beating but does highlight surface imperfections.

WHAT'S NEW

Full-spectrum paints have at least four colorants (but no black) for better coverage and more vibrant hues. C2-201 Interior Latex, \$55 per gallon, c2paint.com



Ceramic paints have the low sheen of a matte but can be scrubbed like a gloss thanks to surface-hardening microscopic ceramic beads. Ultra Ceramic in matte, \$45 per gallon, mura.co.com



Odor-eating paints contain baking soda to help neutralize household smells. Refresh Paint, \$26 per gallon, dutchboy.com



HOW MUCH PAINT TO BUY

Divide the square footage of your wall surfaces by the coverage per gallon listed on the can. Example: A 20-by-23-foot room with an 8-foot ceiling is 688 square feet; 688 ÷ 350 square feet of coverage per can = 2 gallons (make it 4 gallons for two coats).

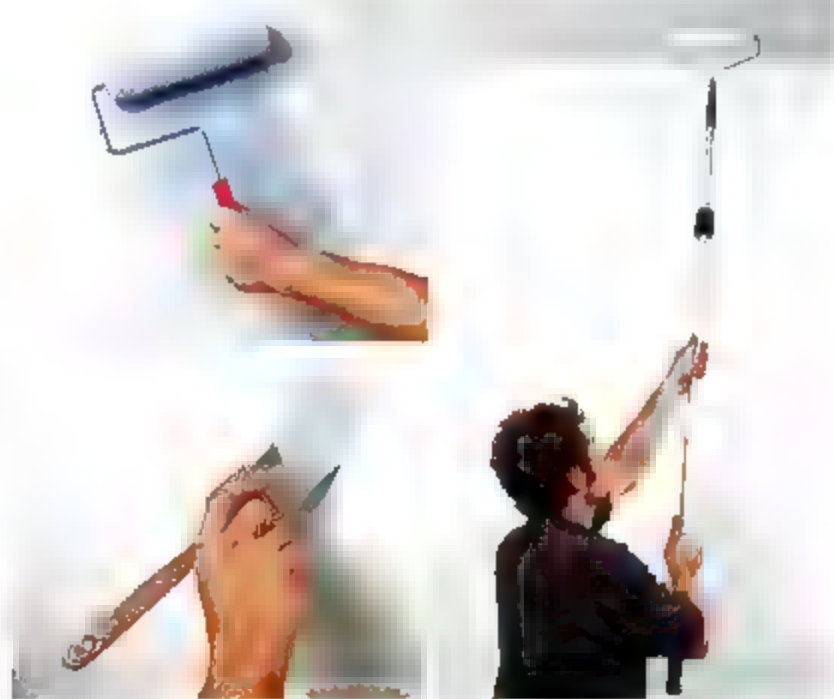
GET A COMFY GRIP

Putting paint on the wall is easy, but the repetition can leave you feeling achy. Prevent the pain by changing your grip or the way you move.

Roller: Roll up at a slight angle before coming straight down.

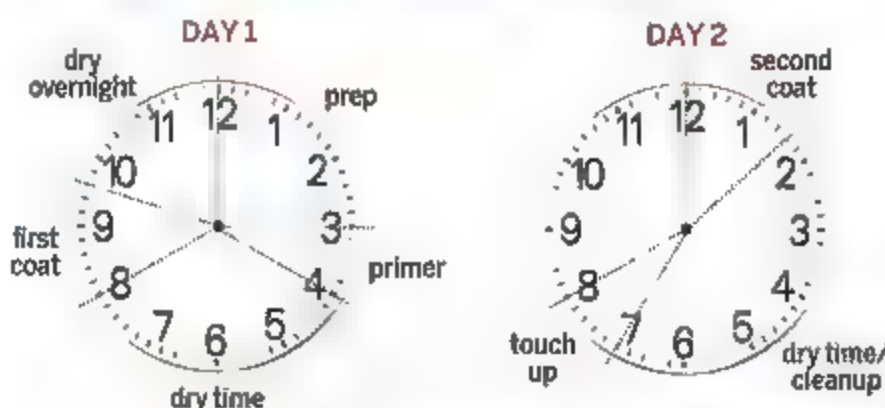
Brush: Pinch the base of the brush with your index finger and thumb along the bottom of the ferrule.

Extension pole: Space your hands about 18 inches apart. For ceilings, roll the area in front of you, rather than directly above or behind, to avoid back strain. For walls, bow down and stretch up from the waist.



HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

Painting is one project you can't rush. Not allowing a coat to fully dry, for instance, can ruin all your efforts. An average 12-by-12 foot room clocks in at about two days.



PERFECT YOUR TECHNIQUE

Start by cutting in with a brush. Next, use a roller to fill the wall space. Make W shapes to release the most amount of paint from the roller, then go over the area with vertical strokes to evenly distribute it. Work in 3-by-3-foot sections to keep a wet edge and avoid lap marks.



PHOTOS (LEFT TO BOTTOM) SUSAN SEIBERT; WENDELL WEBBER; NATHAN KIRKMAN; (TOP RIGHT) TED MORRISON; (3, 4) TED MORRISON; (5, 6) TED MORRISON; (7, 8) TED MORRISON; (9, 10) TED MORRISON; (11, 12) TED MORRISON; (13, 14) TED MORRISON; (15, 16) TED MORRISON; (17, 18) TED MORRISON; (19, 20) TED MORRISON; (21, 22) TED MORRISON; (23, 24) TED MORRISON; (25, 26) TED MORRISON; (27, 28) TED MORRISON; (29, 30) TED MORRISON; (31, 32) TED MORRISON; (33, 34) TED MORRISON; (35, 36) TED MORRISON; (37, 38) TED MORRISON; (39, 40) TED MORRISON; (41, 42) TED MORRISON; (43, 44) TED MORRISON; (45, 46) TED MORRISON; (47, 48) TED MORRISON; (49, 50) TED MORRISON; (51, 52) TED MORRISON; (53, 54) TED MORRISON; (55, 56) TED MORRISON; (57, 58) TED MORRISON; (59, 60) TED MORRISON; (61, 62) TED MORRISON; (63, 64) TED MORRISON; (65, 66) TED MORRISON; (67, 68) TED MORRISON; (69, 70) TED MORRISON; (71, 72) TED MORRISON; (73, 74) TED MORRISON; (75, 76) TED MORRISON; (77, 78) TED MORRISON; (79, 80) TED MORRISON; (81, 82) TED MORRISON; (83, 84) TED MORRISON; (85, 86) TED MORRISON; (87, 88) TED MORRISON; (89, 90) TED MORRISON; (91, 92) TED MORRISON; (93, 94) TED MORRISON; (95, 96) TED MORRISON; (97, 98) TED MORRISON; (99, 100) TED MORRISON



SAVE YOUR LEFTOVERS

Keep paint in an airtight glass jar. To get a better seal, cover the opening with plastic wrap before screwing on the cap. Store the jar off the floor in a cool, dry place for up to five years.

TOUCH-UP TIP Paint an outlet cover and affix painter's tape with the color name and number on its back. If you ever have to buy more paint, simply remove the cover and bring this handy "chip" to the store to get an exact match to the aged version on your walls.



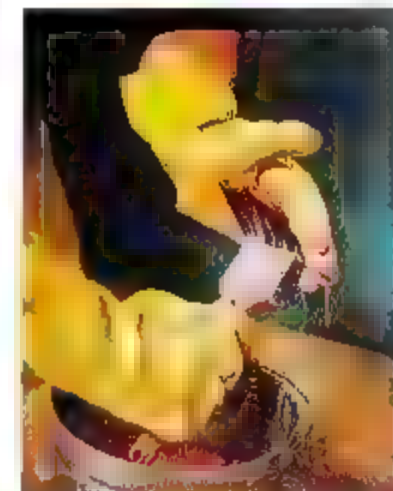
PAINT BY NUMBERS

Work in this sequence to minimize the chance of marring already painted surfaces.

1. ceiling
2. walls
3. doors
4. trim

GREENER OPTIONS

In response to concerns about indoor air quality, nearly every major manufacturer now offers low-VOC (generally 50 grams or less per liter) or no-VOC (5 grams or less) paint. Some, like Anna Sova, even go a step further, making paints from food-grade ingredients.



CARING FOR BRUSHES

Soak synthetic brushes in warm water (use turpentine for natural bristle brushes) and gently wring out. Run a metal brush comb through bristles to straighten them and remove any clumps of paint. Shake out excess water, reshape bristles with your fingers, and lay flat to dry. Store in original packaging or folded newspaper, and either lay flat or hang brushes from their handles.



DISPOSAL You can donate extra paint (maximum one-third can) to a local charity or recycling center. Just enter your ZIP code at earth911.com to find out how. If the paint is dried or degraded, call your municipality's waste authority for proper disposal directions.

12 DIY PROJECTS to Add Old-House Charm



plans and ideas for creating
vintage style in any home

By Josh Garskof

ORIGINAL DETAILS. Some houses have 'em, some don't. If yours is among the latter—meaning that it wasn't born with architectural elements like carved wood balustrades or embossed metal window latches, or if some of those enhancements were lost over the years to misguided remodeling—take heart. With a little sweat equity, you can add your own. Read on for a dozen homeowner-friendly projects, from crafting an ornate pier mirror to swapping out hardware-store-variety metal doorknobs for vintage glass sparklers, that are sure to add classic character, whether you live in a 1970s ranch or a turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOE McKENDRY



1 Coffered ceiling

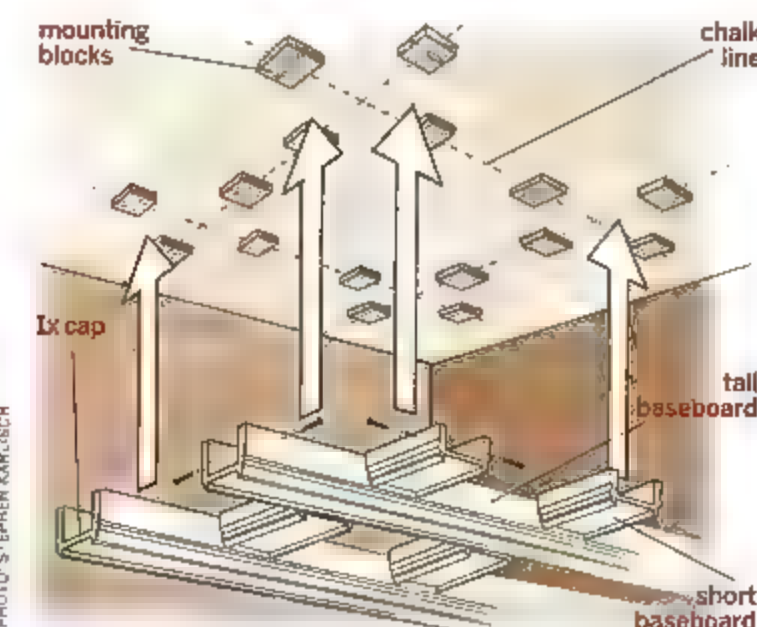
CEILING COFFERS came into vogue during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when American architecture went retro with a revival of classical house styles. The hollow wood-panel grid was originally used during the Renaissance to dress up beams. Today, a handy homeowner can easily create coffers. The trick, says *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva, is to build U-shaped beams on the floor to minimize overhead work.

How to do it

Map out your grid pattern on graph paper, using your room's dimensions to determine the width and number of beams. Next, find the center of your ceiling, and snap two intersecting chalk lines, one spanning the length of the room and the other its width. Measuring off those centerlines, snap a series of subsequent lines to match the grid pattern on your graph paper. These lines represent the centers of the beams.

Now start building the U-shaped beams, full-length ones to span the width of the room, and smaller ones to fit in between, forming the grid. Rather than using plain boards and trimming them out later, the design below calls for baseboard molding with an integrated decorative cap for the side walls. The center is a 1x board that's recessed between the sides to create a reveal. For the full-length beams, use tall baseboard moldings. For the small intersecting ones, use shorter moldings so that where the beams meet, their decorative caps will be offset, eliminating the need for complex mitering or coping.

Lift each full-length beam to the ceiling, sleeving it over 2x blocking that's been centered and fastened along your chalk lines. To secure the beams, drive nails through the side walls into the edge of the blocking. Install the small lengths in the same fashion to complete your grid.



2 Upgrade a newel post

THE STAIRCASE IS FRONT AND CENTER in the entry of most homes, and the newel post positioned at its end is what greets your guests. Given such prominence, it's a shame newels typically have little more detail than a baseball bat. By swapping in one with intricate turnings, though, you can instantly upgrade first impressions of your home.



How to do it

You'll find the most ornate newels at salvage yards, starting at around \$150. Choose one that's about the same height and type as the newel you plan to replace. The one below is a "rail-to-post" type, meaning that the handrail secures just below the newel's final top.

To attach the newel, you need specially fastener kits. At the base, use a two-way Sure-Tite screw (\$16 at stairpartsusa.com), which has wood threads on one end and machine threads on the other. Drill a pilot hole in the framing of the stair where the newel will sit, and twist in the wood-thread end. Drill a corresponding hole in the bottom of the newel, and fit the post loosely over the fastener's projecting machine threads like a sleeve.

The handrail is fastened much the same way using a rail bolt (\$4.40 at stairpartsusa.com), which has wood threads that go into the newel and machine threads that go into the rail.

To tighten the assembly, twist a washer and nut on the machine thread end of both fasteners. Access these through drill-outs in the side of the newel and underneath the rail, and hide the holes with wood plugs.

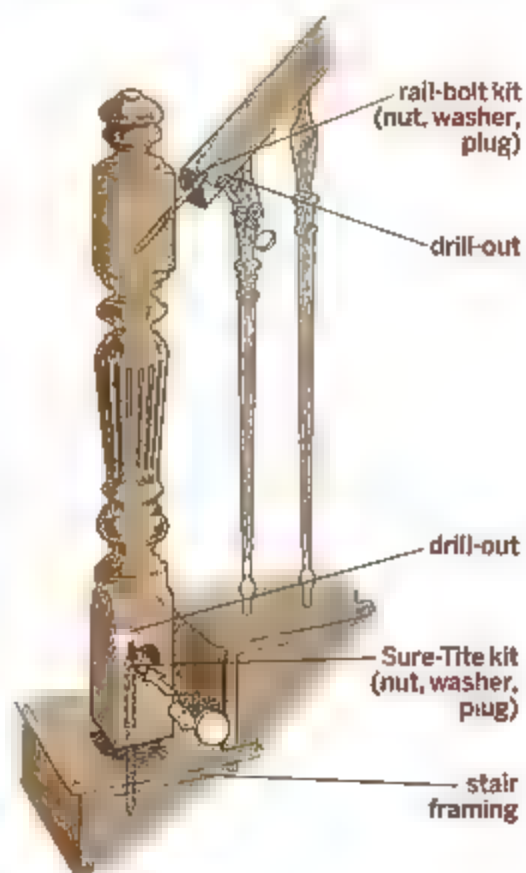


PHOTO: JULIAN WASS



more wainscot ideas

See other paneling designs and materials at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

3 Install a Lincrusta wainscot

AS TIME HONORED as it is earth-friendly, Lincrusta is a sister to linoleum, the hard-wearing flooring made from linseed oil. The difference is that Lincrusta, with its intricate embossed patterns, is used for walls. Capped with a chair rail, it creates a stunning wainscot in high-traffic foyers and stairways.

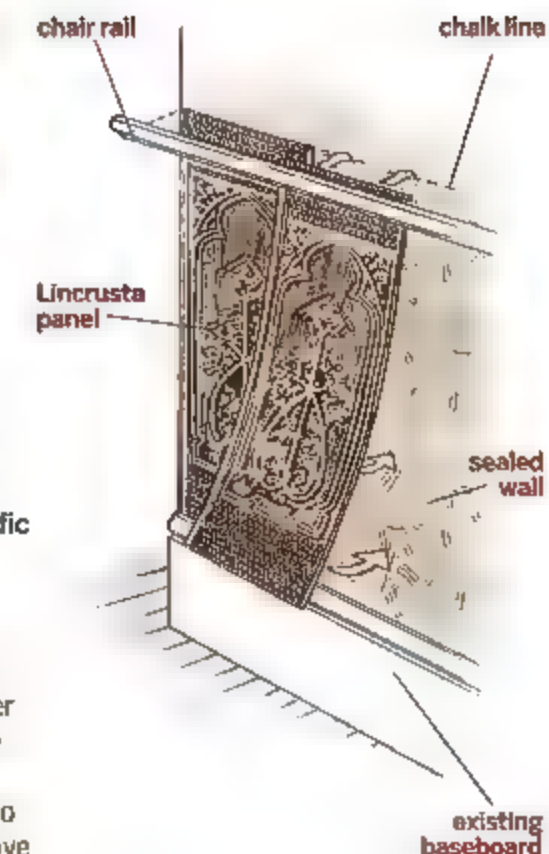
How to do it

Determine the height for your wainscot, and snap a level chalk line. Be sure to factor in the height of your existing baseboards with that of the Lincrusta panels (shown: Gothic Dado 36-by-22-inch panel, \$300 for a box of five; wallpaperplus.com). Coat the wall below the line with an oil-based primer to seal the surface, and let dry.

Sponge the back of the Lincrusta panels with warm water, stack back-to-back, and let sit for 30 minutes while they absorb the moisture. This prevents future expansion that could cause the panels to buckle at the seams.

Wipe the back of the first panel dry and brush on a clay-based adhesive (\$28 per gallon; wallpaperplus.com). Starting at an outside corner of the room, set the panel in place. Work from the top down, and use the chalk line and a level to check alignment. Run a felt roller over the panel to remove air pockets, and wipe away excess adhesive before moving on to the next panel. At corners, fill gaps between panels with linseed putty (Crawford's Painter's Putty, \$12.50; shop.com).

Once the panels are installed and the adhesive has fully cured—about 24 hours—top with chair rail molding. Last, prime and paint your new wainscot.



4 Build in a pier mirror

BEFORE ELECTRIC LIGHTING, mirrors served a purpose we don't usually think of: brightening rooms. Installed between windows in front parlors, tall pier mirrors reflected natural light. In entry foyers, they did double duty as a spot to primp on the way out the door. Today, a pier mirror is a welcome addition almost anywhere in the house.

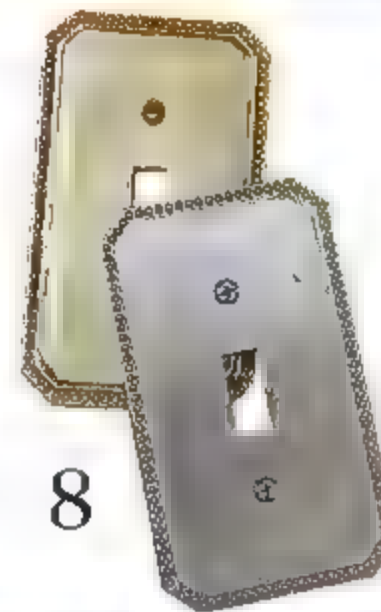
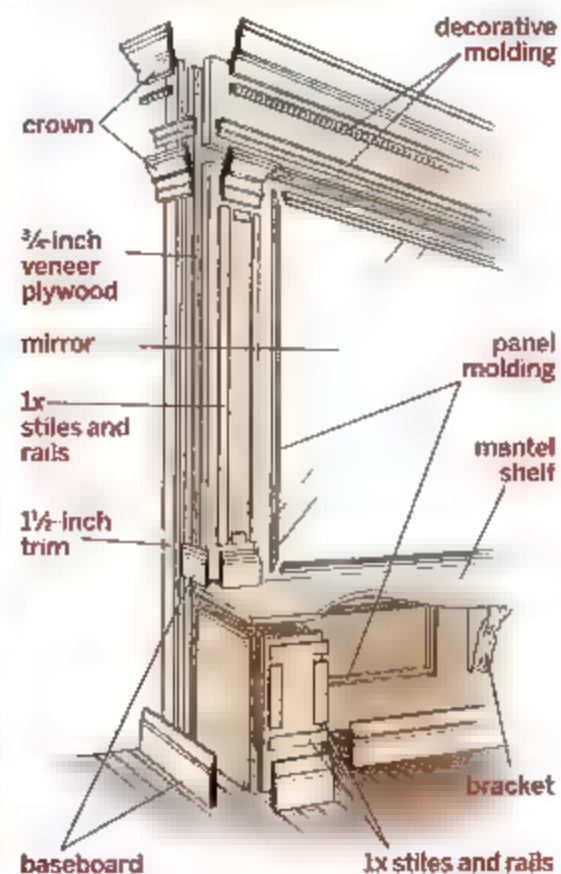
How to do it

Make your pier mirror's back, built-up frame, and bench supports out of 3/4-inch stain-grade veneer plywood. Use solid stock for the decorative moldings, bench seat, and 1x stile and-rail paneling.

Start by boxing out the U-shaped bench supports, which secure to the mirror's back via blocking. Glue the supports and the space between them with 1x stiles and rails. Rather than routing a curved bench seat, make a rectangular one out of 3/4-inch board, or use a salvaged mantel shelf. Support the seat with a carved bracket.

For the mirror frame, rip narrow plywood boards for the sides and bottom, and a wide board for the top. Secure the frame to the back and hide its outside edges with 1 1/2-inch trim. Apply 1x stiles and rails to the frame sides to form pilasters. Trim the pilaster tops and the frame's entablature with crown and decorative moldings. Skirt the pilasters and the bench with baseboards. To add shadow lines to the bench, apply panel molding to the inside edges of the stiles and rails.

Last, coat the back of a beveled mirror with adhesive, fit it inside the frame, and trim its edges with panel molding.



Simple Upgrades

Eight more ways to bring traditional appeal to your home—no major skills or tools required

5. Install runner rods | Before pneumatic carpet nailers, handsome metal rods secured stair runners. Similar to shown: Zorrods Standard Stair Rod in oil-rubbed bronze, \$19; floorsandsurfaces.com

6. Make doors sparkle | Glass knobs replaced brass and bronze ones during World War I, when metal was in short supply. Shown: Salvaged originals in a range of shapes and colors, starting at \$75 each; discoveries.com

7. Wire up a sconce | These electric fixtures imitate the elegant wall-hung gaslights that came before them. Shown: Wings sconce in a crackled-gold finish, \$240; horchow.com

8. Swap switch plates | A lustrous metal cover has a lot more style than a plastic one. Shown: Omnia Beaded Toggle plate in polished brass, \$21, and satin nickel, \$25; myknobs.com

9. Hang interior shutters | Traditional wood louvers can let in light and air while also screening the view. Custom sizes and finishes, starting at \$300 per window; horizonshutters.com

10. Add color to cabinetry | Earthy greens, browns, yellows, or reds will evoke late-19th- and early-20th-century paint palettes. Similar to shown: Behr's Premium Plus Ultra Interior semigloss in Moss Print, \$25 per gallon; homedepot.com

11. Deck out windows | An upgrade over your plain—and likely paint-splattered—sash locks, embossed latches were a Victorian-era staple. Shown: Solid Bronze Flora Design sash lock, \$18.50; houseofantiquehardware.com

12. Glue up a medallion | Once made from heavy plaster, ceiling medallions now come in lightweight polyurethane and need only adhesive to hold them in place. Similar to shown: Symmetrical medallion, \$303; typon.com



ALL ABOUT

Tin ceilings

Embossed metal panels give your ceilings an authentic vintage look quickly and easily. The experts at This Old House walk you through the basics of selecting and using this venerable remodeling material **By Thomas Baker**

A plain white ceiling hardly rates a cursory glance. But cover it with richly patterned metal panels, and instantly it becomes an eye-catching feature.

Tin ceilings originated in the 1880s as an affordable way for people to dress up a room's fifth wall. Tin was not only an aesthetic upgrade, meant to emulate high-end decorative plaster, it also offered a measure of fire protection—a big concern at a time when home cooking, lighting, and heating were largely done with open flames. The 2-by-2- and 2-by-4-foot panels were originally stamped out of steel and called “steel ceilings.” It wasn't until later, when the raw steel panels were plated in tin to help slow down rusting, that the colloquial term *tin ceilings* arose.

Today, most panels are made of 30-gauge tin-plated steel a mere 1/100 inch thick. Incredibly, many historic patterns are still sold some 70 years after tin's heyday came to an end. But now you have a wider choice of factory finishes and colors, and more DIY-friendly ways to install the panels.

On the following pages, we help you pick a pattern that suits the size and style of your room, show the finishes and materials to match your budget and application, and provide advice for planning layouts and estimating costs. Plus, you'll see some inventive ways to decorate surfaces other than ceilings. Whichever way you use these panels, you'll be adding traditional character to your house, whatever its age.

Anatomy

A metal ceiling is actually a system of closely matched components.

Field panels . . .
Cover the center of the ceiling.

Filler . . .
Creates a low-profile border around field panels.

cornice . . .
Marks the transition from ceiling to wall



A shiny clear coat on the tin ceiling adds Victorian-era gleam to this kitchen. Shown: No. 535, 2-by-2-foot field panels, \$3.50 per square foot; No. 705, 6 3/4-inch cornice, \$4 per linear foot; and No. 235, 2-by-4-foot filler, \$3.40 per square foot, all in polyurethaned tin-plated steel. classicceilings.com

VITALS

How much do they cost?

Simple unfinished stamped-steel panels start at about \$2 per square foot. Ornate ones with hand-painted finishes or panels made from copper can go for up to \$17 per square foot.

DIY or hire a pro?

If you have the patience and time to do a careful job, the panels are not difficult to install. But if speed is a priority, call a finish carpenter.

What are your finish options?

Panels come unfinished or with factory-applied paint or clear polyurethane, or are plated in metals, such as brass.



Where to use them?

Besides covering ceilings, tin panels can also be used for wainscoting, backsplashes, cabinet-door recesses, or to replace mirror frames.

Pick your material

The metal you choose will impact the look, price, and performance of your panels

steel The original and still most widely used material. Typically plated with tin, it has to be coated with paint or polyurethane to prevent rust. It can also be plated with other metals, such as brass or copper, which may not require a top coat. Starts at \$2 per square foot. Shown: No. 314 in tin plate, \$2.60 per square foot; classicceilings.com

aluminum It's about half the weight of steel, making it the lightest metal option. Like steel, it needs a coating of polyurethane, paint, or anodizing to prevent corrosion. Starts at \$1.75 per square foot. Shown: Drop-in Metaltaire Large Floral Circle with anodized brass finish, \$9.50 per square foot; armstrong.com

stainless steel Needs no coating to maintain its luster. Good for kitchen backsplashes and porch or bathroom ceilings. Secures with stainless cone-head nails. Starts at \$3 per square foot. Shown: No. 207, \$9.15 per square foot; classicceilings.com

copper Naturally develops a patina if left unfinished. To keep it shiny, coat with polyurethane. Good for backsplashes, exterior uses, and in humid bathrooms. Use only with copper nails. Starts at \$5.80 per square foot. Shown: Savannah Square No. 509, \$8.25 per square foot; tinsmith.com



pro advice

TOM SILVA, TOP GENERAL CONTRACTOR

"For a pleasing layout, and to avoid awkward cuts at the ends, always work from the center of the ceiling out. Snap two chalk lines—one that bisects the ceiling's length and one that bisects its width. Use the point where the lines intersect as your starting spot."

How much to buy

Use this formula to estimate how many panels (most are 2 by 2 feet) you'll need for your room. Work directly with a supplier for an exact figure based on your particular design and layout.

$$\left(\text{CEILING WIDTH}^* \times \text{CEILING LENGTH}^* \right) \div 4 \times .02 = \text{NUMBER OF 2-BY-2-FOOT PANELS}$$

* Rounded down to the nearest even foot, to avoid cuts; use fillers to cover the rest of the ceiling.

Three ways to DIY

- 1. Nail up.** With this traditional installation method, shown at left, panels are fastened to either 3/4-inch plywood or a gridwork of 1x3 furring strips, screwed to the ceiling joists. You can hammer in cone-head nails or shoot in 18-gauge brads with a pneumatic nailer. Dimples on the panels indicate where to drive the fasteners.
- 2. Tongue-and-groove.** Screw the panel's flanges directly to drywall or plaster, then slide the adjacent panels' tongues into the grooves. Available only from American Tin Ceiling's SnapLock line; americantinceiling.com.
- 3. Drop-in.** A metal grid, suspended from the ceiling by wires, supports the edges of each panel; no fasteners required. This method subtracts at least 3 inches from the ceiling height, but it accommodates deep, coffered panels and can cover unsightly ducts, pipes, and soffits. Grid and hanger wires are not included in panel prices.

get the how-to

See the step-by-step for nailing up your own tin ceiling at thisoldhouse.com/bonus

Pick your style

Although tin ceilings originated in the Victorian era, they can feature architectural motifs from many periods

Colonial

Pattern: The drop-in Metaltaire Wreath has a laurel leaf motif fit for a range of Early Classical Revival-style homes. Finish: Anodized copper. Price: \$9.50 per square foot; armstrong.com

Baroque

Pattern: Best for large expanses, No. 50 reveals an ornate medallion when four panels intersect. Finish: Tin plate. Price: \$8 per square foot; tin ceiling.com

Greek Revival

Pattern: No. 2710, with an egg-and-dart border, has a coffered relief that works only with a drop-ceiling grid. Finish: Tin plate. Price: \$5.50 per square foot; wfnorman.com

Eastlake

Pattern: The wreath detail on No. 6-02 repeats every 6 inches, making it ideal for narrow backspashes. Finish: Distressed paint. Price: \$10 per square foot; thetinman.com

Queen Anne

Pattern: No. 2's circle-and-leaf motif repeats every 12 inches. Finish: Patinated copper plate with polyurethane. Price: \$10.50 per square foot; americantinceiling.com

Art Deco

Pattern: No. 280 has a faceted, jewellike design reminiscent of the spire on the iconic Chrysler Building. Finish: Tin plate. Price: \$5.50 per square foot; wfnorman.com

Craftsman

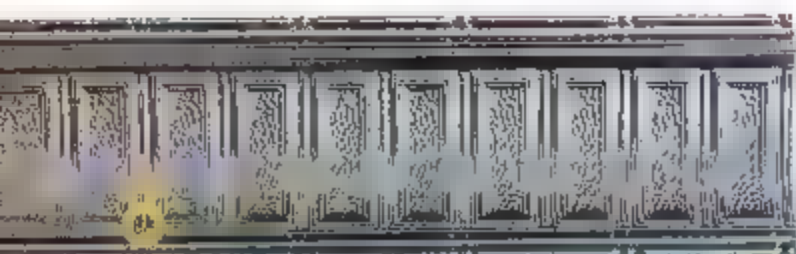
Pattern: The boxy design of the drop-in Metaltaire Medium Panel would be right at home in a bungalow. Finish: White paint. Price: \$4.50 per square foot; armstrong.com

Tudor

Pattern: The diamonds, lobes, and crests of No. 500 have a rich Elizabethan look. Finish: Antiqued copper plate. Price: \$14.75 per square foot; classicceilings.com

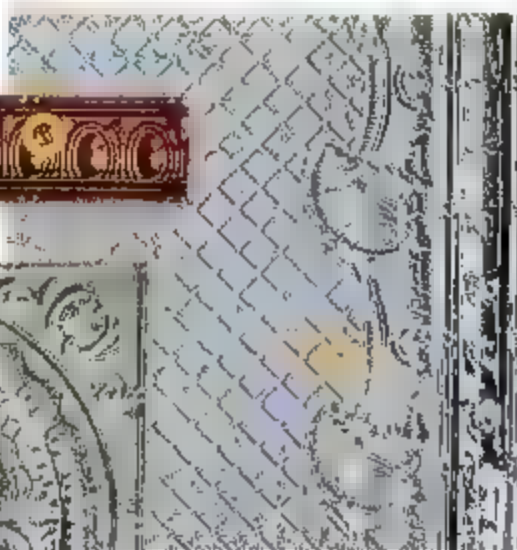
Enhancements

Use these elements to add depth and detail to the edges and center of your ceiling



molding

Covers and highlights the joint between the filler strip and the field panels. Shown: Egg and Dart 4 1/2 by 48 inches in copper-painted steel \$6.40 per linear foot; armstrong.com



cornice

These curved 4-foot lengths offer a more dramatic look than wood crown molding. Choose a pattern that echoes details in the field panels. Widths range from 1 1/2 to 24 inches. On ceilings less than 9 feet high, keep the width to 6 inches or less. Shown: No. 906 in tin-plated steel 6 1/2 inches \$3.15 per linear foot; tinsmith.com

medallion

Add a focal point to the center of a ceiling with a high-relief medallion. To hang a light fixture from it, cut out the center and run the wires through. Shown: No. 162 in tin-plated steel 2 by 2 feet, \$5.50 per square foot; wfnorman.com

filler

These 2-by-4-foot sections have low-relief patterns to minimize gaps where the fillers or field panels meet the cornice. Shown: No. 1011 in tin-plated steel \$8 per square foot tinclinc.com

Alternatives to metal

Mineral fiber Made of recycled newspapers, mineral wool, and starch, these embossed 1-by-1-foot tongue-and-groove tiles go up with staples shot into furring strips, or with adhesive if the ceiling is smooth enough. Can be painted to resemble metal. Better than metal at absorbing sound; not recommended for wet areas, such as bathrooms. Less than \$2 per square foot. Shown: TinTile No. 1240, TinLook ceiling tiles, \$1.60 per square foot; armstrong.com

PVC At just a couple of ounces per square foot, these 2-by-2-foot molded plastic panels weigh next to nothing. Glue them up or place them in a drop-ceiling grid. They're impervious to moisture and can be painted. Not suitable for high-heat areas, such as a backsplash behind a stove. Starting at about \$1 per square foot. Shown: No. 210 in antique copper, \$2.25 per square foot; decorativeceilingtiles.net



DIY finishes

Raw steel and tin-plated panels must be coated with paint or polyurethane soon after they're installed to prevent rust. First, clean the surface with denatured alcohol. Then, if painting, brush, roll, or spray on an oil-based, rust-inhibiting primer followed by at least one coat of oil or latex paint. If you want to play up the metal's silvery appearance, apply two coats of an oil-based polyurethane. For humid bathrooms, make sure to coat the back of the panels before installing them.



Where to use them

For more than just ceilings, tin panels can clad walls, backsplashes, and even indoor and outdoor decor

1 ceiling The higher and larger it is, the bigger the pattern you can use. Rooms smaller than 12 by 12 feet look best with a 6- or 12-inch repeat. Shown: Drop-ceiling Metallaire Hammered Border in aluminum with anodized copper finish, \$9.50 per square foot; armstrong.com

2 backsplash Six-inch patterns fit nicely in the

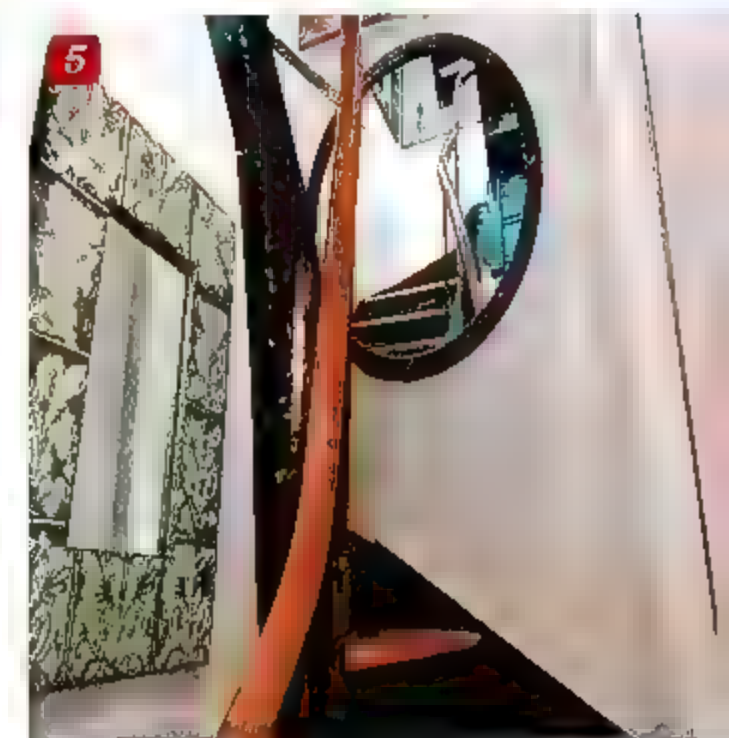
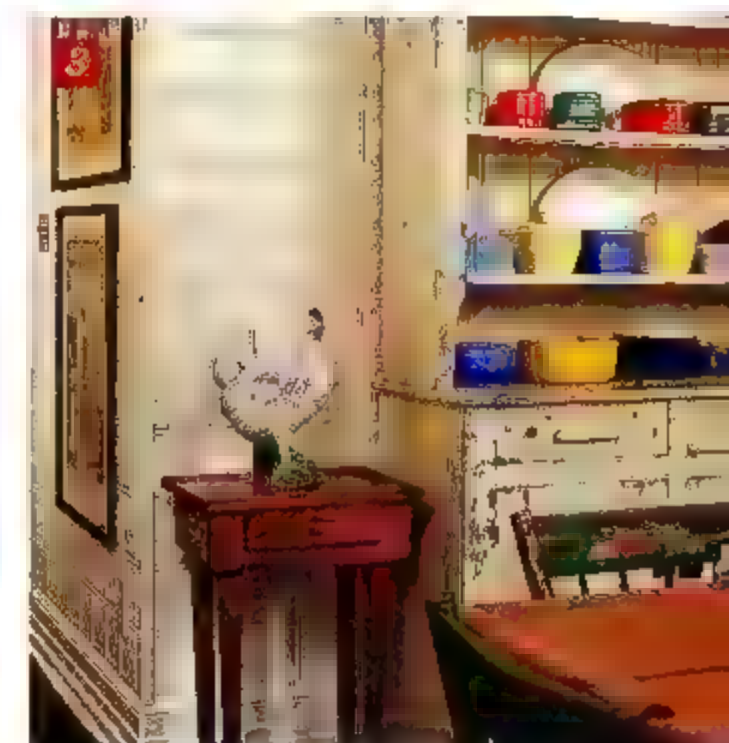
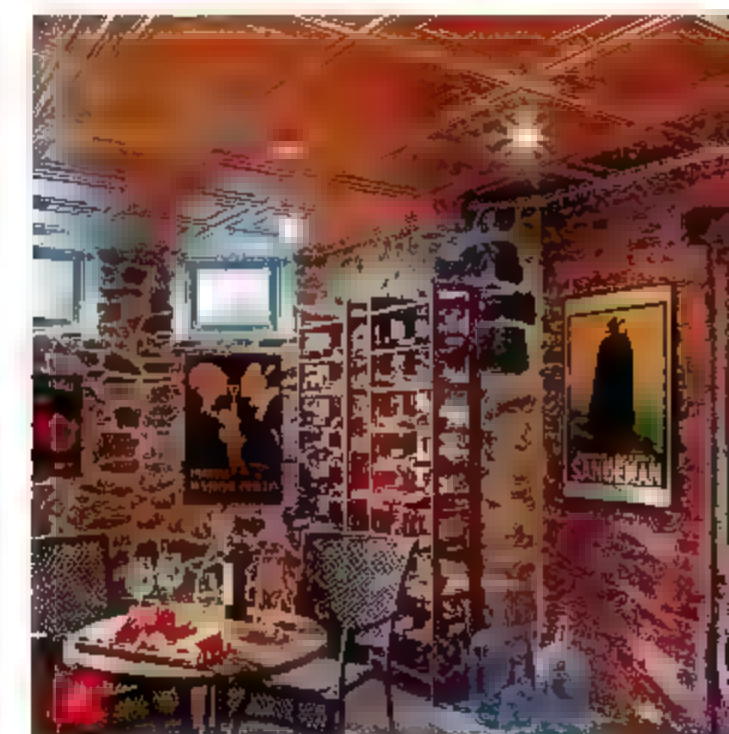
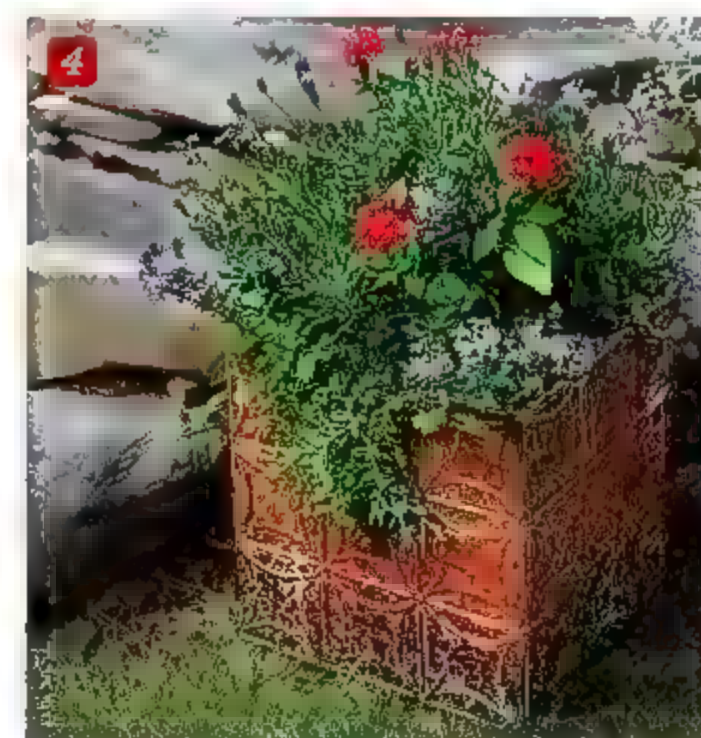
18-inch swath between upper and lower cabinets. Materials such as stainless steel or copper, or a factory finish such as powder-coat paint, stand up to water and heat. Shown: No. 200 and No. 201 in tin-plated steel, \$4 per square foot; wfnorman.com

3 walls Metal makes a bold statement no wallpaper can match. Select a low-relief pattern and install the panels over 1/4-inch plywood. When mounted beneath a chair rail, tin creates a distinctive wainscot.

Shown: No. 210 in painted steel, \$3.70 per square foot; classicceilings.com

4 planter Vintage tin is ideal for small projects where you don't need much matching material. And it's already rusty, so you don't have to worry about using it outdoors. For this planter, the metal wraps around a box made of pressure-treated plywood. Starts at \$5 per square foot at salvage yards.

5 frame Molded around a wood frame, tin adds an antique touch to a mirror or artwork. Make your own frame or let salvage shop Olde Good Things do all the work. Tin-framed mirrors start at \$110; ogtstore.com. ■





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Roy Vinton, Bryantville MA

“This one didn’t jam, like others I’ve used in the past. The grip was comfortable, and the loading method was easier than others.”

—Jay Doughty, Reading MA



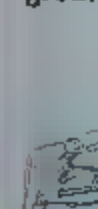
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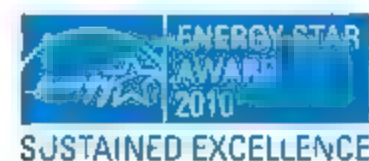


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ask this oldhouse

inside

LAWN PREP

TRENCH DRAINS

PET STAINS

MORE



I picked up this handsome tool at a garage sale. Can you tell me what it's used for?

A When you have a fine sample of a top-handled spokeshave, a tool originally used to round over the wood spokes on wagon and carriage wheels. Nowadays they're mostly used for shaping furniture legs and canoe paddles, but they can also be employed to make or refurbish simple balusters, newels, and porch columns. By the way, this one was made in Birmingham, England, by Edward Preston & Sons, a respectable 19th-century toolmaker. — THE EDITOR

28
tips, tricks, and
answers to
your home-
improvement
questions



PHOTOGRAPH BY
MATTHEW BENSON

THEOLDHOUSE.COM

→ Our cast of veteran experts

TOM SILVA
General ContractorNORM ABRAM
Master CarpenterRICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and Heating ExpertROGER COOK
Landscape ContractorKEVIN O'CONNOR
Host

Around here, ceiling drywall is screwed to 1x3 wood strapping. But during a visit to Ohio, the lumberyard folks told me drywall is always fastened directly to the joists. Which method is better?

BRUCE MAKI, GLOUCESTER, MASS.



Tom Silva replies: Construction techniques often differ from one region of the country to another. The reasons vary, but mostly it comes down to tradition. Many years ago, before lumber dimensions were standardized, strapping was an easy way to make sure a ceiling would be flat and level. Despite the extra time and cost, builders in New England continue the practice; elsewhere, as you discovered, the drywall goes right up against the joists.

Both methods work fine, but strapping does offer some advantages. It creates a narrow space to run wires or small pipes perpendicular to the joists, making life easier for plumbers and electricians. It adds some stiffness to a floor or roof system, and provides better support under drywall seams. With the use of shims, it enables you to make the ceiling perfectly flat even if the joists sag. And for joists spaced more than 16 inches on center, installing 1x3s every 16 inches allows you to use ½-inch drywall rather than the heavier, more expensive ⅝-inch stuff. When I think about it, I'm surprised that strapping isn't used more often.

Like most builders in New England, Tom Silva screws 1x3 strapping every 16 inches to the underside of the ceiling joists before he installs drywall. One benefit of this: He can use ½-inch drywall on the ceiling instead of heavy ⅝-inch sheets.

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): ANTHONY TIEGLITZ; KOLIN SMITH; TRACY POWELL

PREPPING A LAWN FOR WINTER

In my cul-de-sac, snow plows push snow, sand, and salt onto the edges of my front lawn each year. Are there any preventive measures I can take to protect the lawn now? And if not, what's the best way to get the lawn back in shape after winter is over? A friend told me that it might help to sprinkle it with gypsum.

DAN SARDELLA, STONEHAM, MASS.

Roger Cook replies: First, concentrate on making your lawn stronger going into winter. Get a soil test done in the fall and fertilize accordingly. Then mow the grass short on your last cut of the season to keep it from matting under the snow's weight. Also, shorter grass makes it easier to get leaves off the lawn.

Your neighbor is right about the gypsum. It improves soil drainage and helps the salt to wash through the soil. Unfortunately, gypsum is slow-working; you'll need to apply it over several seasons to get the soil where it needs to be. For quicker results, core-aerate the lawn early in November so that the roots won't have time to grow and fill the holes. Core aeration will help the salt and some of the sand work down into the soil.

During the winter, take a flat-blade shovel and lightly scrape off the piles of sand that build up on the lawn. Just be careful not to dig up any of the grass.

On the first dry day early next spring, remove as much of the remaining sand as you can using a plastic leaf rake, a broom, a blower, or a power broom. Your grass should grow just fine once the spring rains wash through any remaining salt.

Here's something else to try:



A → Paint stirrer

B → Trellis hook for vines and climbing roses

C → Extension-cord hanger

D → Or...

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 109



As a street tree outgrows its confines, both the sidewalk and the trunk suffer. Before enlarging the opening around the tree, give town officials a heads-up.

Next time your plow driver swings by, approach him with a cup of hot coffee and a couple of donuts in hand, and ask if he could possibly go easy on pushing the snow onto the lawn. You'd be surprised how far donuts and coffee will get you!

SIDEWALK VERSUS TREE
Over the years, a tree outside our house has outgrown its planting area and is now fighting the sidewalk for space. Is the tree being harmed? If so, is there anything we can do to reduce the damage?

POLLY KINNEY, JERSEY CITY, N.J.

Roger Cook replies: I can't see any damage to the trunk, so I think this tree is okay for now. However, over a very long time this situation could encourage rot where the sidewalk meets the trunk.

If you want to head off this problem, mount a small, diamond-edged cutting wheel in an angle grinder and make a neat cut in the concrete about 2 or 3 inches from the trunk. You don't have to cut all the way through the sidewalk; just take a 2- or 4-pound hand sledge and a mason's chisel and break the concrete next to the tree into small pieces that can be easily removed. Be sure to wear safety glasses or goggles when you do this, and work away from the tree so that you don't accidentally nick the bark.

Of course, your town will probably have something to say about your cutting into the sidewalk, so check with the building department first. There may be ordinances specifying the minimum width for town sidewalks. But when it comes to making room for a healthy shade tree, I bet they would be sympathetic to this solution.

GETTING ACCESS TO A SHOWER LEAK

We're pretty sure we have a leaking pipe or valve behind our tiled shower wall. Unfortunately, there's no way to get at it except to cut into the tile or cut through the other side of the wall, a wallpapered main hallway. I'd go through the tile because we have extras for patching and I don't know if I can match the wallpaper exactly, but which approach would you take?

—KATE SMITH, ARLINGTON, VA.

Richard Trethewey replies: Tile versus drywall? Not even close. Dry wall is much easier to cut through and repair. Chipping out ceramic tile is a mess, and cutting through the substrate and then putting everything back together so that the wall doesn't leak is tricky. And remember: You won't be able to use your shower while the work is under way. Besides, once you cut an access hole in the drywall, you won't even have to patch it; you can just cover the hole with a snap-in access panel or hinged access door that makes it easy to get in there the next time you have a plumbing repair.

Snap-in access panels are rectangular plastic plates that snap into place over the hole. They range in size from 8 to 15 inches square, and their panels can be wallpapered or painted. If you use a sharp utility knife to score the wallpaper first, you might even be able to peel it off and use it to cover the panel. Or just hang a picture over it. Hinged access doors are usually bigger and beefier, and might not be so easy to hide.

Before you buy a panel or door, cut a small hole in the area first to make sure there aren't any wires or pipes in the way. But before you cut a bigger hole in the wall, have the panel on hand so that you know exactly how big a hole to make.



A new sill made of cellular PVC will never rot, the way wood ones can (inset).

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

One of our windowsills appears to be rotting. Can it be replaced without buying a new window?

—BILL BAILEY BALDWIN, MO.

David Raymond, Raymond Design Builders, replies:

Sticking out into the weather year after year, wood windowsills take quite a beating. They can last for decades if you just keep them clean and protect them with a coat of paint. But when water

gets trapped in or against them, as happens with improperly flashed windows, rot can take hold.

A simple epoxy repair will do the trick if the rot is confined to a small area, but if more than 10 percent of the sill is rotten, the old sill should be cut off and replaced.

For this project, I used a solid piece of Kleer cellular PVC sill that matches the profile and thickness of the other sills on the house. It costs less than a piece of clear, milled red cedar and is paintable, but no matter how many times it gets wet, it can't rot.

Cost: \$6.75 per foot for a cellular PVC sill; \$74 for a two-part acrylic adhesive kit
Time: 4 hours
Difficulty: Moderate. Must make cuts with a circular saw.

STEP-BY-STEP

Repair a window sill

1 Remove the side casings

The casing comes off to clear the way for removing the old sill. If the casings are rotting, as here, replace them, too. Since through the caulk bead between the siding and the casing, then carefully pry off each piece. Save the trim to use as templates for the new ones. Make sure the flashing behind the casing is intact and properly installed behind the siding.



2 Saw off the old sill

Make a plumb cut flush with the sheathing along the length of the rotten sill. A circular saw with a beveled blade can handle most of the cutting, but for the sill ends where a circ saw can't reach, switch to a multitool like this Fern Multimaster equipped with an oscillating saw blade. Smooth the cut with a few strokes of a hand plane.



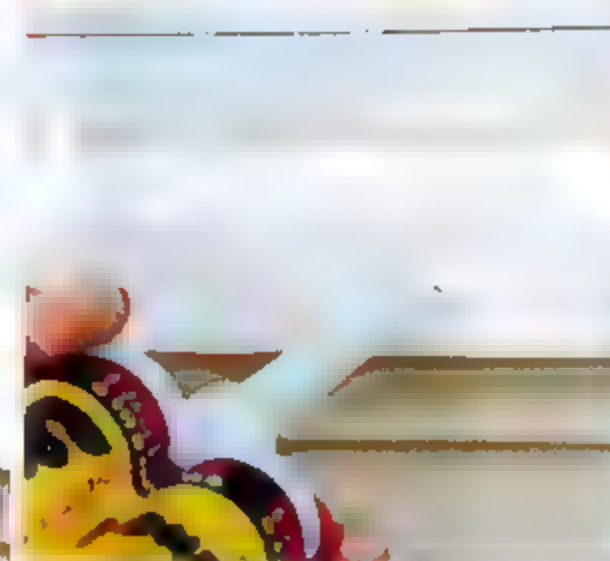
3 Apply the adhesive

Repair any rotten spots on the old sill with epoxy. Trim the back edge of the new sill as needed so that its lower edge fits tightly against the siding and its back edge fits against the old wood. Drill pilot holes every 16 inches or so through the new sill's front and back edges. Run a bead of waterproof marine-grade adhesive along the old sill.



4 Attach the new sill

Press the new sill into the adhesive, and immediately clamp it in place by driving 3½-inch deck screws through the plastic and into the wood. Stop when the heads are about ¼ inch below the sill surface. Immediately wipe up any adhesive that squeezes out. Fill any gaps between the old and new sill with adhesive.



5 Hide the screwheads

Cover each screwhead with a dollop of a white, two-part acrylic adhesive, such as Bond&F II FastCure. (This also works as an adhesive in Step 3.) Overfill the recess slightly. When the adhesive hardens completely, in about 30 minutes, sand it flush.



6 Install the side casing

Squeeze a bead of caulk beside the ends of the siding, and nail the new casing in place. Here, I used cellular PVC trim boards and 8d stainless-steel ring-shank nails. Set the nailheads slightly below the surface, and cover each one with a dab of the two-part adhesive. After the dabs harden, sand them flush.

PHOTOS: RYAN BENNY

TRENCH-DRAIN FREEZE

Our driveway sheds water into our garage. We'd like to install a trench drain to capture the water, but will it freeze up and become ineffective in the winter? If so, is there anything to prevent it?

—SIMON MILLER ETNA, N.J.

Tom Silva replies: It is possible for water to freeze in a trench drain, but ice is only a problem if it builds up and prevents water from draining away. You shouldn't get a buildup if the drain is properly installed and maintained.

The installer should pitch the drain and its pipe so that water doesn't sit and turn solid. Also, the pipe should lead to a deep dry well or to "daylight," a place that's above grade but lower than the drain itself. After that, it falls on you to take off the drain's grates a few times during the warm months and make sure its trough is free of dirt, leaves, and other debris.

As insurance, some people put heating cables in their drains, just as they do with their gutters. Before you do this, check first with your trench drain manufacturer to make sure these cables are compatible with their product.

PET STAINS ON HARDWOOD

Whenever our dogs had accidents on the carpeting, I made sure to clean and shampoo it, and it always looked clean. So I was shocked when I had the carpeting pulled up and found large black stains in the hardwood floor. A local contractor said the floors can't be refinished and have to be replaced. Is that the only solution?

—MARY NOLAN HERSHEY, PA.

Kevin O'Connor replies: According to wood flooring contractor Charles Peterson, replacing the entire floor isn't usually

necessary. "The first step is to try sanding the stain out," he says. Using painter's tape, mask off all the neighboring boards that have not been affected. As Peterson points out, "you'll have better luck blending in a new finish over a board's entire length than if you try to tape just around the stain." Cover the painter's tape with a layer of duct tape to prevent your sander from scuffing through. If the stain comes out to your satisfaction, sand enough of the surrounding area to even out the surface, and refinish the bare wood.

But if an aggressive sanding doesn't remove the stain, leave the tape in place and proceed with a chemical attack. First, bleach the wood with hydrogen peroxide, a few times if necessary. If that doesn't work, brush household bleach over the stains a couple times. Assuming the stain disappears, mop the floor with vinegar to neutralize either bleach. Wait for the wood to dry, then sand it smooth and refinish. When using any bleaching product, Peterson cautions, "Wear a respirator, rubber gloves, and safety goggles when applying the product and when sanding the wood afterward." If a few boards still show the stain, Peterson's advice is to replace them.

For stains that are too deep or widespread to be removed by sanding or regular bleach, Peterson brings out his big gun, a highly aggressive two-part bleach called sodium hydroperoxide, and treats the entire floor. This is not a homeowner-friendly product. Hire a flooring pro to apply it, neutralize it, and sand and refinish the floor.

send your questions to askthisoldhouse

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or write to: Ask This Old House
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include a complete address and daytime phone number. Published questions will be edited for clarity and length and may be used in other media. We regret that, because of the volume of mail received, we're unable to reply to unpublished questions.



Norm's tricks of the trade

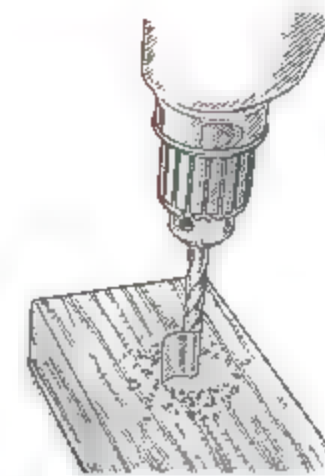


When I drill a pilot hole for a screw, how deep should the hole be, and how will I know if the bit has gone deep enough?

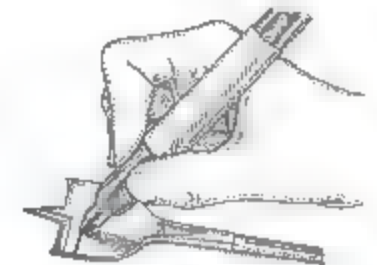
STEVE BARTOLETT GRAFTON, WIS.

A You should always drill a little deeper than the length of the screw. If you don't, the screw will bottom out before it's fully driven in and the last few turns will be tough, particularly in hardwood. And when you apply more pressure, there's a greater chance that you'll mangle the screwhead or scratch your workpiece. These tricks ensure you'll get the right depth every time.

1 With twist bits, I keep tabs on hole depth by wrapping the bit with a piece of blue painter's tape right at the depth I want. If you're drilling down, leave a little "flag" of tape sticking out from the bit. It will sweep away the shavings around the bit just as it reaches the desired depth.



2 When I'm using spade bits to drill counterbores for nuts, hole depth is critical, so I draw a line on both sides of the bit using a felt-tip pen with permanent ink. The line is easy to see as the bit spins—just stop when the line is flush with the work surface.



WHAT IS IT?

D→
SLATE HOOK

The Hallhook's stainless-steel coils provide a permanent and unobtrusive way to hang a replacement roof slate. 10 hooks, \$20; hallclip.co.uk



PHOTOS: WENDY T. WEBBER ("WHAT IS IT?"), DON PENNY/TIME INC. DIGITAL STUDIO ILLUSTRATIONS: HARRY BATES

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Compact utility vacs

Small 4- to 5-gallon vacuums are easy to carry and store, but they still have the power to suck up spills, sawdust, and car-floor debris. Contractor Dave Andrews put these four wheel-less models to the test in his own house, now undergoing a gritty gut renovation. Here's how they stacked up.

—SAL VAGLICA

RIDGID PRO PACK WD4522

Price: \$100

Highlight: includes two 20-inch extension wands for hard-to-reach areas.

My two cents: "The boxy design allows for convenient storage of all accessories. The extension wands allow you to vacuum standing up."

Tool stats: 15½ pounds, 4½-gal on capacity, 5-horsepower motor generates 187 air-watts* (the measure of a vac's sucking power) and 90 dB. Includes 20-foot cord, filter, 7-foot hose, five attachments, lifetime warranty, ridgid.com



* Measured at the end of the hose; air-watts of the other three vacs are measured at the motor.

Prices based on manufacturer-approved online distributors.



VACMASTER VWM510

Price: \$130

Highlight: Power switch is located on the business end of the hose; has the quietest motor.

My two cents: "While the wall-mount held securely, it was tricky to remove the vacuum."

Tool stats: 23½ pounds, 5-gal on capacity, 5-horsepower motor generates 320 air-watts and 78 dB. Includes 20-foot cord, wall bracket, 21-foot hose, noise diffuser, eight attachments, two-year warranty, vacmaster.com

WANT TO BE A TESTER? Let us know which tool you'd like to test and the project you'd use it on by e-mailing us at tooltester@thisoldhouse.com



DAVE ANDREWS, owner of Andrews Custom Building, in Fairfield, Connecticut, has 25 years' experience as a carpenter.

SNAP-ON 93052

Price: \$99

Highlight: includes a HEPA filter to capture fine particles of dust. **My two cents:** "Great suction, the best at picking up dust and chunkier stuff like nails, but its small-diameter hose clogged the most often."

Tool stats: 18 pounds, 4-gallon capacity, 5-horsepower motor generates 220 air-watts and 86 dB. Includes 20-foot cord, 7-foot hose, noise diffuser, three attachments, five-year warranty, jcwhtney.com



SHOP-VAC HEAVY-DUTY PORTABLE 5872462

Price: \$80

Highlight: Disposable vacuum bag keeps the dust contained when emptying the unit.

My two cents: "Solid performer with a hose that locks onto the tank."

Tool stats: 20 pounds, 5-gal on capacity, 5½-horsepower motor generates 345 air-watts and 82 dB. Includes 20-foot cord, wall bracket, filter and filter bag, 7-foot hose, two attachments, five-year warranty, shopvac.com



PHOTOS (VACS) YEO MORRISON



Cover: Kitchen designer: Laura Dalzell, Lexington, KY. 859-253-9002; cabinetsanddesignsky.com.

Before + After Kitchen: Same footprint, brand-new look (pp. 27-30). **Design and general contractor:** Jirich, Inc., Ridgewood, N.J., 201-445-1260; jirichinc.com.

Cabinets: Small Cyma Flat Panel with custom white glaze finish. Draper DBS, draperdb.com. **Paint:** Pale Celery (walls) and Simply White (wainscoting), Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com. **Bin pulls:** Gruppo Romi, Parlin, N.J., 800-690-4801; grupporomi.com. **Latches:** S.L. 4 in polished nickel, Horton Brasses Inc., horton-brasses.com. **Wine cooler:** 3.5W Wine Storage, Sub Zero, subzero.com. **Range and range hood:** DF3646 and Pro Wall Hood, Wolf, wolfappliance.com. **Sink:** Shaws Original Single-Bowl Fireclay Apron Sink (RC3018), Rohi, rohihome.com. **Faucet:** 3-leg Bridge Kitchen Faucet with Handspray (A1458 LPWS), Rohi. **Light fixtures:** Concord 6 with hand-painted shade (ambient) and Humboldt 2.25 with opal glass shade (task), Schoolhouse Electric, schoolhouseelectric.com. **Windows:** Andersen Windows, andersenwindows.com. **Glass subway tile:** 3-by-6-inch Architectonics in Cucumber, Waterworks, waterworks.com. **Porcelain hex tile:** American Clean, americanclean.com. **State tile:** Brazilian Black, The Cleistone Works, Kutztown, PA, 610-683-9349. **Ceiling fan:** Globe Lighting, globe-lighting.com.

Before + After Laundry: Laundry room with a spa spritz (pp. 33-34). **Designer:** Sarah Barnard, 818-988-8821; sarahbarnard.com. **General contractor:** Douglas Morris Construction, Lakewood, CA, 310-721-4831. **Cabinets:** His Life Woodworks, Redondo Beach, CA, 310-406-1460; hislifewoodworks.com. **Library ladder:** Alaco Ladder Co., alacoladder.com. **Knobs:** Restoration Hardware, restorationhardware.com. **Quartzite counters:** Marble Unlimited Inc., Van Nuys, CA, 818-988-0100; marbleunlimitedinc.com. **Washer and dryer:** Maytag, maytag.com. **Sink:** MTI's Gentle Jet whirl pools.com. **Pulldown faucet:** KWC, kwcamerica.com. **Paint:** Farrow & Ball, farrow-ball.com.

Get This Look: Cabin-style bedroom

(pp. 44-45). **Designer:** Suzanne Kasler, Suzanne Kasler Interiors, Atlanta, GA, suzannekasler.com.

Price Wise: Butcher-block worktables (p. 48)

High-End: Pro Prep Butcher Block Table (PPB 2424), John Boos & Co., johnboos.com. **Budget:** French Country Butcher Block Table 1925 (\$365, amazon.com). **Catskill Craftsman:** catskillcraftsmen.com. **Thanks to Richard Lemaster:** North Carolina State University; Rebecca Wallace, USDA Forest Products Laboratory; The American Hardwood Information Center, hardwoodinfo.com.

Paint Ideas: Two-tone rooms (pp. 50-51). All paints: Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com. **Thanks to Susan English,** color consultant and decorative painter, Cold Spring, NY, englishandharris.com.

TOH TV: A kitchen plan goes from ideal to real (pp. 53-55). **Architect:** Christina Chu, AIA, West Newton, MA, 617-965-8094; chriscchuarchitect.com. **Kitchen designer:** Donna Venegas, Venegas and Company, Boston, MA, 617-439-8800; venegasandcompany.com. **Interior designer:** Melissa Guiley, Melissa Guiley Interior Design, Newton, MA, 617-797-4570; melissaguiley.com.

Photoshop Redo: From sketch to finished facade (p. 57). **Designer:** Two Tall Trees Design, Croton Falls, NY, 914-669-0014. **Contractor:** Right

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Choice Home Improvement, Farmington, NY, 585-739-9145; rightwayrightprice.com. **Siding:** HardiePlank Select CedarMill 7-inch exposure in Monterey Taupe (ground level); HardieShingle Straight Edge Notched Panel 7-inch exposure in Cobble Stone (second story); HardieShingle Staggered Edge Notched Panel 6-inch exposure in Monterey Taupe (gable peak) and Cobble Stone (dormers). ¾ HardieTrim Boards Smooth in 9¼-inch white (fascia) and 3½-inch Timber Bark (crawl-space skirt), 888-542-7343; jameshardie.com. **Window box:** XL Laguna Composite in custom 7½-foot length, 800-896-0978; hooksandlattice.com. **Roof:** B&L Wholesale Supply, Rochester, NY, 800-333-0544; bwholesale.com. **Lights:** Aurora sconce in burnished antique (walls) and Baxter flush-mount in burnished antique (porch ceiling); Rejuvenation, 888-401-1900; rejuvenation.com. **House numbers:** 8-inch dark bronze powdercoat, HouseArt LLC, 248-651-8124; houseart.net.

Weekend Remodel: Install a wall niche (pp. 67-71). **Dust barrier poles:** ZipWall, 800-718-2255.

Personalize Your Home With Paint

(pp. 76-83). **Renovation and cabinetry:** Joe Schneider and Kim Clements (designers), J.A.S. Design-Build Inc., Seattle, WA, 206-547-6242; jasedesignbuild.com. **Painter:** The Finish Company, Seattle, WA, 206-632-2839; thefinishcompany.com. **Kitchen:** Range: Viking, vikingrange.com. **Range Hood:** Vent-A-Hood, ventahood.com. **Refrigerator:** Jenn-Air, jennair.com. **Sink:** Rohi, rohihome.com. **Faucet:** Franke, frankesd.com. **Sconce:** Rejuvenation, rejuvenation.com. **Hanging light fixtures:** Historic Houseparts, historichouseparts.com. **Bar stools:** Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com. **Dining room:** Light fixture and shade: Rejuvenation. **Table, chairs and area rug:** Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com. **Powder room:** Sink and faucet: Kohler, kohler.com. **Light fixture, tower, ring and bar:** Rejuvenation. **Home office:** Desk, chair and table lamp: Pottery Barn. **Second bedroom:** Sconces: Circa Lighting, circa-lighting.com. **Area rug:** Crate and Barrel. **Master bedroom:** Exterior door: Simpson Door Co., simpsondoor.com. **Sconces:** Circa Lighting. **Bed and end tables:** Pottery Barn. **Master bathroom:** Sconces and towel bar: Rejuvenation. **Sink and faucet:** Kohler.

12 DIY Projects to Add Old-House Charm (pp. 88-93). **Upgrade a nailer post:** Thanks to Mark Lepper, Beaulieu Homes Inc., 800-403-1480; stairpartsusa.com.

All About: Tin ceilings (pp. 94-99). **Thanks to** Mike Jackson, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, www.illinoishistory.gov.

Ask This Old House (pp. 103-110). **Question of the Month:** Cellular PVC windowsill: Historical Sill No. 1, Kieffer Lumber, 866-553-3770; kiefferlumber.com. **Two-part acrylic adhesive:** Bond&Fill FastCure bondfill.com. **Thanks to** David Raymond, Raymond Design Builders, Fairfield, CT, 203-256-1246; raymonddesignbuilders.com. **Tool test:** Thanks to Dave Andrews, Andrews Custom Building, Fairfield, CT, 203-256-8170.

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15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Number of Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total number of copies: 1,103,122	1,045,815
B. Paid circulation	
1. Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541: 922,745	854,284
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E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 60,157	63,702
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G. Copies Not Distributed: 36,649	65,629
H. Total: 1,103,122	1,045,815
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16. Publication of Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 2010 issue of this publication.
17. Signature and date: John L. Brown, President of This Old House Magazine, 8/26/10
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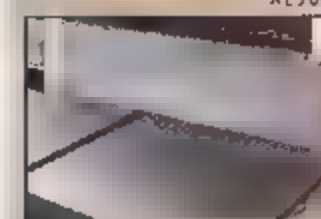
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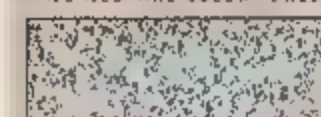


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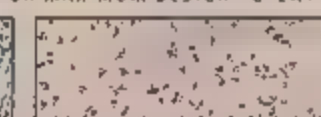


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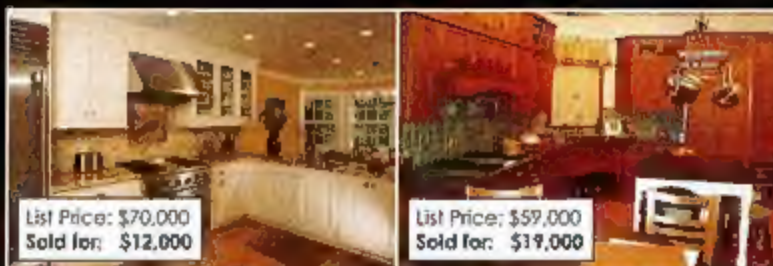
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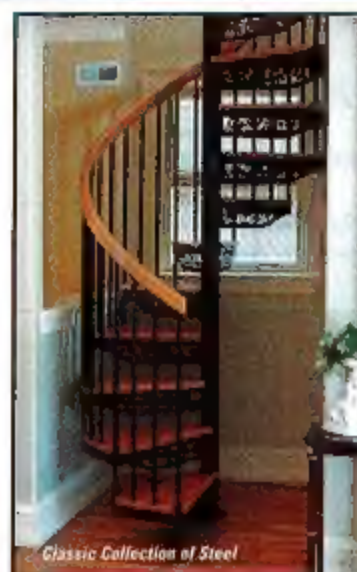
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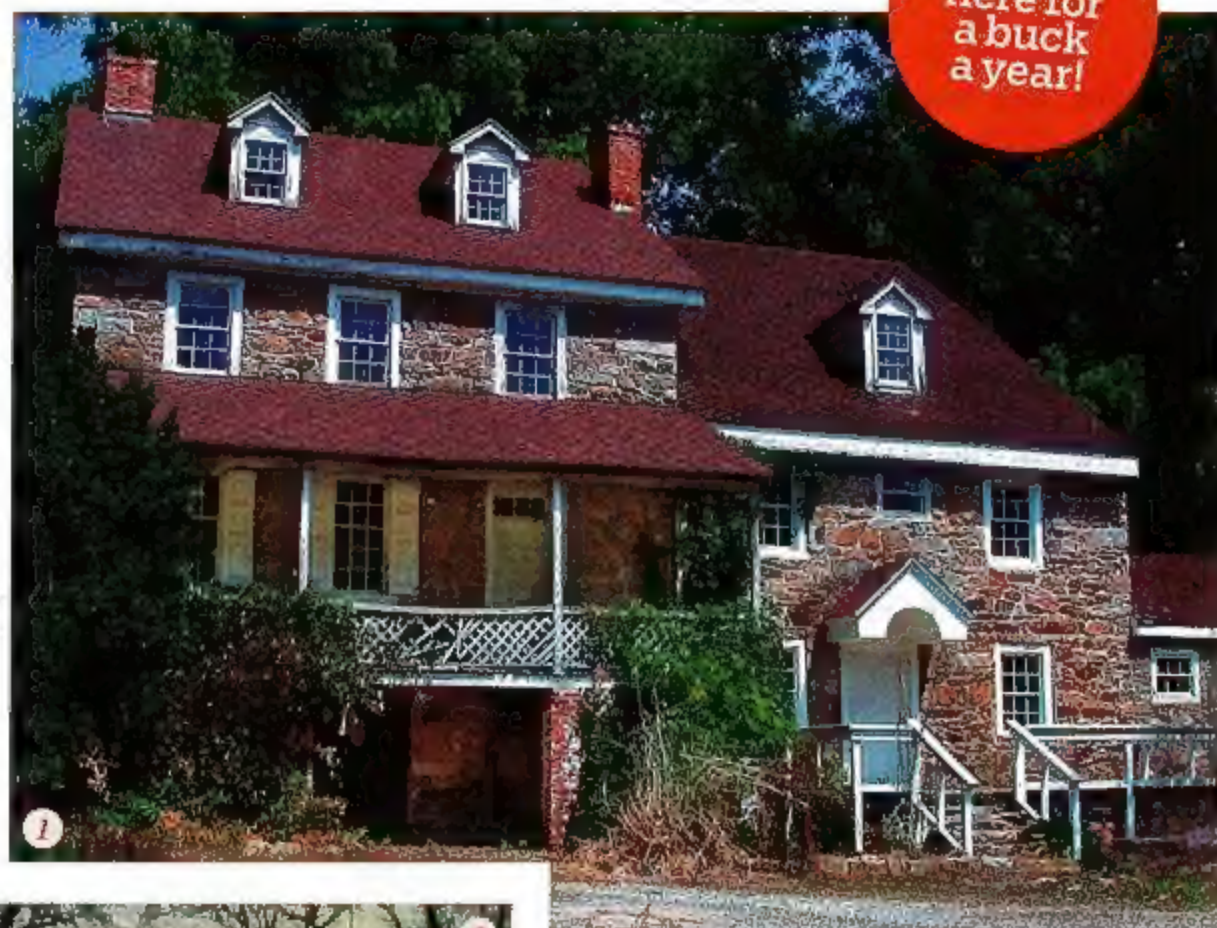
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Why save it? It's loaded with Georgian-style details, including beautiful millwork, wide-plank floors, and mantels. It has thick stone walls and nice deep window wells, too. The place is located in a sprawling state park near the Delaware and Pennsylvania borders.

What it needs: Getting the house into move-in condition will require a new septic system and new wiring and plumbing. It's being offered by Maryland's Resident Curatorship program, meaning that anyone who pledges to restore and maintain the house according to the state's historic preservation guidelines can live here with a lifetime lease that's just \$1 a year. —KEITH PANDOLF

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1. The original section of the house, seen at right, was built near the turn of the 19th century. The left section was added around 1820. A laundry room addition (far right) was built in the 1950s. 2. An earlier photo shows how a sloping metal roof once made the transition between the original house and addition more seamless. 3. An upstairs bedroom shows the house's deep window wells. 4. The front hall, with its original staircase.

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.



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Potential energy use reduction comparing an 8-SEER system to a 20-SEER cooling system and a 65-AFUE to a 95-AFUE furnace, each operating an equal amount of time year round. Actual energy savings will vary. © 2010 Trane. All rights reserved.

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