

This Old House

Spring forward!

**Little fix-ups
with a big
payoff**

**Plant an
orchard**

Fix a baluster

**Metal fence
buyer's guide**

**Redo your
basement**

**Preview
our
Detroit
house**

MARCH/APRIL 2017
THISOLDHOUSE.COM



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In every issue of This Old House in 2017, we'll feature a new room or house for you to color and upload for a chance to win \$700 in cash and paint prizes from Sherwin-Williams.

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ILLUSTRATION BY DOUGLAS ADAMS



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kitchen

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*Based on a 10'x10' kitchen

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Requires assembly. *The total price includes cabinets, fronts, drawers, door dampers, interior shelving, hinges, toe kicks, legs, and cover panels. Your choice of countertop, sinks, faucets, knobs and handles, appliances, and lighting sold separately. See IKEA store for limited warranty, country of origin and 10'x10' details. Valid in US stores only.



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BASEMENT



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AN ORCHARD
OUTBACK

on the cover



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Cover Photograph by
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Cover Flap Illustration by
DOUGLAS ADAMS



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Now you can download the latest issue of TOH on your tablet before the print issue is available. Go to thisoldhouse.com/tablet

PHOTOS (TOP LEFT) TRIA GIOVAN; (BOTTOM) ANTHONY TIEU



3 ActiClean™
Self-Cleaning Toilet

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Letter FROM TOH

Lending a hand in my hometown

I grew up in the city of Detroit, a place that is hard to explain to outsiders. Even the local landmarks are puzzling, from Joe Louis's disembodied fist in Hart Plaza to the giant tire you can't avoid on your trip from the airport to the city limits.

It is a place whose fortunes have always risen and fallen with the automobile industry—a place where new car sales figures inevitably wind up on the front page, a harbinger of things to come. It is a place of great wealth and great poverty, one where the divide between the haves and have-nots has long been painfully obvious.

And yet it is also the place that gave the world the Supremes, the Temptations, Stevie Wonder, Bob Seger, Mitch Ryder & the Detroit Wheels. A place where you can eat just about any cuisine imaginable, as long as you're willing to drive. And it's a place with crushingly great radio, where you can still find really good live music any night of the week.

I've been thinking about this a lot as I look at the images of our new project house in the Russell Woods neighborhood, previewed on page 82. This house, and this project, mark the first time that *This Old House* TV has been to Detroit, and the work that is happening within those four walls is stunning.

Like a lot of house renovations in the city, it is a phoenix-like transformation. Four years ago, the house sat vacant and vandalized, with extensive water damage from a leaking roof and an HVAC system that was missing in action. Native Detroiters Frank and Tamiko Polk bought it at a Detroit Land Bank Authority auction, resolving to restore it themselves. But by joining forces with *This Old House* and some good-guy local contractors and tradesmen, they are well on their way to an amazing result.

There's been a lot of talk about an urban renaissance in Detroit. Some Detroiters will find it hard to believe; they've heard it all before. But if it's finally happening, this is how it will begin: one beautiful house at a time.



Color our cover and enter for a chance to win up to \$700 in cash and prizes from Sherwin-Williams. Go to thisoldhouse.com/TOHcolorcontest for details.

Susan Wyland
SUSAN WYLAND,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
susan@thisoldhouse.com

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HERE'S HOW TO ENTER

- Go to thisoldhouse.com/TOHcolorcontest
- Download this month's coloring page
- Wow us with your creative, colorful vision
- Scan (or take a photo of) your colored-in page and upload
- Share your entry using #TOHcolorcontest



ADVERTISEMENT



COLOR YOUR OWN... CONTEST

March/April 2017

Energize a Front Entry

- On an otherwise neutral home, a few fearless pops of color can make all the difference when it comes to curb appeal. Show us what palette would please you the most, if this were your home.
- Download your template now at thisoldhouse.com/TOHcolorcontest
- Ready, set, COLOR!

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Purchasing does not improve your chances of winning. The COLOR YOUR OWN Contest, Part (1) of (7), begins 12:01 A.M. EST on Friday, February 3, 2017, and ends 11:59 P.M. EST on Thursday, March 30, 2017, EST. To enter and to view complete details, eligibility information, and Official Rules, go to thisoldhouse.com/TOHcolorcontestRules. Open to legal residents of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia who are 21 years old or older at the time of entry. All federal, local, and state regulations apply. Void where prohibited by law. Sponsor: This Old House Ventures, LLC, 262 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06902.



Download our **ColorSnap®** app for color inspiration in the palm of your hand.



PROJECT OF THE WEEK

More saving.
More doing.

HOW TO TURN A DRESSER INTO A BATH VANITY



Photo: Anthony Trull

If you're looking to add a truly original focal point to your bathroom, try retrofitting a charming old bureau into a new vanity. The trickiest part is fitting in the plumbing, as you'll need to modify the drawers. But you can follow along with This Old House master carpenter Norm Abram as he shows you how it's done.

Norm's version is pretty involved: The dresser here is all curved openings, and he added a new top of marble with a drop-in sink, requiring more modifications. But you can make an easier go of it by plopping a vessel sink right on top of a rectilinear piece.

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 thisoldhouse.com/project

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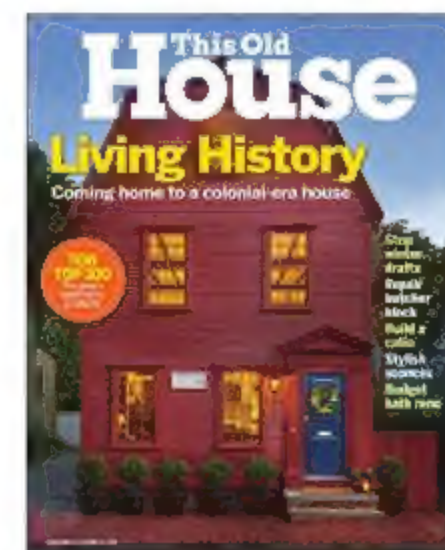
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Reader mail MARCH/APRIL 2017



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

WE LOVE HAVING READERS OF ALL AGES. *We hear from retirees who finally find time for long-put-off projects and from readers too young to reach the top kitchen shelves. From thinking about home design for "aging in place" to championing tradesmen and women just starting out, we're proud to be there for you at every stage.*

Supporting the trades

When I found out about Generation Next [January/February 2017], I couldn't contain my excitement. I realized in my junior year of architecture school that I could pursue the trades, even though many around me looked down on that path. I started a furniture and cabinetry company at the same time that I began my trade education at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology in Lancaster, PA. I'm now 27 and have three employees—ages 23, 21, and 19—who are also graduates of the program. We have just secured a shop triple the size we started in and are excited to continue to grow. We all have great pride in our craft and in the education that we worked so hard to achieve; I try my best to be an advocate for the trades and help young people learn that there are options besides the standard four-year college.

—GREG PILOTTI, PARKESBURG, PA

Salvage superfan

I've seen many beautiful home redos in *This Old House* over the years but none stunned me like "Salvaged Beauty" [November/December 2016]. Every single room and all the decor are absolutely fabulous, and it really got my imagination revved up! The Berkowitzes did an outstanding job on and in their home.

—DENISE BARKLEY, VIA E-MAIL

Let's hear it for the cats

I was paging through what I had decided would be the end of my decades-long run as a subscriber, when I saw your Letter from TOH [November/December 2016]. You'll be pleased to know that "It's Raining Cats" persuaded me to sign on for another year and give a gift subscription. Thanks for thinking of us cat lovers.

—NANCY KAUFFMAN, VIA E-MAIL

Planning ahead

I have subscribed to *TOH* for years, and I always study the floor plans. I look for signs of universal design—like wider doorways and a main-floor full bath—but I almost never see them. I've had three homes built or renovated since 1998, and although my husband and I are perfectly healthy, I've always taken accessibility into consideration. These types of changes did not significantly add to our renovation costs but did help to ensure we'll never have to move out of our home because of physical limitations. Please urge homeowners to look to the future and consider ways to make their homes work for them forever.

—MARCY SOHN, PORTOLA VALLEY, CA

READER PROJECT OF THE MONTH

Entry arbor

—DAVID BRAUN, FORT WAYNE, IN

I fell in love with the house in "Shipshape" [September 2016], especially the entry with the lattice fence and gate. I set my saws in motion and worked almost nonstop since reading the article so I could have it up before it got too cold.



home solutions

Edited by Deborah Baldwin

INSIDE | HOME-REPAIR SCREWUPS | PEONY HELPERS | STURDY STOOLS | MORE



DIY cloches

Starting seeds indoors? Mini greenhouses, made by slicing the bottoms off plastic bottles, can encourage them to germinate. The see-through incubators help keep soil evenly moist while blocking drafts and allowing you to keep an eye on the sprouts' progress. Once they're on their feet, you can transition them to the real world by putting the pots on a porch or stoop and removing the cloches—during the day only, if you can't resist coddling your seedlings a little bit longer.

Put your snowblower to bed

Maybe right now, you're more focused on spring bulbs and reseeding the lawn. But before you walk away from your snowblower, take the time to ensure that it will roar back to life with that first unexpected blast of icy weather next winter.



1 > Hose off dirt and road salt.

Focus on the auger and the impeller behind it. Towel dry and buff car wax on the painted metal housing and inside the chute.

2 > Replace the fuel. Drain the tank and add an ethanol-free fuel oil like TruFuel (\$5.80; trufuel50.com). Let the engine run for a few minutes.

3 > Baby the moving parts. Follow the owner's manual. If it doesn't specify lubrication, coat exposed cables with motor oil. Use dry lube on plastic knobs and silicone spray on spinning parts. Adjust skid shoes and scraper bar. Stock up on shear pins and replacement belts.

4 > Inflate the tires. Using a gauge, add 2 pounds to the recommended psi to allow for air leakage. —SAL VAGLICA



Stakes worthy of your best peonies

Forget those flimsy wire rings and invest in the same hefty steel supports favored by the New York Botanical Garden. Handsome and robust enough to leave out all year, they can be sunk down to soil level and overwinter in place. A coat of spray paint can keep it rust-free. From \$29; bobkeatingsupports.com —SV

Cord-free and won't quit

We're living in the golden age of cordless lawn mowers. Not long ago, these quiet, smokeless cutters had anemic batteries that made you wish you were mowing with gas. Today, you can get about an hour—or even more—per charge. Here are three that can make one item on your to-do list a little easier. —SV

RUN TIME: 45 MINS.

The 40-volt battery in this 20-inch-wide mower powers an efficient brushless motor and has load-sensing technology to maximize performance. Plus, it comes at a nice price. RY40180, \$299; ryobitools.com ▶



RUN TIME: 60 MINS.

Two 80-volt batteries, used sequentially, power this brushless, 21-inch-wide mower through seven cutting heights. Need to hit another patch? Each battery recharges in 30 minutes. KM2180B-06, \$499; kobalttools.com ▶



RUN TIME: 90 MINS.

The 7.5 amp hours in this mower's 56-volt battery run longer than most models on the market yet create 30 percent less noise than a gas unit. The handle folds down easily for storage. LM2001-X, \$649; egopowerplus.com ▶



PHOTOS (THIS PAGE, INSET) MEG REINHARDT; (GRASS) iSTOCK; (OPPOSITE PAGE) NOLLY CLARK/ISTOCKSY; ILLUSTRATION: RODICA PRATO



Germ control: How to trap and zap 'em

We've all seen the headlines: viruses, *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and other icky household invaders are right under your nose—and threatening your family's health. We asked Dr. Amy E. Kirby, a public health expert at Emory University, to translate the latest research into practical tips that can keep germs at bay, and put your mind at ease.

WATCH WHAT YOU BRING IN

Raw meat and fresh produce, including berries, can carry *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Norovirus*, even parasites. The risk rises when produce is grown or handled with contaminated water.

BLOCK CROSS-CONTAMINATION

"Think of it as putting up a wall," Kirby says. Keep germs from spreading by bagging and prepping items separately. Rinse produce thoroughly. Use dedicated cutting boards and dish towels. Scrub hands before reaching for the fridge or range.

DISINFECT WITH BLEACH

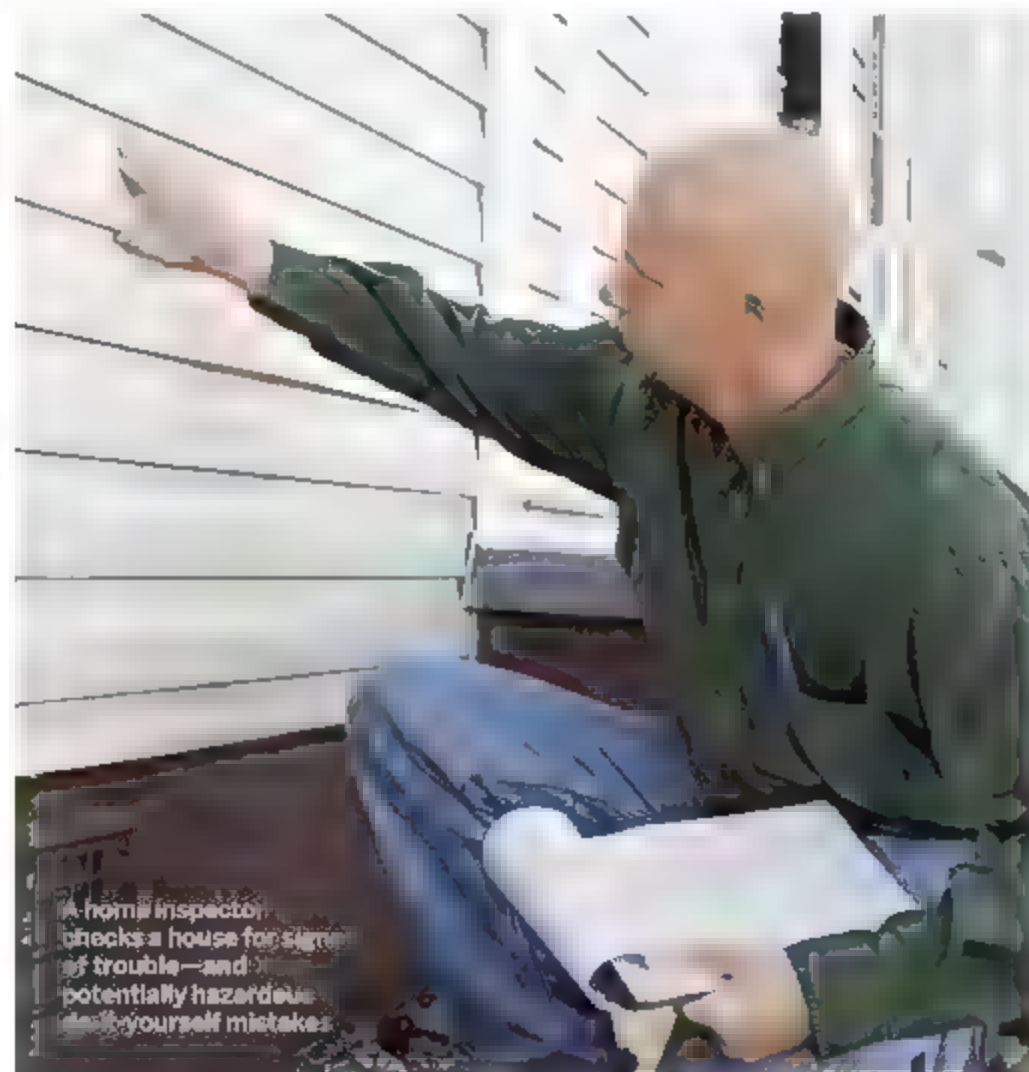
Clean surfaces with a bleach-based wipe or a 1 to 10 bleach-and-water solution. "People think stronger is better, but 1-to-10 is best," Kirby says. "Commercial solutions contain stabilizers, but if you make your own, keep it in an opaque container or replace it after a week."

GET YOUR WATER TESTED

Your utility can help. "Test not only for lead and chemicals," says Kirby, "but also for microbes."

DON'T OBSESS

Take extra steps to sanitize surfaces when a household member is sick or immunocompromised. Otherwise, relax. "We're never going to get to zero," Kirby says. "And some of the bacteria around us may actually be beneficial."



Home inspectors' DIY don'ts

With homeowners increasingly eager to make their own repairs and improvements (have you tried hiring a plumber lately?), code and safety violations are becoming more common and, along with them, "unintended consequences," says Randy Sipe, head of the American Society of Home Inspectors. Here, four common areas of concern.

1. Is that a water heater or Old Faithful? Swapping in a water heater may look straightforward, but some DIYers forget to include the extension pipe for the temperature-pressure relief valve, or they put it higher than a safe 6 inches from the floor. If excess pressure builds, stand back—and prepare for a flood.

2. Tip-over ranges Ranges need to be held in place by anti-tipping brackets in case, for instance, a child uses the oven door as a ladder to reach the microwave. "Inspectors often find the bracket in the drawer," Sipe says.

3. Hot-wire acts Owners of older houses are often stumped when installing the GFCI safety receptacles required for baths, kitchens, and basements and wire them incorrectly—with potentially shocking results.

4. Shaky decks It's tempting to build your own deck—what could possibly go wrong? Plenty, says Sipe. "People don't leave the required clearance for overhead wires. They ignore required rail heights and support brackets and build decks that aren't structurally sound. This happens quite a bit, more than you'd realize." A crowd comes over and boom! it comes crashing down.

Step up your spring cleaning

Few investments are as satisfying as a strong step stool—especially one that doubles as an extra seat—or hand truck—or can slide into a space no wider than a wooden coat hanger. Try one of these standout options on your next cobweb hunt.

Dual purpose

The steps of the Travel Smart Ladderkart are good for up to 250 pounds, and the hand cart can handle 175 pounds. Stash supplies on board and roll to your next work spot. \$100. conair.com



Safety first

Cotterman's extra rugged StockNStore, in sunny yellow 16-gauge steel, has wheels, deep steps, and heavy-duty elongated handles. It holds up to 350 pounds before folding and sliding into a 10-inch wide space. \$258. 800-552-1337.



Stick thin

An anodized aluminum two-stepper that folds to a freestanding, willow 2 inches deep, the Slim Step has widespread supports for stability and a 10 1/4-inch-deep top step. It holds 220 pounds and is nice enough to display. \$160. hasegawaladders.com



White subway tile really pops with gray grout. Shown: TEC Power Grout in Silverado.

Should I go for colored grout?

Patti Watson, an interior designer in Jamestown, RI, likes the effects you can get with different shades.

Here, she explains the impact of an often overlooked finish material.

PAIR WHITE TILE WITH GRAY, as I did in this kitchen (above) for an aged look that also highlights hand-cut edges.

CONSIDER PICKING UP A DETAIL like the veining in a stone vanity top. Grout in the same color will help unify the space and reinforce a calming overall palette.

MATCH GROUT COLOR to the tile in small spaces where high contrast could look busy or in any space where you want the tile to recede.

GET A PREVIEW by borrowing grout sticks from a showroom or by mocking up samples, letting them cure for a few days. Then apply sealant, which can darken the color of tile and grout alike.

Chaos controlled

A high-energy family creates an orderly flight path for kids, dogs, and friends who come and go via the back door

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIANNE WILLIAMS

→ **MUDROOMS** have to have it both ways: serving at once to trap debris and disorder while turning a pretty face to incoming traffic. Some households think of them as containment zones. “Before, the kitchen floor was our catchall,” says Liz McBride, referring to the footballs, backpacks, shoes, and outerwear her three young sons like to shed as they walk in the door. Add one outdoorsy husband, Mike, a black Lab named Maddie, and a family passion for hiking on trails paved with South Carolina clay, and you sense what their Fort Mill house was up against. With design/build help from Mary Ludemann, the couple added a mudroom with tough finishes, assigned storage spots, and a heavy-duty sink. When they aren’t using the basin to fill the dog bowl or scrub off mud, “I treat it as an emergency salon—my boys come down some mornings looking like porcupines,” Liz says, only half in jest. Tall wainscoting and baseboards fend off “dog dishes and kids who kick off their shoes,” says Ludemann. Adds Liz, “Our friends and neighbors don’t bother with the front door—they come right to our beautiful new entry in back.”

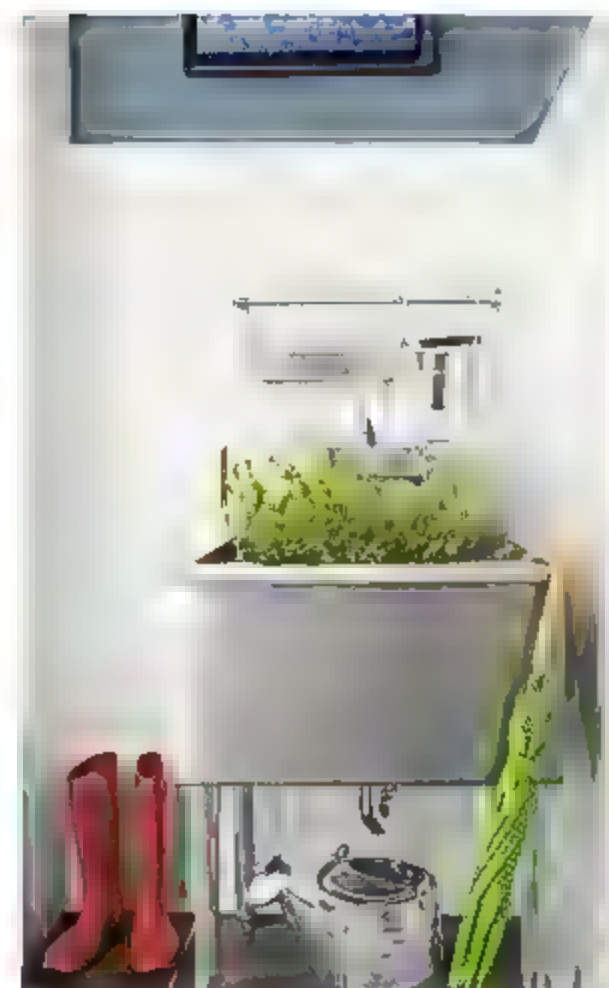
BEFORE The back door opened into the kitchen, where flotsam washed up on the floor and a catchall desk.

AFTER The new space gets its airy look from a 10-foot ceiling plus lots of glass and light reflecting finishes. Paint: Sherwin Williams Bracing Blue (walls) and Extra White (trim).



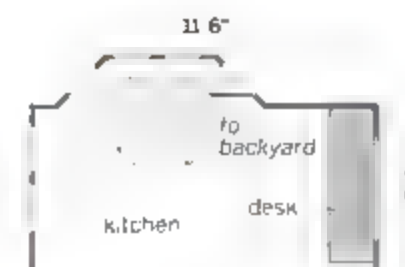
BEFORE

The “slop sink” is handy for watering plants, and during parties it can hold iced wine. Sink and faucet: Regency



before

A kitchen desk area near the back door doubled as a landing pad for shoes and backpacks



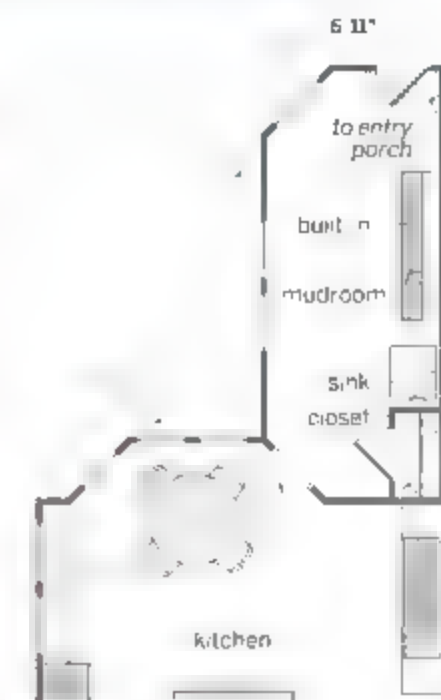
after

The new 135-square-foot back-entry mudroom draws foot traffic to the kitchen by way of a storage-packed built-in and a commercial sink

1. Built an addition off the kitchen for a mudroom with a new entry porch

2. Kept the windowed wall and removed the exterior door

3. Created a cased opening between the kitchen and the mudroom



4. Relocated the back door and added a transom; the door opens to the entry porch

5. Added a built-in with hooks, cubbies, and shelves

6. Installed a freestanding utility sink

7. Put in a coat closet with shelves

A custom 7½-by-5-foot magnetic blackboard, trimmed to match the door, makes reminders hard to ignore. Paint: Krylon Chalkboard Paint in Black over Krylon Magnetic Primer

Designer Mary Ludemann likes to allow 18 to 30 inches of horizontal stowaway space per kid—or enough for three pairs of shoes. Baskets: HomeGoods



Sundays on
MASTERPIECE on PBS

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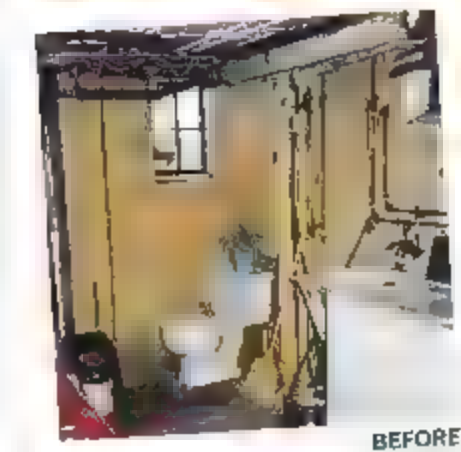
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• before + after | basement

Hidden gem

Priority one in this reno plan: Transform a bare-bones basement into a comfortable family hangout. BY KATE WOOD • PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRIA GIOVAN



BEFORE More utility room than family room, the basement held a mess of exposed pipes and necessities.

AFTER The long wall of the existing mechanicals room and a new closet for the sump pump create a cozy TV/game room area for teens Dillon and Kate.

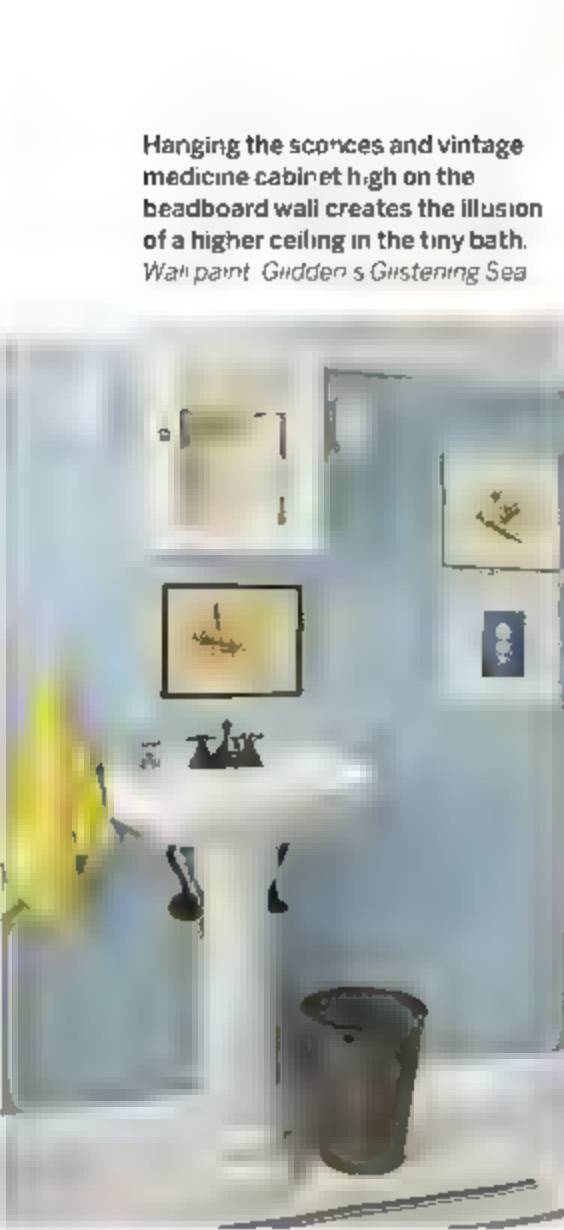
➔ **STARTING AT THE BOTTOM** may be the natural way to build a house, but ambitious renovations don't often begin in the basement. For Jennifer Vreeland McDermott and her husband, Mark, however, the bottom floor topped the to-do list. Built by Mark's father in 1937, their Dutch Colonial Revival home had plenty of sentimental value, but with just 1,600 square feet and a single bath upstairs, it was a tight squeeze for the couple, their two kids, and two dogs. Though they did plan to add on, "we just felt like we needed space right away," Jennifer says. Making the unfinished basement livable was the obvious solution, but it meant dealing with a low ceiling, major moisture issues, and a toilet with zero privacy in the laundry area. After stripping off all the existing surfaces, they hung new drywall, preserving every inch of ceiling height they could, then added a French drain and a sump pump to ensure a clean, dry blank slate. Jennifer, an interior designer, used her drafting skills to draw up a floor plan that hid mechanicals, added storage, enclosed the laundry, and fit in a full bath, while creating a comfortable living space now finished in shades of sandy beige and watery blue. "It was a challenge figuring out how to organize it all," Jennifer says, but now, "it's the beach house we wish we had!"

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANE ELLIS FOR JENNIFER VREELAND & MARK McDERMOTT



Tapping dead space behind and beneath the stairs allowed for a shower and a storage closet whose door is tucked behind a bureau.

In a space with just three small windows, a variety of lighting fixtures banishes any gloom.



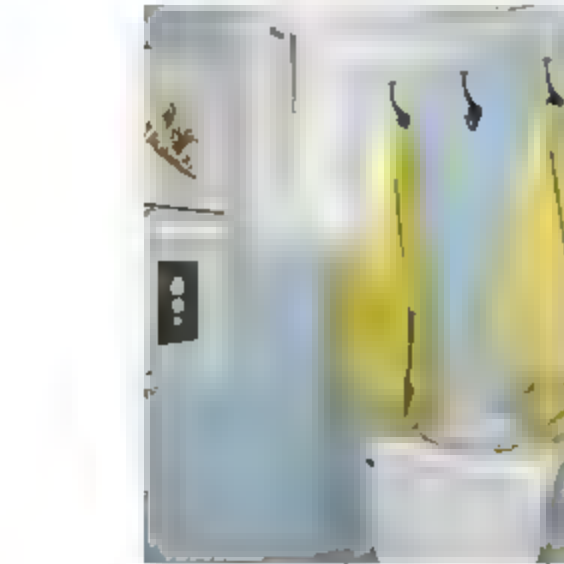
Hanging the sconces and vintage medicine cabinet high on the beadboard wall creates the illusion of a higher ceiling in the tiny bath. Wall paint: Glidden's Glistening Sea



Much of the furniture does double duty: A vintage-style cabinet conceals the TV and Xbox, while the sleeper sofa pulls out for overnight guests. Cabinet: British Traditions; Sofa: Jennifer Convertibles



homeowner tip JENNIFER VREELAND McDERMOTT, ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J.
“Choosing the right materials was the best investment we made. Paneled walls gave us the look we wanted, and the tile floor is virtually maintenance free.”



A seaside theme unifies the basement's eclectic mix of artwork and found objects, including vintage prints and jars of shells collected on family vacations. A palette of white, tan, and pale blue with pops of sunny yellow plays up the beachy vibe.

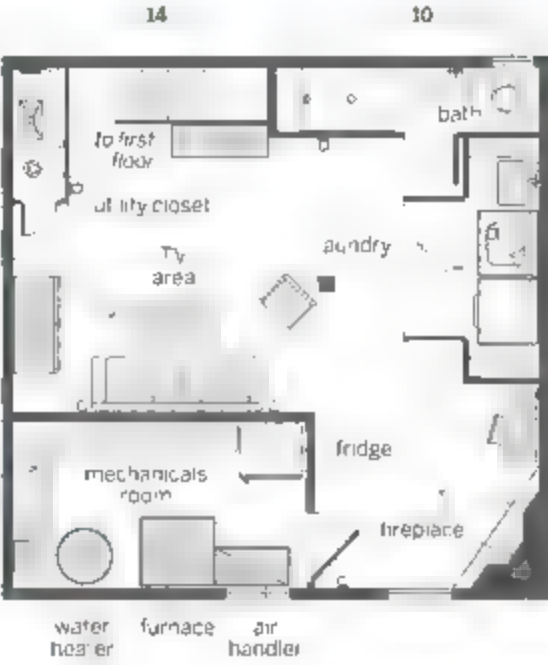


The river stone fireplace built by Mark's father and grandfather finally has a worthy setting, with V-groove pine-paneled walls. The pull-down door high up on the wall accesses a crawl space.

after

Additional walls now enclose a laundry, a full bath, and a second utility closet, leaving one large open living area.

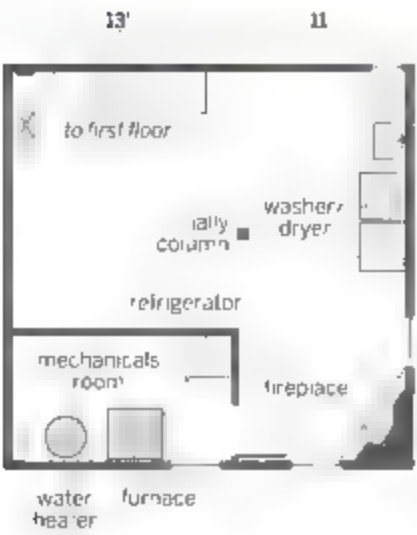
- 1. Built a closet for a new sump pump tied into a French drain to ensure the basement stays dry
- 2. Placed a sofa along the wall of the existing mechanicals room to establish a TV/game room zone
- 3. Added shelving in the mechanicals room, which now has an air handler for central A/C



- 4. Enclosed the toilet along with a pedestal sink and a shower to squeeze in a full bath
- 5. Walled off the laundry and the utility sink double doors allow easy access and blend in when closed
- 6. Kept floor space around the fireplace open for lounging and added a homework desk

DRP: ADAM WILSON

before
The mechanicals and an extra fridge were walled off, but everything else was out in the open.



PROJECT D-I-WINE:

How to Create a Chic Centerpiece



Meet Ashley and Whitney, the power-tool-wielding sisters behind Shanty2Chic, a design blog that inspires DIYers to turn basic bargain pieces into things of beauty. We asked them for a quick-and-easy, low-cost, yet stylish weekend project, and they were happy to share the scoop on this beautiful centerpiece. With a handful of supplies and some leftover wine bottles, you can create one yourself for less than \$20 in just a weekend.

For complete instructions, visit VarathaneMasterSeries.com

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Shopping List:

- 12 pieces of wood (assortment of cuts, see our cut list for details)
- 2 sheets of mdf, in decorative pattern
- Rust-Oleum spray paint (shown here in "Heirloom White")
- Varathane stain (shown here in "Carrington")
- Wood glue
- Sandpaper/sanding pad
- 6 empty wine bottles
- 2 decorative nandies (optional)

ONE COAT TRUE COLOR ONLY VARATHANE



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Ashley and Whitney, prefer Varathane. So don't just finish it. Varathane it.

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Replace a broken baluster

It only takes a few minutes to fill the unsafe and unsightly gap in a stairway's balustrade where a spindle is missing

BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY WENDELL T. WEBBER

COST About \$6 for an off-the-shelf baluster; custom-turned ones can cost \$100 and up
TIME 30 minutes
DIFFICULTY Easy



1

TOOLBOX

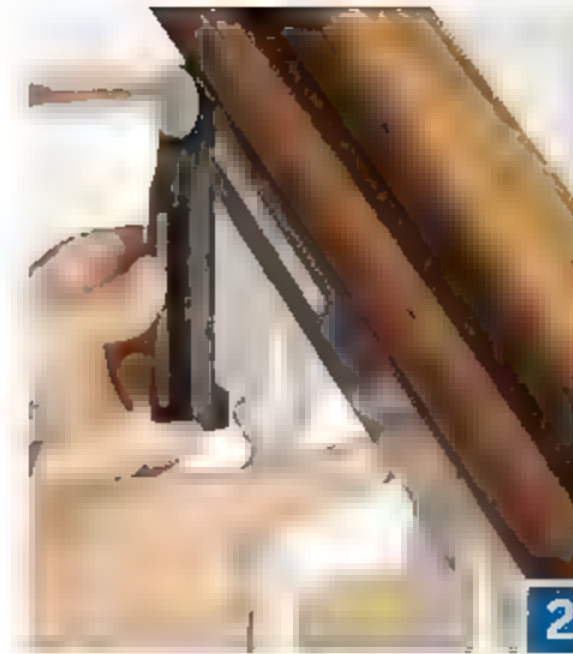
- > utility knife
- > pry bar
- > nippers and pull scraper
- > folding rule
- > sliding T-bevel
- > miter saw and safety glasses
- > wood glue
- > drill-driver
- > 8d finishing nails
- > hammer and nailset
- > wood filler



ONE GOOD TURN

The biggest challenge of this project may be finding a new matching baluster. If you're lucky, the exact piece you need could turn up in an Internet search. If not, then millwork companies that specialize in making stair parts can turn custom balusters for you (above). You'll need to provide an intact baluster for them to copy; just make sure it's the same length as the one you need. It won't be cheap. According to Peter Murray of Fine Finish, which provided the custom millwork for the TOH TV project in Arlington, Massachusetts, a paint-grade baluster made of soft maple would cost about \$100, due mostly to setup costs. A stain-grade baluster made from a specific wood species would come in even higher.

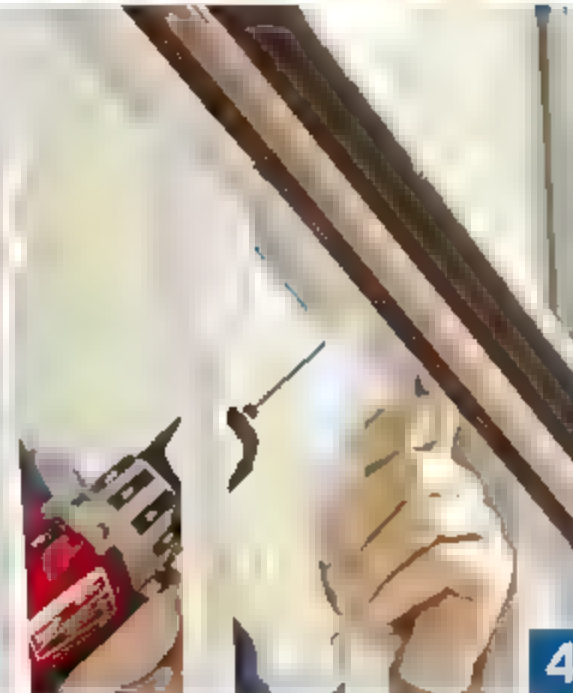
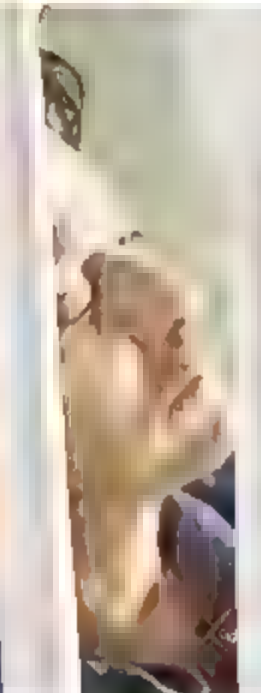
PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDELL T. WEBBER



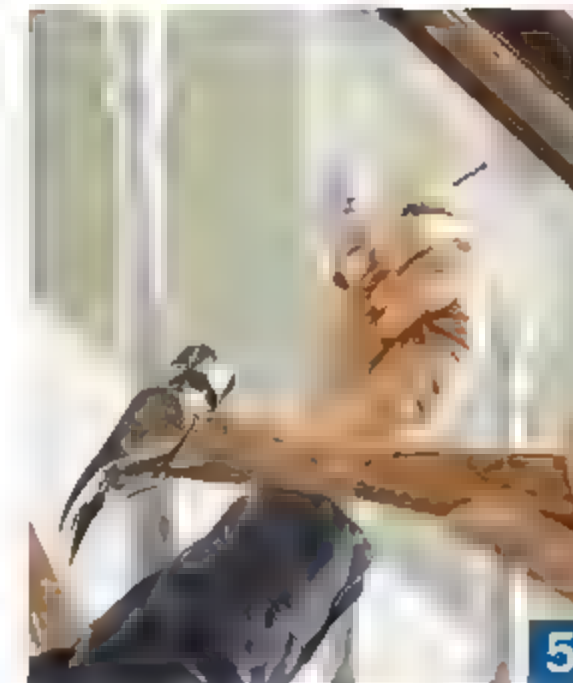
2



3



4



5



6

STEP-BY-STEP

1] Pry off the end cap Use a utility knife to cut through the finish in the joint between the stair tread and its end cap, then insert a small pry bar and gently work the cap free, as shown. Pull out any nails using nippers, and remove the old finish in the joint, using a pull scraper.

2] Measure length and angle Place a folding rule against the upstairs side of an existing baluster that occupies the same position on the tread as the one you're replacing. Measure from the top of the tread to the underside of the handrail, and mark that measurement near the top of the new baluster. Next, place the handle of a sliding T-bevel against the upstairs side of an existing baluster, and swing the T-bevel's blade flush with the underside of the handrail, as shown. Tighten the T-bevel's nut to secure the blade.

3] Cut the top Set the T-bevel's handle against the miter saw's fence and line up the saw's blade with the T-bevel's blade. Remove the T-bevel, rest the new baluster against the miter saw fence, and cut a miter at the mark made in Step 2.

4] Fit the new baluster Apply wood glue to the baluster's mitered end, then slip the tenon at the other end into the tread's mortise. Center the mitered end on the underside of the handrail, and drill an angled pilot hole from the upstairs side into the rail, as shown. Here, the drill bit is an 8d finishing nail with an popped-off head. Hammer an intact 8d finishing nail partway into the hole to hold the baluster in place, then go to the other side of the rail, and drill another angled pilot hole that crosses the first. Drive an 8d nail partway into that hole.

5] Set the nailheads Using a nailset, tap both nailheads slightly below the wood surface, as shown. Wipe away any glue that squeezes out at the top, then cover the nailheads with wood filler.

6] Replace the end cap Put the end cap back, flush with the top of the tread. Drill two pilot holes through the cap into the tread, and nail the cap in place. Set the nailheads and apply wood filler. Your stairway will be gap-free and safe again. ■

Spring greens

Turn over a new leaf and plant these versatile alternatives to plain old lettuce. We've got tips to get you growing—and recipes to inspire **BY SUSIE QUICK**

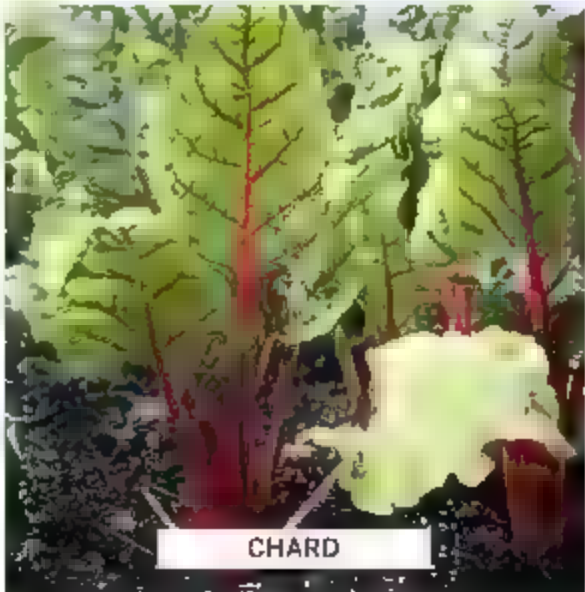
➔ **WHY WAIT FOR** warmer weather to put your green thumb to work? Plant some cold-loving leafy greens in spring, and you can enjoy fresh produce weeks before it's tomato-planting time. Sprouted from seeds or dug in as seedlings, these hardy and hearty vegetables are easy to grow and can survive a late-season cold snap. Snipped young and tender, they perk up any salad mix; cooked, their mature leaves can add zing to stir-fries, soups, stews, and more.

Many of these cold-loving greens are members of the brassica group of antioxidant-rich, immune-boosting cruciferous vegetables like arugula, which has a nutty taste and a slightly peppery bite. You can find variations on its long, narrow, serrated or lobed leaf in the six seed varieties at burpee.com, including 'Myway,' which matures in just 30 to 35 days.

Collards, long popular in the South, can be picked in the infant stage, chopped up, and added to your favorite slaw. Full grown, the large, flat leaves can serve as a wrap around sandwich fixings. For spring planting, look for a compact variety, like 'Champion,' that matures quickly for early harvests.

Tuscan kale—also called black, lacinato, or dinosaur kale—has an elongated, dark green, pebbled leaf that's quite tender and cooks more quickly than curly leaf types. A great introduction to varieties you won't see at the local grocery story is the Kale Premiere Blend Seeds mix at botanicalinterests.com.

Mustard greens come in many shapes and sizes, including 'Scarlet



Friels,' 'Red Giant'—a popular Asian variety with round, flat leaves), and the more common bright green 'Southern Giant.' A bit thinner than collards and most kale leaves, cooked mustard greens are best, just wilted—like most greens, overcooking makes them bitter.

Spinach, part of the amaranth family, offers a mellow contrast to mix in with the sharper brassica greens. Some types have savoy, or very curly, leaves, others are flat and rounded or pointed and narrow. Johnnyseeds.com, which specializes in time-tested heirloom and organic vegetables, offers 15 varieties of spinach. A baby flat leaf type, like 'Fleming,' will give you more bang for your buck, as it is slower than most varieties to bolt—or flower and go to seed.

Chard, which is related to the beet, is similar in taste, texture, and nutrient profile to spinach, but is more heat-tolerant, so it's a good choice to plant when your spinach is finished. 'Bright Lights' is a mix with enticing purple, red, pink, orange, yellow, and white stems.

If you opt to grow your spring greens from seeds, you can sow them directly in garden beds or outdoor pots when the soil temperature reaches 45°F. In just five to eight days, you will see plants poking up through the surface. In 20 to 30 days, you can start harvesting small leaves to relish.

These greens grow best in full sun but will tolerate partial shade, particularly once the weather warms. Use organic soil or potting mix and moisten with water. Sow the seeds by scattering them across the surface of the soil and top with about 1/4 inch of soil just to cover the seeds. Keep the soil moist by misting it until the seeds germinate. Once seeds have sprouted, thin the seedlings to allow for proper growth, share extra plants with friends or transfer them to containers so they have room to grow. If growing in pots, larger containers work best. While you might fit four arugula plants in a 12-inch pot, for a larger green, such as lacinato kale, you would have only one plant in a pot of that size.

If you purchase plants, or start your seeds indoors (following the packet instructions), you can transplant seedlings to your beds or

containers a bit earlier than other crops—from three to five weeks before the last frost date in your USDA agricultural zone. These plants can survive a light frost or two as long as they are protected by a lightweight covering (an old bedsheet, removed during the day, can work) when temperatures drop below 32°F. Water when the soil feels dry or when the plants look droopy, but don't overdo it. Use an organic fertilizer according to label directions once the plants start growing additional leaves.

To harvest your greens, pluck or snip the outer leaves of the plant, allowing the center to continue to grow and leaf out. Before the plants start to go to seed, cut them back to encourage more leaf growth. You can also sow seeds thickly for a continuous crop of baby greens. Simply snip off the tops and let them grow back for another round or two.

Just ahead, some easy, enticing recipe ideas for all those homegrown greens.

A raised bed allows you to control the garden's soil composition from the start. Its height also makes planting and plucking easier on your back. Find out how to build a raised planting bed at thisoldhouse.com.



THE RECIPES

Tuscan kale and garlic pizza

SERVES 2 TO 4

Tuscan kale (also called lacinato, dinosaur or black kale) has long, dark, pebbled leaves that become quite tender when cooked.

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- pinch crushed red pepper
- 3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 pound Tuscan kale, thick stems removed, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 pound plain or whole wheat pizza dough, thawed if frozen
- cornmeal for dusting (optional)
- 1½ cups whole milk ricotta cheese
- 1½ cups shredded fresh mozzarella cheese
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 3 ounces sliced smoked andouille sausage (or other spicy smoked sausage)
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan

Preheat oven to 475 °F.

In a large nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the crushed red pepper and garlic and cook 30 seconds. Add the kale and cook until the leaves are just wilted, about 5 minutes. Set aside to cool.

On a well-floured surface, roll out the dough into a round or oblong shape to a ½-inch thickness. Transfer dough to either an ungreased baking sheet or a preheated pizza stone dusted with cornmeal (if using).

In a medium bowl, stir together the ricotta and mozzarella cheeses; season with salt and pepper. Scatter the kale across the top of the dough. Arrange the sausage on top. Spoon large dollops of the cheese mixture on the pizza. Scatter the Parmesan on top and drizzle it with a little more olive oil.

Bake the pizza 10 to 15 minutes, until the edges are lightly browned and the cheese is hot and bubbly.

TIP: To thaw frozen pizza dough, leave it at room temperature for about 3 hours or defrost it overnight in the refrigerator.



Simple stir-fried greens

SERVES 4 TO 6

This is a very easy recipe you can use with any combination of greens. Try them as a simple bruschetta appetizer, served warm on thick slices of toasted rustic bread with slivers of shaved Parmesan on top.

- 2 tablespoons safflower or other high-heat oil
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ½ cup thinly sliced shallots or red onion
- 4 garlic cloves (or to taste), coarsely chopped
- 1 pound spinach
- 1½ pounds mixed greens, such as kale, mustard, turnip, or arugula, torn into small pieces
- ¼ cup water or chicken stock
- ¼ lemon
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large nonstick skillet or seasoned wok, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the crushed red pepper, shallots, and half the garlic and stir-fry 1 minute. Add the greens to the skillet in batches along with the water or chicken stock and stir-fry until greens are just starting to wilt. Add the remaining garlic, cover, and let greens steam about 5 minutes, until tender but still bright green. Season with a squeeze of lemon and salt and pepper to taste.

TIP: Wash the greens in a sink of cold water and a splash of vinegar to remove any grit. Drain well, but add the greens to the skillet while they are still a little wet.

Spring greens garden salad

SERVES 4 TO 6

Think of this as a healthier 21st-century Cobb salad using a mix of baby arugula, spinach, baby kale, and mustard greens instead of bland romaine or iceberg lettuce.

VINA GRETTA

- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil or grape seed oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon seasoned rice wine vinegar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

SALAD

- 2 firm, ripe Hass avocados
- 8 cups loosely packed mixed baby greens, such as arugula, chard, kale, mustard greens, or watercress
- 2 large, hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- ½ cup diced roasted or pickled beets
- 1 cup thinly sliced fennel or celery heart
- ½ cup cherry tomato halves
- ½ cup thinly sliced radishes
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- ½ cup coarsely chopped toasted walnuts (optional)
- 1 cup crumbled cheese, such as feta, goat, or blue cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh dill or cilantro

Place the vinaigrette ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake to blend (or whisk together in a bowl).

Peel and dice the avocados and toss in a bowl with a little of the vinaigrette. Set aside.

Place the greens in the bottom of a large serving bowl. Arrange everything but the dill or cilantro in rows across the top; the salad can be made about 2 hours early, covered and refrigerated. Drizzle with the vinaigrette and scatter the dill or cilantro over the top right before serving.



Fingerling potatoes with collard greens and apple cider dressing

SERVES 4 TO 6

Golden roasted small potatoes are tossed with wilted collard greens in a mustard-lemon dressing for a hearty warm "salad." You can also add crumbled feta or goat cheese for a one-dish vegetarian meal.

- 2 pounds fingerling potatoes, lightly scrubbed
- Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 pound collard greens, stems removed

DRESSING:

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons nonpareil capers, drained
- 1 tablespoon coarse-grain Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat oven to 425 °F. Place potatoes in a large baking pan. Drizzle with enough olive oil to coat; sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste and toss well. Roast 20 to 25 minutes until potatoes are tender. Set aside; cover with foil and keep warm.

Meanwhile, bring a large kettle of water to a boil. Stack about 5 collard green leaves and roll them up, cigar fashion. Thinly slice (about ½-inch wide) crosswise to create "ribbons." Repeat with remaining greens. Place in a medium metal bowl and add enough boiling water to cover the greens. Let sit about 15 minutes; drain well in a colander, pressing out excess water with a large spoon.

Place the dressing ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake well to blend (or whisk together in a bowl). Toss the warm potatoes and greens and enough dressing to lightly coat. Taste and adjust seasonings. Serve warm or at room temperature. ■

Style upgrade for a 1970s house

Craftsman-inspired elements turn a plain two-story tucked between towering trees into a stylish retreat

BY KATE WOOD • ILLUSTRATION BY DRAWGATE INC.



BEFORE



A new shed dormer ushers light into the garage and helps the house appear more integrated with the forest.

“BRING IT ON!” Mary Calderwood wrote to us, looking for help in improving her 1970s home in Arcata, CA. Set amid majestic redwoods, it’s her husband Dan’s “dream house,” she says, but they’re not so crazy about the blue shingles and dark, recessed entry. So we asked Tomas Salinas and Tim Royer of Heartwood Design/Build for some redo ideas.

“We decided to paint the existing siding,” says Salinas, “which started us on a Craftsman-inspired design.” Moving the door forward and adding an open porch with stickwork enhance the entry. The new box bay window upstairs echoes the one beneath it and adds dimension to the second story. Beefed-up brown trim and chunky brackets stand out against the sand-colored shingles, so the house looks more at home in the trees. Says Mary, “It’s just what we wanted, and yet even better than we imagined!”

WANT TO SEE YOUR HOME HERE?
To be considered, submit snapshots to redo@thisoldhouse.com

finishing touches

Natural materials and a woodland palette harmonize with the house’s forest setting



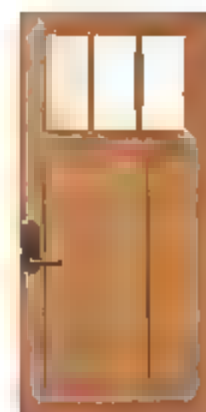
plantings
Deep shade and hungry deer make landscaping a challenge. Astilbe suits the site conditions and provides welcome color. ‘Red Sentinel’ astilbe, \$13 per plant, burpee.com



porch light
A sconce in a verdigris finish enhances the house’s earthy color scheme. Arroyo Craftsman Berkeley 15½” Gold-White Glass Outdoor Wall Light, \$332; lampsplus.com



paint
A cool, sandy hue lightens up the exterior, while a deeper brown emphasizes the trim. Texas Sage and Hasbrouck Brown, from \$68 per gallon; benjaminmoore.com



door
A sturdy Craftsman-style door replaces the out-of-sync Victorian model. Simpson Door Company Craftsman 3-Panel, 3-Lite Exterior Door, from \$700; simpsondoor.com

PHOTOS: ASHLEY STEVENS; PAINT: DARRYL EDWARDS

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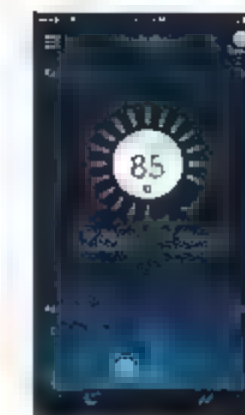
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Wall-mount mailboxes

Increase your curb appeal with a letter box that suits your house's style

BY KATE WOOD • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW McCAUL

THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE dates to the Colonial era, but mailboxes are a relatively recent innovation. Originally, mail only circulated between post offices. Household delivery began in cities as early as 1863, but somebody had to be home since the envelopes were literally handed over. It was not until 1912 that wall-mounted mailboxes and through-the-door mail slots finally made home delivery efficient. Today, you can find mailboxes in a range of styles and sizes, from highly embellished options ideal to hang by the front door to simpler, sturdy locking boxes that can even be installed curbside on a post or a column.

Here are 13 wall-mount models that go beyond the basic box.



2



3

1 > green piece

CREAT VEE CO-OP
Made of: Painted tin
Size: 15 1/2"H x 10 1/2"W x 3 1/8"D
Highlights: A bird motif graces this vintage-inspired mailbox. \$38, ironaccents.com

2 > pony express

SALISBURY INDUSTRIES
Made of: Powder-coated cast aluminum
Size: 20"H x 15 1/4"W x 5 1/2"D
Highlights: Large and locking. \$102, jossandmain.com

3 > slim pick

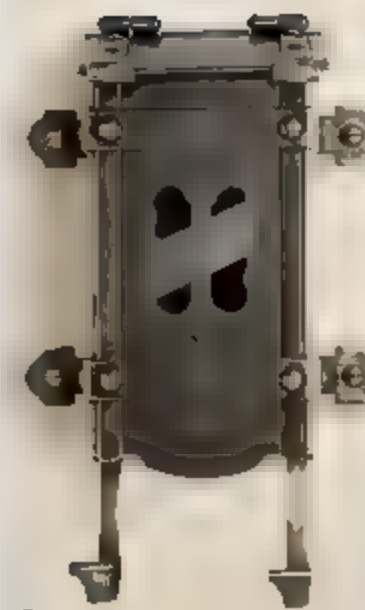
HISTORIC HOUSE PARTS
Made of: Solid cast brass
Size: 12"H x 5 1/4"W x 2 1/4"D
Highlights: This ornamental number fits a narrow space. \$188, historichouseparts.com



4



5



6



7



8

4 > postal pouch

POTTERY BARN
Made of: Painted iron
Size: 11 1/2"H x 16"W x 5"D
Highlights: A vintage brass finish adds to the cheeky feel of this overstuffed envelope-style mailbox. \$50, potterybarn.com

5 > red alert

REJUVENATION
Made of: Powder-coated steel
Size: 14 1/4"H x 16"W x 7 1/2"D
Highlights: A cheerful red-and-white finish gives this sizable locking mailbox extra flair. \$89, rejuvenation.com

6 > well crafted

REJUVENATION
Made of: Cast brass
Size: 17 1/2"H x 10 1/4"W x 4 1/4"D
Highlights: This handsome piece, based on a circa 1910 British Arts & Crafts design, incorporates a magazine rack. \$98, rejuvenation.com

7 > natural wonder

AMERICA'S FINEST MAILBOXES
Made of: Solid brass and stained glass
Size: 12 1/4"H x 9 1/2"W x 5 1/2"D
Highlights: Touches of verdigris complement the delicate ginkgo branch design. \$240, wayfair.com

8 > history buff

AMCO
Made of: Powder-coated cast aluminum
Size: 20 1/4"H x 11 1/2"W x 4 1/4"D
Highlights: A matte-black finish gives this locking Colonial-inspired model understated appeal. \$108, hayneedle.com



9



10



11

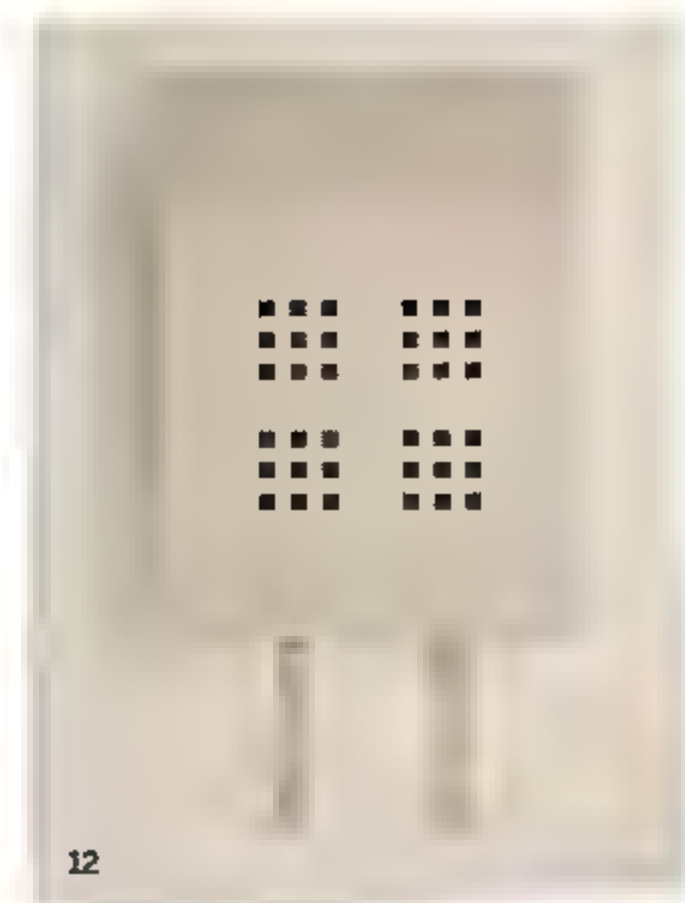
9 > match point
THEBUSBOX
Made of: Painted stainless steel with vinyl decals
Size: 6 1/2"H x 15 1/2"W x 3 1/2"D
Highlights: Choose from more than 40 colors for the perfect custom combination. \$49, thebusboxcreations.com

10 > ivy league
POSTMASTER
Made of: Powder-coated cast aluminum
Size: 12"H x 17 1/2"W x 4 1/4"D
Highlights: Though it features a dainty garden motif, this horizontal box is surprisingly substantial. \$58, lowes.com

11 > lucky penny
AMERICAN FINEST
MAILBOXES
Made of: Solid brass and stained glass
Size: 8 1/2"H x 16 1/2"W x 5 1/2"D
Highlights: This one holds up to five numbers and has a hand-applied copper finish. \$220, wayfair.com

12 > very versatile
SALSBURY INDUSTRIES
Made of: Powder-coated steel
Size: 14 1/2"H x 11"W x 3 1/2"D
Highlights: This simple design works with many home styles and has an optional magazine rack. \$68, jossandmain.com

13 > rustic appeal
COTTAGE HILL COLLECTION
Made of: Painted steel
Size: 17"H x 10"W x 5 1/2"D
Highlights: A distressed, rusty-looking finish makes this mailbox resemble a salvaged find. \$62, ironaccents.com



12



13

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Install a wall-mount vanity and sinks

With some basic bracing and strong screws, you can hang a cabinet that floats above the floor

BY SAL VAGLICA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY WENDELL T. WEBBER

➔ **A FLOATING VANITY** lends clean lines and an airy feeling to nearly any bathroom, but the benefits go beyond aesthetics. In houses with out-of-level floors, hanging a cabinet and sink on the wall means you can skip right past shimming the furniture's four feet. Also, you can customize the installed height, going above or below the standard 31 inches. Even the tallest cabinets leave a gap underneath big enough for you to tuck in a bathroom scale, slippers, or a child's step stool. Need more room? Choose a slim, shelf-style vanity that leaves space underneath for a seat to one side of the sink, creating a morning prep area. Rigo Mocha, of Westport, Connecticut-based Classic Construction Group, installed this 72-inch-long vanity with dual sinks as the finishing touch in a spa-like modern bath, but the process is similar for cabinets of any size. You'll need a plumber to rough in the pipes and make the final water and drain hookups. Read on and learn how to save by installing the cabinet, countertop, and fixtures yourself.

COST \$4,678
TIME Two days
DIFFICULTY Moderate
 The cabinet requires some prep work and two people to install the countertop

vanity, \$2,064
 countertop, \$1,090
 backsplash, \$120
 sinks, \$175 each
 faucets, \$527 each
 us.kohler.com



TOOLS

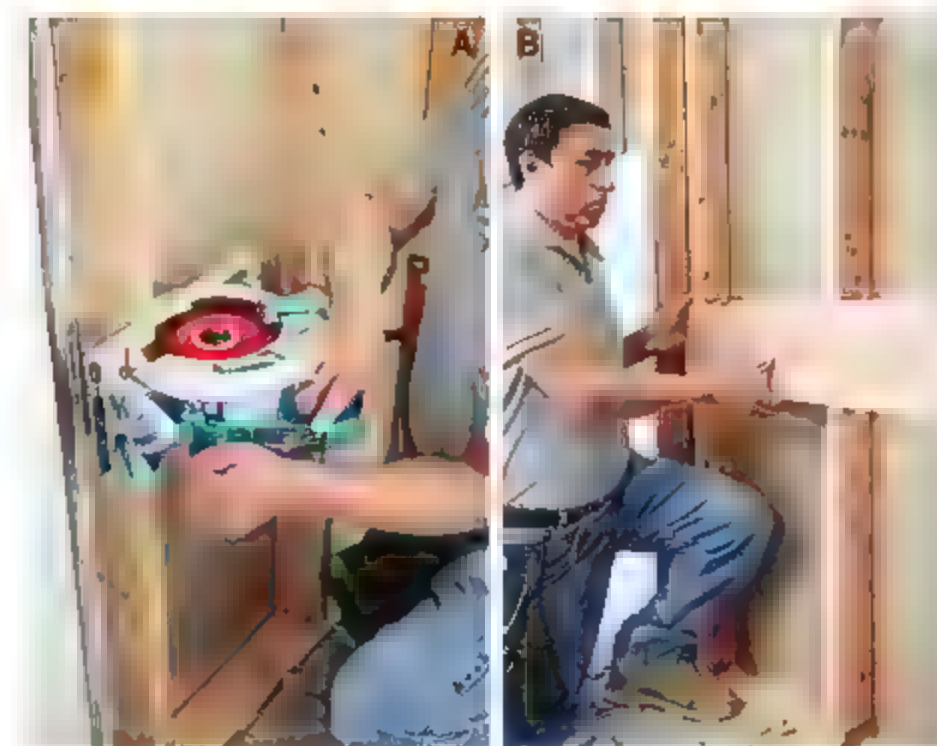
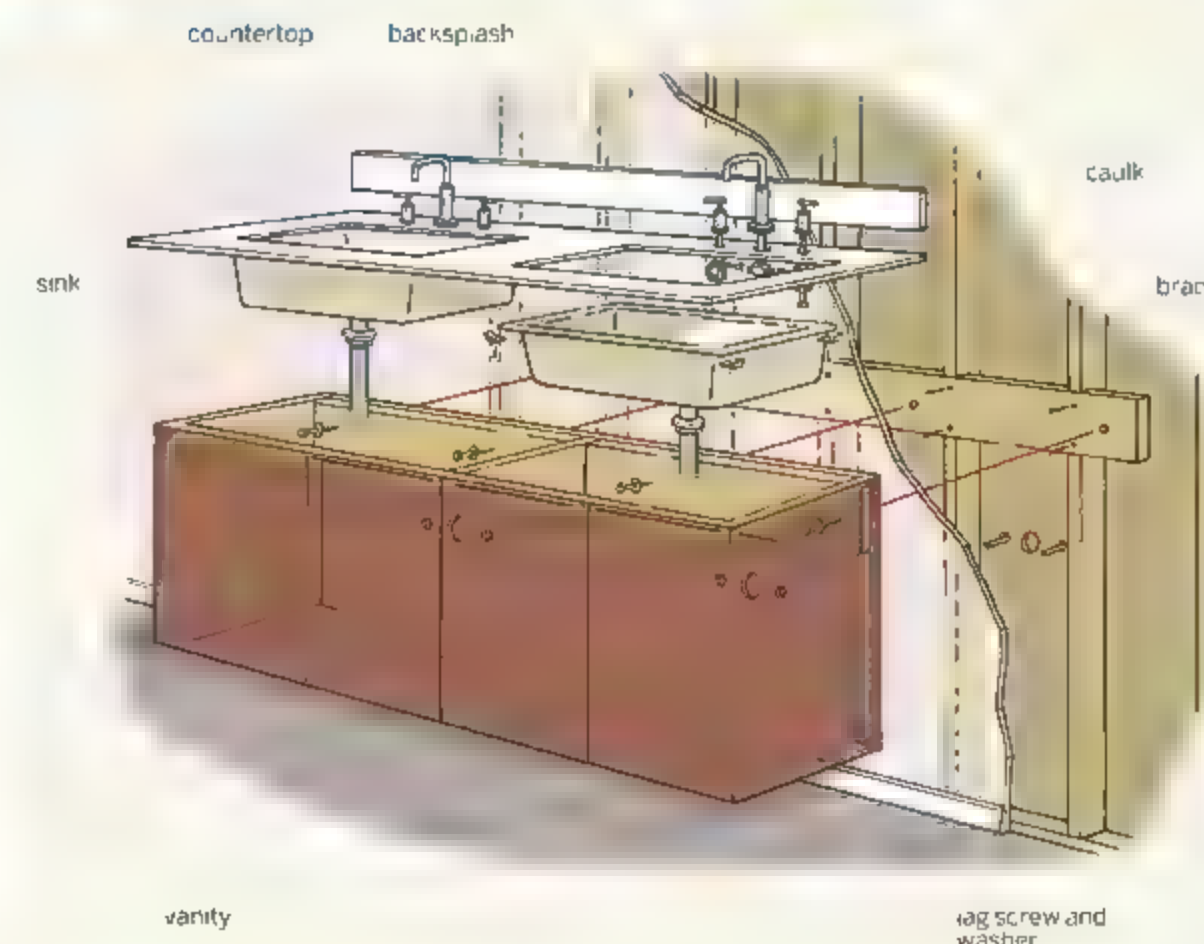
- > tape measure
- > pencil
- > 4-foot level
- > circular saw
- > hammer
- > chisel
- > drill/driver
- > protective mat
- > 3/4-inch-diameter hole saw
- > 1 1/2-inch-diameter hole saw
- > 1/4-inch-diameter drill bit
- > impact driver
- > dust mask
- > 1 1/2-inch-diameter hole saw
- > rags
- > caulk gun
- > screwdriver
- > adjustable wrench

MATERIALS

- > 2x6 Get one 6 footer
- > 3-inch deck screws
- > 3/8 by 3 1/2-inch lag bolts and washers
- > construction adhesive
- > silicone caulk
- > nonstaining plumber's putty
- > silicized acrylic caulk



SATURDAY Attach the bracing and hang the vanity (Steps 1-2)
SUNDAY Install the countertop and fixtures (Steps 3-5)

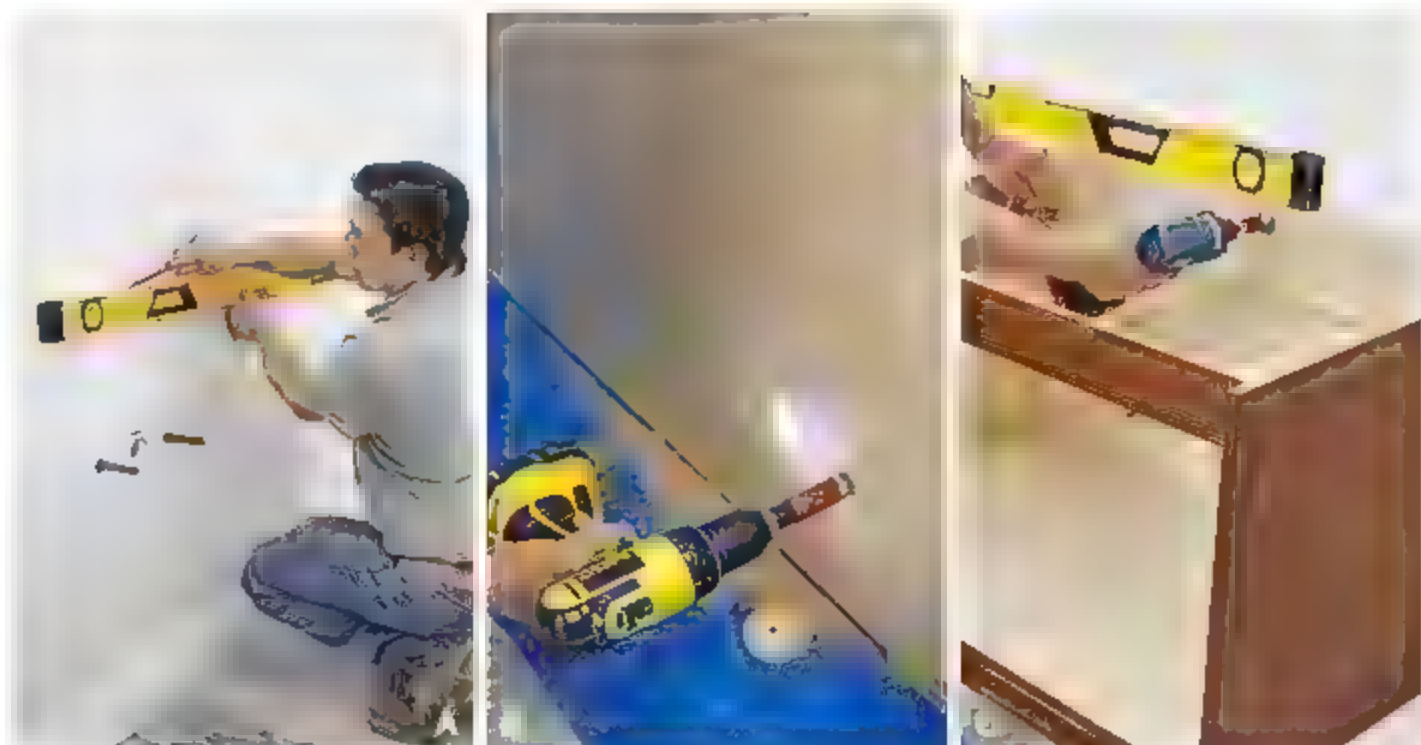


1 Build the bracing

A] Notch the studs Mark the vanity's width above the rough plumbing. For a 36-inch-high countertop, make a second mark 34 1/2 inches above the floor to represent the top of the 2x6 brace. Extend the mark with a level. Draw a second line 5 1/2 inches lower for the bottom of the brace. Using a circular saw set to cut 1 1/2 inches deep, make several passes to create a notch between the marks. Hammer the shims free, then clean the notch with a chisel. Repeat to notch all the studs that will support the brace.

B] Attach the bracing Cut a 2x6 brace 70 inches long with a circular saw. Apply construction adhesive to the notches, and press the brace into place. Fasten it at each stud with a pair of 3-inch deck screws. Have a plumber rough in the supply lines and drains for each sink, then finish the drywall, paint, and add any base molding.

TIP Be sure to use a hole saw for the plumbing cutouts—a paddle bit could crack the countertop.



2 Hang the vanity

A] Mark the location Subtract the thickness of the countertop from the finished height of the vanity $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in our case, and draw a level line at that dimension from the floor.

B] Cut plumbing holes Measure from the level line down to locate the water supplies and drain. Place the cabinet on a protective mat, remove the doors and set them aside. Transfer the pipe locations to the back of the vanity. Use a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter hole saw for the supply lines and a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-diameter saw for the drain pipe. Start the hole from the outside, pushing the pilot bit through the vanity's plywood back, then finish the cut from the inside to avoid tear-out.

C] Hang the vanity With a helper, rest the vanity on a 5-gallon bucket topped with enough plywood scraps to raise the cabinet to the level line on the wall. Make a pilot hole with a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter drill bit through the middle of the back rail at each end of the vanity. Use an impact driver to fasten the cabinet to the wall with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch lag screws and washers, checking for level as you work. With the vanity level, make more pilot holes at roughly each cabinet door bay and attach with more lag screws. Then remove the support.

3 Add the sinks

A] Prep for faucets With a helper, flip the countertop over so the underside faces up and rest it on the cardboard-covered vanity. The countertop is indented to show a spout and four handle locations for each sink. Put on a dust mask and chuck a $1\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-diameter hole saw into your drill/driver. Cut out the three holes per sink that will fit your faucet and handles, applying even pressure as you work through the countertop.

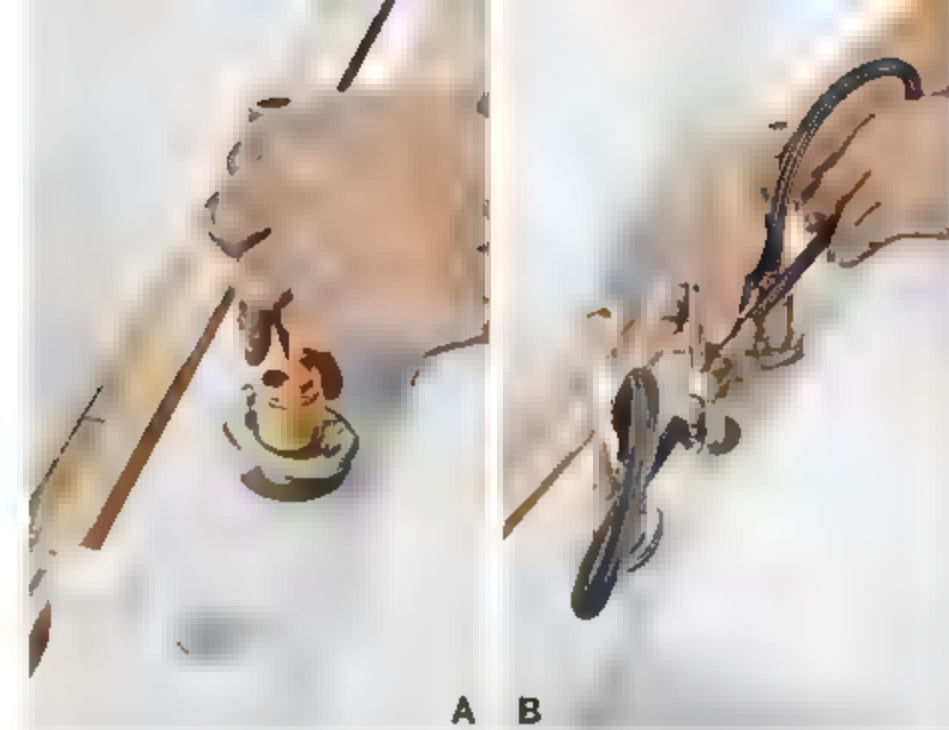
B] Apply adhesive to the sink Wipe the dust from the countertop. Spread a bead of silicone caulk on the sink's flange and tip the sink in place.

C] Screw on clips Attach a steel clip at each corner with a screwdriver, clamping the sink to the underside of the countertop. Use a rag to wipe away any caulk that squeezes out into the bowl.

4 Add the faucet

A] Install the handles Apply plumber's putty beneath the handles and spout. Feed the handles through the outer openings from below, taking care that when the countertop is installed HOT will be oriented on the left and COLD on the right. Make sure that in the off position the handles face away from the spout. Slip washers over the threaded ends, add the lock nuts, and tighten them with a screwdriver. Insert the spout in the center opening, then fit its two-hole washer over it. Thread on the nut and tighten with an adjustable wrench.

B] Add supply lines Use more putty to install the drain assembly. Thread the faucet lift rod through the spout and connect it to the drain's stopper rod. Test the stopper. Thread the mixing tee to the end of the spout. Connect a supply line to each handle, then curl and thread them to the tee. Tighten each connection with a wrench.



A B

TIP Hand-tighten all the fittings, then, once everything is built, go back and cinch them a quarter turn with a wrench.

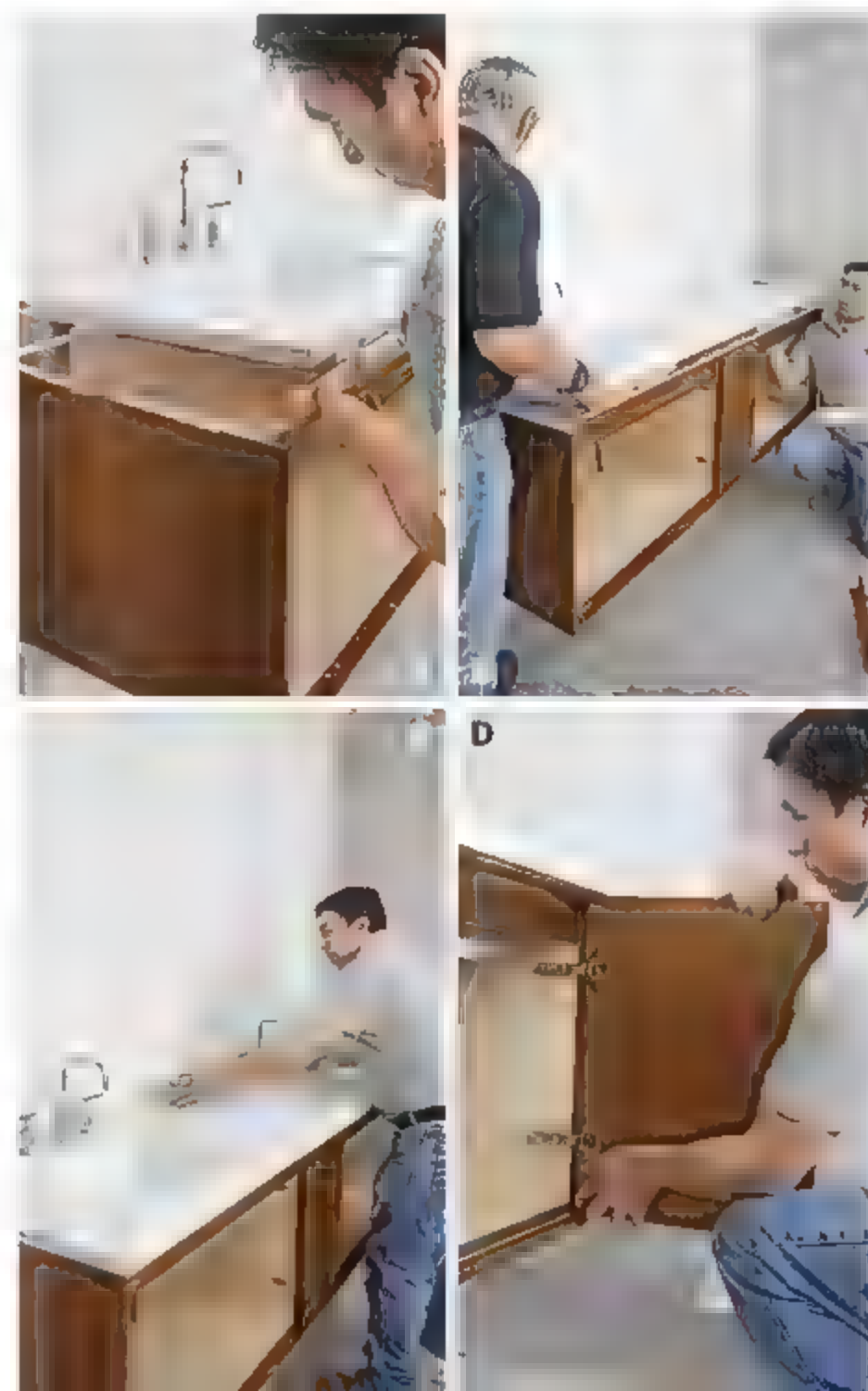
5 Install the countertop

A] Add the sealant With a helper, turn the countertop right side up and lower it onto 2x4 scraps resting diagonally across the front corners of the vanity. Add a bead of siliconized acrylic caulk to the top edge of the vanity.

B] Remove the spacers Have a helper lower one end of the countertop after you take out the 2x4 it's resting on. Then remove the spacer from the other end, pressing up against the bottom of the sink as you lower the countertop. Use a tape measure to check that the overhang on both ends is consistent.

C] Add the backsplash Squeeze siliconized acrylic caulk onto the rear of the backsplash, center it over the countertop, and press it against the drywall. Add more caulk where the backsplash meets the wall and where it meets the countertop; smooth the beads with your finger.

D] Replace the doors Push the top hinge in place first, pressing it until it snaps, then the bottom hinge. Repeat on the remaining doors. Use a screwdriver to adjust the door's position as needed. Then have a plumber install shutoff valves under the sink and make the final connections for water and the drain pipe. ■



D

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Good-bye, old tank!

Before the heating system at the Arlington TV project could be upgraded to natural gas, the old oil tank had to be taken away

BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH VIOLETTE



→ FOR THE LAST three years, since moving into their 1909 Arts and Crafts house in Arlington, Massachusetts, Nick and Emily DeDon have lived in dread of their heating-oil bill. “During the coldest part of the winter, we were spending about \$3,000 a month on fuel deliveries,” says Nick. “It was costing us more than our mortgage just to stay warm.” Thankfully, the Deldons’ money-down-the-drain feeling has come to an end, as their house undergoes a top-to-bottom renovation on the current season of *This Old House*, with general contractor Tom Silva in the lead.

To save energy, Tom’s crew, with assistance from a small army of subcontractors, installed new windows, sprayed foam insulation into the walls and attic, and, perhaps best of all, put in a new gas boiler to replace the inefficient, oil-fired beast in the basement. Richard Trethewey, *This Old House* plumbing and heating expert, figures that with these envelope upgrades and a 95 percent efficient condensing boiler using the latest controls, the Deldons will cut their fuel bills by more than half, without sacrificing comfort.

Homeowners began converting to fuel oil back in the 1940s, when it was marketed as a

At the Arlington project house, TOH’s Richard Trethewey and Removal Specialists’ project manager Shawn Clarke watch as one of Clarke’s crew pumps fuel oil from the soon-to-be-removed tank. Everything in the tank as well as the tank itself has to be removed, recycled, or reused according to strict guidelines established by the state of Massachusetts.



tip

RICHARD TRETHEWEY TOH PLUMBING AND HEATING EXPERT

"To find a firm that's qualified to remove oil tanks, talk to your local fire department. They issue tank removal permits and should know which companies do good work. Then, make sure whoever you hire carries pollution liability insurance and is OSHA trained and certified."

cleaner alternative to coal. By 1960, 32 percent of houses in the United States had oil heat, but its use has since declined to just 7 percent. Oil remains popular in the Northeast, however, where more than 30 percent of homes still burn it. But Nick was done with oil. "I was constantly worried about running out," he says. "And I'd have to keep the driveway clear so that trucks could make deliveries."

Converting to natural gas, which feeds continuously into houses via underground pipes, would eliminate those worries. And they could say goodbye to the rusty 275-gallon steel oil tank lurking in their basement.

These tanks can leak at their fittings and perfume the basement with an oily aroma. Their walls can also corrode from the inside, where sludge—a mix of rust particles, water, oil contaminants, and bacteria—sinks to the bottom.

To make their tank go away, the Deidons hired Removal Specialists, a local firm experienced in decommissioning and taking out fuel oil tanks. "This is not a do-it-yourself job," Richard says. "There are strict regulations governing how the oil and tank must be removed and disposed of. The risk of an accidental oil spill, and the cost of cleaning it up, is just too high to do a removal any other way."

In the Deidons' case, the work took only a few hours and the bill came to just \$325, plus \$50 for a permit from the Arlington fire department. A disposal ticket at the end of the process provided the proof that everything had been handled properly.

To see what's involved in readying a tank for removal and giving it the heave-ho, read on.

STEP-BY-STEP



1 Pump out the tank After removing the tank's gauge, Removal Specialists Robert Crowe inserts the hose that will suck out the uncontaminated fuel oil. He connects the hose to an explosion-proof transfer pump, which feeds the oil through another hose into a drum outside. That leftover oil will then be filtered and used for heating.



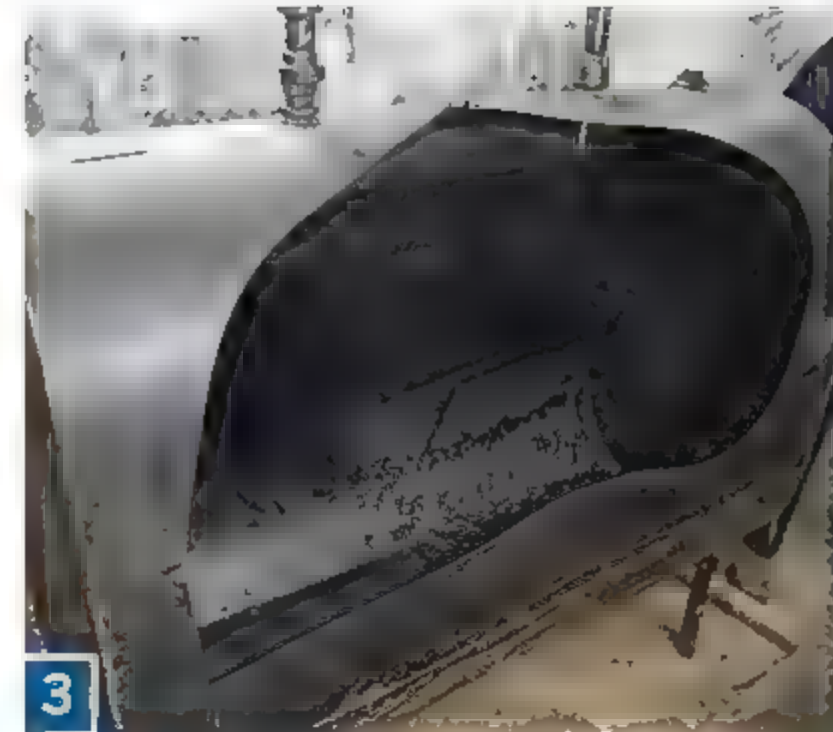
4 Recycle the sludge Lino Hernandez pours the sludge into a 55-gallon drum. When filled, the drum will be taken to a specialized waste-management facility that processes the sludge so it can be burned for industrial use.



2 Cut the tank open With the fuel oil removed, Crowe slices through the tank's 12-gauge wall with a reciprocating saw fitted with a metal-cutting blade. Since fuel oil has a high flash point, there's no concern that the hot metal sparks thrown off by the blade could ignite any fumes trapped in the tank.



5 Cut the pipes Because an oil delivery to a disconnected pipe could result in a disastrous spill, Crowe severs the tank's vent and fill pipes and removes them from the foundation. He then fills the holes with a concrete-patching compound.



3 Clean the tank The hole that Crowe cuts into the side of the tank is wide and deep enough for him to reach in and scrape down the insides. When they're clean, he scoops the sludge—a thick black slurry that accumulates in the bottom of oil tanks over years of use—into 5-gallon buckets.



6 Move it out Crowe and Enrique Cobos-Cordero muscle the empty tank up and out the basement bulkhead. The tank will be taken to a state-certified yard where it will be inspected and scrapped and then carried to a steel mill to be melted down.

PHOTO: RICHARD TRETHEWEY

All wrapped up

Envelop an entryway with bold, cabana-style stripes

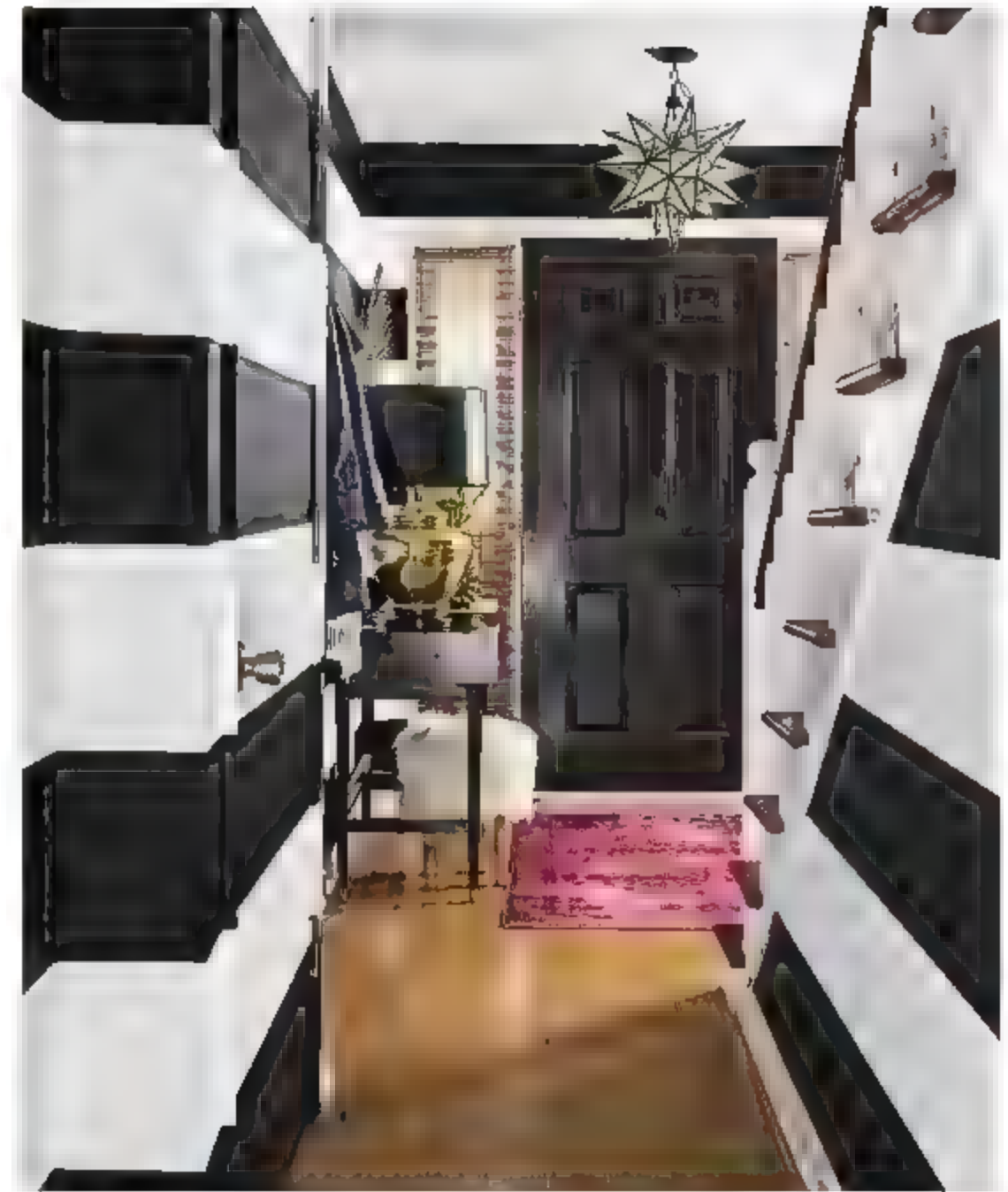
BY DEBORAH BALDWIN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DEBORAH WHITLAW LLEWELLYN

VERTICAL STRIPES “bring the eye up,” says Atlanta interior designer Dayka Robinson, whose entryway is shown here. “I opted for horizontal stripes because I wanted to create one long path from the front of the house toward the back, lengthening the space.” She also wanted to mask a door with a seamless pattern. Along the way, she created a snazzy, elegant introduction to the rest of the house.

After putting down a base coat of white, Robinson’s painters divided the wall into 9-inch stripes. “I included the baseboards and crown molding in my measurements,” she says, “so they’d blend in with the wall.”

Using a tape measure and a laser level, the crew taped off the stripes, arranging the pattern so that the partial top and bottom stripes were glossy white. Deep black stripes match the front door and the wall along the facing staircase. To soften the crisp lines, Robinson layered accessories with varied textures.

On a practical note, she adds, “If you like to periodically swap things in and out for a fresh look, choose a flat finish for the walls so you can move a mirror or artwork and easily touch up the paint.”



OPPOSITE Deft touches of brass and bronze and an eclectic array of accessories, including a salvaged writing table, add texture and dimension to the dramatic black-and-white scheme.

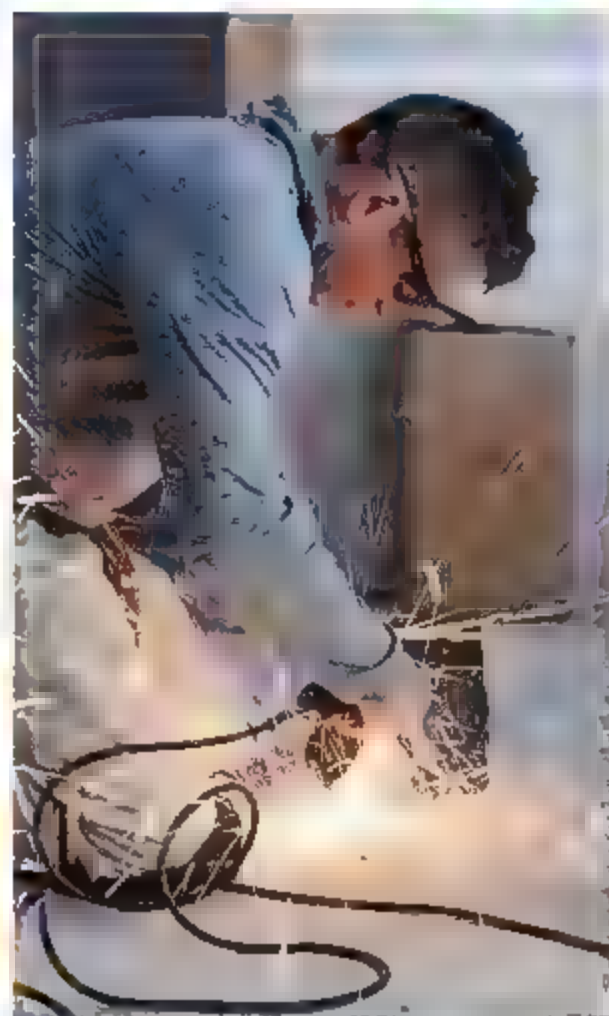
ABOVE: The cabana-style stripes begin at the front door and continue down the hall, camouflaging a door to the garage along the way. Paint: Sherwin-Williams Tricorn Black and Alabaster.



Interior designer Dayka Robinson uses her Atlanta house as a laboratory for her decor ideas.



This Old House Generation NEXT



CASTING CALL: This Old House Is Looking for the Next Generation

This Old House is committed to rebuilding the building trades and training the next generation of skilled workers for the industry—and our own television shows. Together with our charter partners, we're helping to raise money in support of the mikeroweWORKS Foundation's Work Ethic Scholarship Program for people getting trained for skilled jobs that are in demand.

And now we're launching a nationwide search for three apprentices to work alongside—and learn from—the experts

at This Old House. The program is open to candidates interested in all building trades and with varying degrees of experience, from high school grads, vocational students, and returning veterans to journeymen and women looking to take their skills to the next level. Winners will be flown to the greater Boston area this summer, housed for 10 weeks, and paid a stipend to work on our Generation Next Project House airing in the 2017–2018 season. If you think you've got what it takes, submit your video application and letters of recommendation at thisoldhouse.com/TOHApprentice.

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ask This Old House

Q I found a big bucket of old nails while cleaning out my dad's basement. Any thoughts about what I could do with them?

JEFFREY GRAUMAND, EAST HARTLAND, CT

A Do you know how to weld? You could join them together in creative shapes, like this all-nail "hammer," below. (Don't try this if they're galvanized; welding zinc coatings creates toxic fumes.) But if the nails are in good condition, and you don't have any plans for them, then donate them to a local Habitat for Humanity ReStore. That way, they'll end up being put to good use. —THE EDITORS



39
tips, tricks, and
answers to
your home-
improvement
questions

PHOTOGRAPHY: JIM PERRY

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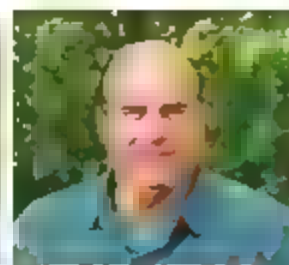
Our cast of veteran experts



TOM SILVA
General Contractor



NORM ABRAM
Master Carpenter



RICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and Heating Expert



ROGER COOK
Landscape Contractor



KEVIN O'CONNOR
Host

Our concrete driveway is so small that one car has to park on the grass so the other car can get by. The grass isn't happy. How can we expand the driveway? KEN FINKENBINDER, LANING, MD

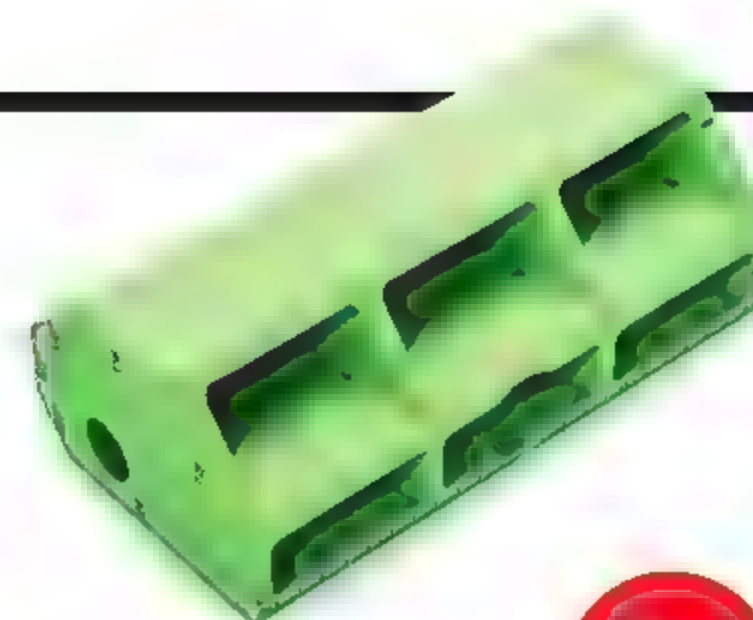


Roger Cook fills the honeycomb cells of these permeable pavers with topsoil in preparation for laying sod. When he's done, it will look like a lawn and yet will be able to take the brunt of car or truck tires.

ROGER COOK REPLIES: Well, you could hire a crew to pour a new concrete pad next to the existing one, and write them a big check when they're done. Or you could install a grid of permeable pavers, like the ones made by NDS (ndspro.com), shown at left. Placed on top of a well-compacted, crushed stone base, they're strong enough to support the weight of a car or truck while providing spaces for delicate grass roots to grow without being crushed. The pavers allow rain and snowmelt to percolate into the ground instead of running straight to the storm sewers, and they're virtually invisible: Your parking area looks just like a regular lawn. Even better, they're easy to install.

You'll have to excavate the area where these pavers will go, so first call 811 to make sure your digging won't interfere with any buried utilities. The depth of the excavation depends on whether you plant grass seed or cover the pavers with sod. If you choose seed, the pavers should be installed at grade level. For sod, they should be 1½ inches below grade. The pavers themselves are 1½ inches thick and need at least a 4-inch base of ¾-inch crushed stone. As you dig, save the topsoil; you'll use it to fill the pavers' honeycomb cells at the end of the process.

PHOTO: KEN FINKENBINDER FOR askHouse.com



What is it?

- A Bench with cubbies
- B Tire chock
- C Scribing guide
- D Romex cable separator

FOR THE ANSWER SEE PAGE 52

When you've finished digging, firm up the subsoil with a hand tamper or a plate compactor, then dump and spread the crushed stone. Tamp the stone layer when it's a couple of inches thick, then tamp again when it's 4 inches thick. Stake some string lines at or above grade level to help you gauge where to add stone and when to tamp.

Now that you have a firm base at the correct level, lock the paver panels together on top of the stone base, making sure to offset the joints between courses. Fill the honeycomb with topsoil, wet it down, and top it off as necessary. Plant grass seed or lay sod, and provide plenty of water for the lawn to become established. You can drive on it right away.

Historic house, bubbling plaster

We own an 1840s brick house in a local historic district. Every year, I spackle and repaint bubbling plaster on the front parlor wall, yet the bubbling reappears. Can anything be done to spare me from this chore?

—ROBERT E. FISHER SR., ANNAPOLIS, MD

KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES: In my search for an expert to answer your question, I was lucky enough to find John Greenwalt Lee, a materials conservator with a long

track record in preserving historic buildings. He also happens to live in Annapolis and so is familiar with the problems of houses like yours. Here's what he had to say.

"When your house was constructed, the walls and the foundation were built of relatively soft, porous bricks held together with lime mortar, and the interiors were covered with lime plaster. These simple materials have been used for centuries—and have held up quite nicely—due in part to the way they allow moisture to move through them harmlessly. But when these old walls have modern cement mortars and acrylic paints applied to them, they can't dry out as readily, and the trapped moisture causes all kinds of mischief as it searches for other ways to exit.

"Based on the photos you sent, I'd say that's what's happening in your house. The brick foundation is absorbing moisture, just as it has always done, but now, because of the paint on the exterior brick, waterproofing on the foundation wall, and, I suspect, cement mortar between the bricks, that moisture is moving up the wall via capillary action and migrating out of the bricks through the only avenue available: the plaster walls inside.

That dissolves the gypsum in the joint compound and spackling and carries it to the surface where the moisture evaporates and leaves behind blisters of gypsum powder. I wouldn't be surprised to find that de-icing salts applied to the sidewalks in winter have also infiltrated the wall, causing additional plaster eruptions as well as breaking down the brick.

"Having seen these problems in other early 19th-century houses, I'd take the following steps: On the outside, strip the paint from the brick to about five feet above the sidewalk. Apply a clay poultice to pull salt out of the brick—a few applications may be needed. Carefully cut out the mortar in that section, and repoint it with lime putty mortar. Then coat the repointed area with a limewash tinted to match the existing paint color. Limewash's excellent breathability enables it to draw out salts that enter the wall in the future.

"Inside, I'd remove the gypsum-based materials from the wall and replace them with traditional lime plaster, which isn't as moisture-sensitive as gypsum. A top coat of durable casein paint—milk paint mixed with 1 percent boiled linseed oil—would be a good

Paint on the outside of this 1840 brick house has trapped moisture inside the walls, causing the interior plaster to fall (far right).

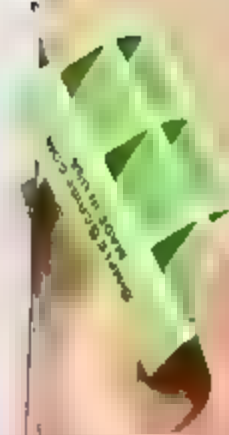


finish. And in the basement, I'd chip off the waterproofing to help the brick dry to the inside. Taken together, these steps should put a stop to the constant blistering."



C Scribing guide

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Propane or oil?

We need a new furnace. We don't have access to natural gas, so we're looking at propane- or oil-fired units. Can you tell us the pros and cons of each?

—JOE PERRY, BATH, ME

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES:

You don't say what kind of furnace you have now, so let me answer your question as though you're starting from scratch.

Let's start with the similarities. Both oil and propane are fossil fuels

that have to be delivered and stored on site in tanks. Both are subject to price fluctuations due to changing supply and demand. Winter weather plays a big role in this. The colder it is and the longer it stays cold, the more likely it is that the cost of both fuels will go up.

But you can't compare the prices

for propane and fuel oil directly because heating oil has 48 percent more Btus per gallon than propane. So even though a gallon of heating oil is currently about 18 percent more expensive than a gallon of propane, oil has 28 percent more Btus per dollar than propane. Advantage: oil.

PHOTO: ANDREW J. FAY

However, that Btu bonus diminishes when you factor in furnace efficiency and cost. With few exceptions, oil furnaces max out at 87 percent efficiency, whereas propane units can achieve efficiencies of up to 98 percent, equal to the best natural gas systems. That cuts oil's Btu-per-dollar advantage in half, to just 14 percent. Also, propane furnaces generally don't cost as much to buy as oil-fired ones with the same output. Advantage: propane.

While an oil furnace needs a dedicated chimney flue to carry away its sooty fumes, propane typically exhausts through easy-to-install sidewall vents. Propane's clean-burning qualities also mean that propane furnaces don't need the frequent equipment

maintenance and cleaning required of oil furnaces, and they operate much more quietly.

And here's another reason to consider propane: You can cook with it. Given the choice between a propane-gas or an electric stove, I'd always go for gas.

That may sound like game, set, and match in propane's favor, but keep this in mind: Propane is a highly flammable, heavier-than-air gas. If there's a leak, it can accumulate in low spots and be accidentally ignited by a spark or flame. As a result, propane tanks must always be placed outside, a safe distance from the house. Leaking heating oil causes other problems, but there's virtually no risk of it catching fire. That's why they allow oil tanks in basements

All of which means there's no simple answer to your question. If you're comfortable using either fuel, and the prices aren't out of whack, then conduct a thorough check of the local suppliers who will be installing and caring for your equipment. One should come out a clear winner in the end.

Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

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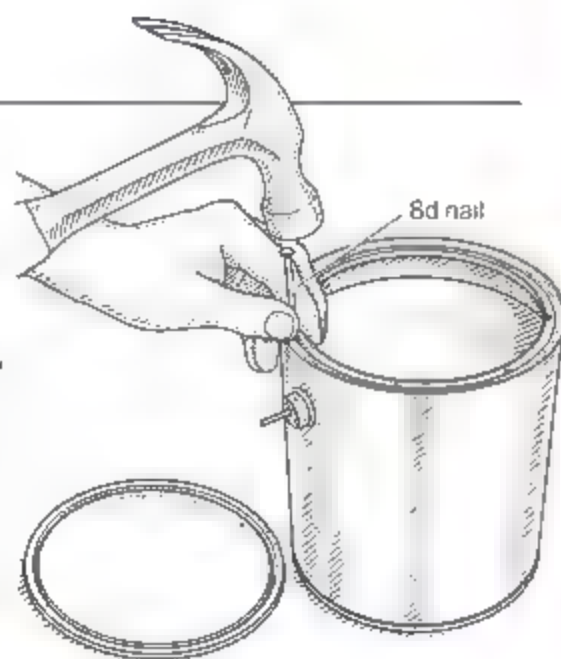


Norm's tricks of the trade

How do I keep crusty bits of dried paint from dropping into the can when I open its lid?

—VALERIE REINHARDT
CHAPEL HILL, NC

A Here's a trick that I use: When I first open a can, I take an 8d nail and punch about five or six holes in the trough where the lid fits, so that after each pour, the paint can drip back into the can. Then, before putting the lid back, I run my brush around the trough to remove any excess paint. Now there's no paint to crust over or to splatter back at me when I pound the lid tight with a rubber mallet. ■



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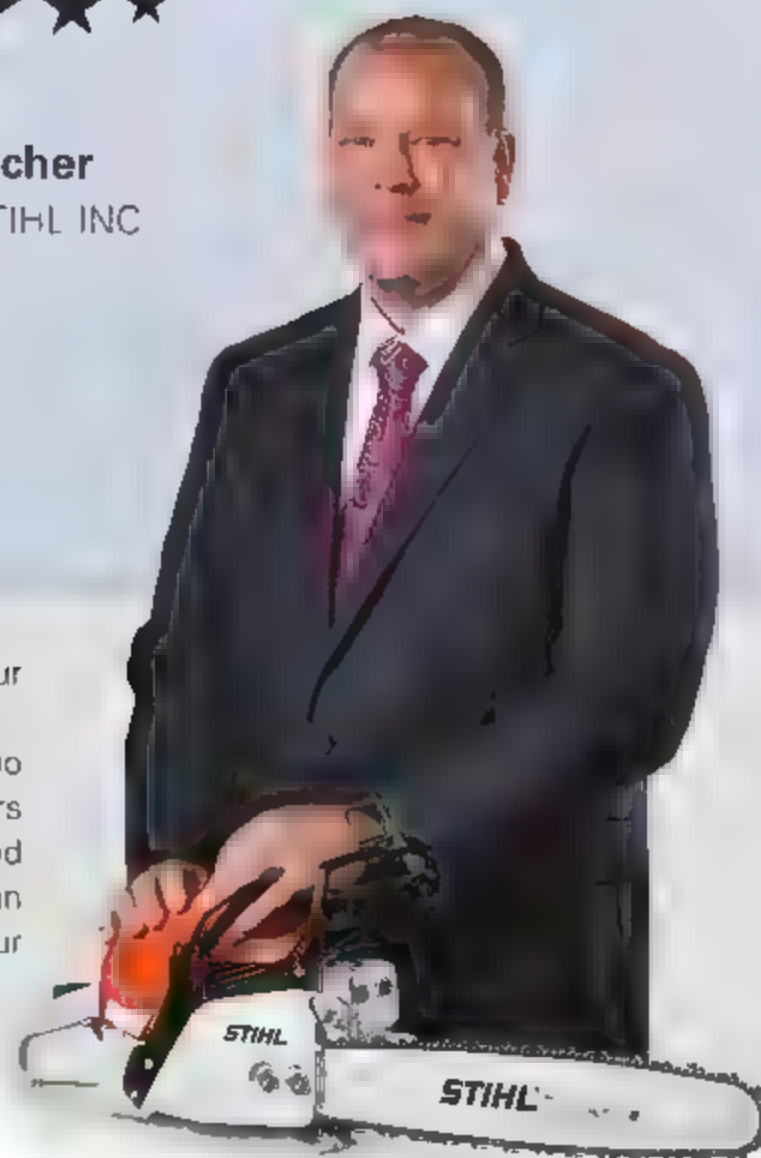
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This Old
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THE ARLINGTON PROJECT

PHOTOGRAPH: SARAH VIOLETTE

This Old
House



MARCH/APRIL

There's something about old houses that draws you in. As you cross their well-trod floors, you can't help thinking that if these walls could talk, they'd have a lot of stories to tell. Pull up a chair and listen.

PHOTO: STYVEN RANDAZZO

RIGHT: Seen here from the walk-out lower level, the L-shaped house looks like two buildings long ago bound together by a clapboard addition. A second 19th-century stone structure (in the foreground) is part of the package. The property slopes toward a Hudson River tributary and climbs uphill, where the main entrances are on the second level.

OPPOSITE: The dining room's fireplace was refurbished with old-school hand-planed paneling. Stairs lead to a finished attic.



Roadside Attraction

In 1850, it was a busy tavern. Today, it's a cozy stone house with a separate studio for a couple of design-minded owners.

What's not to like about a house built before hoopskirts and top hats? Okay, the ceilings may be low, the stairs steep, and the rooms small. But in a world where plastic is the norm, few things beat a structure made of natural materials—back when natural materials were so abundant that timber-starved settlers thought America's first-growth forests would last forever.

BY **DEBORAH BALDWIN**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **STEVEN RANDAZZO**
PRODUCED BY **NICOLE ESPOSITO-POLLY**
STYLING BY **ANNA MOLVIK**





Homeowners Leslie and Woody Pirtle, RIGHT, designed their kitchen, ABOVE, with timeless, hardworking finishes like slate countertops, Shaker-style cabinets, salvaged pine flooring, and black-walnut barstools. The paneled cabinet over the peninsula hides the microwave. Range: DCS. Faucet: Perrin & Rowe. Stools: Sawkill.



There's just one hitch: How to pay homage to a well-aged relic while stepping up its creature comforts—from indoor plumbing and central heating to a kitchen raised above dank basement level? Well, it might be nice, too.

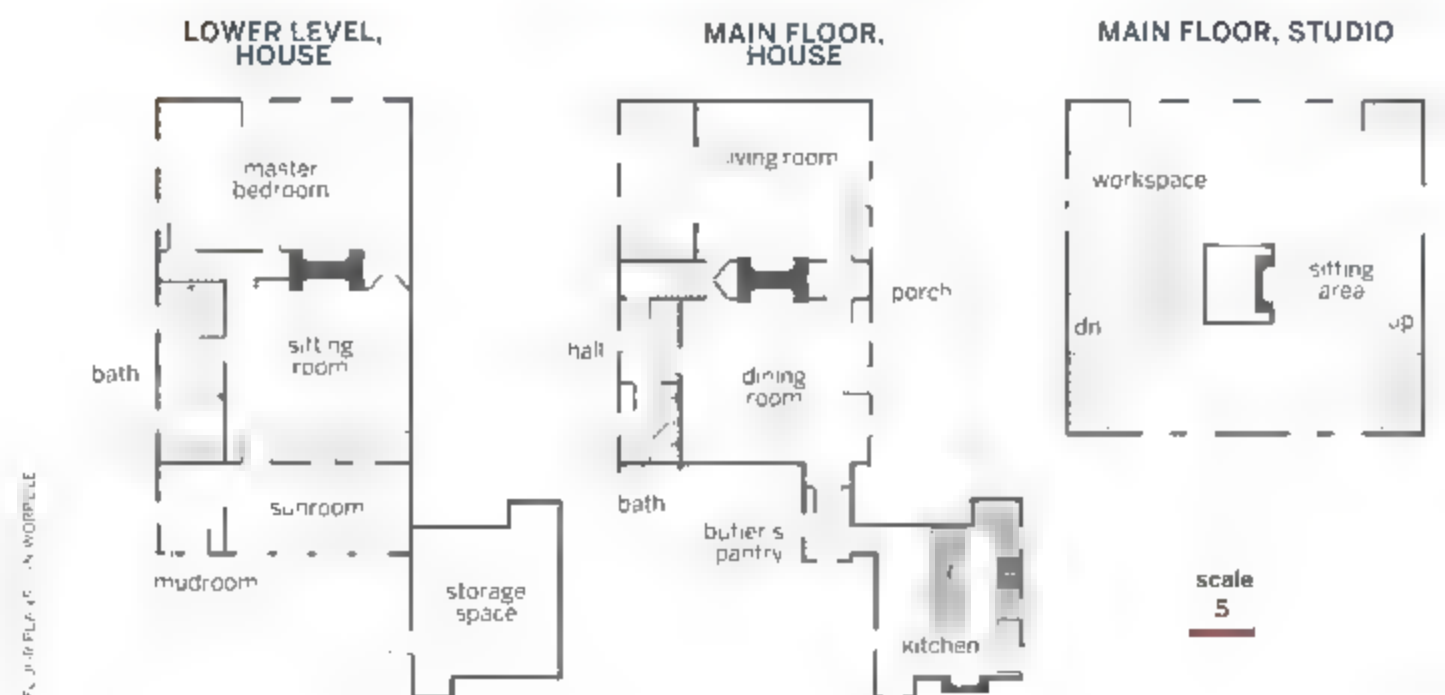
For Michael Kelley, a preservationist and general contractor who helped build period-inspired rooms at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, it's a matter of adding judiciously while paying close attention to what's there—and doing no harm. “You just fix it,” he says of the house that he helped Leslie and Woody Pirtle renovate in tiny Riverside Esopus, two hours north of New York City. “You bring it back to where it's supposed to be.”

A hands-a-most-off approach “doesn't have to mean living in the 18th century,” Kelley hastens to add. “You need heating and air-conditioning and electricity, but without damaging the building and while aesthetically working them in.”

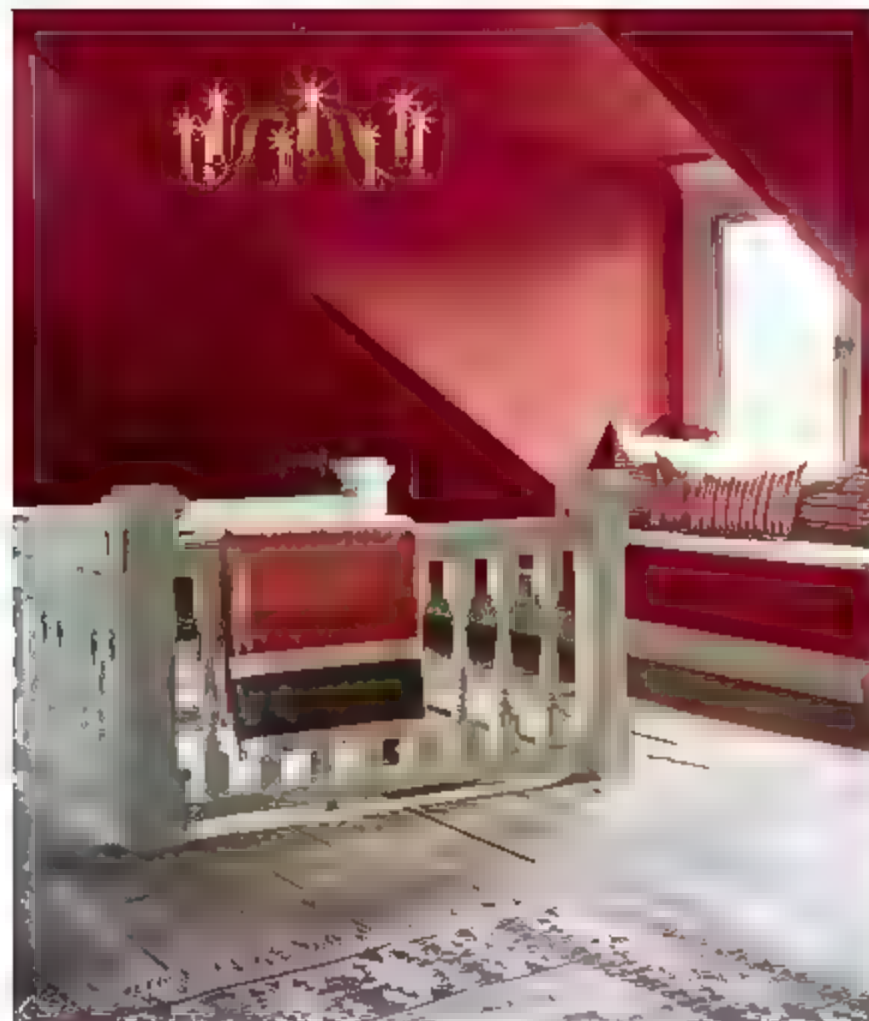
So you blend reclaimed floorboards with what's there, frame an opening with period-style columns, and hide ducts behind cabinets that mimic 19th-

Floor Plans

The renovation reconfigured the 2,900-square-foot house and separate 1,486-square-foot studio. Not shown: The house's finished attic with its new dormer, and the studio's new loft and lower-level guest suite.



ABOVE: Period-inspired trim, covered in a dramatic dark shade, frames new built-ins and a new opening in the living room. Deep windowsills highlight the thickness of the stone walls. Artwork: Laura Moriarty.



century antiques. “You have to make it look real,” he says, “hand-plane it, and subtly replicate what it would look like, so your eye goes right past it.”

The house itself is not something you’d miss if you happened by. Perched above the Walkill River in an area that the Dutch colonized in the 17th century, it sits high, with a handsome facade made from a type of limestone, says Kelley, that is found only on the Hudson River’s west side.

Dating to an era when river commerce and family farms prevailed, the house had been settling into a gravelly hillside for at least 150 years when the couple bought it in 1999. They had jobs in New York City at the time and a weekend house in the Hamptons, quickly sold to finance the Esopus renovations, which included not only winterizing and updating the house but also turning an empty, adjacent building into a warmly furnished studio. Woody, an acclaimed graphic designer, is semi-retired and now works there part time.

Kelley had renovated a 1709 house down the street—that’s how the Partles found him—and Esopus (“es-SOAP-us”) still bears traces of the area’s Dutch imprint, drawing the interest of local historians. Despite their interest, the precise origins of the couple’s house are unknown, or let’s say shrouded in hearsay. The homeowners were told it was built

ABOVE LEFT: The attic became livable with the addition of a light-filled, headroom-enhancing dormer.

ABOVE RIGHT: On the ground floor, the new master bath is tucked alongside the master bedroom. Tub: Randolph Morris; Tub filler: Perrin & Rowe.

OPPOSITE: The sunroom, enclosed by former owners, is now a designated napping space.

even earlier than 1850, the year offered by the Town Assessor’s Office. By then, the fast-moving Walkill, a Hudson River tributary, fueled a bustling stretch of cotton, wool, lumber, and grist mills linked by a wooden bridge.

The studio building may have been a store, separated from the river by a narrow road, it could have handily taken in provisions by boat or wagon. A stone ruin also lies on the property, worth noting mainly because during the renovation it was so easily cannibalized.

The surviving buildings nestle into the hillside like bank barns, which means they have walk-out basements—let’s call them lower levels—on the river side as well as main entries one story up, on the driveway side. Woody believes the lower level of the house originally held a kitchen, with taprooms on the floor above it—let’s call this one the main floor—capped by a kind of attic flophouse for customers who couldn’t make it home, “men on one side, women on the other,” he quips.

The L-shaped house itself may have originally been two structures, since fused by a wood-clad addition with a porch-turned-sunroom on the ground level and a passageway over it leading to a space that now holds the kitchen. “It’s really three-dimensional,” says Kelley, “front and back and up and down, with





ABOVE: The homeowners left the studio's worn floor unfinished while painting the walls pure white and filling the former void with artwork, vintage furniture, and weathered bric-a-brac; some of it fashioned into sculpture. The table offers a place to sketch.

LEFT: It's a short skip from the kitchen to the studio door, along a path that connects the buildings at the main floor level. Pillow: Woolrich.

all these projections. It's probably one of the more interesting houses I've ever worked on."

The fact that so much of the original work involved unwieldy blocks of stone, at a time when a high-quality alternative was just growing on trees, suggests a discriminating owner, Kelley says. One with a hairy crew, adds Tom Cook, a skilled mason who, together with partner Randy Carlante, helped shore up the property. "I can just imagine how tough it was for them," he adds. "We had to use a backhoe to lift some of those pieces. How did they do it?"

Cook and his crew contributed their own weight, putting up a series of retaining walls. Some have cantilevered steps, not unlike Colonial-era walls that corralled sheep while making way for two-legged caretakers. Cook helped himself to stone on the property. "That stuff's like gold when you find it" and rounded up more at a nearby salvage yard. "We cut and placed it, then rechiseled it just like back when. If it was too perfect it just wouldn't fit."

Designed to be warmed by fireplaces, the house and its temperature-retaining stone walls were candidates for more-even forced hot (and cold) air

Unfortunately, level, plumb, and 90-degree angles rarely apply to period houses, Kelley says. "They were probably only ever just level enough, so you can't go in there with a 21st-century mind-set." He was torn when it came to a modern HVAC system. "It's better for an old house that's swollen with moisture in summer to get gradually colder so it can give up its internal moisture slowly, because dry air makes the joints and doors shrink up," he says. But progress is progress. Without altering the walls, his crew ran ductwork inside, then hid it behind built-in faux-antique cupboards.

Born buildings needed new roofs, wiring, and plumbing; to move beyond decayed and decorative, the fireplaces needed structural work. During the roughly yearlong renovation, Kelley also gutted the studio, kitchen, and baths and worked with the homeowners on redesigns—no architect needed. "There are a lot of quirky little rooms," he says. "They were smart enough to leave them alone."

The team added a bath to the studio, swapped out period-imperfect doors that had crept in over the years, replaced windows with six-over-six double

ABOVE: The studio's original fireplace, restored and beautified by a handcrafted surround and mantel, warms the high-ceilinged space, which includes a loft over the sitting area. Vintage wooden foundry molds became a coffee table and a bit of sculpture for the hearth. The end table was borrowed from a sycamore.

hung fitted with divided wavy glass, avoided using drywall, and led the homeowners to other craftsmen, including a blacksmith who contributed hinges and latches.

"We call this complex our living laboratory," says Woody, who likes to putter with the eclectic furnishings. He also lends his eye to local causes like a rail-to-trail park project called Walkway Over the Hudson. "If you're a designer, it's not a job, it's a way of life," he says lightly.

The couple have given up their old apartment and now seem rooted in a slower-paced way of life enriched by a sense of place. It's a two-way relationship. Woody's whimsical sculptures, made from found objects, seem elevated when displayed on 19th-century windowsills. Vintage furnishings like an old butter churner, gleaned from local sources and arrayed just so against stone walls, take on a city-sophisticated air.

Upgrades in function aside, "we wanted it to really feel like nothing had been changed," Woody says of the renovation. As a quick glance around suggests, job well done. ■



AN ORCHARD OUT BACK

Planting fruit trees is a centuries-old way to boost your household harvest—one that will enhance a landscape for years to come.

This Old House landscape contractor Roger Cook shows how to put in a fledgling home orchard so it's sure to flourish.

By SAL VAGLICA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIEULI



Crisp apples, succulent pears, juicy peaches—fruit trees really earn their keep in a garden, providing strong silhouettes in winter and a lovely show of spring blossoms in addition to all that beautiful bounty in summer and fall. Home orchards are a long-standing tradition; some of the first homeowners to enjoy them were the wealthy in Ancient Rome, when the apple made its way from its native Kazakhstan to Europe. Much later, apple trees grafted from English stock were planted on colonial farms in America, usually to make hard cider.

Home brewing was far from Julia Farwell Clay's mind last fall when she sought Roger Cook's advice on what to plant behind her 1902 gambrel-roofed home in Concord, MA. She wanted to replace a vegetable patch that had been part of the home's landscaping. Set back about 40 yards from the house, the beds became difficult to maintain, and over time, vines and voles took over.

Still, Julia wanted edibles. Roger Cook's suggestion was to think long term and convert the 40 by 80 foot plot to a small fruit orchard. "A typical vegetable garden this far away from the house is a ways hard to maintain," says Roger. Besides, when you're cooking, you want to be able to just step outside and grab a handful of herbs.

Roger chose six apple and two pear trees to plant in a diamond pattern, creating an outdoor room. To select the right varieties, he had to take into account more than just the site conditions and growing zone. "For a tree to fruit, it has to accumulate enough chill hours," he says. That means time spent in dormancy, between 32 and 45 degrees.

While Julia waits for the fruit of their labor after planting the 5- to 7-year-old trees, they may need that many more years to produce—she'll have snowy spring blossoms and a lush setting for an open-air dinner come summer.

Want a mini orchard of your own? Read on to see how Roger put in this productive patch.

With the old vegetable beds cleared out and the soil leveled, TOH landscape contractor Roger Cook and homeowner Julia Farwell-Clay plant flags where the eight fruit trees will go. Placing them roughly 15 feet apart in a diamond-shaped pattern will allow room between the trees when they reach maturity. Tweaking placement with the flags is a lot easier than moving around trees that weigh more than 100 pounds each.

STEP-BY-STEP



STEP 1

Mark the hole's circumference

Using the flags as markers, Roger rolls each root ball into place. Trees need a generous hole, backfilled with quality soil that encourages roots to spread horizontally. Roger likes the hole to be about three times the root ball's diameter, gauging by eye. He marks a ring around the tree using a shovel.



STEP 2

Find the root flare

A nursery tree's root flare—where the trunk transitions to the roots—might be buried under excess soil, jeopardizing the plant's health. Before digging, Roger cuts a hole in the burlap and removes any soil on top of the root flare. Then he measures the depth of the root ball below the flare.



STEP 3

Dig the planting hole

A few days before starting work, Roger calls 811 to make sure no utilities are buried at the job site. Using a pointed shovel, he digs the hole following the ring he marked earlier. Tip: Tossing excavated soil onto a tarp or into a wheelbarrow makes backfilling easier.



STEP 4

Check the depth

When the tree is planted, the root flare should be at or slightly above grade. To confirm planting depth, Roger stretches a rope across the hole and measures down. He doesn't loosen the soil at the bottom of the hole so the tree is less likely to sink when planted.

STEP-BY-STEP



STEP 5

Roll the tree in place

Roger rests the tree on its side, then eases the root ball into the hole. After cutting the canopy free, he centers the tree before stepping back to find its best side. He rotates the root ball until the most pleasing side faces the approach to the orchard.



STEP 6

Set the root ball free

Roger uses bolt cutters to remove any wire cage added by the grower to hold the root ball together. Though the burlap underneath might degrade over time, he likes to remove it, too, using a utility knife to make it easier for the roots to spread out.



STEP 9

Water in the roots

Soak the soil with a garden hose to collapse air pockets. Roger uses slow-release watering bags around the base of the trunk after the initial dousing. Alternatively, you can put a hole in the side of a 5-gallon bucket. Refill either one daily for the first six to eight weeks.



STEP 10

Add tree supports

Stakes help young trees stand up to strong winds, especially in the first two years after planting. Using a fence post driver, Roger installs 6-foot-long stakes 30 inches into the ground on either side, just outside the root ball, angling them slightly away from the tree.



STEP 7

Loosen the roots

With the burlap gone, Roger uses a cultivator to expose the root flare. He works along the sides of the root ball, freeing up small feeder roots. If the hole has shiny, smooth sides, common in clay soils, he roughs them up, making pockets for the roots to enter.



STEP 8

Backfill with amended soil

Roger uses a 50:50 blend of excavated topsoil and compost to backfill the hole. He also adds a starter fertilizer according to the bag's directions. As he works, he checks that the tree is straight, adding or removing soil from under the root ball as needed.



STEP 11

Use tethers to keep it straight

Wrap flexible plastic chains around both stakes, and connect them to the central leader. Roger sets the ties no higher than two-thirds of the way up the tree. Once the chain links interlock, they should pull the stakes toward the tree, creating tension.



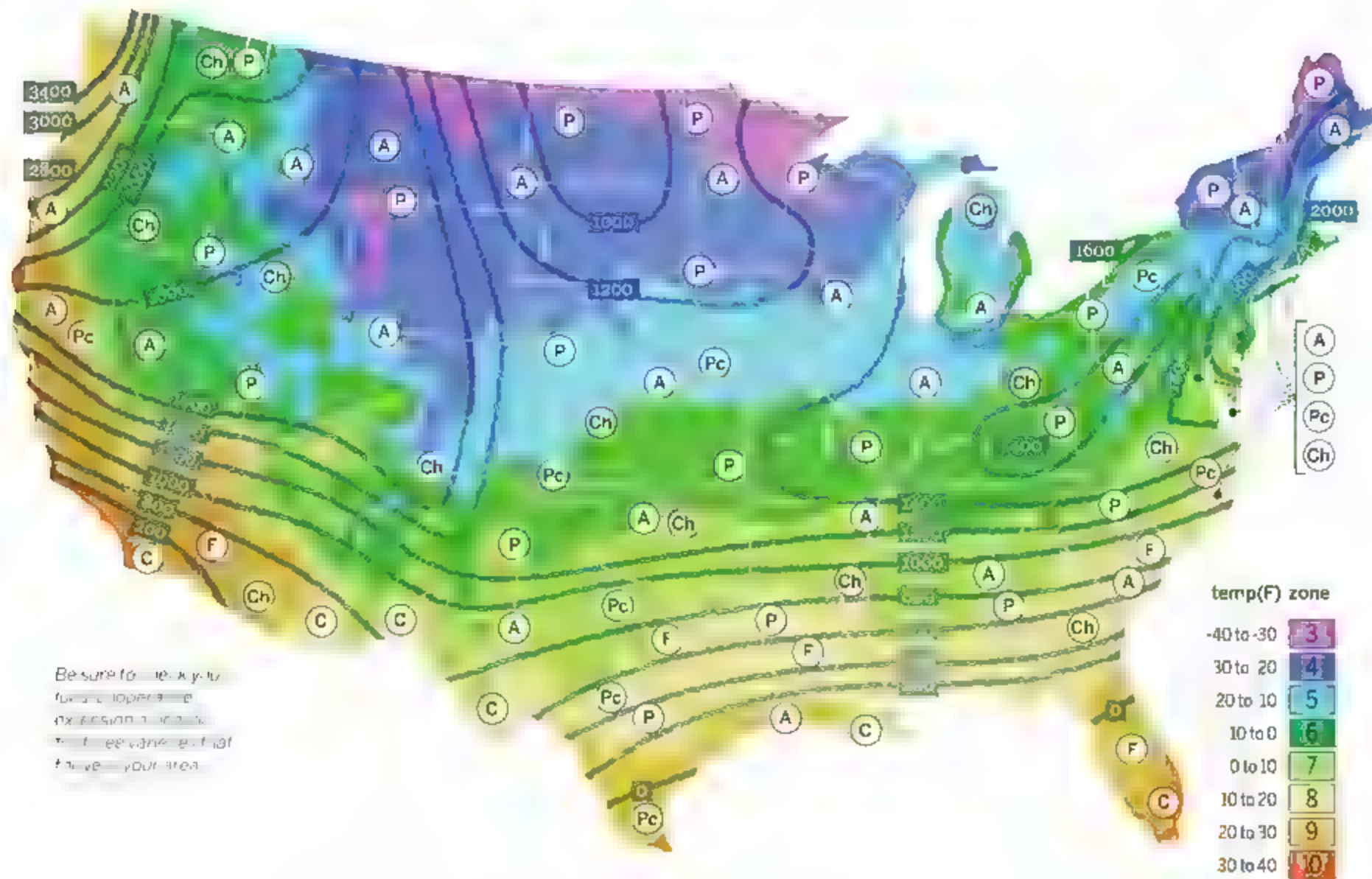
STEP 12

Pest-proof with mesh

A barrier like hardware cloth prevents deer from rubbing up against the tree bark and damaging it. Roger uses tin snips to cut a length of mesh that's tall enough to cover the trunk up to the first branch, then secures it with plastic zip ties.

Which fruit where?

Picking the right fruit tree means considering USDA plant hardiness zones and chill hour requirements—the amount of time temps need to hover between 32°F and 45°F. This map can help you pick species that will fruit, not just flower, where you live.



Apples (A): While these can grow across the country, colder climates favor apples and the hefty chill-hour needs. But some cultivars, like Anna and Ein Shemer, require just 300 chill hours in warmer areas. Most apples need a second variety to pollinate or you can buy a tree grafted with another variety of apple. **ZONES:** 3–10. **CHILL HOURS:** 400–1000.

Pears (P): Like apples, pears will fruit nearly everywhere, but some varieties like Ayers and European cultivars like Bartlett are best picked mature, then allowed to rest for a week at room temperature to finish ripening. Asian varieties can be left to ripen on the tree. **ZONES:** 3–10. **CHILL HOURS:** 350–900.

Citrus (C): Lemons, oranges, limes, and grapefruits want zero chill hours and will often lose leaves after weeks below 50°F—making them hard to grow outside of the Sunbelt. Kumquats are some of the cold-hardiest citrus, weathering temperatures as low as 20°F. In colder zones, try potting up citrus indoors in bright sun. **ZONES:** 8–10. **CHILL HOURS:** 0.

Peaches (Pc): The unofficial fruit of summer likes hot, frost-free growing conditions. In cooler climates, pick a warm spot to plant like against a south-facing wall that will reflect heat. Or plant a cold-hardy variety such as Contender. Peaches save space in small yards because they self-pollinate. **ZONES:** 5–9. **CHILL HOURS:** 600–800.

Figs (F): These tropical fruits require long, hot summers, though they can be wrapped for protection in cold climates. Once mature, the trees can produce in summer and fall. The common fig doesn't need cross-pollination but its fruit ripens for only two days in the refrigerator. **ZONES:** 8–11. **CHILL HOURS:** 100–200.

Cherries (Ch): While all cherries need full sun and similar chill hours, sweet varieties like Lapins are more finicky, requiring milder temps, low humidity, and a second variety to pollinate. Sour cherries, used for preserves, are self-pollinating, more cold-tolerant, and tend to bear fruit at an earlier age. **ZONES:** 4–8. **CHILL HOURS:** 500–800.

THERE'S MORE!
To find out how to care for your new fruit trees, go to thisoldhouse.com/orchard.

SPIGOT ON THE SPOT
Newly planted trees need a lot of watering; a dedicated faucet makes the job easier. To install one, add a Y-shaped garden-hose splitter to the house spigot and connect a length of flexible PEX tubing with fittings. Bury the line 6 inches deep as you run it out to the trees, then secure it to a post with pipe hold-downs. Use more fittings to connect the tubing to the faucet. ■

TOH TV: The Detroit House



OPPOSITE Homeowners Frank and Tamiko Polk with Frank's mother, Carolyn O' Bryant, who lives nearby. The Polks, who both grew up in Detroit, are fixing up a brick two-story, LEFT, which they bought at auction. Though the house showed signs of water damage inside from a falling roof, it also retained wonderful original details including leaded- and stained-glass windows and ornamental plasterwork. Featured on the current season of *This Old House*, the project marks the TV show's first visit to the city.

Here to Stay

In the historic Russell Woods neighborhood of Detroit, the leaves are finally falling after the hottest summer on record, but the weather isn't the only thing that is changing. Contractors, family members, folks from the Detroit Historic District Commission, and the crew from *This Old House* are zipping in and out of Frank and Tamiko Polk's recently purchased home, laying down a protective barrier over the newly installed kitchen floor, carrying in cabinets, hunting for tools, and discussing how the project is helping shine a spotlight on the city.

"It's going, going, going," says Frank, briefly stopping in the middle of the living room just before disappearing again. "It's nonstop motion."

A couple of native Detroiters dive into the renovation of a 1939 house with the help of family, friends—and *This Old House*.

By **Liana Aghajanian**
Photographs by **Michelle Andonian**

PHOTO: OPPOSITE PAGE: ERIN QUITE; HAIR AND MAKEUP: CLAYTON P. HARRIS



The buzz around the house is a testament to how well Detroit is living up to its motto of rising up from the ashes. The story of this 1,700-square-foot, two-story brick house from 1939 encapsulates the city's history, too. When the house was built, Detroit was a pioneer in innovation and one of the more prosperous cities in America, but after a series of social and economic disasters, it became known for having the highest concentration of poverty among large U.S. cities. Since Detroit successfully emerged from bankruptcy a couple of years ago, things are beginning to change once again.

Frank, 47, a second-generation firefighter, now retired, and Tamiko, 45, who works for Chrysler, have been married for 26 years, but the couple have known each other much longer than that. They both grew up in Detroit and met as children, when Tamiko and her girlfriends were riding bikes in their shared neighborhood. They've both witnessed their city go through a lot. "We've seen a lot of changes in different eras," says Frank, whose job took him to nearly every neighborhood. "I've seen it thriving, I've seen it fall economically—the real estate market and the job industry—and now, the resurgence."

With all three of their children either on their own or away at college, the Polks considered leaving the city. But halfway into tying up loose ends and planning to relocate to North Carolina, they found out about the Detroit Land Bank Authority, which oversees both the demolition of thousands of blighted buildings and the auction of abandoned and foreclosed homes. The Polks realized the Land Bank could provide an affordable path to home ownership in the city they both love. "Finally, we just came to a decision: Why run? This is who we are, this is where we are, and for right now, it's going to work for us," says Frank.

The house that the Polks won at auction sat vacant and vandalized, with obvious water damage from a leaking roof, leaded-glass windows that needed restoration, and a missing HVAC system that had been stolen. But while the city that surrounds it might have seen plenty of blight, this particular neighborhood was far from abandoned. The Russell Woods area was historically a Jewish and Anglo neighborhood, but by the 1950s, African American families had begun to move in, many of them prominent in the community, some even pioneers in their fields. Now, a chat with neighbors, many empty nesters themselves, quickly reveals that Diana Ross, NFL player Dick "Night Train" Lane, and poet Dudley Randall had all lived in the area.



ABOVE A colorfully tiled archway in the kitchen frames the view all the way to the back of the first floor. Tudor-style arches are one of the recurring original elements in the three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath house.

The couple have a lot to tackle to get the house not just in shape and livable but also in line with Historic Commission regulations. The guidelines require that the defining characteristics of the site be subject to minimal change and that historic features be repaired rather than replaced. Inside, however, the couple aim to combine their modern aesthetic with the house's historical elements, particularly in the kitchen and baths. But first up, they had to address the roof.

"We had some water intrusion, both through the roof and the foundation," says This Old House general contractor Tom Silva. "Water can do major damage if not attended to." A section of roof added years ago was causing water to back up and pool; the whole roof needed replacing. The block foundation, though, turned out to be in decent shape, and the brick on the walls just needed repointing where cracks had formed in the mortar.

Remedying the dampness found in the basement



ABOVE The leaded- and stained-glass windows lining the living room are some of the original details that first drew the Polks to the house. They were removed and taken to a shop to be painstakingly restored.

LEFT TOH general contractor Tom Silva shows homeowner Frank a plaster-repair technique on the ornamented arch that divides the living room and the front hall.



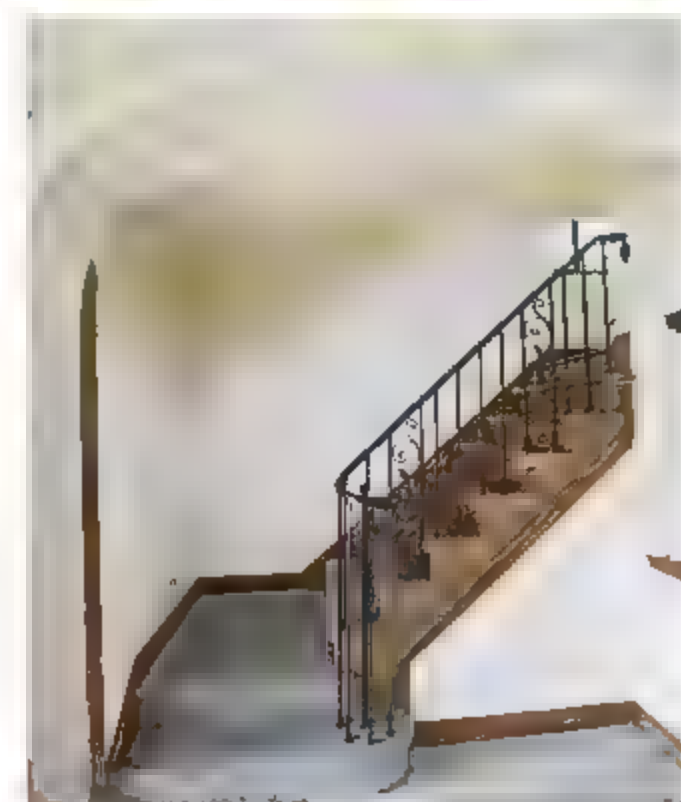
did mean rerouting the drainage system. New gutters installed with downspouts now flow into two dry wells in the yard to keep water away from the house.

Unfortunately, the water damage had taken a toll on original plaster moldings inside, along an archway and on ceiling medallions in the first-floor rooms. Tom was able to show the Polks how 3D printing can be used to replicate such details: A 3D camera takes images of the existing plaster, a computer model is made, and then a plastic replica is created. Some small areas of damage were repaired using traditional methods.

As Tom and his crew could be seen at work on the renovation, the house's revival inspired several local pros to volunteer their services.

General contractor Josh Engle, who is based in nearby Livonia and is a big fan of the TV show, would regularly drop by the house to offer suggestions to the Polks. When Engle offered to pitch in, the Polks were thrilled to have him lend his expertise—and the extra hands. "Our main fan is helping us now," says Frank. "He's a wealth of knowledge. Without him, I don't know where we would be—I think I was overly optimistic about my capabilities and the time frame that I could do it in."

Engle also led them to Ann Baxter, a Metro



OPPOSITE Colorful bath fixtures and tilework are hallmarks of 1930s residential design. Combinations ranged from Easter-egg pastels, such as this pink and blue, to Deco-inspired greens and yellows accented with bands of black to palettes incorporating purple, brown, or burgundy.

TOP LEFT TOH heating and plumbing expert Richard Trethewey talks to Frank Polk about the journey his house—and he himself—have been on.

TOP RIGHT Local contractor Josh Engle and one of his crew tackle work in the kitchen.

LEFT Peeling paint and water-damaged plaster on the first floor await repair.

Detroit glass artist, who volunteered to take on the restoration of the leaded-glass windows. Mike Thompson, who heads up a Detroit landscaping business, offered to help TOH landscape contractor Roger Cook install the dry wells and will donate sod. The Polks have been collaborating with the crew and the tradesmen and women every step of the way, helping run plumbing pipe and pull electrical cable. "They've been involved in everything," says Tom.

The Polks' family has been chipping in, too. Christian, 26, their eldest son, got to work demolishing the thick plaster walls in the upstairs bathroom and kitchen, working on 90-degree days to bust up the heavy, solid material. Frank's sister, Caryl Polk,

came up from Atlanta for two months to help rebuild the front steps. Tamiko's father, Donnie, flew in from Texas to do as much as he could. Even Frank's firefighter colleagues showed up to do demolition. "We're good at tearing things up," he says.

The kitchen, closed off by a wall, is being opened up and new cabinetry, an island, and granite countertops are being installed, as well as a subway tile backsplash with some accent tiles from Detroit's iconic Pewabic pottery, founded in 1903 and still in operation today.

The silver lining to the stolen HVAC system is that the Polks, with help from Joe Burke, a local heating and cooling contractor, had a blank slate in which to install a modern, high-efficiency system, saving them on both installation and operating costs. Masonry expert Mark McCullough, who flew in from Boston, is finishing up the brick repair around the house, dissecting the collapsed concrete steps and crumbling brick columns out front and reusing the materials to build them back up.

For the Polks, while the work they continue to put in is strenuous, doing it as a family is making the entire process more meaningful. "We're putting our hands, sweat, blood, tears, everything into this project," says Tamiko. "At a young age of our lives, we can say we've done that."

Known for their love of hosting friends and family, they look forward to opening up their new home as soon as the work is finished, cooking up some of their signature dishes, including jambalaya, gumbo, and banana pudding, in the remodeled kitchen. It's no surprise that the Polks' vision for their new home is intrinsically tied to what's helping them achieve it: the people they love. ■



Metal Fences

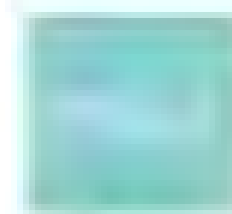
Today, metal panels and posts framing a front yard are most likely aluminum or steel that evokes the look of wrought iron—for far less. Here's what you need to know to sort through the options. BY LOUIS HOLTSTON

IN COLONIAL TIMES, only the wealthiest could afford to import wrought—meaning hand shaped—ironwork for their fine brick and stone townhouses. By the early 1800s, however, as blacksmithing grew domestically, ornamental iron began to embellish the more varied house styles of the day. Such metalwork really peaked in popularity during the Victorian era, when foundries started casting and mass-producing elaborate pickets, posts, and scroll details.

These days, metal fences aim to suggest traditional iron using more-available steel or weatherproof aluminum, usually with hollow pickets made to resemble solid $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch square bars. The lighter-weight panels come together with fasteners, making installation easier. Even wrought iron's classic glossy black paint is upgraded with a longer-lasting, multistep powder-coating process that greatly reduces maintenance. When restoration projects call for true wrought iron, a craftsman has to rely on salvaged material that can be melted down to be reworked by hand, making genuine wrought iron fencing prohibitively expensive. What is marketed as wrought iron today is often solid steel (though solid aluminum can also be found), dressed up with machine-made scrolls and cast details, such as rosettes. A custom fabricator can mix materials and manufacturing methods, depending on the budget, pairing cast-iron details with hollow-steel pickets that save on material costs. Some high-end manufacturers use molds to cast iron fence panels that feature shapes found in Victorian-era ornamental ironwork catalogs, but the product comes at a price—\$125 and up per linear foot.

Read on to find out which type and style of fence will best flatter your house, while preserving your bank balance—and enhance the view from the curb.

The simple lines of this solid-steel fence echo the understated style of a brick rowhouse. Cast ball finials top each hollow post, while staggered cast details add a pleasing rhythm to pickets welded to rails along the top and bottom.



WHAT DO THEY COST? Depending on city, a 34-inch-tall prefabricated fence panel in tubular aluminum may cost \$120 to \$140 per linear foot, unpainted. The same panel in hollow-steel starts at \$150 and solid steel at \$200, and casting may add \$125.

DIY OR HIRE A PRO? You're an experienced DIYer, assessing ground for footing and pouring aluminum or steel fence panels. If you don't mind digging postholes and pouring concrete, let a professional install the fence for you.



HOW MUCH MAINTENANCE? Not much, compared with a wrought-iron fence. Steel or iron needs to be painted with paint to prevent rust. Rust-proof aluminum requires virtually none.

HOW LONG DO THEY LAST? Protect the finish, and you can get 20 years or more from a well-shielded solid-steel fence, or 10 to 15 years from a well-maintained aluminum fence. Cast-iron fences can last a lifetime.



Pick a post cap

The right topper can give a style boost to standard picket panels.



PINEAPPLE

The pineapple became a symbol of hospitality in early America and is often used on fences in front of Colonial homes.

Shown 2x2 inch cast iron post cap. \$6.40. customironworks.com



BALL

Orbs are a classic detail on fences fronting Victorian-era homes where they were often paired with ornamental scrollwork.

Shown 2x2 inch cast aluminum post cap. \$7.68. homedepot.com



URN

For a greater number of cap styles, upgrade to beefier 3x3 inch posts and choose from styles like this curvy shape designed to replicate a turned-wood post.

Shown 3x3 inch cast aluminum post cap. \$62. metalcraftindustries.net

Gate Upgrades

These hardworking details add a heap of function to your fence's entry point.



WIRELESS GATE BELL

If your home's network extends to the gate, a smart doorbell can beam video of your guests to your phone without requiring wires. \$199; ring.com



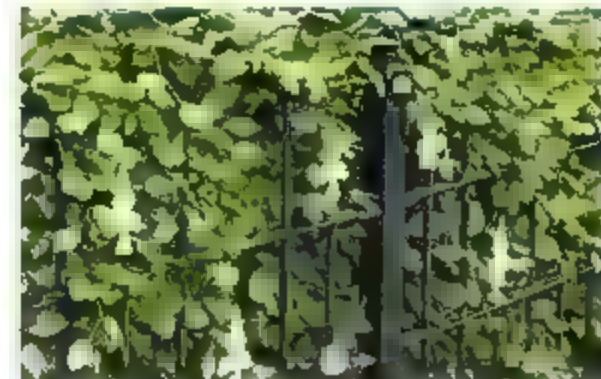
SELF-CLOSING HINGE Replace traditional hinges with this rust-proof version, in plastic and stainless steel. It will swing closed any gate up to 66 pounds. \$21 for a pair; ddtechglobal.com



MAGNETIC LATCH Traditional latches stop working as the gate settles, but this magnetic one adjusts to seasonal movement and can work with your house key. \$67; ddtechglobal.com

FENCE FRIENDS

Foliage and flowers soften the hard lines of a metal fence, turning a border into a pleasing streetscape.



CLIPPED HEDGE A thick hedge can boost privacy with a metal fence. The foliage of American hornbeam, a deciduous shrubby tree, emerges reddish-purple, then turns green before finishing orange-red in fall. Its gray-blue bark provides winter interest.



TALL BULBS Add a touch of English cottage-garden style with the straight stems and softball-size blooms of allium. 'Globemaster' reaches over 30 inches tall with purple flowers up to 12 inches wide—a colorful and fun counterpoint to black metal pickets.



MIXED PERENNIALS Enhance a rusted iron or steel fence with a border of white, pink, purple, or blue geraniums. Vary the heights and foliage of nearby plants like the tall masterwort and shorter ferns here.

Design variations

Even basic bars can take on different looks.

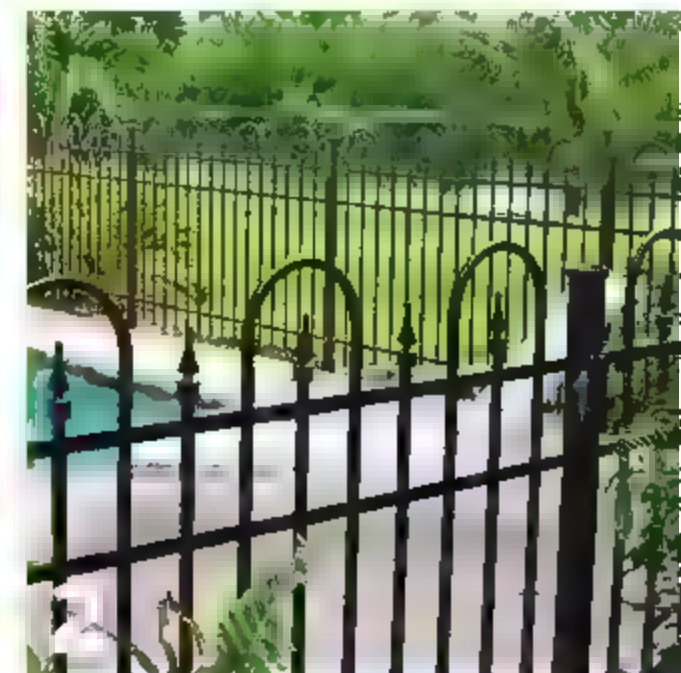
1 > STAGGERED SPEARS

While each of these tubular-aluminum pickets is finished with the same pressed-tip spear, simply alternating their heights, and giving the whole assembly a coat of creamy-white paint, helps to set this fence apart. Shown 4 foot tall, punched picket panel in satin white. \$45.150. \$1.1 per linear foot. ultrafence.com



2 > ARCHED BEAUTY

The classic wrought-iron hoop-and-spear design can now be had in easy-to-maintain hollow aluminum. Its kid-friendly curves keep pool-goers safe. Shown 5 foot 3 inch tall, hoop-and-open picket panel starting at \$18 per linear foot. jerith.com



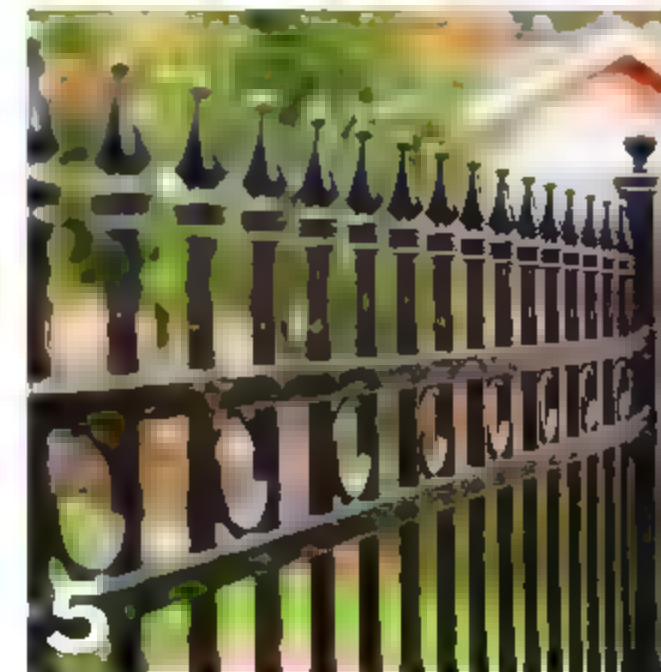
3 > OLD-WORLD DETAIL

Molten metal poured into molds is the only way to achieve the elaborate decoration found in ironwork dating back to the 1800s—as in this cast-iron fence design. Shown 3 foot 5 1/2 inch tall, Gilberton picket panel. \$137.81 per linear foot. heritagecastironusa.com



4 > SIMPLE AND STATELY

Solid aluminum can be machined to create a variety of shapes—like these fish-tail-topped and pointed pickets—then painted, without ever having to worry about rust. Shown 4 foot tall, custom picket panel in weathered brown. \$60 per linear foot. ultrafence.com

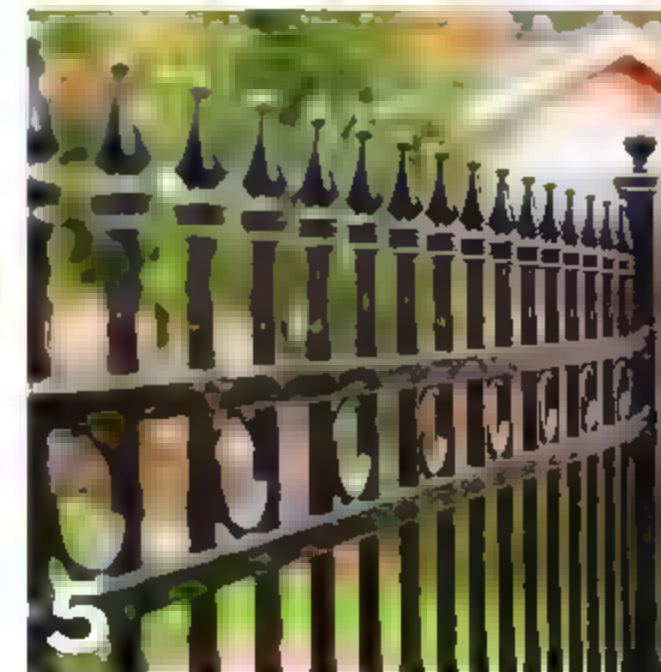
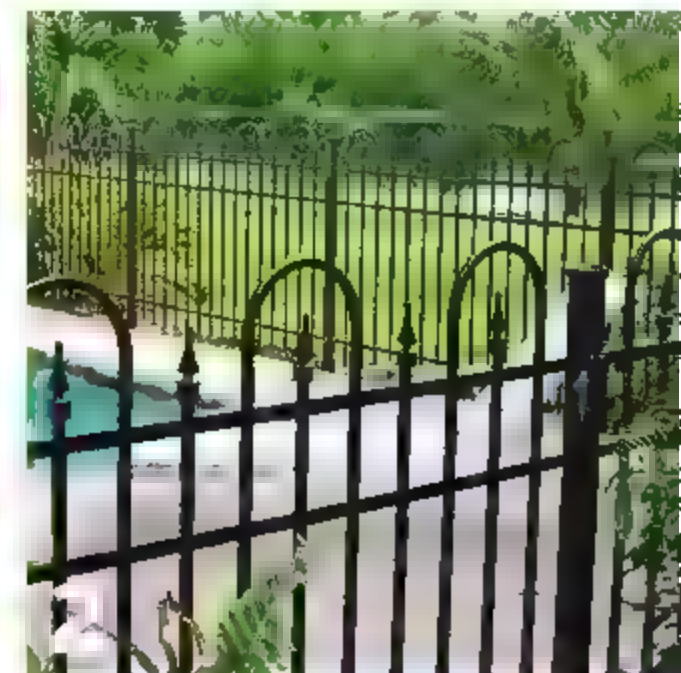


5 > MODERN VICTORIAN

This tubular-steel fence nails classic Victorian-era cast-iron styling in three ways: spear-and-ball picket tops above alternating ring details and ball-capped posts—but without the cost of solid metal. Similar to shown 6 foot tall, classic stile with extra rail and rings. \$45.08 per linear foot. ironfenceshop.com

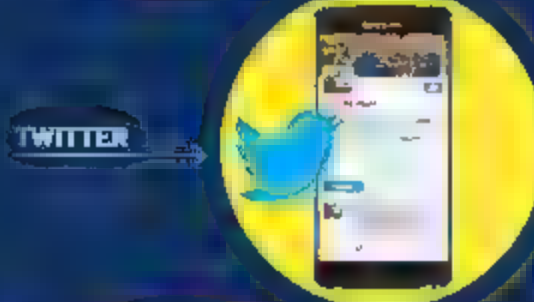
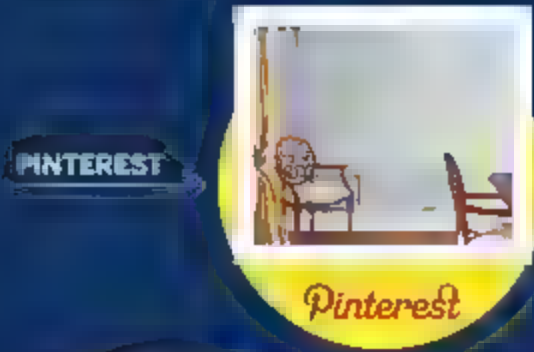
6 > ONE-OF-A-KIND DESIGN

Proof that a steel fence can be playful, this custom design combines petal-like picket tops that dance above narrow, stem-like rods to fancifully border a garden. Similar to shown 3 foot tall, custom fence panel. \$400 per linear foot. hammersmithstudio.com



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COVER See the listing for "Roadside Attraction"

HOME SOLUTIONS (pp. 14-17) Home inspectors' DIY don'ts > *Thanks to* Randy Sipe, American Society of Home Inspectors, ash.com. Germ control: How to trap and cap em > *Thanks to* Dr. Amy E. Kirby, Emory University Rollins School of Public Health, sph.emory.edu. Stakes worthy of your best peonies > *Thanks to* New York Botanical Garden, nybg.org. Should I go for co. oret grout? > *Thanks to* Patti Watson, Taste Design Inc., Jamestown, RI, tastedesigninc.com.

BEFORE + AFTER: MUDROOM Chaos controlled (pp. 18-19). **Designer/builder:** New Old, Charlotte, NC, newold.com. **Paint:** Bracing Blue SW 6242, walls, Extra White SW 7006 (trim), sherwin-williams.com. **Floor tile:** americanolean.com. **Clock:** target.com. **Sink and faucet:** Regency, webstaurantstore.com.

BEFORE + AFTER: BASEMENT Hidden gem (pp. 21-23). **Interior designer:** Jennifer Vreeland, McDermod, JV Design Style, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, jvdesignstyle.com. **Paint:** Soft Off White 44YY 75/094, living area walls and all trim, White On White 30GY 88/04, living area ceiling, Glistening Sea 50BG 62/133, bathroom walls, gidden.com. **Living area floor tile:** 16-inch Porcelain Ceramic Tile in Sandstone, Crossville Ceramics, crossvilleinc.com. **Bathroom floor tile:** Keystones mosaic tile in White, Dai Tile, dalltile.com. **Bathroom sink:** Arlington Petite Pedestal, Lavatory, St. Thomas Creations, stthomascreations.com.

FIX IT Replace a broken baluster (pp. 26-27). *Thanks to* Peter Murray, Fine Finish Inc., Framingham, MA, finefinishinc.com.

GROW YOUR OWN Spring greens (pp. 28-31). *Thanks to* Seattle Tilth, seattletilth.org.

PHOTOSHOP REDO Style upgrade for a 1970s home (p. 32). **Designers:** Tomas Sainas and Tim Royer, Heartwood Design/Build, Arcata, CA, heartwooddesignbuild.com.

WEEKEND REMODEL Install a wall mount vanity and sinks (pp. 38-41). **Vanity:** K 99550-1W. **Countertop:** K 5462 S33. **Backsplash:** K 5449 S33. **Faucets:** K 14406 4-CP. **Sinks:** K 2882-0. All by Kohler, us.kohler.com.

TOM TV Good-bye, old tank (pp. 43-45). *Thanks to* Shawn Clarke, Remova Specialists, Maiden, MA, 781.397.8666.

PAINT IDEAS All wrapped up (pp. 46-47). **Interior designer:** Dayka Robinson Designs, daykarobinsondesigns.com. **Ceiling light fixture:** Ballard, ballarddesigns.com. **Stool:** target.com.

ASK THIS OLD HOUSE (pp. 49-54) Historic house, bubbling plaster > *Thanks to* John Lee, John Greenwalt Lee Company, Annapolis, MD, preservationscience.wordpress.com.

ROADSIDE ATTRACTION (pp. 66-73). **General contractor:** J.M. Kelley Ltd., Mechanicsville, VA, jmkelleyltd.com. **Masons:** Tom Cook and Randy Ciarante, Olivebridge, NY, 845-657-2982. **Exterior > Windows, yellow door:** Charles Bellinger, Architectural Components Inc., Montague, MA, architecturalcomponentsinc.com. **Siding:** custom fabricated by J.M. Kelley Ltd., Mechanicsville, VA, jmkelleyltd.com. **Furniture:** adirondackarts.com. **Throw pillow:** woolrich.com. **Kitchen > Cabinet paint:** Pitch Pine, californiapaints.com. **Countertop:** Vermont Slate Company, vermontslateco.com. **Knobs and pulls:** Whitechapel Ltd., whitechapel-ltd.com. **Sink:** Reinhard Fireclay Farmhouse Sink, signaturehardware.com. **Faucet:** Perrin & Rowe, rohihome.com. **Range:** DCS, desaplances.com. **Refrigerator:** Sub-Zero, subzero-wolf.com. **Attic > Blanket:** woolrich.com. **Bath > Bathtub:** Randolph Morris, vintageb.com. **Fixtures:** Perrin & Rowe, rohihome.com.

AN ORCHARD OUT BACK (pp. 74-81). *Thanks to* Sam Benowitz, Rainree Nursery, rainreenursery.com, Tom Spellman, Dave Wilson Nursery, davewilson.com. **Fruit trees:** Milican Nurseries, Chichester, NH, milicannurseriesinc.com.

HERE TO STAY (pp. 82-87). *Thanks to* Josh Engle, JD Engle Construction, Lymington, ME, jdengle.com, Ann Baxter, Baxter Glass Art, Grosse Pointe Park, MI, baxterglass.com, Mike J. Thompson, Hiicrest Sod Farms, Romulus, MI, hiicrestsod.com, Joe Burke, Burke Mechanical, Shelby Township, MI, burkemechanical.net, Mark McCullough, M.J.M. Masonry, Arlington, MA, mjmmasonry.com, Shane Masters, Masters Electric, Shelby Township, MI, 248-670-3290, Brian Creary, Overa Painting, Ypsilanti, MI, 734-730-1054, Chris Harris, Roger and Desiree Dutcher.

ALL ABOUT METAL FENCES (pp. 88-93). *Thanks to* Car Close, Hammersmith Studios, Newton Upper Falls, MA, hammersmithstudio.com, Jason Caicco, Fence Depot, fence-depo.com, Doug Bracken, Heritage Cast Iron USA, Tulsa, OK, heritagecastironusa.com, Fence Factory, Stamford, CT, fencefactory.com.

SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE (p. 104). *Thanks to* Robyn Anderson, Historic Augusta Inc., Augusta, GA, historicaugusta.org.

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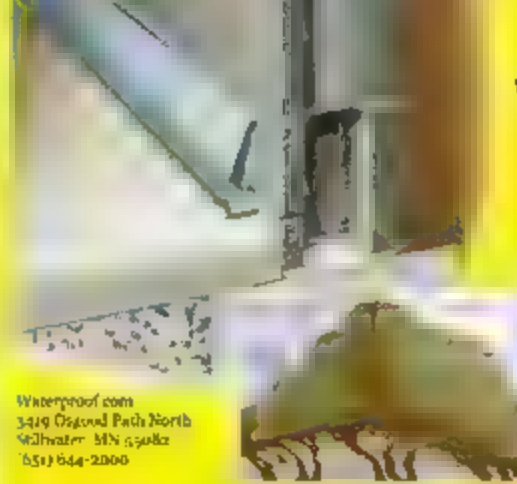
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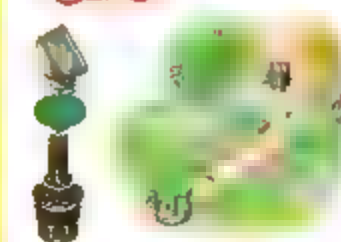


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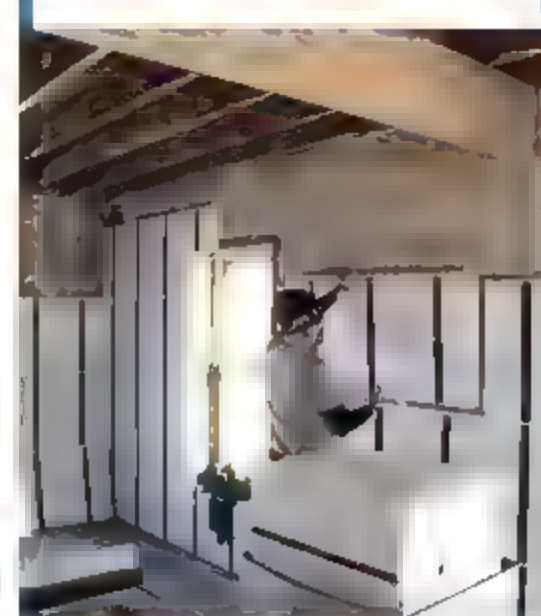
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50" CLAMP AND CUT EDGE GUIDE
ITEM 65551

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 70%
\$22.00 \$49.99

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47076210

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47035803

US GENERAL **SUPER COUPON**

26", 16 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET
• 14,600 cu. in. of storage
• 1000 lb. capacity

Customer Rating **★★★★** ITEM 61509 67631 shows

SUPER COUPON
\$299.99

SAVE \$653

470811348

CENTRAL **SUPER COUPON**

ITEM 34706
12" x 33-3/8" WOOD LATHE WITH REVERSIBLE HEAD

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$60
\$319.99

SUPER COUPON
\$279.99

47033057

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

1000 LB. CAPACITY SWING-BACK TRAILER JACK
ITEM 65780 41905 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 54%
\$17.99

SUPER COUPON
\$24.00

47033259

CENTRAL **SUPER COUPON**

8", 5 SPEED BENCHTOP DRILL PRESS
ITEM 62520 60238 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$75
\$125.13

SUPER COUPON
\$49.99

47086500

CENTRAL **SUPER COUPON**

2.5 HP 12" THICKNESS PLANNER
ITEM 95052

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$129
\$209.99

SUPER COUPON
\$239.99

47032460

CENTRALPNEUMATIC **SUPER COUPON**

2-IN-1 FLOORING NAILER/STAPLER
ITEM 68703 01689 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

WE CARRY A FULL LINE OF FASTENERS

SAVE \$279
\$99.99

SUPER COUPON
\$139.99

47087410

drill master **SUPER COUPON**

1500 WATT DUAL TEMPERATURE HEAT GUN (572"/1112")
ITEM 62340 62546/63104 95289 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 88%
\$14.00

SUPER COUPON
\$28.83

47033410

CENTECH **SUPER COUPON**

12 VOLT, 10/2/50 AMP BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER
ITEM 60581/60653 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 57%
\$49.99

SUPER COUPON
\$69.99

47064762

Lifetime **SUPER COUPON**

ALUMINUM OXIDE SANDING SPONGES - PACK OF 10
ITEM 46751 46752 46753 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 59%
\$4.99

SUPER COUPON
\$9.95

47071146

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET
ITEM 69505/62418/66537 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 66%
\$5.99

SUPER COUPON
\$8.00

470662758

HARDY **SUPER COUPON**

POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES PACK OF 100
ITEM 65406/61363 64976/61096 65494/61259 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 62%
\$7.99

SUPER COUPON
\$15.99

47047162

CENTRAL **SUPER COUPON**

4" x 36" BELT/6" DISC SANDER
ITEM 62502 57181 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$64
\$79.99

SUPER COUPON
\$124.51

47053140

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

350 lb. CAPACITY STEP STOOL/WORKING PLATFORM
ITEM 69645 85578 60625 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 65%
\$199.99

SUPER COUPON
\$29.99

47035040

drill master **SUPER COUPON**

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER
ITEM 69645 85578 60625 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 50%
\$99.99

SUPER COUPON
\$14.00

47048395

CENTRALPNEUMATIC **SUPER COUPON**

2.5 HP, 21 GALLON, 125 PSI VERTICAL AIR COMPRESSOR
ITEM 69091/61454 61693/62803 67847 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$296
\$179.99

SUPER COUPON
\$149.99

47202138

SUPER COUPON

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WITH ANY PURCHASE
3-1/2" SUPER BRIGHT NINE LED ALUMINUM FLASHLIGHT
ITEM 69052 shows 69111/62522/62573

Customer Rating **★★★★**

VALUE \$4.97

47177420

CENTRAL **SUPER COUPON**

16" VARIABLE SPEED SCROLL SAW
ITEM 62519 63263 93012 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$79
\$89.99

SUPER COUPON
\$149.99

47170301

WARRIOR **SUPER COUPON**

29 PIECE TITANIUM NITRIDE COATED HIGH SPEED STEEL DRILL BIT SET
ITEM 62281/61637 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 83%
\$10.00

SUPER COUPON
\$9.99

47132774

BADLAND **SUPER COUPON**

2500 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL
ITEM 61258 shows 63478/61640/61287/66145 47165840

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$70
\$89.99

SUPER COUPON
\$119.99

47165840

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

RAPID PUMP® 3 TON LOW PROFILE HEAVY DUTY STEEL FLOOR JACK
ITEM 61202 shows 61253/62326

Customer Rating **★★★★**

WEIGHTS 73 lbs.

SAVE \$190
\$199.99

SUPER COUPON
\$84.99

47170122

CENTECH **SUPER COUPON**

2.4" COLOR LCD DIGITAL INSPECTION CAMERA
ITEM 61839 62350 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

Includes hook, mirror, magnet accessories and video-out cable.

SAVE \$135
\$79.99

SUPER COUPON
\$205.75

47112764

CENTECH **SUPER COUPON**

3-IN-1 PORTABLE POWER PACK WITH JUMP STARTER
ITEM 38391/62376/62305 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 38%
\$59.99

SUPER COUPON
\$64.99

47140170

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

6" DIGITAL CALIPER
ITEM 61585 62387 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 68%
\$17.99

SUPER COUPON
\$29.99

47141570

DR. WINDSOR **SUPER COUPON**

60", 4 DRAWER HARDWOOD WORKBENCH
ITEM 93454/69054 63395/62603 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

Twelve sold separately.

SAVE \$265
\$159.99

SUPER COUPON
\$395

47105177

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

32 PIECE SCREWDRIVER SET
ITEM 61259/90764 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 96%
\$5.99

SUPER COUPON
\$13.67

47131777

CENTRAL **SUPER COUPON**

UNIVERSAL TOOL STAND
ITEM 69605 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 63%
\$29.99

SUPER COUPON
\$81.39

47180542

PREDATOR **SUPER COUPON**

6.5 HP (212 CC) OHV HORIZONTAL SHAFT GAS ENGINES
ITEM 61971 61972 60121/69727 shows CALIFORNIA ONLY

Customer Rating **★★★★**

Blade sold separately.

SAVE \$280
\$99.99

SUPER COUPON
\$119.99

47105305

CHICAGO ELECTRIC **SUPER COUPON**

10" SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAW
ITEM 61971 61972 98199 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

Blade sold separately.

SAVE \$84
\$149.99

SUPER COUPON
\$179

47161608

drill master **SUPER COUPON**

1/4" TRIM ROUTER
ITEM 61626/62609 44934 shows

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE \$79
\$29.99

SUPER COUPON
\$99

47104178

DR. WINDSOR **SUPER COUPON**

DOVETAIL JIG
ITEM 34102

Customer Rating **★★★★**

SAVE 47%
\$27.99

SUPER COUPON
\$34.99

47080160

save This Old House

PRICE \$59,000

LOCATION Augusta, GA

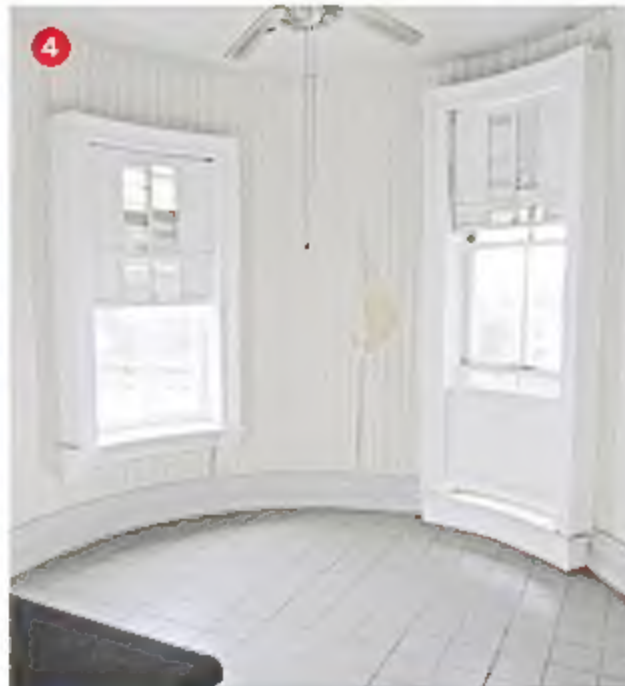
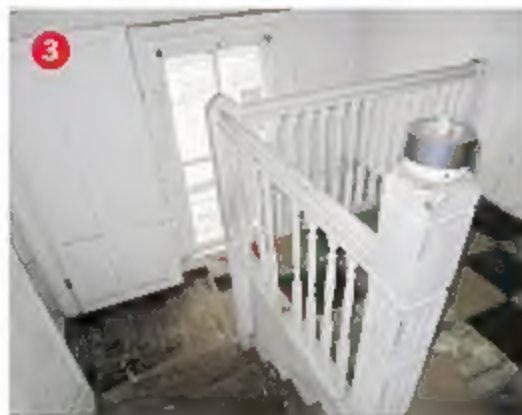
CONTACT Robyn Anderson, 706-724-0436;
robyn@historicaugusta.org

THE HISTORY This 4,543-square-foot, turreted Queen Anne was built in the 1890s by Augusta native Patrick H. Rice. A prominent member of the local business community, Rice served as president of what would today be considered the chamber of commerce and championed numerous community development and improvement efforts. Known around town as Captain Rice, he helped establish post-Civil War Augusta as a trade hub connecting Atlanta and South Carolina to New England goods imported via Savannah.

WHY SAVE IT? Listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Augusta Downtown Historic District, the Rice House is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style, with a large dome-capped turret and a second-story porch. Though some details were lost in its conversion to a multifamily home, the house still retains original moldings, mantels, and windows.

WHAT IT NEEDS The foundation is sound, but the house awaits a new roof and upgraded plumbing and electrical; it has no HVAC. It needs extensive interior renovations, and some work would be required to return it to a single-family home. The exterior restoration is governed by protective covenants, though there is the possibility of federal, state, and/or local grants and tax incentives to help defray costs. It is one of the last historic structures on its street still waiting to be restored, as downtown Augusta undergoes a resurgence that would make Captain Rice proud.

—KATE WOOD



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If you know of an old house that should be saved and is for sale, write to savethisoldhouse@thisoldhouse.com or This Old House, 262 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06902

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Queen Anne
in a historic
downtown!**

1. The three-story house is configured as two apartments but could easily be reworked into a four-bedroom, single-family home. It currently has two half baths and one full bath.
2. Previous owners had begun renovations on several first-floor rooms.
3. The back staircase has been returned to its original layout.
4. In the upstairs unit, a curved space in the turret was used as a dining area off the galley kitchen.

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mean working even harder to reach them.
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