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# This Old House

**17**

**scary ways  
DIY can ruin  
your home**

p. 68

**Fresh  
Redo  
Ideas**

**21**  
front entry  
face-lifts  
that'll  
boost value

**32**  
mudroom  
upgrades  
anyone can do

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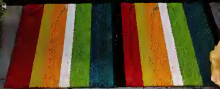
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**17**  
scary ways  
DIY can ruin  
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p. 68

**Fresh  
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Ideas**  
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front  
face-  
that  
boos  
**32**  
mud  
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any

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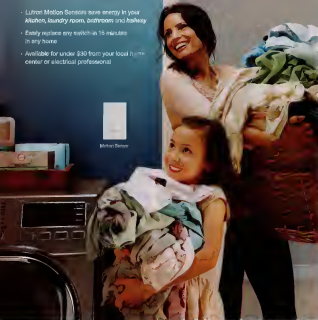
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Michael Denner



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the art of transportation

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# On the cover



Top 100  
pp. 16-17

Cover photo by  
BEN OTHMAN  
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making a name for  
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the industry

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BATH DESIGN



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ENERGIZER ULTIMATE LITHIUM LASTS LONGER THAN  
FINDING THE RIGHT HOUSE IN THE RIGHT TOWN  
AND NOTICING THE FUNNY LEAK IN THE CEILING  
AND REALIZING IT'S NOT THAT FUNNY  
AND YOUR ATTEMPT TO REPAIR IT  
AND EXPLAINING THAT TO THE ROOFERS  
AND THE TIRE TRACKS IN THE YARD  
AND RESEEDING THE GRASS



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## Letter

FROM THIS OLD HOUSE

### I see character, he sees cracks and faults

**T**he way my son sees it, we'll never exactly win a home-improvement contest.

Our house is too old, he'll say. Our house is broken, he'll say. Or he'll say it's all icky.

Four-year-olds are tough that way.

He'll brown as he watches bumper cars roll across the sloping dining room floor. He'll make an exaggerated point, on his way into the house, of stepping over the hill that cushions the brownstone stoop—just so I know he knows they're there.

And he won't give up harping on the ant contractor's repair to the 150-year-old glass in the skylight over our overhanging, crooked gingerbread staircase, either. In the early days that skylight provided the only illumination against a spiraling tangle, but now my sky-watching boy contemptuously warns, "It's gonna leak if we don't do a project!"

He prefaces the new construction in our neighborhood of 1700s-century brownstones, just as he prefaces whatever is the current Lags set—no matter how much he likes it, or even if it's finished with, the best case.

Unlike the Legos, much of the new construction in our neighborhood disappears in one—contrary—old houses whose wistfully plastered and paneled rooms are unfireproofed, poured into a changer, and replaced with full-floor beams devoid of any detail but a repeating line of halogen spotlights and the ever Barokk then that'll be as dated as an on-screen Arnold Schwarzenegger before the next calendar season.

To be honest, and as much as my little boy might like the bright shiny newness, those places won't win any home-improvement contests, either—at least not as likely as our annual Search for America's Best Renovation, which we're looking off in his new.

Yup, it's time to show us what home-improvement triumphe you've had. A powder room? A kitchen? A whole house from top to bottom? Upload a photo and a bit of description to [thisoldhouse.com/yourTOH](http://thisoldhouse.com/yourTOH) could win you as much as \$10,000, courtesy of our sponsor, Delta House. It's more: you'll get a prize package worth \$1,000 from Delta. And every more of you will be rewarded with the knowledge that your projects, tips, advice, and money-saving ways were savvy enough to be included in October's special Reader-Created Issue of *This Old House* and on *thisoldhouse.com*.

And don't worry—we won't let the kid have a say in the vote. I mean, how seriously can you take a guy who wears a hat and undergarments whose only experience with building consists of multicolored mud-pie together blocks?

*Scott O'Connell*  
SCOTT O'CONNELL, EDITOR  
[scott@thisoldhouse.com](mailto:scott@thisoldhouse.com)



The editor contemplating how the future of an old house studies his young son.

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IKEA launched the **Together, We Eat** contest to give families a chance to share their time-honored recipes and tell us how those meals have brought them together.

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We hope it inspires you to start your own family food tradition.

Food brings people together. That's why IKEA celebrates life in and around the kitchen, be it growing, cooking, serving or storing. For inspiration and ideas, visit us at [IKEA-USA.com](http://IKEA-USA.com)



# Reader mail



AS YOUR LETTERS so often remind us, what really says "home" isn't palatial spaces but a personal vision realized or a hand-built gift for a child, like the reader project below. One reader also spoke up for local kitchen-and-bath retailers.

## Dreams within reach

While at my doctor's office, I looked at an architectural magazine and admired houses that cost \$3.5 million, some owned by celebrities. But no hope for me. Then I came home to open the November/December 2015 *The Old House* and was left with a good feeling—like, I could own that. I especially admire the couple who spent two years forging on as an mortician (Reader Remodel) and how they turned their old house into a beautiful showplace. Your magazine is as inspiring to everyone.

—BETTY J. HANLEY, ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

## Fair or foul?

I enjoy reading a great deal as much as anyone, but I was disappointed by the homeowners' trip to November/December's Before & After Kitchen Designs. I worked in the kitchen and

hard industry for more than 12 years and do not believe it's fair to use a brick-and-mortar location and an experienced sales staff to "shop" and get advice, then order online at a discount price elsewhere. Many of these designers and sales professionals are paid on a commission basis, and that should be respected.

—PHIL GRAPP, JACKSON, MISS.

Find these and other November/December articles, how-tos, and videos at [thisoldhouse.com/readers2015](http://thisoldhouse.com/readers2015).

## How to reach us

THE EDITORS: E-mail [TDH\\_letters@thisoldhouse.com](mailto:TDH_letters@thisoldhouse.com) or to This Old House magazine, 225 Liberty Street, New York, NY 10038

• Include your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.



## Kid's bookcase

TOM HOLLAND, PHILADELPHIA

Here's my version (near right) of the child's bookcase at Weekend Remodel: November/December 2015. I stuck to the script, other than using some pocket screws (and switching to polyurethane for my granddaughter). Thanks for the easy-to-follow plans.



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# Checklist

MARCH 2016

Easy ways to  
improve your home  
right now

## 6 FAST FIXES

❑ **Make tax time easier:** Pull receipts, interest statements and other crucial docs now to avoid future stress.



❑ **Partin storm windows:** Cover and label them so you know which goes where, and store them vertically.

❑ **Shovel lingering snow:** Use a plastic shovel to clear any residual snow and ice from decks to prevent boards from becoming warped or split.

❑ **Help out your yard:** Order seeds for microcover now, and spread them on the lawn once the soil is workable for a boost of green all summer.

❑ **Reveal exterior joints:** Look for small gaps around window and door trim, then remove any old caulk before filling with weather-resistant polyurethane caulk.

❑ **Inspect the furnace:** Remove the access panels and filter, clean out dust and debris with a vacuum at technician, then install a new filter.

### ❑ Plant some peas

It's an old American tradition to plant peas on St. Patrick's Day, which is said to bring luck come harvesttime. And it makes sense. Soil is typically thawed and workable, and these veggies prefer to get started in chilly spring weather. Plant about a month before the last frost, soaking the seeds in water for a few hours just before to help speed up germination. Then sit back and watch your good fortune take root.



### ❑ Clean dryer vents

This is one spring-cleaning task that's a safety essential, since the National Fire Protection Association reports that about 35,000 home fires per year are associated with clothes dryers. Detach the duct from the back of the dryer and have a long snake-type brush (\$40, repairline.com) to remove lintable lint from the vent's maze of length.

TOH  
TIP

### ❑ Keep kids safe

National Poison Prevention Week (March 26–30) is a good reminder to be careful with household



and household paint, garden chemicals, which can be fatal if ingested. To protect children at your home, take measures to store chemicals and drugs that come in easy-to-open bags such as fertilizer, in locked cabinets or shed. Always keep household cleaners in their original containers to avoid confusion.

### ❑ Check for roof damage

Winter snow and ice storms can take a toll on your roof, so it's a good idea to scope things out now. There's no need to walk on the roof—it's safer for you and better for your roofing to take a peek from your ladder.



Look for buckling, curling, or blistering shingles and for war around chimneys and pipes. If you spot something questionable, call in a pro.

PROMOTION



# History In the Making

The TOH crew has been busy at the Belmont project house, taking care to preserve its rich history while updating it for modern living. Tune in to see the incredible transformation!

ALL-NEW EPISODES ON PBS

Check local listings or stream at [thisoldhouse.com/watchTOH](http://thisoldhouse.com/watchTOH)

Join the conversation #TOHBelmont

This Old  
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—Kelly V., iTunes Review



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# home solutions

Edited by Megan Baker

INSIDE | DIY DECOR | CLEANING TIPS | LANDSCAPING | ONLINE RESOURCES | MORE



## Scrap stencils

If you're searching for vintage patterns to bring to your next project, look no further than the extras from your last. Leftover materials can offer up playful graphics perfect for painted furniture—like this whimsical piece we stenciled using radiator screening. To get the look, we primed and painted a vintage table in a punchy teal. Once dry, we set the screening in place and lightly pounced paint in the openings using a small artist's brush. Any material with a repeat will work for the task, including patterned fabrics and even plastic sanding pads (pictured at right). Forget concerns—we can't think of a smarter way to use up leftovers.



## DIY plate rack

A simple wooden board is an charming way to display a colorful set of plates, whether they're treasured heirlooms or off-the-shelf finds. In 1x12 pine common board, like the one we used here, gives the project a rough-hewn look. Thanks to subtle imperfections that add character. After cutting the board to 30 inches, we sanded it smooth using a block and medium-grit paper. We laid out the plates on the board (ours are 8 inches in diameter, spaced 4 inches apart) and added plate hangers where the holes would go. Finishing the board with clear, nontoxic wax gave the wood an aged patina. Look, we're serious: no more plate racks, they're out. The plates fit snug. Drying up style has never been so easy.

—MICHELLE FISHER

Decorative and durable, this rack holds up to 12 plates. We like these 11 1/2" x 2 1/2" inch plates (see [www.williams-sonoma.com](http://www.williams-sonoma.com))



SEE HOW IT'S DONE!  
Download this step-by-step video at [bit.ly/mrsclean](http://bit.ly/mrsclean)



## Quick cures for kitchen grime

Sure, you remember to give counters and floors a clean sweep—but what about not-so-obvious spots in your cook space? Here's how to sanitize some easy-to-forget junk magnets.

**RANGE HOOD:** Grease buildup can render filters ineffective. Once a month, remove them and soak in hot water with dish detergent for 10 minutes. Then scrub with a nylon brush. Wipe hood and dust off the hood exterior with a rag and hot soapy water.

**GARBAGE DISPOSAL:** Bits of food stuck to the chamber (and under the gasket) can cause odors. To clean, run the disposal with cold water and add ice cubes, which will help dislodge and wash away crud.

**DISHWASHER:** Once a month, use a toothbrush and baking soda to remove food particles caught in the drain or spinning arms, which can create a stink. Then, fill a dishwasher safe container with one cup of white vinegar, place it on the top rack of an otherwise empty dishwasher, and run a hot cycle. A dish detergent white vinegar solution is especially handy for removing grime around the gasket.

**FLOOR MAT:** Unless you remove the debris trapped in your mathead, you'll just be spreading it around the rest of the house. Detach the head and wash it with dish detergent and hot water, be sure to let it dry completely before storing.

**DISH SPONGE:** Dirty, damp sponges are a perfect playground for bacteria, so they need to be cleaned every couple of days. The easiest way? Microwave the sponge for one minute for 1 minute. Replace every few weeks.

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## Pruning primer

In zones where winter has put plants to sleep mode, now's the best time to prune certain specimens. Use heading cuts to prune back to a healthy bud and promote side branching, and thinning cuts, which take the branches to the nearest limb, to maintain the plant's shape. Snap smart, and you'll see more blooms and thicker foliage. —SAL KAGAN

### WHAT TO PRUNE

### WHEN AND HOW

#### Summer-flowering deciduous shrubs

that bloom on new growth such as butterfly bush, rose of Sharon, and crepe myrtle

These are still dormant in late winter/early spring, making it easy to see year cuts—and they'll break up quickly with the flush of new growth in spring, which is when the shrubs set the summer's buds.

#### Random-branching conifer trees and shrubs,

such as arbutus, juniper, yew, and holly

Prune in early to late spring, once lighter-colored new growth appears, which gives time for cuts to heal and new buds to form. Use thinning cuts back to a main stem to remove overgrown shrubs, but heading cuts: prune back to a branch that has needles or leaves in it so new growth can form.

#### Deciduous perennial vines

that bloom on new growth such as trumpet vine, climbing hydrangea, and Boston ivy

Heading cuts in late winter or early spring control growth and encourage branching. Vines can be trimmed anytime, but save heavy shaping of deciduous varieties for late winter/early spring, before leaves appear.



**What to wait on:** Prune azaleas and rhododendrons in spring or early summer, after flowers wither, so as not to remove next year's buds and reduce blooms. Traditional mophead hydrangeas set buds on the previous year's growth, so while it's safe to snap spent flowers and dead branches, avoid major shaping until summer's end.

## How do I get rid of...

**Deciduating** is easy compared with figuring out what to do with all the stuff you want to unload. Here's how to toss or recycle household materials in need of special treatment. **Note:** Be sure to check your local laws before proceeding. —KATELIN HILL



### WOOD

Local recycling centers can chip untreated lumber for use in compost, mulch, or garden beds. Find a facility near you at earth911.com. Treated or fire-treated wood can't go to recycling, though; instead, donate it to a local reuse facility.



### METAL

Most metals can be scrapped for a small profit. Consult scrapgo.com for local scrap metal shops and current rates. Keep in mind that ferrous (iron-containing) metals, such as stainless steel and cast iron, fetch less than nonferrous metals, such as copper.



### HAZARDOUS WASTE

First, ask your regular trash pickup service what their bulk pickup rules are for nonhazardous nonrecyclable waste—this is often the cheapest option. You can also try a Bagster (\$30 the bagster.com) which can hold up to 3,300 pounds. They'll come empty it for about \$200.



### HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD WASTE

Give away toads, paint, stains, and pesticides or take them to a recycling center that accepts hazardous household waste. If the product is water based, you can let it evaporate before disposing of the solids in a sealed plastic bag.



### APPLIANCES

Fridges, freezers, window AC units, and dehumidifiers may contain toxic substances such as mercury, so in many states sending them to the landfill is illegal. Instead, look into local cash-back or rebate programs that include pickup, just confirm that inefficient units will be recycled, not resold.

# HOW DO YOU <sup>This Old</sup> House?

This Old House is everywhere you are. Find all the inspiration, information, and entertainment you love—to watch, to read, and to share with friends.



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## Scribble center

What better way to add whimsy to your walls than with oversized animal silhouettes that serve as both creative and display space? These sea creatures get bonus functionality from magnetic primer and chalkboard paint. To make them, we used 1/4-inch MDF (\$6 for a 2-by-4-foot sheet; at home centers) that we outlined freehand (you can download the three templates at [thisoldhouse.com/mar2016](http://thisoldhouse.com/mar2016)). We cut them out with a jigsaw, paying special attention to tight center turns, then softened edges with a rasp. Two coats of magnetic primer followed, and tinted chalkboard paint gave them their color. Mounted with removable adhesive strips, they form an irresistible interactive display. —a sources

We used Rust-Oleum chalkboard paint in Freshwater. Prospekt and School House Green are magnetic primer.



## Design help, a click away

Thanks to a growing array of online services, anyone can have access to an interior designer. Here's a slice of inspiration from five stylish options.

### KARIM (karpinterior.com)

**Price:** Free  
**What you get:** A single-page design board—think Pinterest—but it's curated by designers who review a cut of product sales via the app.

### HAVENLY (havenly.com)

**Price:** \$79–\$299 per room  
**What you get:** Two concept boards; top price includes revisions. After the 1st, buy products through the site.

### LAUREL & WOLF (laurelowlf.com)

**Price:** \$299–\$499 per room  
**What you get:** Three designs and a one-week revision process. You pick a designer from those who submit pitches based on your budget and style.

### DECORST (decorst.com)

**Price:** Starts at \$299 per room  
**What you get:** Two room designs, plus revisions. You're paired with a designer based on budget and style and order products through the site.

### HOMEPOUSH (homepouish.com)

**Price:** No charge for the initial consult; then \$200 or \$350 per hour  
**What you get:** A 1-hour in-person video consult with a junior- or senior-level pro who is matched with you after you pay for furniture sourcing and layout ideas by the hour.

## Dining room built-ins for \$380

Custom storage with farmhouse flair helps turn back the clock in a lackluster dining room



**BEFORE:** A bare wall served as the perfect canvas for the homeowners' forlorn first, final midlevel carpentry project.

**AFTER:** The storage-rich unit helps balance out the living room by shortening its footprint by 2 feet, while plate racks show off fully curvial dishes.

## THE PROJECT TALLY

Constructed the bench out of stain-grade lumber and built plate racks with 1 1/4-in. x 1/2-in. x 1/2-in. metal rods. Included dishware plate. **\$380**

Track cup long-run and groove strips—in the trunk groove strips—to create benchboard backrest with a seamless look. **\$75**

Painted the units white to match the rest of the room and decorated the shelves with a light gray hue. **\$50**

Used the two units with crown molding which was cut and installed the rest of the room. **\$45**

TOTAL **\$380**

THE CURE FOR A HOME'S tired style can be as simple as bringing a lackluster room. When Jessica and Joshua Davis moved into their 1910 house, in Frederick, Maryland, they found it overworn with dated 1970s additions. The couple wanted to reintroduce some of the farmhouse elements the original home may have had, so they designed a set of built-ins for their dining room that included plate racks, window seat, storage and access to the deck, which Joshua wanted to be the front of the back. Large space hides off-screen decor and open shelves. Above, they flanked the window with two shallow shelving units, which are backed with beadboard, and removed the window's existing shutters to allow for more natural light. A fresh coat of light-white paint ties the backboard in with the rest of the room, while light gray on the shelves helps add visual depth. The new built-ins look as if they were born with the house. "It felt right to bring back some of the cottage character the house may have had when it was first built," says Jessica. "And it's the first thing guests comment on!" —NATE ARIEL

## ARE YOU THERE?

Share us how you found a pro. We'll feature you in the next issue of our October issue. Share your story with us. [thisoldhouse.com/yourstory](http://thisoldhouse.com/yourstory)

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## Moving up

Rejiggering a hillside house allows everyone's favorite room to reinvent itself as a gathering spot on the sunny top floor

BY DEBORAH KALOWIN + PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL OYER



**IF YOU'VE TRANSIT SYSTEMS** can help explain why some old homes more oddly oriented today. A side entrance, for example, may recall the trolley that could once be sped from the door. In the case of this Victorian-era house, clinging to a hillside in coastal Belvedere, California, the front door and kitchen belonged downstairs for easy access back when groceries arrived by ferry. With the advent of cars, the main entrance moved to the third floor, near parking space up the hill. Now the kitchen has moved too, joining the living room on the top floor as part of a redo by architect Mark Reilly.

Nonetheless James Campbell and Adam Gousser happily sacrificed two upstairs bedrooms to gain an airy kitchen and dining area that housed the cook (Adam), bottle waiter (James), and guests with winning wine views. To preserve historical 7-foot windows, Reilly ran shelves and a counter top in front of them, allowing daylight to spill onto prep space and below it, via openings under the sinks. "It's great to entertain here—it's the real center of the house," says James. As for the new master suite, it took over the old cooking and eating areas, as James puts it, "on the quiet level."



**BEFORE** Two small bedrooms hogged much of the top floor, relegating the kitchen to a spot far from the main entrance and best views.

**AFTER** Walls came down to make way for a crowd-friendly new kitchen and dining area. Pendant lights: Jabel Range hood: Vent-A-Hood

The painted plywood shelves minimize the visual weight of the counter tops. Counter tops: Cambridge Painted Oak



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The lefty space has  
opened views of  
San Francisco Bay.  
While white oak  
countertops define  
the kitchen, dining  
area and adjacent  
living room. Pig  
Cush & Albert

Homeowner Adam Greenstein  
requests for a spot where he could  
anchor a potting table. The 30-inch  
seating overhang fits the bill.



Deep drawers hide  
pots, pans, utensils,  
and crockpots.  
An accent wall  
displays black  
and white photos of  
the family.  
Homeowner James  
Campbell (left),  
Benjamin Moore's  
Hardwood Pig and  
Super White (wall)

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## before

Asymmetrical  
309 square feet



## after

Opened and rebuilt  
with new plumbing  
and gas lines, the  
large, narrow space  
now holds an open  
kitchen and a  
dining area.

1. Demolished wall  
between kitchen  
and living room  
to open up the space.
2. "Island" prep  
and cleanup space  
in front of existing  
windows to  
maximize light.
3. Created a  
compact work zone  
with a second sink  
out of the way.



4. Allocated perimeter  
space near a set of  
windows to the  
dining area.
5. Took off doors  
and widened one  
of the openings  
to the living room  
for better flow.
6. Built an  
18-foot island  
that has seating  
on one side  
and storage  
on the other.
7. Added a door  
to access a new  
powder room.

ILLUSTRATION BY TQM



Floating shelves keep tabletops clear  
while preserving original windows and  
interior wall. The new island light.  
Taberner West Co.



**homeowner tip** ADAM GREENSTEIN, CALIF.  
"We chose solid-surface countertops because they're  
stain- and scratch-resistant, then went for a marble  
backsplash—12-by-12-inch tile cut down to 12-by-6."



The open shelves  
being anchored right  
above the island.  
Stripes of  
electrical outlets and  
LED lights are almost  
invisible under the  
tile. Integrated  
Recessed Group  
Outlets and LED  
Cabinet. West Co.

## Kid-friendly classic

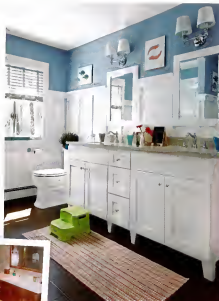
Timeless architectural details form the backdrop for a fun, functional children's bath with lasting appeal

BY NINA MALIKIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY TINA GIOVANNI

**"THEY GROW UP so fast!"** That parental refrain takes on new significance when the kids of a bath's birth is on the agenda. So when Joe and Lynn Karsnick of Wayne, New Jersey, decided to tackle the bath in their 1973 Colonial shared by their son, 4, and daughter, 6, "We were aiming for longevity," says Lynn, "a room to suit them now and when they're teens."

While the existing space was dark and dated, it was of ample size and the plumbing locations worked well. Enter designer Jennifer Woodard McDermott, who found a way to keep the price and with deep drawers that made above-the-sink storage unnecessary. As Lynn says, "Kids reaching up for a medicine cabinet seems like an accident waiting to happen." Whitecoating adds architectural interest, while double sconces brighten the space. Fun fish prints on the watery-blue walls complete the look—for now. "As the children mature, they can update the room with color and pattern in towels, rugs, and accessories," adds McDermott.

Just as nice, says Lynn, "getting ready for bed has become a smoother, quicker process."



**BEFORE** The single vanity and tiled floor had worn linoleum, and the room dramatically needed light.

**AFTER** A new vanity with a semi-circular mirror, top glass, and white subway tile storage space. Glowing white paint on the full wall made the room feel bright and airy.



BEFORE



**homeowner tip**  
Lynn Karsnick  
Wayne, NJ

"Splurge on some artwork for the walls! It's the kind of small detail that really ties a room together."



Double-vanity sconces are switched beside the sinks as children's reach and center the lighting theme.

Source: RestorationHardware



PHOTOGRAPH BY TINA GIOVANNI



Dark four-panel ceramic tile backsplash provide a welcome contrast to the white vanity. Equally dark grid is key.

A built-in shelf board tucked up the wall saves space and adds a touch of the newly fun. Two-panel shower curtain.

Source: Delta, The Home Depot



## after

Separate sinks and cabinet storage put an end to squabbling. Extra elbow room in the tub/shower makes bath time more comfortable.

1. Exchanged a single sink for a 6-foot double vanity with two under-mount sinks for easy cleanup.

2. Put a new commode in the old bathtub's left-chase bed room to make sleeping.



3. Swapped in a tub/shower unit that provided 60-in. of space for the shower.

4. A pressure-balance shower valve prevents accidental surges of hot or cold water.

5. Swapped the 'Memphis' tub/shower surround for tiled walls added a deeper water tub.

## A fresh spin

Formerly part of a cluttered storage and office area, a laundry room sacrifices a little square footage for a lot more function—and style

BY BERNADETTE DAZZYNSKI • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALISE O'BRIEN

**LONG ON CHARM,** vintage houses are by definition short on modern conveniences. Even when a laundry-room addition is part of the package, it doesn't always satisfy, as Sarah and Dan Wenzel found when they moved into their 1927 Tudor-style home, in Webster Groves, Missouri.

The existing laundry footprint was one room that included an office desk and a coat closet, though the master entrance door was at the far end of the adjoining kitchen. After living with it—and its sagging, improperly tiled floor—for five years, the Wenzels hired architect Michael Bliss. His solution: Move a load-bearing wall to create separate laundry and mudroom areas, add pocket doors to conceal the washer and dryer when closed, and give the mudroom direct access to the outside.

Designer Wendy Kohn specified a farm sink and sage-green laundry cabinets that match the kitchen. Moreover, like a hanging rack and a ironing board, set out of sight, to period style (laundry and cosmetics can take center stage). Kohn even found room for the family files. Says Sarah, "Now the room has all that I need, just where I need it."

**BEFORE** Though fringed with handsome windows, the room pocketed clutter and was ill-suited for doing laundry.

**AFTER** A freestanding custom sink makes the 6-foot-wide passageway unobstructed pocket doors, exhibiting delicate character in the house. Black look-alike line baringhane pedestal helps define the new laundry area. See "DIY" Master laundry room.



BEFORE

Centering the sink on the wall allows for dedicated space for tasks like folding laundry and ironing plants. The ironing board pops up from a drawer as needed. A wood-look-style backsplash gives the green cabinet a clean, modern look. Ironing board: Pottery Barn

A roll-up clothes rack hides iron cabinet when not in use. Hanging rack: The Art of Color; cabinet: Mission Oak



### before

Wardrobe tasks claimed one side of the multipurpose space



### after

Moving a load-bearing wall by 54 inches created a 96-square-foot laundry room and a separate mudroom area.



1. Installing a space-saving pull-down clothes rack and ironing board meant allowing for life elsewhere below.
2. Flip the existing closet to store bulky winter coats, as well as a broom and a vacuum.
3. Addition of exterior door to the mudroom for direct access to and from outside.
4. Combined the coat closet along the far wall with a built-in bench for the light.
5. Shifted the washer and dryer slightly in order to move the wall in line with the coat closet.
6. Put pocket doors in the relocated wall to hide the laundry room from view as desired.

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## DISCUSSION



DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2016

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## What's old is new again

On the left, we have faithful reproductions of historical wallpaper patterns; on the right, playful updates. Any one you pick will bring enduring appeal to your walls.

BY MICHELLE BRUNER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW MCCALL

**AS LONG AS THERE HAVE** been verdant forests and fields of flowers, artists have looked to Mother Nature as their muse. Between the mid-1800s and the early 20th century, for instance, designers such as William Morris and C.F.A. Voysey favored stylized botanical motifs and whimsical woodland creatures in their wallpaper designs. Today, these classic patterns are connecting with a fresh audience, and a whole new crop of designers is finding similar inspiration in nature's beauty. Here are some of our favorite reproductions of traditional prints alongside their modern counterparts.



**FLORA AND FAUNA** Based on a 17th-century needlework, G.F.A. Vasey's 1928 design (see right) depicts birds, insects and various herbs arranged in vertical rows. The beautiful pattern features a vibrant color scheme and plays with scale (grasshoppers are bigger than birds). In similar vein, designer Julia Rothman's contemporary take (see right) shows wildlife in a lush forest environment. She credits another 17th-century source of inspiration: Italian still-life paintings.

**TRADITIONAL**  
**apothecary's**  
**garden**  
TRUSTWORTHY STITCHES  
Made of bleached paper  
Take note: It's equally at  
home in a formal dining  
space or a kid's room  
\$7 per square foot  
trustworth.com

**foret**  
HYGGE & WIST  
Made of Clay-coated paper  
Take note: This alluring  
profusion might  
only combine to  
(\$4 per square foot,  
hyggeandwist.com)



**FLIGHTS OF FANCY**

Graceful gulls bob along the waves in this lively print from 1931 (above). Seagulls soar and dip through the clouds in this Julie Rodman wallpaper (right). What do the two have in common? Besides feathers and intensity! Soaring lines representing the sea and sky give the patterns a kinetic energy.

**TRADITIONAL seagulls**

YIELD: THREE BY STUDIOS  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: This smaller scale of the graphic is perfect for a smaller room. \$7 per square foot; traworth.com

**MODERN daydream**

HOGE & NEST  
Islands of Clay-coated paper  
Take note: This ocean print of paper comes in 22 shades and is available. \$3.60 per square foot; hysandnest.com

**FORMAL FOLDS**

Acornbush leaves are a common motif in classical architecture—they adorn the tops of Corinthian columns—and work as a lovely element in William Morris designs, such as this 1904 design (above). This is a 19th-century (right) or a modern print of the left without acorns.

**TRADITIONAL acanthus**

WOLFE AND COMPANY  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: Against an earthy backdrop, the foliage produces an almost 3-D effect. \$3.60 per square foot; wolfeandco.com

**MODERN rind acanthus**

THIBAUT  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: A hand-drawn background with abstract and organic lines (black and white). \$4.37 per square foot; thibaut.com



**JUST BAIT**

Not for the faint-hearted (about 1910), this wallpaper (above) features fish and seaweed. It's a nod to the Oriental aesthetic evoked in Dan Fendburg's 1910 Update (right) shows the whimsical, swirling, strong carnivorous plants, such as a Venus flytrap, and a palette that reads more like a traditional lode.

**TRADITIONAL bat and poppy**

THIBAUT  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: The gray, navy, and brown color scheme works well with neutrals. \$7 per square foot; thibaut.com

**MODERN elysian fields**

THIBAUT  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: Although this paper is hand-printed, it has a clean, crisp look. \$3.25 per square foot; thibaut.com



**RABBIT REDUX**

No, you're not seeing rabbits. Designed in 1911 as a fabric by William Morris in 1911, the Rabbit Redux wallpaper (above) was named for a character in the 1911 Morris children's book, *The Rabbit Redux*. Morris's print (above) has a pattern of rabbits in profile, though the figures are more simply rendered.

**TRADITIONAL bree rabbit**

WOLFE AND COMPANY  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: Although this paper is hand-printed, it has a clean, crisp look. \$3.25 per square foot; wolfeandco.com

**MODERN heathland**

THIBAUT  
Made of Uncoated paper  
Take note: The subtle, scenic pattern in five colors, including blue and white. \$3.25 per square foot; thibaut.com

## Rustic bedroom retreat

Woody elements and vintage finds bring the outdoors in and add one-of-a-kind character to this sleeping spot

BY MICHELLE BURNER + PHOTOGRAPH BY QUENTIN BACON

**THE FASTEST ROUTE** is giving a space a ton of personality? Furnish it with pieces that tell a good story. That's exactly what Atlanta interior designer Barbara Westbrook did for this bedroom in a Georgia lake house. A hackery sleigh bed reveals the furniture one night's nap in an Adirondack lodge and hints at the houseowner's ancestor's spot north of the Mason Dixon Line. For a taste of local flavor, a grumpy sign from a discontinued railroad station nearby—a reminder to train crews to signal their approach—hangs above the bed. A vintage wooden trunk with primitive dreamtime tins at the foot of the bed, piled with cozy blankets—a nod to the footlockers one might find at camp. Even the walls have character, thanks to painted shiplap peeling away in places. Want to bring a similar cabin-chic vibe to your own bedroom? Read on.



### folk-art chest

The vintage flowerbox trunk at right is a real find. You could get lucky at a flea market, or you could make your own. We fashioned ours from shelving, plywood, sealant, primer hardware, with stencils molding tucked around the base and half round molding framing out the lid. Leftover paint and antique wax give it a rich patina. Total cost: about \$45



### French provincial table

With flat-topped legs and a curvy apron, a Gallic style console makes an unexpected nightstand. We painted this one a similar shade of periwinkle. \$140, wayfair.com



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DELTA



**vintage look clock**  
In a rural refuge, a ticking digital alarm clock might seem out of place. This old-fashioned analog model echoes the one at left. Greater clock. \$45, potterybarn.com



### accent pillows

Straw sack pillows invite you to curl up and into a big, bold pillow with a sense of whimsy. Striped pillow. \$48, wayfair.com. Fox pillow. \$40, \$50. Inexpensive side table on etsy.com



### cozy throw

With its long stripes, this classic wool-and-cotton throw recalls the blankets campers used when setting up camp. \$18, potterybarn.com



### circle lamp

The farmhouse found the set of lamps at left in a local shop. This rope hemisphere version has shabby-chic appeal. Kenney Home. Dayton, Ohio. \$200, kenneyhome.com



### log bed

Adirondack-style like the one the designer used will set you back a pretty penny. You can build your own from a lot already in inventory. Northern white cedar logs for a headboard of the bed. Full size bed kit (showing starts at \$570). theloghouse.com



### DIY

### railroad sign

Railroad-themed signs were plentiful, but it's the one we embedded in the letters to reflect the headlights of passing trains. Keeping signposts on the straight. We re-created the look of the flea market find at left with salvaged paint. Ticket, unsanded craft store letters, and glued down metal washers with the seen-railroad theme—for about \$25.

## Inspired by the past

Use tape, print, and a stencil to make this classic floor pattern shine

BY DEBORAH KILGORE



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**BUTTER PANTRIES** don't get the white-glove treatment as often as they should. In recognition of the hard work this one does for its suburban household, interior designer Penny Dine Baird gave it a decorative paint finish underfoot. A grid of 2-foot squares, set at an angle to visually magnify the floor's width, is punctuated at the intersections with black. "I'm influenced by classrooms—in the 1990s this would have been done with masonry tile," says the New York City-based designer, who features the project in her newest book, *Decorehouse* (The Monarch Press).

After lightly sanding, sweeping, and staining the floorboards, Baird's crew measured and divided up the space. Painter's tape went down next, and the pattern was completed with two shades of paint, one suggesting black granite and the other pale limestone. "It's always a good idea to choose colors that are natural," says Baird of the timeless look. A lighted leaf motif, achieved with a custom stencil and stain, adds an updated flourish, and a coat of polyurethane provides polish and protection. (For tips on how to cut and wield a stencil, go to [doithouse.com/mar2016](http://doithouse.com/mar2016).) Many months later, the pantry is still shining in style. ■

Wood tones, clean white, and black accents unite the floor and other elements in the room.

PHOTO: KIMBERLY GILBERT

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## Unexpected wall treatments

The four vertical surfaces that surround you provide a lot of canvas space for creativity. Here, the stars of *The Fabulous Bushman Boys* offer three fresh inspirations for walls from their new book. BY KATHRYN KELLER

**1. "THE BIGGEST" "wow" factor** a room can have is when you use something in a not-so-obvious way." That's how Josh Kliner-Purcell and Brent Ridge think when designing a space, a philosophy reflected in *Brushwork 1800 Style*, their new book. They like the idea of covering walls with home-center ceiling medallions, lacinated shutters, or even open books (heavily). They've lined walls with faux-tin ceiling tiles and nested mirrored strips of picture molding together to create a dramatic chevron effect. What inspires them? "A lot of times our ideas come from going to big-box stores and seeing what's on discount. Scoring a bulk quantity of something for very little money usually makes us more creative. We have nothing so lost! Here, a few designs they love:

### L sheets of newsprint

Think beyond the roll when it comes to wallpaper. A stack of 20056 *Urbanism* newspapers bought at a flea market for \$20 serves as a graphic backdrop for vintage plumbing fixtures in this bath. All it took to transform the sheets into a moisture-resistant wall covering: wallpaper paste, flat fresh craft sealant—and a little extra patience.



*Brushwork 1800 Style* (Hardcover) by Brent Ridge and Josh Kliner-Purcell, is available at independent bookstores and on Amazon.com



Josh Kliner-Purcell & Brent Ridge



### 2. horizontal paneling

More often than hanging vertically, thin horizontally grooved boards have created a sleek gray frame a handsome background for an armless sofa, playing up its long, low lines. They also visually widen a tight space. A collection of small framed mirrors spans the area above the sofa, adding the all-too-common mistake of centering something under (and directly above) furniture.

**pro advice** JOSH KLINER-PURCELL AND BRENT RIDGE, FOUNDERS, DEEDMAN LUCE DESIGN, SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

"For interesting wall finishes, visit high-end retailers, hotels, and restaurants in your area. You'll get a glimpse of all the latest trends and a true 'touch and feel' experience."

### 3. wood-look floor tile

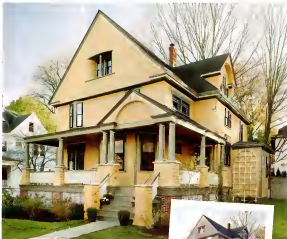
Another kind of painted treatment extends this tilework and reaches between two boxes of vibrant green. Modern blue-bay porcelain floor tiles form a pale neutral backdrop below minty green walls and cabinetry, the transition from the white countertops and teal cabinets below. Their long lengths mean minimal seams and grout lines. ■



## Putting history front and center

Designed and built from the ground up, the wraparound porch of this Queen Anne takes its proud place at the heart of the home's appeal

BY JILL CONYERS • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY REGUI



### THE PORCH, REMASTERED

The owners, *This Old House* general contractor Tom Sileo and the crew are renovating an 1895 Queen Anne in Foxboro, Massachusetts, that housed some of its share (THROTTLE). Rebuilding the single-level front porch (MOUNT) became a major part of the project. The sketch that architect Mel Cammerings drew early on (JENNIFER) established an overall look for the porch that delighted homeowners Maurel and Katherine Blinn.



REFRAME



**EXCITED ABOUT THEIR** first working session with the architect, homeowners Katherine and Maurel Blinn led Mel Cammerings to the dining room of their 1895 Queen Anne. Cammerings unfolded a set of existing-house drawings across the table, spread them flat, and asked what the Blinns wanted for their house, the subject of the current season of *This Old House* TV. Some of the improvements they discussed would include a new kitchen, a revamped foyer, a mudroom (housewifery, aggressive master class), and a new heating and cooling system.

Heading in on a front elevation, Maurel spoke up: "It looks naked, like something's missing." At that, the architect produced a piece of tracing paper and a black Sharpie and started sketching over the blank facade—columns, a swooping railing, wide steps. Right before their eyes, the picture the couple had envisioned since buying the house a month earlier began to take shape. "He drew a porch for the house in about 30 seconds," says Katherine. "And he really nailed it. We could see immediately that a porch was exactly what the house needed."

And so began the story of a renovation in which adding a porch where one had long ago been removed took on major significance, in effort, expense, and impact. It completely transformed the facade. The exterior changes addressed function and history:

**DEEP IN DETAILS** ARCHITECT: THIS Blinn built the original wraparound porch for the porch gable as a weathered, then installed the historic place on the house.

ABOUT 1895-97 Blinn and Katherine Blinn, born with their daughter and son, first their historical-looking new porch makes the house more a part of the neighborhood.

But the porch was all about architectural detail and the overall feel of the place.

An old town map shows the footprint of a porch running along the main facade and wrapping around the right side of the house, but by the time Maurel and Katherine came along, only a stubby set of steps remained. "A front porch would have been really important to this house during the Victorian era because at that time, people sat out there and greeted their neighbors as they strolled by," says Cammerings. "It created the sociotope. It's not just a porch, really—it is the character of the house itself."

To design the porch, he drew on his experience with other projects from the period, as well as his observations of the defining elements on the houses on the Blinns' neighborhood. "It was kind of like putting together an entire dinner service from a rice bowl," says Cammerings. The result is a keeping with

the Queen Anne vernacular, which is known for plenty of detail, asymmetry, and a bit of whimsy. For example, he included columns resting on shingled piers that flare out at the bottom and a decorative gable signaling the front door—both elements characteristic of the style. Taken together, they display a level of detail that a custom home built in 1895 would likely have had.

Creating a Victorian-era porch today, however, requires devotion



FRONT SKETCH



**ABOVE AND BEYOND**  
FAR LEFT: Time

bolts sections of the Speedmaster railing. In its installed position, the rails.

LEFT: Using a belt sander, the contractor smooths the approach. Siler Brothers' business Dan Buckley is in the workshop, working on the porch first, then the railing. The board is in place.

to the notion of doing things right. "It all comes down to whether you pay enough attention to detail," says Cummings. One test of this philosophy arose during the design of the porch foundation. As Katherine recalls, "Matt and I worried about the cost of brick and thought we should go with a less expensive material and hide the entire porch foundation behind lattice. Matt pushed back and said it would really make a difference. He was so right."

Despite the painstaking work required, This Old House general contractor Tom Silva needed no convincing. "There's a lot of detail and a lot of different materials in this porch, but it's worth it because it's such a key element of the house," says Tom. He poured effort into every aspect, from installing the five-boarded ceiling and mahogany decking with matted corners where the porch steps are set to shingling the eaves with butt-joints and handcrafting the swooping handrail and balusters.

While it's unusual for decking to run the corner with the porch, Cummings feels that when all the decking is devoted to one direction, it doesn't lead anywhere. Tom had nailed the decking in place, a technique typical of the era and one he uses for most of his projects.

He also used a "strong" adhesive, "because that's the way I like to do it today."

The signature detail of the porch, however, is the gable, and it is a feature to which the entire team brought heart and soul. Early on, Morris and Katherine were hired on a fairly routine to get ideas for the look

**WANT THE MAKE-UP HAPPEN?**  
Time into your local PBS station to watch the renovation of This Old House. To see the porch project, go to [www.thisoldhouse.com/tv](http://www.thisoldhouse.com/tv).

While Tom's porch project was made with modern City millwork, a Millwright installed the brick that has been hand-laid and painted for more than a century.



of the gable, piling both loads into the SUV and Sunday afternoon and driving around neighborhood with Victorian-era houses for inspiration—settling on through the local postcard. "If we saw a porch gable we liked, we'd pull over, take a photo, and keep going," says Katherine. "Then we chose our favorites and shared them with Matt." The common denominator of the gables they liked was that they were all shingled and they all had decorative elements that made them feel like they belonged on their respective houses.

Cummings drew a gable that could be the whole and welcoming every step, with a pair of columns on either side, and with a shingled eave that echoes the one found on the house's existing third-story gable, facing the side yard. Tom built the shingled eave on a table-top using every cedar shingle by hand with a knife, nailing each one to a plywood back, then trimming out the shape—and installed the finished porch on the house. "It's a lot of work for a small area, but in the end, it's one more thing that makes this porch look like it's always been there," says Tom.

For the family, the porch sums up their dream for the house. "In terms of our daily lives, it probably has the least impact—whether the kitchen and the outdoors and the air conditioning, for example," says Katherine. "But in terms of the joy we get, it is enormous. Every time we walk up those steps, we will be glad we did it. We have given our house its proper respect."

## Anatomy of a perfect porch, detail by detail

1. A single column on a stone base with a bracketed capital is the silhouette of the porch columns.

2. The sweeping handrail is the sort of detail found on Victorian-era houses, which included a diversity of archaic chair shapes. A nearly invisible cable attached just above the rail is another good one. Tom Silva's subtle solution for meeting the building code height of 36 inches.

3. Taking cues from neighboring Queen Anne architect Mel Cummings included porch piers shingled in white cedar and hand of the builder—more Victorian whimsy.

4. As the plan developed from the sketch, the need for a gable to announce the second floor also became clear. Beneath it, wide eaves signal an expansive roof speak to the level of porch as gathering spot. "The double columns are needed to keep proportions," explains Cummings.

5. Setting the porch into foundation of brick piers rather than making concrete new, built on the existing walkway the leveling that the porch steps always bear there. The brick matches the house's chimney.

6. Wood porch ceilings were characteristic of the era. While often painted, the ceilings were sometimes left natural. The three large and grooved handrails.

7. Mahogany is a durable alternative to old growth Douglas fir, which would have been used for the porch floor when the house was built. With the same grain, the mahogany is the sort of craftsmanship typical of the era.



## Paw patrol

Drool-worthy fabrics and savvy strategies to keep your furniture from going to the dogs

BY KATHY BARNES • ILLUSTRATION BY TONI UM



**SEE SPOT JUMP.** See Spot play! See Spot—and upon—all over your new sofa? Not necessarily. Just because you live with a dog doesn't mean you have to suffer ugly covers or stained fabric. If you're shopping for new furniture—or re-covering what you have—there are lots of practical options. Here, dog lovers' and designers' top picks.

### Synthetic stars

"Dogs equal dirt," says Anette Selts, the designer behind home textile company Dink & Alice. "They can do a number on a living room, so I cover everything with leathers or leather textures." Quick to clean and stain resistant, these fabrics are commonly made of solution-dyed acrylic (such as Sunbrella) or polyester and repel

moisture and soil. Today many look and feel like high-end, interior-only upholstery. Other dog-friendly choices include microfleece, a thin and durable material with a very tight weave, and neoprene, a microfiber designed to mimic made-in-leather look and feel. Both feel soft, but a neoprene (dog) naps and wash well.

### Natural selections

Hard-working leather is a favorite natural choice, though it can show scratches. Blogger Kristen Leone (@crislenew.com) put swatches through the paws test before ordering her leather sofa. "We cook samples outside and let my dog run around with them," Selts points leather with a distressed finish, "since extra miles put old to the patina."

Denim and cotton canvas or well can be fine options too, especially for slipcovers, which New York City designer Heather Higgins recommends. "They're easily cleaned, and usually less expensive than upholstery." Plus, you can have another slipcover made when you need a new look, or buy a ready-made sofa that comes with a variety of in-stock options. Her schismatic-disheveled max spends a lot of time on her white-cotton-slipcovered sofa, which she keeps looking sharp with bleach.

### Technical help

Treated fabric is another way to go. Crypro is a proprietary process that gives fabric dirt-, moisture-, and odor-repelling qualities. It's targeted to pet owners—and parents—and you can find it on upholstered furniture and by the yard at fabric stores, such as Jo Ann, ranging from \$15 to \$120 per yard. A less pricey, also-water-resistant alternative, Scotchgard. Blogger Allison Moore (@alisonanddog.com) notes by it. "It makes wiping up messes very easy," she says, adding that she keeps 46 bottles of the home center and sprays those pillows as needed after working there.

### Match game

Wherever your fabric, be smart about style. Snap a photo and match it to the color to fix. A pet mess is also a good idea. When you have a lot to look at, you don't focus on shed hairs. Blues, greys, and florals are all tops in camouflage.

This Old House

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## Upgrade a steel lamppost

Use a PVC column kit and trim to create an architectural detail that shines day or night BY SAL VADUCA • PHOTOS & VIDEO BY KOLIN SMITH



**COST \$321**  
**TIME** Two days  
**DIFFICULTY** Easy. Ajo helps with assembly and the wiring is basic.

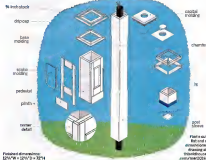
**MOST LAMPPOSTS FAVOR** safety over aesthetics. But why shouldn't your source of street-front lighting enhance curb appeal when the sun is up, too? This lamppost is a chunky, square column wrapped in layers of Colonial Revival moldings. And it's not as complicated to make as it might look. We designed the post to slip over a post sleeve that itself slips over a standard 3-inch-diameter steel pole. Made from PVC, which won't rot, the lamppost looks classic in stark white but can be painted if you don't mind retouching every few years. Follow along as The CMJ House master technical editor Mark Powers shows you how to dress up a drab metal post—a stylish welcome for guests who come knocking at top hour.



Lights here: Scores Post about Lumber 3250; white paint: weekendremodel.com; PVC column wrap: Home Depot; trim: PVC; wiring: Home Depot; see their list. PVC is available from 70 cents per linear foot at [www.cdn.com](http://www.cdn.com)

# DAY-TO-DAY TIMELINE

**SATURDAY** Build the column and pedestal (Steps 1-5).  
**SUNDAY** Install the post sleeve and wire the lantern (Steps 6-7).



## TOOLS

- > tape measure
- > pencil
- > circular saw
- > miter saw
- > trim router
- > 45° chamfering router bit
- > drill/driver
- > clamps
- > 1/4-inch roundover router bit
- > 3/8-inch hole saw
- > combination square

## MATERIALS

- > 2x4 PVC Get two 8-footers
- > bed molding
- > 2x2 PVC Get one 8-footer
- > 2x4 PVC Get two 8-footers
- > PVC drip cap
- > PVC soffit molding
- > Axxel column wrap kit
- > PVC cement Get both all purpose and Axxel's slow setting formulas
- > 1/4-inch deck screws
- > painter's tape
- > light fixture
- > wire nuts

## 2 Build a jig

**A) Attach the base.** Fasten a 2x4-inch square block which represents the inside dimensions of the column to the work surface with 2x4-inch deck screws, as shown.

**B) Add the base.** Fit the jig over the block. You'll use it to assemble the rings of molding that will be the post. Once you remove each assembly from the jig, the moldings will slip right over the finished column.



SEE HOW IT'S DONE.  
To watch a virtual version of this project, go to [diyhouse.com](http://diyhouse.com) and click.

## 3 Create the capital

**A) Start the shellstock.** Clamp a 2-inch-wide board overhanging the work surface. Fit the router with V-nose and roundover bit and push it along one edge, as shown. Flip the board and repeat on the underside of the same edge, completing the bullnose. Wrap the base of the jig in a wide band of painter's tape to keep the molding from sticking to it. Cut four sections of shell stock with 45° routers at either end to fit around the jig like a picture frame. Starting at one corner, coat the router's ends with all-purpose PVC cement and pinch the pieces together for 30 seconds, using the jig to hold the joint square. Repeat at the other corners, clearing any squeeze-out with a rag.

**B) Add the bed molding.** Measure and miter four pieces of bed molding to lay over the bullnose shell. Add cement to the underside of the concave or dove detail as a piece and place third edge against the shell while lining up the miters. Rest the molding, a new detail against the jig. After the cement bonds, coat the next piece and press the rest member into the first piece and the shell. Complete all four sides.

**C) Make the sleeve joints.** Draw lines over to corner on the post to mark the joint. Then cut the edges of one face with the 1/4-inch-radius roundover bit. Clamp the piece over scrap and use whole saw to drill a 5-inch-diameter hole, as shown, to go over the existing lamp post. Remove the piece from the jig and place it on the work surface. Bed molding down. Apply cement around the inside perimeter of the shell stock. Then place the sleeve block on top, using a combination square to center it.

## 1 Assemble the post sleeve

**A) Cut the boards to length.** Use a circular saw and miter saw to cut the PVC parts except for the soffit molding to final dimensions according to the cut list at the end of this article (see page 20). Fold out the three tapered sides of the column to length. Place spacers on either side of the column and trim the panels to length with a circular saw. Cut the fourth piece to the same length. Saw a 1/2-inch offset of the offsets to make a jig to use for building the molding layers.

**B) Join the sleeve panels.** Coat the grooved corners with slow-setting PVC cement (applied one with a working time of 10 minutes). Starting at one end, fold the kit into a shape, shaping the joints together and work toward the other end. Use a drying tape along any adhesive that squeezes out. Add cement to the fourth panel and snap it into place, as shown. Repeat this process with the soffit to form the top. After the cement dries, peel the tape off and mark 30 inches and 36 inches from one end of the column. Chuck a 45° chamfering bit into a trim router and rout between the two marks on all four corners.



ILLUSTRATION: GUY LAWRENCE





**TIP** Use an all-purpose PVC cement on the miter joints after you dry-fit them. It bonds in 30 seconds and cures in about 2 minutes.

## 5 Build the pedestal

**A) Make the panels.** Set the narrower pedestal panels on edge and cut the top edges with slow, setting cement. Place a miter joint in the wet edges. Score through the panel and insert the edges with deck screws at each corner, as shown, and one between them. Flip the assembly over and do both the last panel the same way.

**B) Add edges and rails.** Add the narrower slats over the edges of the wider panels using all-purpose cement. Then attach the wider slats overlapping the narrower ones, making a 90° corner. Cement the rails between the slats. Flush with the top of the pedestal and inset 2 inches from the other end, as shown.

**C) Add scotia molding.** Measure and miter pieces of scotia molding to fit and use them to frame the interior of the panels. Bond them in place one at a time, as shown, with all-purpose cement. Then wrap the base of the pedestal with mitered 1x4 boards to create a plinth, using more cement.



## 4 Make the base molding

**A) Add flat stock.** Kicks at the top, make a square frame out of four lengths of exterior 1/2-inch square stock, as described in previous steps.

**B) Wrap with drip-eag.** Apply cement to the back of a mitered drip cap and bend it to the 1/4-inch stock. Complete the other three sides to make another picture frame. Once the cement sets, remove the molding assembly from the top.

## 6 Sleeve the lamp post

**A) Add the column.** Shut off the power to the lamp post, remove the fixture, and cap the wiring. Slide the sleeve over the post, as shown, and rest it on the ground. Wedge shims made from 2x4 scrap between the steel post and the sleeve to keep it plumb.

**B) Slide on the pedestal.** Slip the pedestal assembly over the column and slide it all the way to the ground. Shim any gap between the column and the pedestal with PVC scrap, then score and snap them flush with the top of the pedestal.



## 7 Top off the post

**A) Attach the base molding.** Apply a ring of all-purpose cement to the top edge of the pedestal. Slide the base molding over the column, as shown, and onto the wet cement. Press it in place for 30 seconds.

**B) Slide on the capital molding.** Apply cement to the top edges of the column. Push the wires through the hole in the capital, then slip the assembly down over the pole and onto the column.

**C) Wire up the fixture.** Place the fixture on a step ladder while you work on the wiring. Make the connections: black to black, white to white, green to ground. Tip the fixture into position, slip it over the exposed steel post, and tighten the set screw. Screw in a bulb. Flip the power back on, and look on the glory of your handsome new lamp post. ■



**TIP** If you plan on painting the PVC, use an exterior-grade, 100% acrylic paint and choose a light color. For darker tones, use a paint formulated for vinyl or PVC.

# ALL THE RIGHT spaces

An enlarged floor plan that makes the most of nooks and crannies turns a modest 1914 house into a happy home for three

By **Deborah Snoorian Glenn** » Photographs by **John Ellis**  
Produced by **Tisha Leung** » Styling by **Sunday Hendrickson**



**LEFT** Christian and Kris Leibel, with their 2-year-old daughter, stand by the back door that leads to their kitchen. The Dutch door, original to the house, was moved from the laundry room.

**RIGHT** A sliding patio door leads to seamlessly connect the kitchen to an outdoor dining area right behind it. A secret entry "hides" the remodeler's closet. The remodel brought in lots of built-in features as well as millwork concealed behind Shaker-style cabinet doors.



Windows flank the area above an O'Keefe & Merritt stove that comes with the house, making it a focal point in a room that brings together vintage finds and modern conveniences. A pot filler (and an open-shelf soap dispenser) within reach and away from a tangle of curious knickknacks. *Port: Fortna & Gill's Ocean Pines (oceanpines.com); soap dispenser (westjoe.com); chairs (Thames Tidewater, Inc.)*



## Luxury means different things to

different people. Take, for instance, Christina and Erika Leach, who live in a revamped 1914 home in Venice, California. When asked to single out a favorite new feature, Christina goes about a built-in sponge drawer next to the kitchen sink. A sponge drawer? "It may sound silly, but we get each day's fresh buying places to just away everything we use," he explains. "Of course, we need a sponge to wash our dishes, but we don't need to see a sink out on the sink when we're done. Having a drawer to hide it is a little downright extravagant."

This handy luxury, like many others, was the surprise of their architect, Kirk Kiehlke, who has worked on many of the area's period houses and

once owned this particular home himself. The remodel he designed for Christina and Erika expanded the house to just 1,978 square feet of living space—hardly a castle. But a clever layout and highly functional spaces, with plenty of built-in storage and smart details like the sponge drawer, provide the features that the couple find so historic.

When Christina bought the house, in 2007, he didn't imagine transforming it so radically. Back then, he lived in New York City, traveling often to his native Southern California for film directing, commercials and film, and wanted "a place to touch down when I was working here," he says. Usually a fan of domestic, modern spaces, he nevertheless found himself drawn to this modest



abode. The compact kitchen is just what he needed. Located behind the house, it's a perfect bridge that also looks like a built-in cupboard on the back wall keeps the space understated and efficient.

UP: The heart of the house lies in the kitchen, featuring only stone. The wide entry is on the side. The original problem features a mix of architectural details, including a Pirella-style two-panel front of windows and a collage (opposite) single-wing. *Port: Benjamin Moore's Great Wall (interior walls)*

## floor plans

The two-story house grew by about 40 percent, from 1,400 to 1,978 square feet of living space. The first-floor addition became the new kitchen, which opens onto a courtyard with a dining area and, just beyond, a new garage. The original kitchen became a butler's pantry on one side and a home office on the other. On the second floor, a bridge, now the nursery, was added to connect the new master suite to the existing bedrooms, one of which became a TV room. The laundry room moved upstairs next to a reading nook with a window seat, where a sunroom had been.

First Floor



Second Floor



scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

ADDITION



1,400-square-foot house as one of Venice's covered pedestrian-only arteries. The hoag, two-story home was in good shape thanks to the renovations it has since owned. Blumlike, had completed three years earlier "Kirk modernized it, a plating, the electrical and plumbing and opening up the stairway as well as the space between the living and dining rooms, without stripping away the details that give it character," says Christa, pointing to divided-light windows in the living room and columns topped with half-hoops between it and the dining area, which remain intact.

Then Christina met Erik, an actor, and began to see the house as more than just a short-term landing spot. The couple started to talk about living in Venice full-time and how they might change the house to suit their needs. Eventually they finished out

On the first floor, the original entry door, windows, and half walls topped with columns were left in place during the remodel. New vertical grain Douglas Fir Beams add warmth, a pale cream and gray paint pulls the various as a quiet backdrop for eclectic furnishings. Four Farrow & Ball's deep Raven Gray (wall), Iron, Sevenson Moss and Titanium (ceiling) and custom color (crowning of Cove Paint (door).

priorities for a next-wave renovation: master suite that offered privacy; a TV room separate from the main living space; a home office; and a garage for two cars, a rarity in a beachside area where parking is a premium. "Basically, we wanted our space to live twice as large," says Christian. It was still only for a house on a small lot, with clearances of an inch or 11 inches from the property line.

Not surprisingly, of the half dozen proposed designs they got from architects, it was Blaschke's that had the mark. His plans gave more the form than they wanted while increasing the indoor square footage by about 40 percent. The existing half bath/sunroom on the first floor and the sunroom above it—an earlier addition and structurally unsound—would come down. In their place, Blaschke proposed an

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Christakis's office: a hallway between the living room and the kitchen. Incubators built inside top-of-desk. Electrical outlets are hidden below the desktop, and a printer, used only occasionally, is tucked inside a cabinet.

**ADDITION** A theme of residing on the ceiling above the dining room is original to the house and helps define this area next to the living room. The metal pendant fixture over the dining table was found at a local antiques store.



8-foot-deep rampout spanning the house's full width, with a generous rear kitchen extension and a laundry and mezzanine level upstairs. He placed a separate building at the rear of the property for a garage with a master suite above it. Then he connected the two structures with a glass-and-iron bridge, which looks down onto a new 425-square-foot courtyard with dining area. This unusual floor plan lets sunlight pour into the house from many angles, and the courtyard can be used year-round.

Some parts of the remodel required more thought than others. The living room and adjoining dining area remained intact except for a fresh paint job and new hardwood flooring. It was also a no-brainer to move the kitchen to the back of the house so it could open onto the courtyard, and to cut the second-floor sunroom to make way for a staircase landing.

For other aspects, the back-and-forth decisions were, in a word, sparring. "I rose and a rowhouse in Brooklyn, plus I'm a dancer, which means I've got the potential to be a nightmarish client," Christian says with a laugh. "And Erikka and I didn't always see eye-to-eye creatively, but Kirk became our de facto arbitrator." Blaudich drolled deep into the couple's lifestyle: in pursuit of asking the most of every square foot. He used the details he extracted—from where they liked to sit to eat breakfast to the



heights of their books and the types of cookware they would store in every kitchen cabinet—as Erika uses each space. “The more information, the better the design works,” he says.

The rooms, though modest in size, are packed with function. Numerous niches and alcoves with shelves or built-ins recall the house’s Confucian-era roots and help to visually marry old and new spaces. The new master bedroom isn’t much bigger than the bed itself and features built-in dressers and sliding headboard doors that disguise closets. Downstairs, two parallel hallways leading from the dining area to the kitchen serve as destinations as well as transitional spaces. One is a boy’s passageway. The other leads to a half bath and Christina’s writing desk.

At one point the couple considered making the second-story bridge an open-air walkway, and initially Christina wanted to extend it in a straight line from the landing to the master bedroom. Ultimately they settled on a glazed-in design that doglegs left off the landing, leaving room at the top of the staircase for a comfy, L-shaped window seat with storage. “It’s a perfect spot for reading with our daughter,” Erika says.

**LEFT:** From the master suite, the bridge looks toward an interior wall of the guest bath, where an original window from the old house was retained. The couple’s daughter plays table tennis in the space beneath it. The table is five feet long and became her survey area, by chance. Just wide enough for a table on one side and a changing table with storage for baby clothes on the other.

**RIGHT:** In the master bedroom, built-in dressers and built-in headboard doors that disguise closets provide a seamless look.



Construction went relatively smoothly due to Blanchard’s “planning every detail down to the last screw,” say the couple, and the building team, who got them out of a few jams. When a web of overhead power lines made it impossible to use a crane to hoist a 500-pound heat pump onto the roof, the crew improvised a low-profile block-and-tackle system of ropes and pulleys for the job. And for the courtyard fireplace, vintage bricks of the correct proportions were beyond the couple’s budget, so the contractor found bricks, sand blocks and cut them to size.

Christina and Erika had been married all of two days when they found their keys to the contractor. The project was finished a year later, and by the time they moved back in, Erika was pregnant. For now, their daughter sleeps in a nook on the bridge over the master bedroom, the only space in the house that didn’t have a clear purpose before the renovation started. “Life decided for us in the best possible way,” says Erika.

The couple hope their little one will grow up to share their love of the house’s whimsical touches, like the vintage OCCUPED sign above the half bath’s doorway that lights up when someone flips the



**ABOVE LEFT:** A wall-mounted 5-foot brick lends a vintage touch to the master bath. Above it, exposed door panels flank a recessed shelf. **RIGHT:** Sign of the Club.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The courtyard is landscaped between the bump-out and the new garage/master suite. The glass-enclosed bridge lets in lots of natural light. The original 1934 house was reinforced structurally and given a partial new foundation to handle the bridge’s weight. **Siding:** Hemlock/cedar.

interior switch. Or the dual entrances to the garage, which have tiny red metal stamps into the concrete. Or the second-floor bath, where an original window from the old house is installed on an interior wall. “Our daughter looked herself in the bathroom once,” says Erika, “and we just chucked in through the window to get her fix.”

More than anything, the couple appreciate how the revamped house has changed their lifestyle for the better. “We cook at home more often now, and we spend more time outside, reading or relaxing in the courtyard,” Christina says. He loves the view at night from the master bedroom toward the front of the house. “It feels like I’m in a turret, looking across the courtyard to another wing far away,” he says. “Which is funny, since the house isn’t very big.”

See, we’re everything. Turns out they live in a castle after all. ■

# A DROP ZONE

FROM BARE-BONES TO BUILT-OUT, HERE ARE **28 IDEAS** FOR CREATING A STYLISH SPOT FOR COATS, SHOES, BAGS—AND MORE—RIGHT WHERE YOU NEED IT MOST

BY MICHELLE BRUNNER

## Vintage-style vestibule

This personality-packed mudroom—part of an addition to designer Alys Prutzman's 1930s farmhouse—provides side-yard access for a family of four.

**1 | QUEBBY FURNITURE** and accessories such as an old New York City transit-car bench and a galvanized-steel olive bucket, used to hold umbrellas, lend oodles of character. A rattan table (opposite), a colorful boar-wood mirror, and painted wood stools round out the flea-market aesthetic.

**2 | SHIPLAP PANELING**, which echoes the home's exterior, marks the transition from outside; it's also a durable surface for mounting hooks and stands up to scuff marks.

**3 | WIRE LOCKER BASKETS**, screwed into the wall with eye hooks, control scarves and gloves and allow wet coats to air-dry.

**4 | THE HERRINGBONE BRICK** floor was made from salvaged red-clay sidewalk blocks. Slotted to tile thickness and set with mortar, they provide a scratchproof surface underneath.

**5 | A DOG DOOR** lets the space do double duty as a safe haven for the family's Australian shepherd on rainy days.



# BY THE DOOR







### Bright, bold back entry

Thanks to a sun-kissed color scheme, plenty of natural light, and a bench that's also a window seat, this mudroom by builder Bret Franks is a place to hang out as well as hang up.

**13 | SLENDER CABINETS** lined all the way to the prickled ceiling, maximizing vertical storage.

**14 | THE BENCH SEAT** isn't just a sunny spot to sit; plywood, framed with a beefy face frame, provides a solid base for the side cabinets. Vertical supports act as drawers for shoe bins and baskets.

**15 | WALL COVERINGS** for a mudroom need to be durable, but they don't have to cost a fortune. The homeowners benefited from the natural contrast by interweaving just chair rail and picking it to the wall with small tiles. Total cost: \$6.

**16 | OUTDOOR FABRICS** are ideal for cushions since the mudroom is a buffer zone for dirt from outside.

**17 | AN EASY-TO-CLEAN THROW RUG**, especially one made for outdoors use, keeps family members from tracking mud all over wood floors.

STYLING: KIM CLEMENTS; PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFFREY M. HARRIS; WALL COVERINGS: JEFFREY M. HARRIS; BENCH: BRET FRANKS; TABLE: JEFFREY M. HARRIS



### Stair-side armoire

In a small bungalow with three active boys, space is a valued commodity. Designer Kim Clements created this built-in to resemble a large wardrobe just beyond the front stairs, knowing open lockers would never work since the spot faces living room seating.

**18 | MIRROR FRONTS** dress up the cabinets, which give each boy a place to stash jackets and athletic gear. On the back of each door is a magnetized piece of sheet metal for sticking up homework schedules and the like. Deep bottom drawers conceal shoe boxes.

**19 | STACKED CABINETS** on the left are an adults-only affair. Each parent gets a place to hang coats and jackets as well as a shelf for charging electronics.

**20 | A GALLERY LIGHT** mounted above two neat rows of cubbies and bins ensures a well-lit reflection for quick spot-checks before heading out the door.

### Fanciful foyer

Mudrooms tend toward the utilitarian, but there's no reason they can't also be elegant—especially if they're the first thing you see, as in this entry space from interior designer Katie Ridder. The setup's cheerful vibe is established the minute you walk in the door.

**21 | PRETTY, PATTERNED WALLPAPER** sets a welcoming tone suited to a space that sees high traffic but less heavy-duty wear and tear.

**22 | CLOSED CABINETS** are just tall enough to hold coats, leaving plenty of room up top for displaying decorative objects, which wire makes a charming addition to the door floor.

**23 | A NARROW CONSOLE TABLE** provides a chic and practical spot for dropping keys and mail.

**24 | A WOVEN BASKET** keeps shoes, comfy slippers, or pet accessories out of sight.





### Place to perch

A corner of a multi-purpose room with backyard access can become an inviting spot to pause for a change of footwear. For this cottage-style bench, general contractors Robert Anderson and Elian Burrell paid plenty of attention to period details throughout the rest of the home.

**25 | A SHELF-STYLE BENCH** that's open below shows off decorative baskets, which echo corbels in adjacent rooms. It also allows for an old-fashioned boot tray.

**26 | HARD-WEARING HEADBOARD** provides a durable bench back. A ledge on top puts a classic front and center.

**27 | A WALL-MOUNTED COATRACK** over the radiator makes a handy spot to hang damp clothes.

**28 | PAINTED WOODWORK.** Inspired by the color of the baseboards and door casings, make the beach look like it's always been there.



## OUT-OF-THE-BOX SOLUTIONS

No budget for built-ins? Ready-made and freestanding pieces let you make a custom smoothie.

**A -> Three easy pieces:**  
Here a storage bench combined with a wall shelf adds cost less for a well-finished setup that is so functional as a built-in. Finesteak adds a shelf back and ties the pieces together. Similar to shown.  
Dana's the bench and shelf, \$299; for both, and Mirin coatrack, \$219. [all.profiles.com](http://all.profiles.com)

**H → Salvage style**  
**bed tree.** In this entry designed by architects Schemke and Kirtland, a vintage door is repurposed as a backing for coat hooks, a length of pipe cleverly conceals window Green-making brings out the top and bottom, where it forms a tray. Finisher: daniel-oligasson for about \$400.



**C** > **Slim shoe cabinet:** These elegant dining wenders are perfect for narrow hallways and trailers with a lot of footwear, with hung outsoles, hold sides and ends and outsoles! Similar to shown: Hemlock shoe cabinet: \$90 (also with shelf with cubbies and pegs, \$255, also can

**D = Minimalist approach**  
Da bare-bones with a  
branch and a peg rail  
Similar to shown  
Cottage beach \$126:  
Ibex.com 35-inch oak  
Shaker peg rack \$44:  
pegandrill.com ■



# are you killing your home with kindness?

You're house-proud—we understand. But it is possible to **overdo** when it comes to **upkeep**. Here, 17 ways your enthusiasm for homeownership could be doing more harm than good

By **Scott Gibson** ■ Illustrations by **Serge Bloch**

# 1. Screwing in brighter bulbs

A well-lit room sets a cheery scene, but screwing a lamp or light fixture's recommended wattage is a dangerous move, especially if you're still using incandescents or halogens in your home. "Wattage is related to heat," explains John Drangenberg, consumer safety director for Underwriters Laboratories (UL). "Using a bulb with too-high wattage will cause the fixture and its wiring to overheat." If the heat travels into the wall and erodes the insulation on wires, sparks can result—and a serious house fire can ensue.

**Instead:** Use appropriate bulbs. All fixtures should carry a label stating that they've been UL-tested for safety; this indicates the maximum wattage they can handle. No sticker? With older fixtures especially, Drangenberg recommends using a bulb of 40 watts or less. Better yet, upgrade to LED bulbs, which run cooler, glow brighter with less watt, and save energy costs.

## 2. Serial repainting

That cracked coating that blemishes your side wall is nothing a little new paint can't remedy, right? Think again, says Rich O'Neil, a pro painter in Woburn, Massachusetts. Excessive paint is detrimental—especially on an older house, which may have layers of thicker oil-based paint, which becomes brittle with age. Regularly adding more may result in the old paint's ability to flex with temperature and humidity changes, leading to "alligatoring" or thick cracked peeling paint.

**Instead:** Keep a paint job looking great with annual touch-ups in spring or summer. Start with sandpaper, washing (see No. 3), then prime and seal areas that need attention, typically around windows and doors, where water accumulates. Buy 100-percent acrylic exterior paint for superior adhesion.



## 3. Insulating the attic with abandon

Older houses often have too little insulation installed right, a layer of cellulose or loose-fill fiberglass insulation in the attic is almost always a good thing. It slows the loss of heat, saving money as well as wear and tear on your furnace. In summer, it'll keep the house cooler. But if soffit vents along the eaves become blocked by insulation, it can impede air circulation, allowing moisture to accumulate on roof sheathing and upping the potential for attic mold. It can also become a place in which ice and the roof leaks that come with them.

**Instead:** Before adding insulation, seal air leaks between the house and the attic. Apply caulked spray foam, air-tight tape, or firestop sealant to close off gaps around vents and plumbing. Use metal flashing and nonflammable insulation such as rock wool to close off gaps around chimneys. Then add at least enough insulation to meet your area's energy codes, installing fiberglass or cellulose batts along eaves to keep insulation from blocking vents.

## 4. Spritzing mirrors with glass cleaner

Who knew? While store-bought spray will make your looking glass sparkle, just wiping off the liquid running around the mirror's edge can cause the reflective backing to lift or crack. The resulting "black edge" is a common outcome of using ammonia- or vinegar-based cleaners.

**Instead:** Try warm water and a soft, lint-free cloth. If you have a long way toward getting your mirrors clean, Wet and Forget's ammonia-free sheet, wipe them over, and then quickly wipe with a dry cloth. If you use a spray mirror cleaner for something stronger, spray universal glass cleaners directly onto a dry cloth, not the glass, and avoid the mirror's reflective edge.

## 5. Amping up the range hood

Sending smoke, odors, moisture, and combustion fumes out of the kitchen makes for healthier air and a drier house. Plus, that huge hood looks so much cooler in your new style range. But a high-powered hood can draw up to 1,200 cubic feet of air per minute.



# 6. Planting trees near walks and driveways

An allee of trees leading to the entry might up your house's street appeal, but planting a young specimen too close to paving puts both sapling and slab at risk. As they grow taller and spread their roots outward, trees push up paving, causing it to buckle and crack.

**Instead:** Expect big things. Know what type of tree you're planting and how it will develop. The roots of a shade tree will likely spread at least as wide as its leafy canopy. Plant small specimens that will stay under 30 feet at maturity at least 30 feet from paved areas; larger ones should have a 20-foot buffer zone.

sucking up that icy stuff—while potentially drawing moisture into your home, insulating chimney exhaust and combustion gases from a furnace or water heater. This "back-drafting" not only can make a smoky, smelly mess in your house, it can pull in hot gases of carbon monoxide.

**Instead:** Consult with a contractor about the probability of back-drafting in your home. The Home Ventilating Institute recommends that a hood installed against a wall draw 100 cubic feet per minute per linear foot of range—so a 36-inch requires a 360 cfm hood. If the range is an island, add 50. If you choose to go bigger, code may require sealing a make-up air system. "When an exhausted, it creates a negative pressure in the house, so all the air comes in through the windows," says the company's manager, John Rose. "The device

lets you control where the air enters, so it doesn't come down the chimney or through combustion appliance vents."

## 7. Coddling counters with sealer

You want to give your new kitchen's stone work surfaces love and a layer of stone protection, but shelling out multiple coats of sealer will only make them look streaky and dull, according to Ryan Gaudin, owner of countertop specialty.com. He notes that some granites and limestones look best better if you can't use an impregnator at all.

**Instead:** Test to see if the stone is porous. If a small puddle of water leaves no stain after 30 minutes, the stone can be left bare. If the water leaves a dark mark, it should be treated. Apply sealer in a single, spare layer, or as the

manufacturer label recommends. Let the sealer absorb for a few minutes, then use a clean, dry cloth to wipe away the excess and dry the surface. You'll know it's time to reapply when the countertop feels like water beads.

## 8. Overscrubbing sinks

You're splashing on a new farmhouse sink and want to show it that you care by keeping it green, shiny, and free. But best not to go at it with abrasive cleaners, which will scratch and degrade that beautiful shiny surface. "Cleaners with dirt or grit on them will wear away at the finish and dull it," says Kohler's Mike Marbach. "That will make the sink more prone to quick staining too—actually making it look dirtier."

**Instead:** Request your friendly or enameled sink's sensitive side. Marbach suggests a

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# curb-appeal makeovers

Borrow from these before-and-afters and give the neighbors something to talk about

by Deborah Baldwin

## perk up with paint

The homeowners didn't realize what they'd done until architectural color consultant Amy Wise arrived to do a paint consultation. She suggested a modern take on classic Victorian schemes.

**THE NEW PALETTE** brings out period style and detail, with crisp, defining lines of red and white, and dark awning green highlighting the shingle and clapboard siding.

**A WINDOW BOX** on the second floor—standing ready for its summertime infusion of blooms—ties together the two siding colors while reinforcing the painted look.

**HELLO, HANDRAILS** in traditional paint red woodwork up the welcome and also bring the steps up to code. A sunny pop of white lends generous paint to replace the old slough and narrow walkway, adding interest and a more inviting approach.

**BEFORE:** The 1902 house in Montclair, New Jersey, was suffering from the blues. The two-tone treatment made it top-heavy and disjunct as it splashed its



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**BEFORE:** Despite its sleek product fence, the 1920s house, in Santa Barbara, California, seemed to be speaking behind a cloud of time lines.

## color inside the lines

Stylish new interior design, the emblem of the lounge, is a sign of its brightly soul under the guidance of architect Dennis Thompson and color designer Jessica Blake Smith.

**A THING-OR-TWO TREATMENT** of turquoise, chocolate, and white turns the original ornate front door—and the unusual stained glass in its transoms—into a focal point, while adding dimension to the windows, porch column bases, and other architectural elements. Extra oomph comes from an unexpected floor palette in the same shade of blue, but distinct from the porch, windows, and rail. “A lot of homeowners have bold trim, so it worked well in the context of the neighborhood,” Smith says.

**A LIGHTER-UP LANDSCAPE**, in the form of a square flowering succulent bed, subtly signals green for an airy, graceful, and open shape, puts the newly colorful facade on display.

**BLUE-GRAY ASPHALT ROOF** SHIMMERS drive the eye up to a new second-story dormer, which allows more upstairs living space and balances the bay window out front and the walled grille and above it—both more visible.

## create an opening statement

New homeowners Buck Davis, and his family members and neighbor Carlos Castro, rebuilt the porch, revamped the lawn, and applied the latest carpet by installing it to Buck's truck.

**THE FUNDAMENTALS**—foundation, siding, and roof—were sound, though the house did need new support beams. Buck plans to replace the steel porch holding up the porch roof, and Buck and Castro used a new center square to create a design while making that is echoed by an arched garden gate at the edge of the yard. “I designed the gate and helped figure out,” Buck says. “We bought 3-12 boards and cut the arch out with a circular saw.”

**SPICY BLACK PAINT** revived the original windows. Buck's dad helped make the complementary board and batten shutters. A fresh coat of white paint brightens the original shutters, and Buck finished a window door to find at an antique shop with a custom orange red that makes it pop.

**YARD IMPROVEMENTS**, handled by Buck's cousin Wayne Kasey, a garden pro, included leveling the ground and pouring two concrete walkways to walk in and drive. Shapely bamboo trees in the yard bring in a new look.



**BEFORE:** This Daguerre-era cottage was hiding its woods in a quiet 19th-century neighborhood.



**BEFORE**



## GO BOLD WITH FRONT-DOOR COLOR

For years, neutral shades and muted red were the hallmarks for entry doors, but bolder choices are making headway. Color is a way to introduce the world to the people inside, points out architectural color consultant Amy Wee, so why not make it unexpected and playful? Here's a how-to get started.

- 1) Assess the whole package.** The owners of the Sacramento, California, house shown above contemplated the gray stripes with a deep yellow-green Dutch door. If the entry incorporates a lot of glass, as this one does, it can easily handle a more intense color. While trim makes the new door stand out, while tying it to the rest of the house. Along with the siding and trim, consider the colors of other exterior elements. Use a duplicate paint or a brick foundation.
- 2) Take a look around.** Neighboring houses may suggest which colors to work best with which house styles. But think about playing against type. A stately shingle can make a cottage-style door look more sophisticated, while a bright hue could make a formal facade feel more whimsical.
- 3) Don't forget the fittings.** especially if your trees and shrubs bear colorful leaves. Call red and yellow a little more. A deep yellow door might be just the ticket.

## reinforce period style

Once the house got a new foundation, with the help of a steel beam, the exterior had to be taken down to the studs, and the roof to the framing to help iron out a sag.

**FIBER-CEMENT PLANKS**, painted warm gray, replaced the worn wood siding. A lot of the same gray tinted the white paint used for the trim and existing roof brackets.

**THE PORCH**, designed by architect Josh Channing and Jason Mills, saved from major surgery and the touch of a retired mason who lives next door. Bricks from the old foundation were reused for the steps and porch-pier footings, and some of the same planks used for the siding went into the porch planks. A new wood floor and a hinge-center door, painted poppy red, add polish. Polished wrenos stand in front.

**PLANTING** like red begonias and yellow suns complements the color scheme. White barwood and other additions fill the garden bed. A handsome 4-foot stained-oak fence creates privacy on the corner lot, but the porch is the real draw for owners Jim Beasley and his wife, Christy. "The former owner loved the porch, called it his space," he says. "I had said, 'and brought it by'—reconditioned, as our phrase."



**BEFORE:** The 1920s home in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, "had been through a lot," says homeowner Jim Beasley.



**BEFORE**

## celebrate symmetry

This Cape Cod reflected the eye of architect Bill Ingram, whose 8-day vision saw hidden bones.

**TO ACHIEVE BETTER PROPORTIONS**, Ingram dropped a third dormer between the two existing spaced, caddy-corner ones. He also had the attic replaced with 11/2-inch planks with notched rafters to echo the side gables. All the windows are new. "The ones on the first floor were really low and narrow, so I made them a little higher," he says.

**CEDAR SHINGLES** on top and all four sides plus a chimney stone chimney add weight and texture.

**LITTLE TOUCHES**, like a paneled door, beveled shutters with iron fittings, and dovetail-patterned, and a lantern made from copper, give the small house a slightly more formal look, reinforced by a brick rimmed parsonage. "It was easy," says Ingram. "We just painted one, gable doors and got to pat," then added two rustic iron wrenos.



**BEFORE**

**BEFORE:** The house, outside Birmingham, Alabama, had been seriously altered, and the front strap roof path "looked like a hangar," the architect recalls.



**BEFORE**

**BEFORE:** The exterior of the Victorian in Boston, in Chicago, was marked by stucco, metal, and red paint.

## uncover hidden charm

Born in 1925, the house was well-maintained and columns during the 1950s—plus a small ironwork hidden behind aluminum siding under the gable.

**TO REVIVE THE ORIGINAL DETAILS**, architect Nathan Kiper conceived the metal panels from the gable and exposing corners ready for work. Further exploration revealed the original dentil trim and a keyhole detail in the half-shown ironwork window.

**A NEW PAINT SCHEME** sharpened those details. Armed with brooks devoted to Victorian-era palettes, Kiper spruced up the exterior with a green-tinted stucco, a keyhole detail for the stucco and painted the trim two shades of cream. The window treatments, a darker green, and the door and small details, burgundy. A custom oak screen door reinforces the period look.

**THE LINGERING TOUCHES** include a lamp post lightened up with a bevelled glass shade. Hanging pots and planters also warm up the entrance, providing a slight contrast to the street view. ■

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**68**  
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**Q** We'd like to put in a concrete-paver patio. What's the best kind of paver to use in my climate?

—PATRICK THA, CLARK, ARIZ.

**A** Freezing conditions rarely affect concrete pavers, so go ahead and choose ones you like. More important is installing them over a well-compacted base of crushed stone so that ice won't make your patio lift and settle. Also, avoid using deicing salts, which can degrade the cement that holds each paver together. Spread sand instead.

—TODD COOPER



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW MACALE

10.15.13 | [thisoldhouse.com](http://thisoldhouse.com) | 13

Our cast  
of veteran  
expertsTOM SILVA  
General ContractorNOAM ABRAM  
Master CarpenterRICHARD TRETHEWEY  
Plumbing and Heating  
ExpertROGER COOK  
Landscape ContractorKEVIN O'CONNOR  
Host

I received a new two-stage snowblower for Christmas, but I have to say I'm a little intimidated by how powerful it is. What do I need to know to use it safely?

—ROBERT SYRACUSE, N.Y.



**ROGER COOK REPLIES:** I'm actually glad to hear that you're a bit scared of your new present. You have good reason to treat it with cautious respect. Each year, more than 3,000 people end up in the emergency room, many with amputated fingers, because they got careless and accidentally reached into the chute or auger to clear a clog. My advice? Don't ever do that!

The only safe way to clear a clogged snowblower is to first turn off the engine and then dislodge the ice and snow with a stick or a drive-on tool, like the one I'm using at left (snowblowerdoctor.com). It comes with a clip that mounts on top of the snowblower body, so the tool is always right at hand when I need it.

But there are other things you can do to avoid getting clogs in the first place. Start by sweeping the chute, the impeller, and the auger

When his snowblower gets clogged, Roger Cook always makes sure to shut off the engine, then uses a drive-on tool to break up the ice and snow, keeping his hands a safe distance from the auger.

with Snow-Jet (jet-deck cone), a lubricant that keeps wet snow from sticking to the metal rivets. Spray these coats on your new machine now, letting each coat dry before applying the next, then spray these surfaces again before breaking out to throw some snow. Just make sure that the lubricant doesn't get on the belt that powers the impeller.

You can also minimize clogs with good snow-blowing technique. When working in wet, claggy snow, crank up the discharge all the way to keep everything moving up the chute, take smaller bites out of the snowpack, and maintain a steady pace so that the snow doesn't get a chance to solidify into ice.

### Plug the holes around pipes

How can I seal the pipes where the pipes for the baseboard heating come through the floor? I want to keep out the dust and the occasional bug that comes up from the basement.

—BRIAN WADE, MAE

**RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES:** Take some mastic-wood insulation and stuff it into those holes between the pipes and the floor. It will keep out the dust and bugs and won't rot in a fire, as fiberglass will. Be sure to wear gloves while handling the fibers or irritate your skin.

After the gaps are filled, lay your work with those two-piece metal mesh mats that slip around the pipe and rest against the floor. You can get these through plumbing supply stores. Nobody wants to look at raw insulation in their living space.

### What is it?

- Drain snake
- Pipe hanger
- Saw-tooth guard
- Tie-back for trees

PHOTO: JAMES H. HARRIS FOR THIS OLD HOUSE

**Hardwood flooring over asbestos tiles**  
I was hoping to install a hardwood floor in my home's 1970s addition, but when I pulled up the carpet, I found vinyl tiles stuck to the concrete slab. I suspect they contain asbestos. Can I install wood flooring right over these tiles? I don't want to get into a costly hazard removal.

—BETH SCHROEDER, OCEASIDE, CALIF.

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** Yes, you can cover the tiles with wood flooring, and you won't even need a hazardous waste permit. The flooring can't be solid hardwood—you won't be able to nail or glue it down—but you can install a floating engineered floor that will look just as good.

A floating floor, where the individual strips are joined edge to edge with either glue or a click-lock feature, needs no fasteners, leaving the tiles undisturbed. Like the click-lock system, it's faster and less messy than gluing. And even carpets, even when it's covered with tile, I prefer to see flooring made with a plywood

base. Wood-veneer construction is more stable and is more resistant than flooring made of solid wood or vinyl-over-MDF.

Engineered floors must be installed over a perfectly flat surface. So before you proceed, check for low spots using a long straightedge. If you find any dips more than 1/8 inch deep over a 10-foot radius, fill them in with a moved-on floor patching compound. Then roll out the foam underlayment and install the flooring per the manufacturer's instructions. You can see what's involved by watching a video of me installing a click-lock flooring floor at [thisoldhouse.com/tv/2016](http://thisoldhouse.com/tv/2016).

### Painting fiber cement

My Victorian-era home is painted with three shades of purple. I am planning to re-sid the house with fiber cement, but I can't find any manufacturer that offers those same colors. What are my options?

—CORRINE COWELL, BELLFLOWER, CALIF.

**KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES:** I took your question to Rich O'Neil, a painting contractor at Masterwork

Attaching engineered wood floor offers a safe and sturdy way to install a vinyl tile floor that may contain asbestos.



Painting & Illustration, who has appeared on Ask THIS OLD HOUSE.

"Have you checked out the colors offered by James Hardie? Their factory-applied, baked-on pigments come with a 15-year warranty against fading, chipping, peeling, or cracking."

"If their color selection doesn't meet your needs, talk to someone at a lumberyard that stocks it. He may be able to point you to a local company that can apply a custom baked-on finish, fiber cement's weight and brittleness make long-distance shipping impractical. However, even if you do locate a prefabricator, it may not be cost-effective to order three different shades. One prefabricator told me that the minimum cost for such custom color work'd be \$950, with a minimum run of 500 square feet."

"It might be better to just paint the fiber cement after it's installed. Order unpainted fiber cement, which is pressed in the factory, then cover it with a top-quality, 100 percent acrylic exterior paint using any colors you want. I recommend two coats, after the boards are gently cleaned with a power washer and allowed to dry for a few days. Don't wait too long before painting, the exposed primer boards disintegrate after about six months."

"Also, make sure that every board end—at the corners and in each course—is covered with an elastomeric or acrylic-latex caulk. Without that protection, those ends are liable to let moisture in and deteriorate."

"Site-applied paint on fiber cement should hold up very well—much longer than painted wood—but it certainly won't have the longevity of a factory finish."

## What is it?

**■ Saw blade guard**  
The BladeGaur's grooved plastic fits over 10- and 12-inch circular saw blades, protecting the teeth—and your hands—from damage. A built-in hook allows for easy storage. Starting at \$23, woodpeck.com



## Whips, chains, and crosscut

The service guy for my wood-finisher discovered thick pitch crosscut in my chimney's terra-cotta flue. He says he can remove the crosscut with a chain file, but that doing so will probably damage the flue. He recommends taking out the terra-cotta and insulating the flue with stainless steel. Is that the best solution to my problem?

—ROCK MELBY (NOT) SWANSEA, MASS

**MARK SCHAEFFER REPLIES:** The type of crosscut you have, called glassed or stage-three crosscut, does have to be removed because it's the most easily ignitable form. It's also the hardest to get rid of because it's nearly impossible to regular flue brushes. Chain files will work, but your guy is right about the damage they can cause.

Fortunately, there are other, gentler options for you to use, such as spinning wire whips, or chemicals that soften crosscut enough for it to be removed with a file brush. These include liquids like TSM Stone Three (natural, oven, powder like Cre-Away), and

Mark Schiele, owner of Chimney Sweeps in Wallborough, N.J., regularly finds problem chimneys on TV episodes of *This Old House* and *Ask This Old House*.

products like FireShield PCB (both from chimney-sweeper.com).

Reaching a flue also has its risks. It involves cutting the existing terra-cotta with a chain file, a process that's likely to damage neighboring flues. And because the new flue can't be any smaller than your furnace exhaust pipe, there may not be enough room around the new flue for an even layer of insulation. Without that, the flue's weakness is void, so are any insurance claims in the event your chimney causes a fire.

Once your flue is clean, or refined, take these steps to prevent another buildup of crosscut. Lay in your supply of wood a year in advance so that it can season properly. Avoid burning softwoods, which generate more soot. Buy a moisture-stone dehumidifier, suck it up on the pipe connecting the furnace to the chimney, and adjust the air intake so that it reads between 23°F and 40°F. At that temperature range, the flue walls will stay warm and be less likely to condense the smoke into crosscut. Also, give your burning wood a daily dose of Anti-Creosote spray or powder (chimneysewer.com). These contain a catalyst that breaks down crosscut.

Finally, have your chimney cleaned at least once a year, or more often, depending on your

wood-burning habits. Spring is the best time to schedule a cleaning by a chimney sweep because you beat the fall rush and reduce the likelihood of smoky odors wafting into the house during the summer, when your furnace is on hiatus.

**■ Deck board question**  
We were planning on using 2x6s for our new deck, but for some reason 2x10s turned out to be cheaper. The wider boards would have fewer joints, but would they be more likely to sag?

—NORTH LINCOLN, ILLINOIS DALE, MD

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** You're right about 2x10s being prone to cupping. That's just one reason not to use them as decking. Wide boards also are more likely than narrow ones to check—show cracks—and to have defects like knots and sap pockets.

And while 2x10s do have fewer joints, the finished gaps would have to be fairly large—about 1/4 inch across—to allow the boards to expand and contract without warping. Make those gaps any narrower and there's a risk that the boards will crack with each other and buckle when they swell.

So stick with your original plan to use 2x6s. For a bonus, check out the price and quality of 1x6 deck boards, the size that most builders use. They're 5/8 inch thinner than 2x boards, and therefore should be less expensive.

**■ Three-board tabletop**  
I'm planning to make a 10-foot-long tabletop by gluing together three 1/2-inch-thick by 10-inch-wide oak boards. How should I build it so that it

## ASK ANSWERS

If you've got a tip that would improve the show, write us for a chance to appear in the October issue. To post ideas visit [www.thisoldhouse.com](http://www.thisoldhouse.com)/youTSA.

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stay flat? And how do I attach the top to the table base?

—WATERLOO, ONTARIO

**NORM ABRAHAM REPLIES:** Today's modern adhesives are more than strong enough to edge-glue the boards together, as long as the edges are primed to match perfectly. That's a job for a primer or a table saw. For boards that long, you'll need a helper or an outfeed table to make those cuts.

Before gluing, arrange the boards so that their end grain abuts between curving up and curving down. That will help to prevent the top from cupping. Then use a biscuit jointer to cut matching pairs of slots every 10 to 12 inches, staying 3 inches away from the ends. Biscuits will keep the boards aligned during the glue-up. For that process, use five evenly spaced glue-changes three under and two over the assembly. Use a clamping cloth to immediately wipe

up any glue that squirts out. Attach the top to the table base at evenly spaced crosspieces. These are fastened to the side rails with pocket screws and a jig, like the kind made by King (kingtool.com). A table that long calls for five such crosspieces: one in the middle, one at each end, and one between the middle piece and each end piece. Set the crosspiece 5 inch below the top edge of the side rails so that the tabletop sits tight against the rails.

The top and the crosspieces are held together by 1/2-inch No. 8 pine-head screws fitted with fender washers. One screw, tightened just a bit, goes through the center of each crosspiece; the others go through elongated 3-inch-long by 1/2-inch-wide holes placed as close as possible to the ends of each crosspiece. The elongated holes allow the screws to slide in the top expands and contracts with changes in humidity. To keep the

## HOW TO ATTACH A TABLETOP



cop's movement to a minimum, make sure the house's moisture content is less than 10 percent, and apply a finish on all sides and edges.

#### Hot time for GFCI

Our preferred space heater was plugged into a surge-protector power strip in our kitchen when I smelt plastic burning. We unplugged the strip and tripped the circuit breaker, but we couldn't figure out what created the smell until we discovered the burned, melted GFCI it has been replaced, and no seems so far, thank goodness. But what should I do to prevent this from happening again?

—JENNIFER KIM, KIL, MD

**SCOTT CARON REPLIES:** Just to make sure everyone is on the same page, a GFCI (ground-fault circuit interrupter) is a specialized receptacle that stops the flow of electricity before it can cause a deadly shock. It's required in wet areas like kitchens and bathrooms.

Okay, now to your story: Even I suspect from your photo that there was probably a loose wire at the GFCI, which would have hindered the flow of electricity. Faulty connections generate heat, and in that case the screw terminal got hot enough to melt the surrounding plastic. Hopefully, all the wires on your new GFCI are securely attached.

Also, I don't think it's a good idea to plug big-draw devices like space heaters and window air

Scott Caron, a licensed master electrician and the owner of Caron Electric in Lexington, Mass., appears regularly on TV episodes of *Ask This Old House*.



A loose wire at the screw terminal is the suspected cause of this melted GFCI.

conditioners into power strips. These strips can only handle relatively small electrical loads, like lamps or computers. That's why you should always plug heaters and air conditioners directly into wall receptacles.

#### Mold in the attic

This winter, up in the attic, I found black mold covering the plywood on the underside of the roof. What's causing this? And how do I clean the mold off and keep it from coming back?

—ADAM MERICZKE  
HERWOOD HEIGHTS, IL

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** We get this question a lot, especially near the end of winter. That's because all season long, warm moist air has been leaking from the house and into the attic, where it has

condensed on—and been absorbed by—the cold underside of the plywood roof sheathing. As temperatures warm up and the icy plywood thaws out, the conditions

are perfect for mold to grow in the wet wood.

As the weather gets warmer and the sheathing dries out, that mold will go dormant until conditions allow it to start growing again. Dormant or not, black mold isn't something you want in your house, particularly if anyone has allergies, asthma, or an impaired immune system.

To see a demonstration of one pro-level removal technique—blowing the mold away with dry-air pillows—go to [thisoldhouse.com/2016/01/26/after-the-blasting-the-exposed-wood-in-the-attic-was-treated-with-Fiberlock-BLQ-4100](http://thisoldhouse.com/2016/01/26/after-the-blasting-the-exposed-wood-in-the-attic-was-treated-with-Fiberlock-BLQ-4100), a clear, mold-resistant coating (Fiberlock.com).

DIY-friendly spray-on cleaners are also effective for killing mold, as long as they contain 7 to 10 percent hydrogen peroxide. A solution with a lower percentage won't do the job; a higher percentage would require a trained pro. The day after spraying the cleaner, sweep up the residue with a HEPA filter vacuum, then apply a mold-resistant coating.

But whether you get rid of the mold yourself or hire a pro, you can't depend on a temporary keep-it-as-bay indefinitely. The only way to stop mold from coming back is to decrease its moisture. You do that in two ways: by plugging all the holes that allow air to leak from the house into the attic and by keeping the attic well ventilated, ideally with a vent along the roof ridge and continuous vents in the soffits.

#### How to remove a subfloor under a well

My house took in 30 inches of river water as a recent flood, and the OSB subfloor had to be ripped out

up to the walls. Should the OSB left under the studs also be replaced? If so, how is this done, given that the weight of the house rests on these joists?

—NORMAN DAVLEY, COLUMBIA, S.C.

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** Yes, you should get rid of the remaining OSB, or one-inch strand board, under the well, one joist bay at a time, by working in your basement or crawl space. Here's how to do it.

Use a recip saw to slice off the OSB under the well plate between the floor joists. Then cut pieces of sheathing the same thickness as the OSB to match the width and length of the plate's exposed ends made. I strongly suggest that you cut those pieces out of a moisture-resistant

floor sheathing, such as Advantech ([advantech.com](http://advantech.com)). This water-impregnated OSB won't be affected if your house floods again.

Glue and screw the pieces to the underside of the plate. Now glue and screw 2x6 blocking, cut to fit between the joists, to the underside of the sheathing pieces. Toward the ends of the blocking to the joists. You want the edges of the 2x6 to project past the plate's edges and leave a narrow shelf for attaching your new subfloor. Advantech would be your best choice here, too. It's never expensive than regular OSB, but you won't have to replace it at a given wet.

Tackle each joist bay, from center to blocking, before moving

to the next one. That way, the walls won't shift or settle as you work.

Before lagging the joists, treat the exposed studs and joists with a hygroscopic moisture mold cleaner, and then spray them with a bleach-based mold inhibitor, such as Flox. Cure with Mold-Cure ([moldcure.com](http://moldcure.com)).

#### Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

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House  
editors'  
picks

## More great stuff

Every month, we discover new tools, materials, and home-improvement products. Here are the latest standouts. —THE EDITORS



## Clean up with a pull

**Knaggs Bros., by Handy Central**  
It's just like a push broom, but you pull it like a rake. Genes. The curved plastic bristles collect more debris than regular brooms, even on irregular surfaces. The steel handle telescopes from 36 to 6 feet and screws into a sturdy cast-metal fitting. \$32, [handycentral.com](http://handycentral.com)



## A smartphone is your key

**Nokia wireless padlock.**

**by Fiat**  
No more hunting for forgotten combinations or fumbling for the keys. This Bluetooth-enabled steel-encased padlock unlocks itself when you approach with your smartphone. It can be picked (there's no keyhole), but if the battery dies, you can still open it manually by clicking the buckle with a custom Morse code. \$70, [nokia.com](http://nokia.com)

## Quick trims, one-handed

**Compact palm planer, by Triton**  
Power planers are typically big, expensive, two-handed tools. Here's a model light enough that you can plane with one hand but stout enough to shave 1/8 inch of wood with each pass. The 8.5-pound tool spins a pair of 2 1/4-inch-high speed steel blades at 13,000 rpm. Think of it as a power block plane for smoothing or beveling doors and trim. \$73, [batsonools.com](http://batsonools.com)

## Great gear for cutting

**Worm-drive table saw, by Skilsaw**  
The durability and torque of worm-drive circular saws is legendary. Now there's a job-site table saw that uses this pairing. So heavy it sags down or breaks down, even when fed in. On this 48.5-pounder, the self-aligning fence slides out enough to rip a full sheet of plywood in half. \$379, [skilsaw.com](http://skilsaw.com)



## Swing in comfort

**IceCore hammer, by Fiskars**  
A rubbery thermoplastic sleeve isolates the deep-forged head from the handle, absorbing shock and vibration better than any other hammer on the market. The ergonomic insert in the head reduces the frequency of ringing. We particularly like this tool's silence and its comfortable diep-grip. Starting at \$45, [fiskars.com](http://fiskars.com)



## Wood? Nope, clay!

**Certery bricks, terra-cotta tile, by Ludowico**

They look just like hand-split cedar shakes, but these interlocking clay roof tiles won't burn, fade, discolor, or rot. Ever. So durable that they come with a remarkable 75-year warranty, yet compete with wood. They're a bargain, assuming your nation carries the extra weight. Available in five realistic colors. \$3 per square foot, [ludowico.com](http://ludowico.com)

Norm's  
tricks of the trade

The frame surrounding the panel on my wood cabinet door has developed a slight crack. What's the best way to fix it?

—ROBERT SAWYER, STUCIDITY, CALIF.

**A** Little glue should be able to fix that problem quite nicely. The problem is getting the glue far enough inside the crack so that it does some good. Here's how to go about it.

First, remove the door and lay it on a flat surface protected against drops. Wedge a flathead screwdriver into one end of the crack and twist it slightly, that will widen the crack enough so you can squeeze in some wood glue. Be careful about how much you turn the screwdriver—crank it too hard and you could make the crack much longer.

Apply the glue to both sides of the crack. If it doesn't flow into the crack's narrow end, use a toothpick to push it in.

When the glue is done, pull out the screwdriver and close the crack with a clamp or two. Use a damp rag to wipe up any glue that seeps out, before it dries. You can remove the clamps in about an hour, but wait 24 hours before rehanging the door. ■

THE HOME DEPOT  
Project of the WeekHOW TO  
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There's a reason certain architectural embellishments stand the test of time: function is built into the design. Take louvered window shutters. They've been used for centuries to control light and draw air in through an open window. Their utilitarian lines make them equally appropriate on house styles from the Colonial farmhouse to the rambling ranch. And if it's made of brick? No problem. Use masonry anchors to attach working window coverings to the plain brick facade—and add some period charms, to boot.

You'll find all the tools and supplies necessary for this—and any—home project at The Home Depot nearest you.

For step-by-step instructions, go to [thisishome.com/project](http://thisishome.com/project)



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**CONTACT** Ray Bryant, 206-555-5526  
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**THE HISTORY** As a prominent local physician, E. D. Lusk would have needed a house that could double as an office. So when he built his family home, around 1880, he erected an elaborate center-hall Colonial Revival, which no doubt would have inspired a sense of confidence in visiting patients. In 1915, he passed away, leaving the home to his daughter and son-in-law. That house burned down in 1933, but when the family, apparently quite fond of the original, decided to rebuild, in 1938 they erected a near-replica on the same site, this time opting for fire-resistant brick in place of wood siding. The house stayed in the family for several generations—and Lusk's great-great-granddaughter sold it and the surrounding parcel to an adjacent church, in 2003. Now the church would like to build on the land and is offering the house for free to anyone with the means to move it.

**WHY SAVE IT?** The house has a classic symmetrical design and is flanked by handsome island porches. A simple porch over the entrance is supported by Doric columns. The interior retains a number of original details, including wainscoting and a wood mantel.  
**WHAT IT NEEDS** Moving the 3,400-square-foot house will be a sizable project, though the structure is in good condition. Gunterwillow is a small town of 8,200 about 70 miles north of Burlington. The town is perhaps best known for its 84,000-acre reservoir and lake, where \$25,000 will buy a half-acre waterfront parcel that could be a perfect new site for this gem of a house —PHEL WINE



**FREE!**  
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 Colonial  
 Revival



1. The spare bedroom hosts five bedrooms and two bathrooms. The graceful exterior features elongated windows flanked by the first-floor windows.
2. A painted wood mantel in the living room is adorned with fluted pilasters and a carved pediment.
3. When the house is moved, its new location is plenty of light. Thanks to its exceptionally tall divided light windows, most of which are original.
4. Simple but handsome wainscoting lines the dining room. The story is one of the home's many fresh details.



**GOT A HOUSE?**  
 If you know or would know that should be moved, visit [for.sale.usda.gov](http://for.sale.usda.gov) at The Old House Restoration Society, 33 West 37th Street, New York, NY 10018.

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