

This Old House

Modern Living

Refreshing a mid-century house



Front-yard gardens
Step up your stair color
DIY privacy screen
Charleston TV house preview
Clean siding the right way



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Fix & Finish: Family Mess, Managed!

FOR A FAMILY OF FIVE, it's easy to accumulate a lot of clutter. Homeowner Jackie Nevin didn't like the way her family's pantry/home office had become a dumping ground for random items. A jumble of toys, games, and crafts supplies left precious little room for actual pantry items, like dry goods, canned foods, and seldom-used small appliances.



BEFORE



IKEA SEKTION cabinets, RINGHULT doors; TOBIAS chair; OMLOPP LED spotlights; TEJN rug; DAIDAI plant pot; BATTING storage boxes; DOKUMENT magazine file; BEGÅVNING glass domes



THE FIX

Enter expert carpenter **Johnathan Brewer** and design expert **Lauren Makk**. As Johnathan assembled the new cabinetry, Lauren went shopping on IKEA-USA.com, selecting storage pieces and accents to get this room organized and under control.

Storage savvy

Inside each cabinet and within every drawer, Lauren arranged clever storage elements, including racks and files to organize projects, and storage boxes to cleverly hide away loose papers and receipts.

Order in the drawers

Adjustable dividers keep items neatly separated inside large drawers. Clear-sided, airtight containers are perfect for cereal and dry goods, and they also make excellent storage for loose crafts supplies.



DOKUMENT magazine files; DOKUMENT letter trays; BATTING storage boxes; MÅLA assorted paints

THE FINISH

Jackie's new pantry/office is a study in storage smarts, where every item has its place. Accent lighting, a coat of rich navy-blue paint, and a few decorative items turned this cramped corner into an inviting home office with storage to spare.



IKEA 365+ dry food containers; MAXIMERA drawer dividers, Variera series

To follow this project from Fix to Finish, watch now at thisoldhouse.com/FixandFinishwithIKEA



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A Northern California family puts the finishing touches on their 1955 house, which effortlessly blends indoor and outdoor spaces



PHOTO: MIKI DUISTERHOF

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MODERN LIVING

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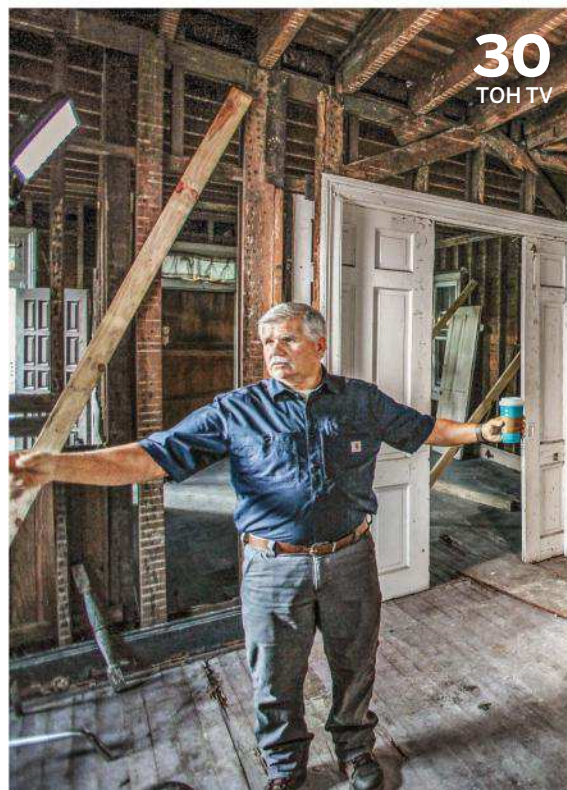


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Cover Photograph by
GRIDLEY + GRAVES
Styling by ANNA MOLVIK



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**Kick your
lawn's grass.**

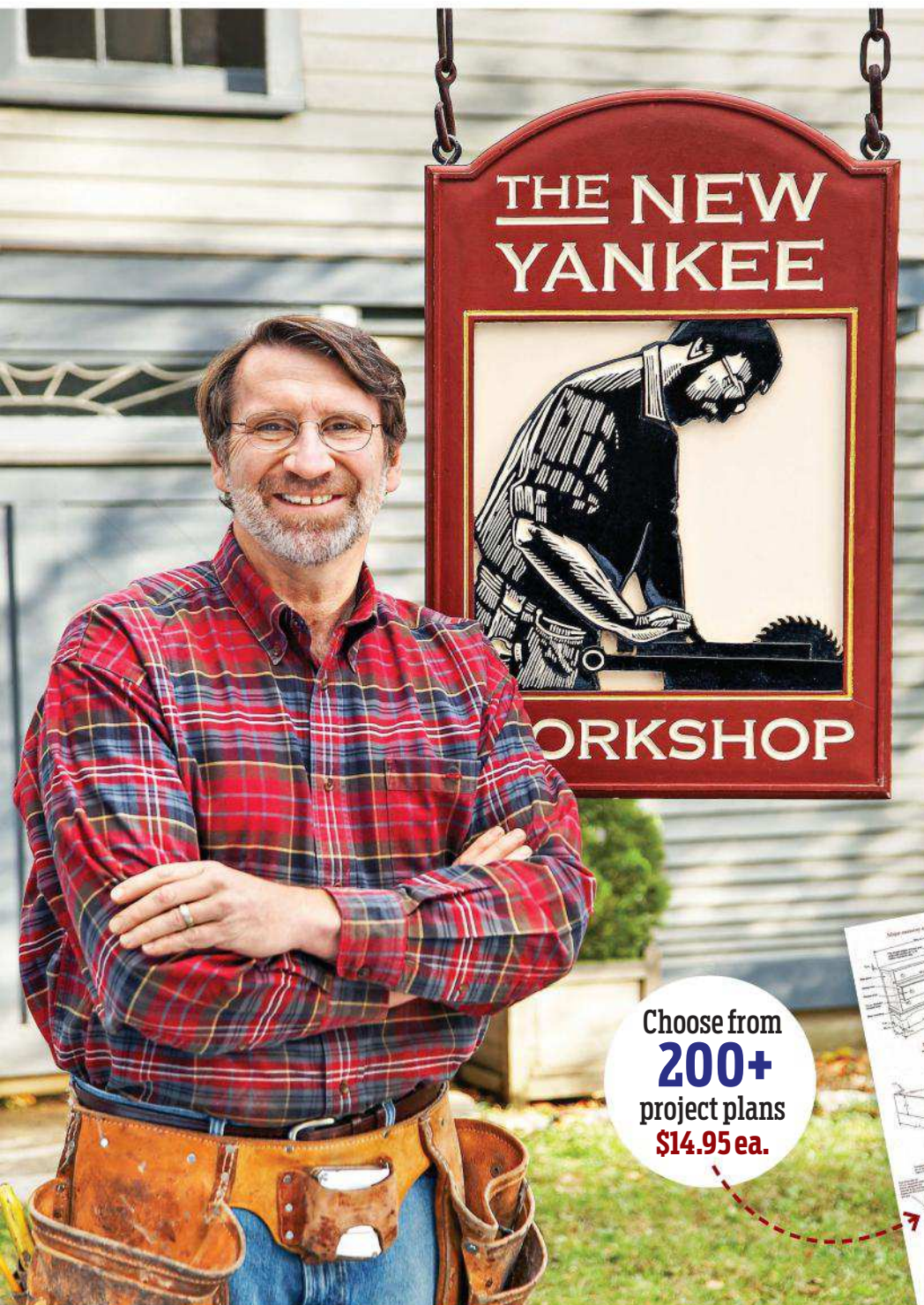
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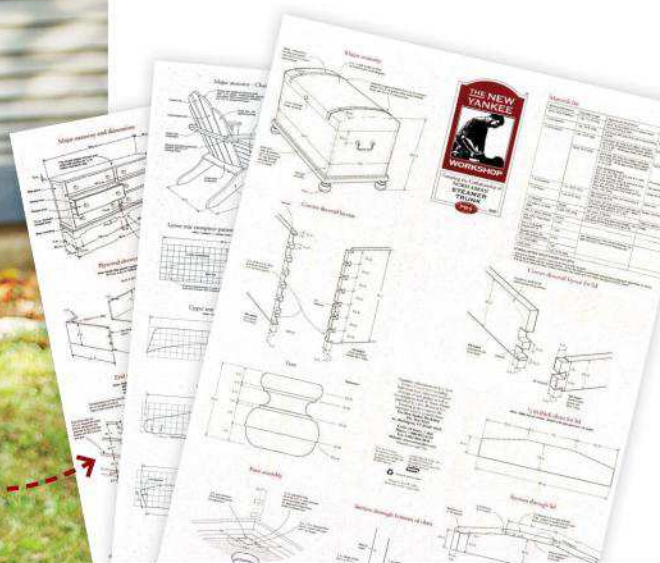
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Mid-century modern's enduring appeal

I have lived in a lot of houses in my lifetime, but there is one particular kind that has always eluded me. Sometime before I die, I would really like to live in a mid-century-modern house.

You know the type: clean-lined, low-slung, its rooms geometrically arranged. Not too large or too small. Full of open-plan spaces, natural materials, and lots of big windows that let the outdoors in.

It turns out I have a lot of company in this fantasy. Mid-century-modern houses are hot commodities, and they just keep getting hotter. In the last two decades, their prices have skyrocketed; in Seattle, where there are quite a few of them, they are 44 percent more expensive than other comparably sized homes.

Maybe the zeitgeist is part of what makes these houses so compelling. Most were built in the '50s and '60s, in a boom of postwar optimism that had everybody enjoying each other's company enough to not put very many walls in the common spaces. But it's also the fact that they are just great, uniquely American design. The ideas they put forth—of being close to nature, of one common hangout, of multifunctional living spaces designed with a lack of pretension and formality—have endured remarkably well. Today we think of well-designed homes as having every one of these qualities. And, I might add, they now officially qualify as “old” houses, since the National Register of Historic Places generally accepts only buildings more than 50 years old.

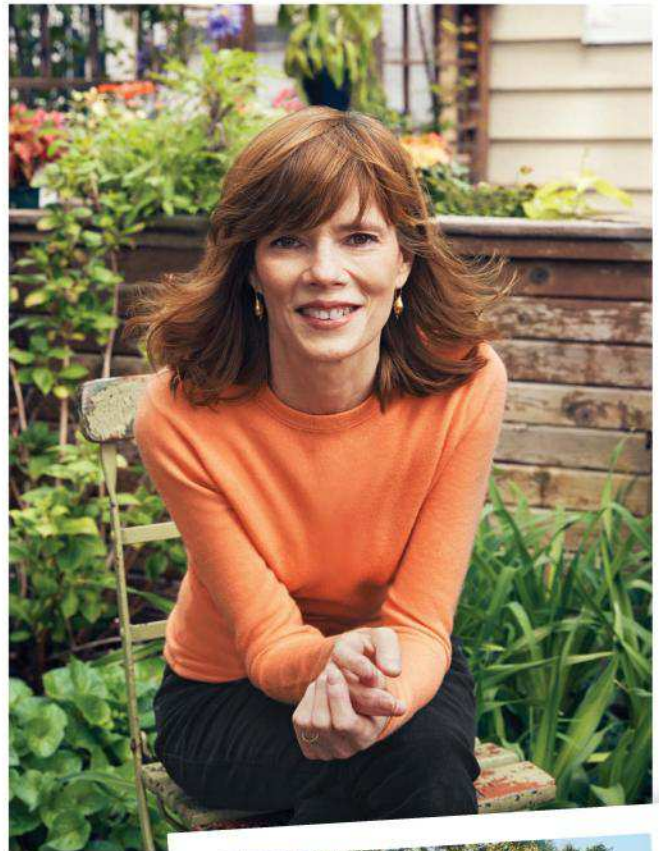
We have two of these houses in this issue, which celebrates mid-century modernism, on pages 44 and 58. One is in Delaware, the other in California. I would be happy as a clam in either one.

But, of course, I'd have to move. We don't get this kind of house in New York City. In our dense, urban center, we have tall, skinny houses that are literally attached to one another, and sometimes you'd rather not see the wildlife outside your multipaned windows.

But I can dream, can't I? In my next life, it will be mid-century modern all the way.



SUSAN WYLAND,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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Philip Johnson's Glass House, built in New Canaan, CT, in 1949, is an iconic mid-century-modern home.

Reader mail JULY/AUGUST 2018



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YOU CAN DO IT! *At This Old House, we're all about empowering homeowners to take on home repairs and renovations—and to recognize when to hire a pro (and what to ask!). We appreciate your input, too. After all, there's always room for improvement.*

Finding studs behind tile

Tom Silva's reply concerning the installation of grab bars (Ask This Old House, May 2018) was very informative, but sometimes there is an easier way to locate the studs behind ceramic tile. If it's on an interior wall, check the room on the other side to see if a stud finder will work there. If so, locate the studs, take measurements from a point that is common to both rooms (such as a doorway or an exterior wall), then transfer the measurements to the tiled wall.

—MARVIN REED, LEESBURG, FL

Look out overhead

Roger Cook may be shown "standing safely on the ground" using a pole-saw-mounted lopper, but he is not working safely (Ask This Old House, May 2018). Such tools can generate small particles like sawdust, so it's appropriate to wear eye protection. Falling branches can be deflected by other limbs and not land where expected, so a hard hat would be wise too. Still, another good issue!

—BOB LIGETT, CHAPEL HILL, NC

Brick dos and don'ts

Love the painted brick fireplace makeover (Budget Redo, May 2018). But the owner also mentioned doing the same to her home's brick facade. My local mason is emphatic that ordinary paint should never be applied to exterior brick. Brick breathes, and sealing it with nonporous paint can cause wood framing inside walls to rot or grow mold. While painting interior brick is fine, doing it outside is a big fat no unless you use paint made for that purpose.

—FLORENCE WEBB, LANDAFF, NH

THE EDITORS REPLY: *We asked mason and frequent TOH TV contributor Mark McCullough for his take. "Masonry walls in proper working condition actually have a low threat of mold or rot," he says. A 1985 house such as this one is unlikely to be endangered, if it was built to allow air to circulate between the masonry and the wall behind it. As long as the exterior brick is intact, flashing or weep holes should allow any moisture to escape. This homeowner applied a suitable masonry primer, too. When in doubt, though, a breathable masonry stain is the safest way to change the color of exterior brick.*

A word of thanks

I just have to say thank you so much for both of your TV programs. What is great about *This Old House* is the quality of your work and advice. I really appreciate what you have done with the apprenticeship program to get younger people involved in the trades. It's so motivating—I hope a lot of kids have seen your programs. Finally, *Ask This Old House* gives such practical instruction. The things you show are so useful to the average person. You are doing a wonderful job.

—JIM EDDLEMAN, TANGENT, OR

**READER
PROJECT
OF THE
MONTH**

Gearzilla takes NY

—ADETOLA ABATAN, VIA E-MAIL

While the tips in *TOH* have long inspired me, I caught a different type of creative bug from the Ask TOH question in the March/April 2018 issue about iron acetate stains. The old rusty parts were so artistically photographed, they led to a collage of my own, which was a pleasure to make.





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home solutions

Edited by Kate Wood

INSIDE

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MORE



Simple privacy screen

Carve out some personal space in the open air with a slatted wall you can make in a weekend. Jennifer O'Brien, who blogs at cityfarmhouse.com, built this 12-by-6-foot privacy screen flat on the ground using stock 4×4 posts and 12-foot 1×3s, then hoisted it into postholes lined with gravel. Want to build one of your own? For sturdiness, dig below your frost line and plan to anchor a third of the post below grade. Lay out the three posts at 6 feet on center, nail the first slat flush with their tops, and use a 1× spacer as you attach the rest of the slats. Set the screen in the postholes, then backfill with a mix of gravel and soil, tamping and checking for plumb as you go. Two coats of stain (here, it's Sherwin-Williams's SuperDeck Exterior Semi-Transparent in Baja Beige) will enhance and protect it. Now all that's left is to string up some mood lighting.

PHOTO: JENNIFER O'BRIEN



Prep your pup for the Fourth

People ooh and ahh at fireworks, but unexpected, intermittent loud noises tend to have the opposite effect on dogs. That's why more pets go missing on July 4th than on any other day of the year. Make a plan before the Fourth to ensure your pooch stays safe. If he is already anxiety-prone, a **visit to the vet** could help with prep. Your dog's doc may even recommend a prescription medication like Sileo or Trazodone. There are lots of **calming products** to be found in pet stores, though many vets say their efficacy depends on the individual dog. Some pet owners swear by the ThunderShirt (from \$40; thundershirt.com), which soothes with gentle, all-over pressure. At the very least, **keep your dog indoors** during the display. If your pet is crate-trained, the crate is an ideal safe space. Otherwise, confine him to one room. Close doors and windows, and create background buzz with a TV, stereo, or white-noise machine. And if someone can stay home, that helps, too; after all, man is dog's best friend.

—SKYE MCEOWEN

Paint spill? Don't panic

Spring into action while it's still wet, and it's likely that latex can be removed from almost any surface.

Carpet > It won't be easy, but with the right tools, it's doable. First, use a plastic putty knife to scoop up as much paint as possible. Next, mix a solution of warm water and dish soap (1 cup : ½ tsp.) in a spray bottle. Squirt the stain with the solution, then immediately run a wet/dry vac over the area; repeat until paint is gone. Use a clean, dry rag to mop up any remaining moisture.

Wood > On sealed wood, confine the spill with pieces of absorbent material like cardboard or cloth. Use these to sop or pick up what you can, then finish with a wet sponge or rag. Untreated wood is trickier: Speed is key to keeping the paint from penetrating the grain. Remove paint using a clean, dry rag for each pass. Then wet the area with rubbing alcohol and rub with yet another clean rag until all traces of paint are gone.

Concrete > Using newspaper, paper towels, or rags, wipe up everything you can. Then scour with a nylon scrub brush to get up any paint clinging to the rough surface. Rinse with a bucket of water, and repeat until clean. Going back over the area with a hose or pressure-washer should completely erase the evidence. —CARI SHANE



Job-site notes that stay put

There are generally two scenarios for construction-zone labels and reminders: hope they'll stay stuck or accept that they'll be impossible to remove. That's where the latest iteration of the classic sticky note comes in: Post-it Extreme Notes will stand up to all kinds of conditions, indoors (from hot, dusty attics to basement freezers) and out (even rain or snow). When the job's done, they peel right off. From \$4.99 for three 3-inch square pads; target.com —K.W.

PHOTOS: (TOP LEFT) VANESSA VAN RYZIN/GETTY IMAGES; (TOP RIGHT) TOMAS WORKS/SHUTTERSTOCK; (CARPET, WOOD, CONCRETE) GETTY IMAGES

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Cook up a little retro color

Add a dash of mid-century-modern style without having to rewire an outdated appliance. In classic hues, these kitchen helpers only look vintage. —K.W.

1 CANDY-APPLE-RED TOASTER >

Give respite to late risers by keeping toast, well, toasty on the removable warming rack. Another perk: Check browning without hitting CANCEL with the “lift and look” feature. Retro Style 2-Slice Toaster, \$80; russellhobbs.com

2 BABY-BLUE KITCHEN TIMER >

Under 4 inches tall, it’s just the ticket for adding a hint of mid-century flair. It’s seriously old-school—spin the chrome ring to set. Vintage Streamline Kitchen Timer, \$25; kikkerland.com

3 CORAL STAND MIXER >

Need an excuse to splurge on a new stand mixer? This vivid hue, dubbed Bird of Paradise, is a 2018 exclusive. Save a few bucks (and still get plenty of power) with this mini version. Artisan Mini 3.5 Quart Tilt-Head Stand Mixer, \$400; kitchenaid.com

4 TEAL PERSONAL BLENDER >

Finally, a glass-jar blender that allows you to ditch plastic without sacrificing your morning smoothie. Its 20-oz. capacity is ample enough to mix more than just drinks. Proctor Silex Compact Blender, \$25; amazon.com

5 MINT-GREEN MICROWAVE >

Short on counter space? This 700W small wonder has a .7-cubic-foot capacity at less than 18 inches wide. It’s energy-saving, too, with a zero-power standby mode. Daewoo Retro Microwave Oven, \$90; lowes.com



Before you leave for that vacation...

Avoid mere inconveniences—as well as potential catastrophes—by taking care of some not-so-obvious to-do list items

✓ Run your garbage disposal:

To head off a smelly homecoming, *TOH* plumbing and heating expert Richard Trethewey advises tossing in lemon rinds, then running the disposal with the cold water tap on.

☐ **Pause your post:** Piled-up mail is an instant tip-off that no one’s been home for a while. Go online to holdmail.usps.com/holdmail. You can opt to pick it up or have it all delivered at once when you’re back.

☐ **Unplug unused appliances:** Save on your electric bill by pulling the plug on microwaves, coffeemakers, and other appliances that draw power to run a clock or even a standby light.

☐ Thwart potential thieves:

Though it’s no substitute for a home security system, research shows that a sign suggesting you have one can be a deterrent, says ADT’s Bob Tucker. Another easy fix: Toss gravel (it’s noisy!) on the ground near entries.

☐ Check social media settings:

Make sure you and your family are sharing vacation photos (“Look at us, we’re not home right now!”) only with your actual friends, not the general public. Or take the old-fashioned route and wait till you’re back to share. —S.M.

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Dark Hickory [1] and Coastline [3], from \$3.75 per foot, azek.com; Macadamia [2] and Chicory [4], \$3 per foot, deckorators.com

New composite porch flooring

Durable, easy-care planks look better than ever

MORE COLORS Once only basic gray and brown, composite porch flooring is now available with exotic wood graining, driftwood looks, and paint-like finishes, like the Azek and Deckorators boards above. What's changed? These planks are made with a tough polymer "cap" adhered to the boards' faces, which can be fabricated to have a range of effects. The caps also provide added stain, slip, and UV resistance. Since the plank's core color doesn't match the surface, matching trim boards are sold to conceal the exposed cut ends.

PAINT-FRIENDLY Want a particular color porch floor? Paint will last longer on uncapped PVC than on wood, since PVC is more stable and unaffected by moisture. If you like the gray shades it comes in, you can skip the paint and save money, too: Uncapped planks like Aeratis (from \$1.79 per foot; aeratis.com) and Koma's Harmony (about \$2.96 per foot; komabuildingproducts.com) often cost less than capped ones.

TIGHTER FIT If you're a traditionalist who prefers planks that form square joints where tongues and grooves meet (they're also less likely to trap dirt), look for square-edged flooring that is milled after being extruded. Deckorators and Harmony planks are both made this way. —THOMAS BAKER

Upgrade your harvest basket

Finally starting to see the fruits—and veggies—of your labors? For hauling in your garden bounty, we're fans of these polypropylene containers. Fold-out legs keep contents clear of the ground, and perforated sides make rinsing produce, with a garden hose or in your kitchen sink, a cinch. Molded, fold-down handles are comfortable to carry. Even if you lack a green thumb, you might want one of these for the farmers' market. Mod Hod, \$30; gardeners.com —K.W.



Banish mildew from siding

The right way is safer and more effective than using bleach

When mildew gains a foothold, homeowners often turn to **diluted chlorine bleach (sodium hypochlorite)**, a.k.a. your standard household whitener. It appears to make mildew vanish, but on porous surfaces, such as wood or vinyl siding, chlorine evaporates too quickly to get to the fungi's "roots," guaranteeing regrowth. Chlorine can also damage foliage and stain clothing.

A better alternative: **oxygen bleach (hydrogen peroxide)**. Less volatile than chlorine, it removes mildew on and below the surface—as well as algae, dirt, and oxidized paint—but won't harm plants or clothing. Choose a liquid concentrate such as Scotts Outdoor Cleaner Plus OxiClean (\$9.99 per gallon; scotts.com), which is easy to use in a garden sprayer or pressure-washer. —T.B.



PHOTOS: (TOP LEFT) DENISE SFRAGA; (BOTTOM RIGHT) COURTESY OF RUST-OLEUM.COM

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Kick Up Your Curb Appeal with a New Garage Door



WHETHER YOU ARE

sprucing up your home's exterior to sell, or just giving it a cosmetic update, few projects can improve your home's curb appeal as quickly and affordably as a new garage door. In fact, replacing the garage door is one of the best home-improvement bangs for your buck, providing a nationwide average return on investment of up to 98.3% at resale.*

Not just functional, today's doors come in a variety of styles, making them an architectural element instead of an afterthought. And since your garage door can represent up to 40% of your home's curb appeal, it's important to find a style that complements—and enhances—your home.

Here are three steps to finding the perfect pairing.

1. Mimic Your Home's Architectural Style



2. Choose Your Materials

Construction: Garage doors can be made of aluminum, steel, wood, or a faux-wood composite material. Natural wood offers the most design flexibility for creating a custom look.

Energy efficiency: A well-insulated door keeps your garage 10 to 20 degrees warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer, for improved comfort and savings.

3. Add a Personal Touch

Decorative hardware, windows, or a unique color can really set your door apart.

Clopay faux-wood carriage doors in a custom coastal hue made for a dramatic entrance at the TOH 2017 Beach House at East Matunuck, RI.



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Airy update

Annexing an attached laundry shed's footprint allows for a bigger, brighter cook space with easy access to the backyard **BY NINA MALKIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKI DUISTERHOF**



➔ **WHEN IT COMES TO** blurring the lines between indoor and outdoor living, the backyard is at the front of most homeowners' minds. For Adriana Daringa and Ben Corotis, the impediment to rear access was a laundry shed tacked on to their 1904 bungalow in Emeryville, CA. But the couple—partners in the architectural firm ADBC—soon saw the upside: Scrap the shed, which sat on a deck platform, and they could build out their barely-there kitchen, adding proper footings and a beam to support a wide opening in the house's back wall. A new deck could step down to the stone patio below, while offering spots for casual seating.

The unified 261 square feet of open kitchen allowed them to move the cooktop to an island for improved workflow and add a dining peninsula. Ceiling-high upper cabinets beefed up their “virtually nonexistent” storage, and the laundry machines were tucked into an alcove alongside the fridge.

Thin stainless-steel counters and slab-front wood cabinets reflect the couple's modern aesthetic—and don't distract from the opened-up view. The family is now living the California dream. “Better yard access has enhanced our lifestyle immeasurably,” says Ben. “And with more open, functional space we really enjoy cooking and entertaining.”



BEFORE

BEFORE With no upper cabinets, the old cook space was storage starved and gloomy, despite a window over the sink.

AFTER Natural light pours in to the new kitchen through the 10-foot-wide opening's glass doors. An island not only adds storage: “The counter space on either side of the cooktop is great,” says Adriana. “And it's surprisingly handy having access from both sides.”



As a countertop choice, stainless steel "is durable, heat resistant, and easy care," says Ben. The thin quarter-inch counters, matching 4-inch-high backsplash, and white walls have a simple, modern look.

A wine-fridge cabinet in the peninsula and next to the wall solves the problem of the almost-impossible-to-use corner cabinet on the other side, says Adriana. It opens toward the backyard, out of the work zone.

before

The 156-square-foot kitchen lacked storage, counter space, and seating. A tacked-on laundry shed wasted space, with a single, in-swinging back door



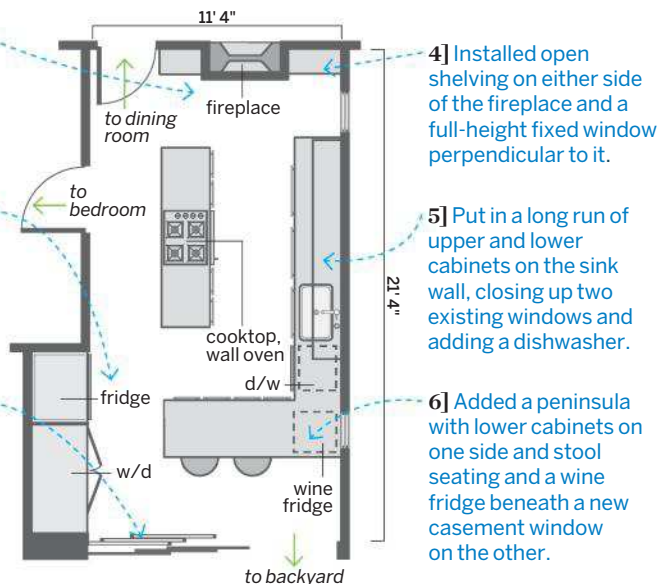
after

Annexing the shed's footprint made room for an island, a dining peninsula, a trim laundry closet—and wide-open access to the backyard in the now 261-square-foot kitchen

1] Moved a cooktop and a wall oven to an island and added a double-sided fireplace where the range had been.

2] Tore off the shed to bump out the kitchen, picking up 2 extra feet of space in an alcove; relocated the laundry and fridge there.

3] Created a 10-foot-wide expanse of glass with one fixed panel and two sliders. Three sliding wood screens offer light control and privacy.



4] Installed open shelving on either side of the fireplace and a full-height fixed window perpendicular to it.

5] Put in a long run of upper and lower cabinets on the sink wall, closing up two existing windows and adding a dishwasher.

6] Added a peninsula with lower cabinets on one side and stool seating and a wine fridge beneath a new casement window on the other.

A double-sided gas fireplace insert warms the dining room as well as the kitchen. "When it's on, we don't need heat for the rest of the house," says Adriana. Open shelves allow the couple to vary accent pieces in the relatively minimalist room. Floor: SlateScape



homeowner tip BEN COROTIS, EMERYVILLE, CA

"Sliding wood-slat screens are great for controlling light and heat, and provide privacy as well."



The bumped-out area's wood ceiling and Douglas fir beams were a splurge. "We hired specialty wood finishers to sand and varnish them," says Ben. Adding a skylight amplified the new kitchen's airy, open feel.



Ben, Adriana, and their daughter Alexa, now 5, love the seamless transition from the kitchen to the backyard. The stepped-down deck is made of ipe. The modern-looking addition's slat siding—like the sliding screens—is also ipe, and echoes the vintage bungalow's 3-inch lap siding.

Scenic snack spot for \$397

A stylish paint scheme and some stock lumber turn an enclosed entry porch into a breakfast room with a view **BY KATELIN HILL**



BEFORE

BEFORE A small enclosed porch off the kitchen, once a drop spot for deliveries, was so chilly that the previous owners had nailed the door shut.

AFTER With the door removed and the floor built up, the room provides casual dining space for the family of six, and better reflects the character of the 1883 house.



\$26 black trim paint

\$0 repurposed chairs

➔ **THE MOST WALLET-WISE** expansion plan? Annexing space you already have. After Stacy Grinsfelder renovated the kitchen in the 1883 house just outside Buffalo, NY, that she shares with her husband and four kids, the home still lacked a spot for casual meals. An adjacent, though unheated, enclosed porch provided the perfect solution. To incorporate and warm up the space, she removed the door and built up and insulated the floor; caulk and weatherstripping sealed out drafts. To give the floor's plywood a style boost, she stenciled it with a fun pattern, then stained it (which helped mellow the white paint),

and added polyurethane. After painting the walls white and the beadboard ceiling sky blue, Stacy gave the windows a coat of black to play up the views. Then she built a wall-mounted breakfast bar from maple plywood with picture-frame trim and corbel supports. A set of vintage schoolhouse chairs she already owned completes the look, along with plants and accessories with a nature theme. Stacy, who blogs at blakehillhouse.com, says the space is a hit with the entire household, and that it's not uncommon to see wildlife during mealtime: "The whole family loves to watch the deer, squirrels, and birds play year-round." 🏡

THE PROJECT TALLY

To raise the floor to kitchen height and warm up the space, added a 2×4 platform, packed it with leftover R-13 insulation, and topped it with ¾-inch plywood.... **\$72**

Caulked and weather-stripped walls and windows with supplies already on hand.....**\$0**

Installed baseboard and shoe molding using new and leftover materials...**\$38**

Primed and painted the walls and trim white, the ceiling sky blue, and the window frames black**\$58**

Stenciled a black-and-white pattern onto the plywood floor using leftover paint, then stained it; added a coat of polyurethane..... **\$51**

Wall-mounted a bar top made from maple plywood and scrap trim using a pair of new corbels; sealed it with tung oil..... **\$91**

Added new and old plants and accessories, including four vintage chairs borrowed from another room.....**\$87**

TOTAL \$397



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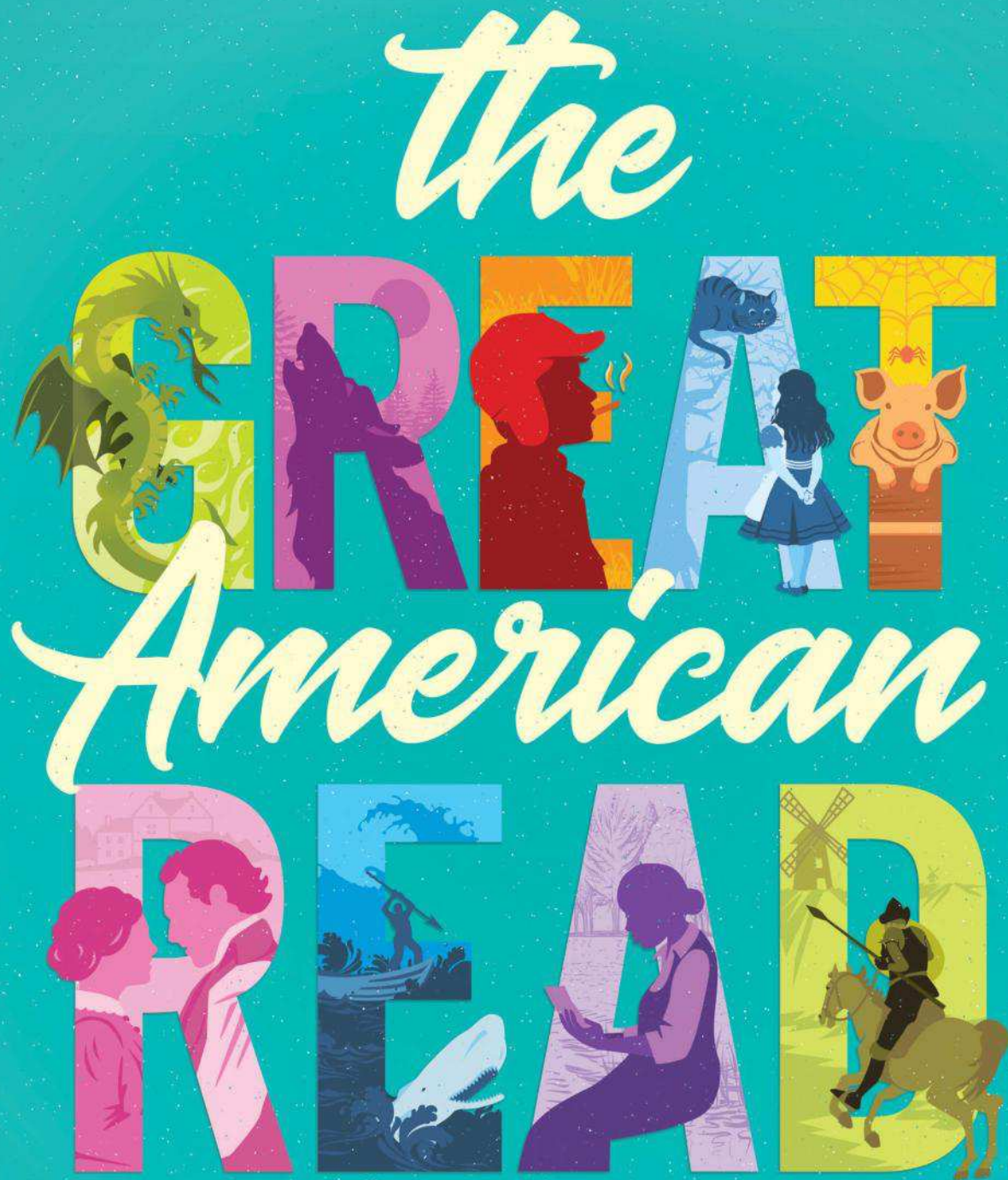
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Are you ever too old to get a mortgage?

If you're buying or refinancing, the answer may surprise you

BY NATHANIEL WICE • ILLUSTRATIONS BY IRENE RINALDI

➔ **WHETHER YOU'RE** looking for help financing the Victorian fixer-upper of your dreams, tapping the value of the house where you've been for years, or taking advantage of rates that are still at near-historic lows, you might be surprised at how mortgage lenders rate older borrowers.

➔ Age doesn't matter.

Counterintuitive as it may sound, your loan application for a mortgage to be repaid over 30 years looks the same to lenders whether you are 90 years old or 40. A web of federal civil rights laws, including the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and the Fair Housing Act, make it illegal for a creditor to discriminate on the basis of an adult's age.

➔ Being debt-free may pose a

problem. Greg McBride, chief financial analyst at Bankrate.com, says an unexpected stumbling block can be that you don't have a credit rating if you haven't recently been in debt. "It used to be that you looked to retire debt-free. You may have a great credit history, but if you're out of the credit game now—debit cards don't count, and you've paid off your car loan, you've paid off your mortgage—there's no recent activity to give you a score. It's one of the reasons to use a credit card even if you pay it off completely each month, just so you have active credit lines to show a current credit history." A strong credit score can mean you'll be approved with a better borrowing rate.



→ **Retirement income is still income.** Mortgage applications usually start with questions about income to document how you will make monthly payments. In place of the employed person's pay stub and W-2, retirees can provide a Social Security or pension award letter. The sources of income, unlike your credit score, do not affect the calculation of how much debt you can carry, according to Bill Banfield, executive vice president of Capital Markets at Quicken Loans: "We don't have different guidelines based on profession or employment." Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which largely set the standards for the secondary market in mortgages, usually require that monthly housing and debt costs (including real estate taxes and homeowner's insurance) account for no more than 50 percent of monthly income.

→ **Your savings can work as income.** Specialized mortgage lenders often associated with stockbrokers like Merrill Lynch and JP Morgan cater to the affluent with alternative forms of underwriting of some of the same kinds of 15- and 30-year mortgages. If you have investments, ask the firm where they are held about mortgages. Morgan Stanley Private Bank, for instance, has an Asset Pro-Forma Method for attributing income from investment accounts, so that wealth can qualify you for a mortgage even if you're without income. A million-dollar investment account with stocks and bonds, for instance, could typically be calculated as the equivalent of \$35,000 a year in income (assuming 5 percent of annual income, after a conservative 30 percent discount for market risk). The borrower is not required to cash in these assets—the investments are merely used to demonstrate an ability to make mortgage payments. Another industry term for this kind of loan is "asset depletion mortgage."

These assumptions are actually more conservative than Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac guidelines, which are also used by mortgage lenders industry-wide. The Fannie and Freddie rules can qualify the same million-dollar investment account—it could be retirement savings in an IRA or a 401(k)—toward a "three-year continuance of income." Using this math, the million-dollar account, divided into three years, is the equivalent of an annual income of \$233,333 (\$1,000,000 less 30 percent market-risk discount, divided into three years).

→ **You don't need to put down 20 percent.** "The myth is still out there," says Quicken's Banfield. "But Fannie and Freddie programs allow for mortgages that are 97 percent of a home purchase. FHA



mortgages go to 96.5 percent. The Veterans Administration will do 100 percent."

→ **Reverse mortgages can be legit.** They can be a lifeline for retirees who need to tap home equity for living expenses, and, according to Svenja Gudell, Zillow's chief economist, "Boomers have, on average, just over \$125,000 in home equity." A "cash out" mortgage or home equity line of credit can also tap this value. But instead of paying down the loan over time—as in a typical 15- or 30-year mortgage—the reverse mortgage loan compounds, with the growing loan to be repaid when the borrower moves out or dies. "Bad actors have given reverse mortgages a bad name," says Bankrate's McBride, "but the product is sound." Borrowers must be at least 62 years old and are required to go through reverse mortgage counseling. Players who offer Home Equity Conversion Mortgages (HECM) through the Federal Housing Administration include Quicken Loans' One Reverse Mortgage. CEO Gregg Smith says, "the home should be a key asset in planning for retirement." ■

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Candy crush

A secondary staircase becomes a visual treat when painted a handful of unexpected hues **BY KATELIN HILL**

➔ **CERTAIN UTILITY** spaces in a house generally get overworked and underdecorated. Not so in this Southern California house, where an array of playful paint colors brighten the back stairs, while chunky wood treads and neutral gray trim keep the look sophisticated.

The most difficult part in pulling off this project? Putting together the palette. “One color shouldn’t look like an uninvited guest,” says architectural color consultant Amy Wax. If you stick to colors from a small collection, says Wax, they’ll probably be complementary. Or, if you’re picking from paint-chip strips, go for shades that have comparable density, or depth of pigment—whether they fall at the top, middle, or bottom of the strips—and make sure there’s some contrast between each one. Another approach: Try attaching a single adjective to your selections, such as energetic, historical, or “sweet”—like the intensified pastels at right. If one pick doesn’t fit your descriptor, it likely won’t go with the flow.

Wax advises using an odd number of colors in a seemingly random pattern, as shown. Before you commit, paint a large swatch on each riser and live with the colors for a few days—you may find that in certain lights, some blend too much with their neighboring shades. When you arrive at a combination you’re happy with, it takes just a few quarts of semigloss or satin—scuffs wipe off more easily when the paint has a little sheen—to seriously step up your stair game. ■



PHOTO: JEREMY COULTER/POLSKY PERLSTEIN ARCHITECTS

Spray On a New Style!

CLEAN, LEAFY, and as laid-back as a summer's day, the "tropical modern" look is trending now, and this retro rattan bucket chair evokes the casual comfort of the style. However, the finish was quite outdated, and the piece was beginning to show signs of wear and tear. So we asked House One editor Jenn Largesse to reimagine this simple yet stylish seat and bring it back to life.



THEN Jenn found this chair on a curb, wearing a FREE TO A GOOD HOME sign.



NOW This curbside find was transformed in just a few hours—and for just a few dollars—with the help of Rust-Oleum spray paint, a faux-fur cushion, and a foliage-pattern pillow. For easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions, visit house.one/projects/rattan-chair



A LITTLE SPRAY GOES A LONG WAY

To give the chair a modern flair, Jenn selected Rust-Oleum Painter's Touch® 2X Ultra Cover® spray paint in flat black. This premium general-purpose paint has great coverage, which makes the job fast and easy.

PRO TIPS

For clean, even coverage, hold the can approximately 10 to 12 inches from your target, and, using a sweeping motion, begin and end your spray beyond the edges of the project to eliminate stop-and-start marks. Shake well, and often,

while you work. Always apply spray paint in a well-ventilated area, such as your backyard or garage. And be

sure to check your product label for detailed application and drying instructions.



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Reclaiming her past

This Old House teams up with a second Charleston homeowner to revive a dilapidated but memory-filled Victorian-era house where her grandparents once lived **BY BRIDGET VENATTA**



➔ **AS JUDITH AIDOO-SALTUS** stands in the foyer of her 1890s Charleston, SC, house and surveys a beat-up screen door, the decades seem to roll backward. With its warped and gouged wood, peeling paint, and rusted hardware, the door is in rough shape, especially compared with the rest of the home, which is looking refreshed thanks to a down-to-the-studs renovation that is being documented by *This Old House* TV.

For Judith, 55, the weathered door is something of a time machine, sparking memories of the summers she spent in Charleston with her grandparents. Every year till she was about 12, she traveled to their home from Washington, D.C., where her Charleston-born mother and her father had settled after

The house's stacked front porches are unusual for Charleston, SC. The massive crape myrtle was planted by the homeowner's grandmother decades ago.

BEFORE Water intrusion over the 15 years when the house stood vacant led to widespread rot and termite damage.





ABOVE: The four original fireplaces will be converted to gas; the brick chimneys required repointing with historically accurate mortar. Two mantels were rotted beyond repair; the two pictured here will be restored and reinstalled.

RIGHT: Tom Silva surveys the site of an archway that will separate the dining room and the new kitchen.

graduating from Howard University. Judith remembers peering through the door's scallop-edged screen to catch the breeze and drink in the hustle and bustle of the surrounding Elliotborough neighborhood. "Back then, it was a thriving middle-class black community," Judith recalls. "We all knew our neighbors, and my grandmother would sit on the porch and hail people as they passed by."

Recent gentrification has changed the fabric of the neighborhood, with new construction peppered in among the period houses, and lots of upscale restaurants and bars have popped up within walking distance of the house. While she cherishes memories of the close-knit community she knew as a child, Judith also concedes, "It's good to see the property values going up and the old houses being refurbished."

Until recently, hers was one of



those old houses in dire need of attention. After Judith bought the 1,900-square-foot two-story from her mother in 1998 (widowed by then, her grandmother had retired to Ghana, West Africa), the house stood empty for more than 15 years. "I always planned to remodel it, but life got in the way," says Judith, a Harvard Law grad

turned investment banker whose work had her splitting her time between first New York, then suburban Washington, D.C., and Ghana.

When Judith finally was ready to renovate the home as a primary residence for herself and her wife, Julia Aidoo-Saltus, a native Bermudian who works as a

corporate lawyer, there was an enormous amount of labor needed to make the house livable again. Holes in the roof had invited in the elements, and the water intrusion had caused considerable damage. Some beams, trim, and interior doors had been hollowed out by termites. The plaster walls were crumbling, the floors were sagging, and rot had undermined the pier-and-beam foundation. Most of the exterior woodwork was beyond repair; vines and moss grew freely between the Dutch-lap siding.

“My first thought was *teardown*—that it would be better, faster, and almost cheaper to start fresh,” says *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva. But Judith’s family connection to the place—not to mention the strict renovation guidelines set by the City of Charleston’s Board of Architectural Review—made that impossible. “So the challenge became how to bring it back, make it look good, and make it last,” says Tom.

Local architectural designer Andrew Gould, a neighbor whose backyard adjoins Judith’s, drew up blueprints to present to the city, which had to sign off on the project before construction could begin. Protecting and restoring historically significant exterior details, like the double Greek Revival-style porches in front, was top priority. “The great majority of Victorian-era houses in Charleston are single houses, which are one room wide with side porches, so having front porches is not so typical,” Gould says.

His plans called for rebuilding the porches and refurbishing original interior details such as the staircase, the four fireplaces, and a set of pocket doors between the living and dining rooms. Period-appropriate additions would include two east-facing second-story windows that line up with

TOP: Judith Aidoo-Saltus and her mother, Nora Aidoo, share memories sparked by the old screen door with *TOH* plumbing and heating expert Richard Trethewey. The homeowners plan to refurbish the door themselves.

MIDDLE: A period-appropriate archway will visually separate the new kitchen from the adjacent dining room in the open-plan layout.

BOTTOM: The pine staircase was one of the soundest original features of the home. More beadboard will cover both stairway walls. *Insulation:* Rockwool





stacked porches in the rear will echo those in the front, though with simpler square columns to distinguish them as less formal. The porches will overlook a walled back garden with a pergola gate and an arched entry.

The house's condition presented plenty of building challenges for Flyway Construction, the local contracting firm. When the team discovered that the existing kitchen add-on they had pledged to salvage was beyond hope, they had to seek city approval for the additional demo and construction, unanticipated extra work that added about three weeks to the timeline. "The main structure was so rotted that it was out of square by five or six inches," says project manager Bridges Williams. "We not only had to reframe the existing structure but also rebuild the addition and align the two."

That was only after attending to the foundation, which meant jacking up the house, replacing rotted girders, adding new piers, and repointing the existing ones.

All-new wiring, plumbing reinforcements, and a forced-air HVAC system were needed too, with ducts tucked in closets, cabinets, and behind a tub.

Soon drywall will lend the rooms a more finished look, and the new kitchen and baths will start to take shape. Judith and Julia will refinish the old screen door to get it ready to be hung on the back porch. Local interior designer Taylor King is busy helping them choose paint colors and furniture.

The couple are excited to bring life back to the home, a place, as Judith recalls, where friends and neighbors once gathered for rounds of pinochle and plates of okra gumbo and sweet potato pie. "It was a lovely house before," says Judith, "and hopefully it will be again." ■



ABOVE: Tom Silva checks out the framing on the two-story addition, which will hold a guest room on the ground level and a master suite above it.

LEFT: New stacked porches in back echo the original Greek Revival-style front porches, but with simpler square columns.

existing windows below them, and another set of pocket doors between the living room and foyer.

There was a silver lining to the scale of the damage: Since much of the interior woodwork and plaster were beyond rescue, the layout could be tweaked without sacrificing historical materials. At the couple's request, the kitchen would be relocated opposite the dining room, and opened up. Could

added a period-appropriate arch to visually distinguish the two spaces while allowing for an open flow. Design consultant Niki Komorek mapped out the kitchen's white flat-panel cabinets and midnight-blue island, which will be finished with marble-look quartz countertops.

The city green-lighted a two-story addition in back with a guest room on the first floor and a master suite above it. A second set of

Rebalancing a boxy split-level

A more prominent entry, a new side porch, and upgraded siding and stonework improve the view from the curb **BY THOMAS BAKER • ILLUSTRATION BY DRAWGATE INC.**



BEFORE

➔ **OUT THE BACK** of his 1977 split-level in Manhattan, KS, homeowner Aaron Harries has a magnificent view of rolling prairie and open sky. “But I’d like the front to be more balanced and welcoming,” he says.

So we asked local firm Ben Moore Design to propose some ideas. Their team would swap the deck for a screened porch with a stepped-down prow roof, giving the house more presence—and function—overall. A new portico, with exposed roof beams and tapered columns atop stone piers, emphasizes the front entry, which is bumped out to create a usable 7-by-10-foot vestibule inside. Other upgrades include properly proportioned windows, two types of fiber-cement siding, and a broad band of natural limestone to match the chimney. A low wall adds another level of interest—and planting space. Says Aaron of the new design, “I love it!” 🏡

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The screened porch has a roof like the one above it, and columns that match the portico's.



finishing touches

Adding several Craftsman-style elements gives this update a familiar old-house feel



tapered column

Made of rot-proof cellular PVC, these hollow 4-foot columns wrap structural support posts. Turncraft Craftsman Series, from \$167; architecturaldepot.com



wall sconce

The detail on this patinated brass fixture matches the style of the windows and entry-door lights. Arroyo Craftsman Huntington Outdoor Wall Lantern, from \$165; wayfair.com



showy shrub

Sun-loving fire thorn sports clusters of red-orange berries in late summer. This fast-growing *Pyracantha* ‘Mohave’ is disease and deer resistant. From \$70; monrovia.com



front door

A three-light, flat-panel fir door sets the tone for the entry; a matching transom and sidelights usher in even more natural light. #6863 3-Panel 3-Lite, \$736; simpsondoor.com

This Old House blueprint

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ask This Old House ▶

Q I'd like to buy my son-in-law, who's a pretty good woodworker, a midrange router and four or five useful router bits to start his collection. What should I look for?

—KEITH JONES, DALLAS

48

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

A

There are lots of good routers to choose from. The best ones have a soft-start, variable-speed motor that automatically responds to changing loads; an easy-to-reach ON/OFF switch; and a ½-inch collet to hold the bits, like the ones below. The best bits have a sturdy ½-inch shank and carbide cutting edges. In my collection, the most-used bits are the roundover, the flush-trim bit for following patterns, the rabbeting bit, straight bits to make shallow hinge mortises, and the mortising bit to cut deep recesses for tenons.

—TOM SILVA, TOH GENERAL CONTRACTOR

RABBETING BIT

CHAMFER BIT

DOVETAIL BIT

COVE BIT

STRAIGHT BIT

MORTISING BIT

OGEE BIT

ROUND OVER BIT

FLUSH-TRIM BIT

STRAIGHT BIT

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General Contractor



NORM ABRAM
Master Carpenter



RICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and Heating Expert



ROGER COOK
Landscape Contractor



KEVIN O'CONNOR
Host

PHOTOS: (5 PORTRAITS) CARL TREMBLAY, (RIGHT) ANTHONY TIEULI



Rabbits have eaten the bark off one of our apple trees. Can it be saved? And how do I keep them from coming back? —NANCY MCGOWEN, SPALDING, NE

ROGER COOK REPLIES: If rabbits girdle a tree—chew off the bark all around the trunk—during the winter, its dormant period, then it might be possible for an arborist to apply bridge grafts across the damage and save the tree. Such grafts enable nutrients to flow up to the branches. But when rabbits girdle a tree in the summer, the tree is toast. Nothing can be done to save it. Now if some bark is intact, the tree can survive, but you'll have to protect it from further predations.

Roger Cook ties a cylinder of hardware cloth around a newly planted apple tree to protect its bark from rabbits, mice, and deer.

You could take a cue from Australia and build a rabbit-proof fence around your property to keep the critters out. The barrier Down Under, which has proved quite

effective, is a 2,000-mile-long ribbon of wire mesh with its bottom edge buried 6 inches underground. Yours wouldn't have to be that long, but you'd need some sort of rabbit-proof gate so you could get in and out of your fenced-in enclosure, and that might soon become a pain in the neck.

The more practical alternative would be to erect a little cylindrical fence around each tree, as I'm doing here, using 1/4-inch hardware cloth made of galvanized steel. The cylinder should be at least 2 inches wider than the trunk, to keep gnawing teeth at bay, and tall enough to prevent standing cottontails from reaching the bark. I make mine as tall as possible,

DIY SMARTS

Before Richard Trethewey installs a new toilet, he checks the distance from the wall to the center of the drain to make sure the new fixture will fit.



Q Will the new toilet fit?

I'm replacing our old toilet with something more efficient. Will the new one have the same wall-to-drain measurement as the old one? —BRIAN VAN TUBBERGEN, HOLLAND, MI

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES: When it comes to plumbing, almost nothing is standardized, including rough-in dimensions: the distance from the wall to the center of the closet flange that connects your toilet to the drain. It usually ranges from 10 to 14 inches—12 inches is most common these days—but I've seen flanges even closer to a wall.

It's easy to determine the rough-in dimension for any toilet, and you don't even have to remove it. Simply measure from the wall to the nearest closet bolt, which holds the toilet to the flange. If there's a baseboard, add its thickness to get the actual wall-to-drain distance.

If your measurement is close to 10, 12, or 14 inches, you're in luck; you should be able to remove and replace the toilet yourself. Don't worry if your rough-in doesn't match these dimensions exactly. Anything within the 10- to 14-inch range can be accommodated by just setting the toilet farther from the wall than the usual $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. Rough-ins a little shy of 10 inches can also work with the existing flange, if you don't mind the toilet being closer to the wall.

For rough-ins between 8 and $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the wall, you'll need an offset closet flange, which can move the drain's centerpoint $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches away from the wall. That should be enough clearance for a toilet with a 10-inch rough-in. Installing offset flanges is a tricky job, however. Call in a plumber if you need to go that route.

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DIY SMARTS ONLINE

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because a crusty snowpack will allow hungry rabbits to reach even higher in winter.

Flare out the bottom edge of the cylinder to get it below the mulch and to keep its sharp ends from cutting into the roots. Then tie the edges together with short lengths of wire, as I'm doing here.

Hardware cloth is also effective against voles and mice, and will help protect the trunk from deer scraping their antlers in the fall.

Keep the barrier in place for as long as you can, but make sure to remove it when the trunk grows too close. After several years, hopefully, the bark will be thick enough to resist being damaged.

Q Good technique for driving screws

I've noticed that Tom Silva doesn't drive a screw in all the way at one time. He screws it in most of the way, stops, then goes a little more, stops, then drives it home. Is there a reason for this?

—LEE WAMPLER, SULLIVAN, IN

TOM SILVA REPLIES: Wow! I'd better be careful; you're watching my every move!

Just so you know, I will drive screws straight in without stopping when using an impact driver, and fastening into framing. But most of the time, when I'm driving screws with my regular drill/driver, I do everything I can to make sure that I don't strip the screwhead. That means I line up my drill/driver with the screw and always keep the tip of the bit seated in the screw. The stopping and starting serves the same purpose. I guess you could say I feel my way in as I set the screw. That way I don't strip the head when it bottoms out.

PHOTO: CARLENE RYAN



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Q Rusty ducts in a slab

We have a single-story house built on a concrete slab. An inspection of the ducts that run through the slab revealed areas that are rusting away. Is there any way to fix them?

—KEN CRAIG, NEWPORT, NC

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES:

Whoever thought it was a good idea to bury galvanized-metal ducts in or under a concrete slab obviously didn't think—or care—about what would happen to them in a few decades. Sorry to hear that you're the one who's stuck with the consequences of that bad decision.

One not-very-good option would be to abandon those ducts and run new ones through the attic and vent them through your



ceilings. That would require you to insulate the attic to keep the ducts cool in the summer and warm in the winter. You'd also have to remove your old furnace and replace it with a new updraft model to push the air

Rusted metal ducts can be relined with a special coating that covers the corrosion and fills any voids.

into those new overhead ducts.

Or you could cut into your slab with a concrete saw and replace the old ducts with ones that will survive underground, such as BlueDuct high-density polyethylene ducting (aqcind.com). All the cuts would then have to be filled with fresh concrete. Not a very appealing option, either.

Here's a solution that won't be as costly or invasive as the other two: Reline the existing ducts with a thick, rubbery coating made by Duct Armor (ductarmor.com). The patented application system uses a high-pressure airless pump that's attached to a nozzle. After a duct is cleaned in the usual manner, the nozzle is fed into the duct, where it sprays the water-based coating onto the duct's inner

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walls. When the coating cures, the nozzle takes another trip down the duct, spraying a second coat. At the end of the process, when the new lining is fully cured, an inspection camera is inserted into the duct to confirm that there are no voids. If any turn up, spot applications will cover them.

Jason Stiles, who holds the Duct Armor franchise in Tulsa, OK, says that he can reline the ducts in a 2,000-square-foot house in 3 to 4 hours, for about \$400 per duct. He says the lining, which is loaded with zinc oxide to inhibit mold growth, carries a 15-year warranty and can stand up to the brushes used to clean ducts. If the coating ever needs to be renewed, he says it's a simple matter to spray on a new coat.

What is it?

- A** Drywell
- B** Tub strainer
- C** Wire spool
- D** Sprinkler head

FOR THE ANSWER,
SEE PAGE 42



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Although I don't have experience with this system myself, it seems like it might be worth a try, given the unpalatable alternatives.

Q Dangerous siding, or benign?

We want to add a front porch to our 1925 cottage, but we're worried about removing its faux-stone siding because it might contain asbestos. Would it be dangerous for us to remove it? If it's safe, how do we remove it and what do we put in its place?

—LINDA FAUSEL, BAY VIEW, WI

MARK McCULLOUGH REPLIES: If your cast-in-place concrete veneer does contain asbestos, then removing it improperly certainly

Mark McCullough, the owner of MJM Masonry in Arlington, MA, has been the masonry contractor on 12 This Old House TV projects.



What is it?

B Tub strainer
The TubShroom silicone strainer fits in a standard 1½-inch tub drain, where it collects human and pet hair without impeding water flow. Simply remove and clean it when necessary. \$13; tubshroom.com



Removing faux-stone-veneer siding that's been molded in place, as below, requires determination and demolition tools like a drilling hammer.

could pose a danger to you and your neighbors. Once inhaled, the fine asbestos fibers can become lodged in the lungs and trigger the formation of cancerous lesions.

While I doubt that there is asbestos in your siding, the only way to know for sure is to have it tested. Test kits are available at hardware stores and home centers for less than \$10. Just pop a small sample into the pouch and send it to a lab, which charges about \$40 for the test and report.

If the report says that there is asbestos, and the veneer is in good condition, you don't have to do anything. Leaving it in place is a perfectly safe choice. But if you still want to get rid of it, then hire an asbestos remediator to contain, remove, and properly dispose of the toxic material.

Now let's say the news is good and there's no asbestos. You can go ahead and remove the siding yourselves. I'd start at a corner or an open crack and use just a drilling hammer and a masonry chisel to pry off the veneer and get a peek at what's underneath. Chances are you'll find either concrete blocks or builder's felt

over wood framing. Either way, ripping it off will be hard, physically demanding work, what we masons call "fun."

The replacement siding is up to you. A brick or natural-stone veneer would be appropriate over concrete block. Clapboard siding—whether it's wood, fiber cement, or poly-ash—works well over wood framing.

One word of caution if you do go ahead with this project: The silica dust generated by cutting, drilling, or chiseling concrete isn't good for your lungs, either. While you work, be sure to wear a NIOSH-approved N95 respirator to keep from inhaling the silica. Safety goggles and gloves are also a must. Good luck!

Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

Go to: thisoldhouse.com/askTOH
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Include a complete address and daytime phone number. Published questions will be edited for clarity and length and may be used in other media. We regret that, because of the volume of mail received, we're unable to reply to unpublished questions.



Norm's tricks of the trade

No matter how neatly I wrap up a string line when I'm done, it's a tangled mess the next time I use it. Any suggestions?

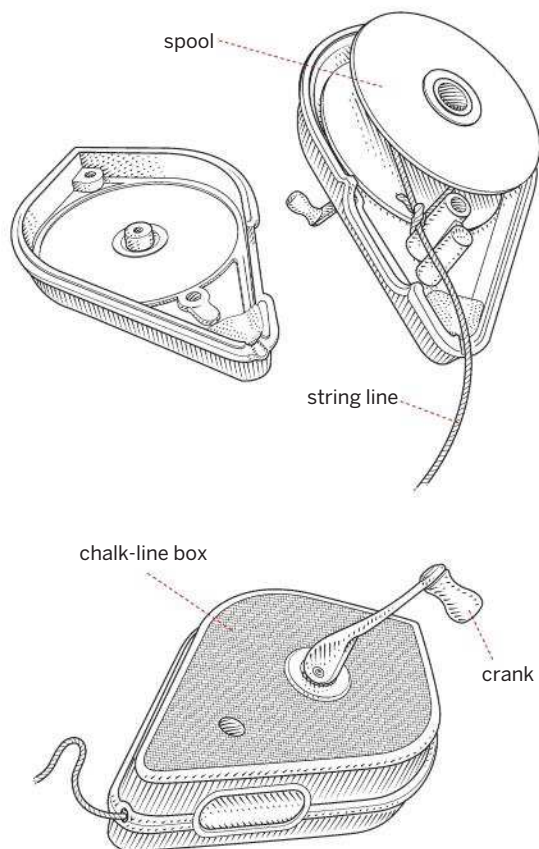
—JASON WOODFORD, MILFORD, CT

A Those stretchy nylon string lines, also called mason lines, are notoriously difficult to keep tidy. And who has the time to untangle them?

My dad and I fixed that issue by repurposing chalk-line boxes as string-line reels. The box's internal spool, turned by a crank handle, made it easy to deploy the line when needed and rewind it when we were done. Tangles were never a problem for us.

In most cases, you open a chalk-line box simply by backing out the screw that holds the two halves together. Tie the line to the spool the way you'd tie a string to a yo-yo, then lay the line in the guide hole at the box's nose. Screw the box back together and wind up your line using the crank. When the spool is full, tie on the barbed hook that comes at the end of every chalk line. It will act like a stop to keep you from winding the loose end into the box.

A typical reel holds about 100 feet of line. If you need more than that, just set up another chalk-line box in the same way. ■



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MID-CENTURY MASTERY

A free-flowing 1959 house with a lofty interior rises to the next level in the hands of two detail-obsessed owners

By Deborah Baldwin
Photographs by Gridley + Graves
Produced by Nicole Esposito-Polly
Styling by Anna Molvik

ABOVE: Zingy orange-painted doors greet visitors as they enter the brick-and-wood-clad house, built in 1959. The doors, hardware, and sconces are original. Paint: Behr's Clove Brown (siding) and Flaming Torch (door). Rug: Flor

OPPOSITE: The living room's old and new mid-century-style furnishings, many in citrus shades, reinforce the warmth of the oak floors, dark-stained rafters, and flagstone fireplace. Noguchi pendant light and Paul McCobb coffee table and stools: vintage. Credenza: Design Within Reach. Sofa: Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams





For many period-house lovers, the term “mid-century modern” evokes sharp angles, bare windows, and no place to sit except a stiff chrome chair. But you won’t have trouble finding privacy or comfy seating in the spacious 1959 home of George Marrone and Michael Nocera, dedicated restorers with a distinct preference for the floor plans and furnishings of the *Mad Men* era.

Instead, their postwar gem, in a leafy neck of Wilmington, Delaware, is more slinky than severe, with warming trends at every turn, from luminous wood accents to a fireplace open to pooled living space ideal for both cocooning and entertaining.

Appraising the house from the outside, near a sinuous creek and a wandering walkway, George tips his hat to the couple who commissioned it, Carolyn and Stanley Blish, and who “emphasized curves,” as he puts it, right down to a low-slung stone wall that wraps the back as if giving it a hug. The property’s

ABOVE: White paint, quartz countertops, sparkling mosaic tile, and new cabinet hardware and stainless-steel wall ovens brighten the kitchen. Cork flooring was chosen to blend with the adjacent oak. The sculptural vent hood is original. Countertops: Cambria. Tile: Ann Sacks

OPPOSITE, TOP: The downstairs den retains its sliding door and stained-walnut wall covering, complemented by vintage furnishings like an Adrian Pearsall rocker. The oversize picture window replaced one that was drafty and threatening to pop out. Window: Pella. Sofa: Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams

well-rounded approach extends inside, to a curvaceous swath of flagstone flooring and a floating staircase in the shape of an inverted capital C.

Carolyn Blish, an artist, now 90 and living in rural Pennsylvania, seems surprised to get a call about the house, as if it’s newsworthy. It sits, after all, in the shadow of a Frank Lloyd Wright built around the same time on the very same creek, she says, by her late husband’s then boss.

The Blish house lacks a big-name provenance. “No architect,” says Carolyn, offering credit only to a savvy hairdresser. She and Stanley, an executive at DuPont, had been given an acre-and-a-half plot by her parents, who lived next door. “I saw a picture in a magazine, which I found through the guy who cut my hair,” she says. The house had a self-effacing brick facade and wild amounts of glass in back. “We said, ‘That’s it’ and gave it to our builder.”

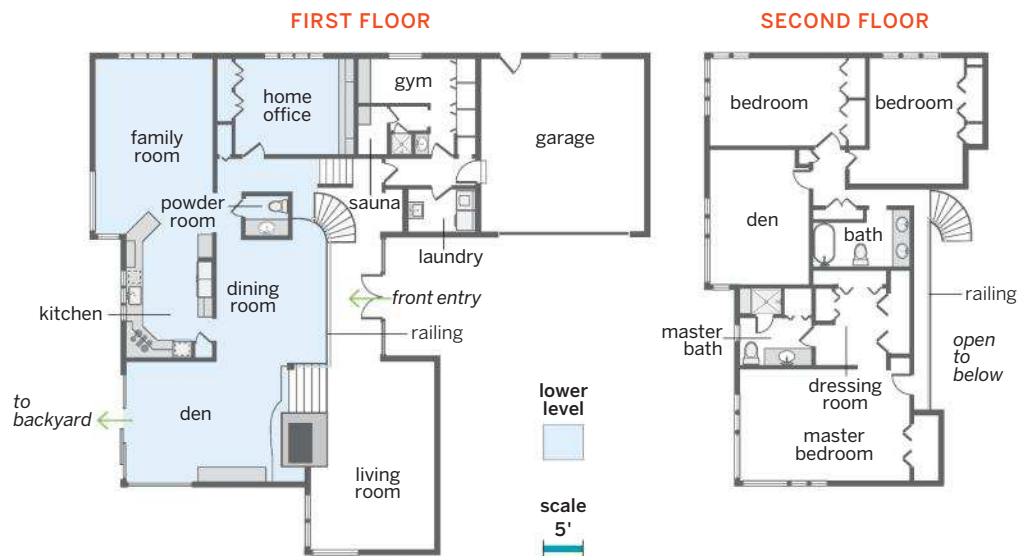
The moniker “mid-century modern,” which



ABOVE: Homeowner George Marrone, with Sasha, an Olde English Bulldogge, on the restored oak treads of the floating stairs. Previous owners had stained them ebony and wrapped them individually in thick-piled carpet.

FLOOR PLANS

The 4,300-square-foot house still has its four bedrooms, two and a half baths, and working sauna (with shower). The homeowners furnished one bedroom as an upstairs den, renovated the master bath and powder room, and removed cabinets over a kitchen peninsula. They shied away from changing the layout, which is centered around a dramatic open, multilevel living space.





you'll now find everywhere, wasn't popularized until the 1980s, when interest in the period, roughly 1935 to 1965, took off, perhaps in reaction to bland McMansions. Stripped of ornamentation and trained on Mother Nature, the houses are characterized by opaque walls in front and large, open, shared spaces with expanses of glass in back. Natural materials like rugged stone and unpainted wood mingled with more contemporary plywood and plastic, giving rise to equally innovative furnishings—fiber-glass chairs, paper pendants, sputnik chandeliers, anything Eames.

George believes his post-and-beam find may have been a magazine's "idea house" and would love to run across the period periodical that would help him trace its DNA. A health care administrator by day, he is a sleuth by nature. Few things delight him like unearthing a planter at a garage sale that has a racy mid-century provenance and a value far exceeding the \$5 asking price. "I enjoy the thrill of the hunt," he says, surrounded by mid-century furnishings painstakingly acquired online and on foot.

ABOVE: A guest bedroom looks lively thanks to vintage lamps and mod-patterned wallpaper and curtains. A large print by Roy Lichtenstein is surrounded by pieces from the 1960s. Wallpaper: Antonina Vella. Quilt: Crate & Barrel. Curtains: West Elm. Rug: Pottery Barn. Bedside table: Target

CONTINUE THE TOUR

See more photos of this 1959 gem at thisoldhouse.com/mid-century-mastery

For a house with no architect, this one has swagger to spare. A stately front entrance, set back and framed by glass panels, hints at the dramatic space just inside. Skylights brighten dark-stained rafters angled over an entry anchored by Pennsylvania flagstone, handpicked by Carolyn Blish in shades of teal and eggplant. The entry faces a wide mezzanine fronting three bedrooms, an upstairs den, and two baths. Windows clustered at the back overlook a circular patio cracked by age and fond use like a worn leather sofa.

Floating stairs and warm wood built-ins add a sense of spaciousness to an already roomy 4,300 square feet. "The first time I saw it empty, I asked myself, 'What did we do?'" says George.

He grew up nearby, and had roamed around house-hunting for years without noticing all that excitement hidden in plain sight. Through some trick of reverse-snob curb appeal, the house, he notes, "looks like a small ranch from the front." He had always wondered what it would be like to lay claim to a house similar to the one in *The Brady Bunch*, as he



ABOVE LEFT: A muted palette and textured grasscloth wallpaper add to the serenity of the master bedroom. New curtains cozy up the original windows. Wallpaper: Phillip Jeffries. Bed: Crate & Barrel. Paul McCobb side table and Peter Hvidt chair: vintage

likes to say, with “its casualness, its full rock wall.”

He found what he was looking for through “kismet,” he says, after he and Michael, who works in finance, had renovated a townhouse in Wilmington. They were settled into vertical living and continuing to grow their collection of mid-century finds, when one day George was Web-surfing on behalf of a friend and saw a listing that featured the Bradys’ airy staircase and stonework.

A year later, his friend was still looking, and George and Michael were once again renovating.

While the place was sound, with a new roof and stepped-up wiring, some of the double-paned windows were foggy or slipping in their openings, and the HVAC system required reinforcement. The unloved living room carpeting sat on bare subflooring, and the repeatedly worked-upon kitchen had dark solid-surface counters and so many layers of lavender linoleum flooring that “you had to step up to go in,” George recalls. The master bath also needed updating. Overall, the place felt dark, as if it needed to be dusted off and reminded of its clean, airy origins.

The new owners found themselves moving from one unfinished space to the next, shoving aside unpacked boxes and bags while pulling down heavy curtains, pulling up shaggy carpet, and struggling to lighten things up with lots of white paint. They found a company to tackle the heating and cooling, and tracked down a contractor who could swap in energy-efficient windows in the living spaces, replacing a view-impairing trio in the living room with a single

ABOVE RIGHT: The powder room held on to its original floating vanity and white side walls while gaining cheery mosaic tile in citrus hues, set in a custom pattern by homeowner George. Michael raised the ceiling and replaced the light fixtures. Mosaic tile: Modwalls. Mirror: West Elm



unit. Later, after an earthquake, heavy rains ushered water into the basement, so more pros were called in to install two French drains and a second sump pump.

The couple managed all this while attempting to contain two bulldog puppies, who set about turning a minimalist raked sand bed under the stairs into a jumping-pad shortcut to the sunken dining area. Today Sasha and Sophie play no small part in fostering interest in the house on Instagram, where “@modernpup” has 19,200 followers.

Less high-profile is the role played by Michael, who credits his handiness to a DIY dad, stints watching *This Old House* on TV, and plenty of book research. At estate sales, while George hunts up the odd Paul McCobb, Michael is drawn to the old tools.

Together they painted the exterior and interior, redid the master bath and powder room, and hung wallpaper—upside down, in one case. “We almost killed each other,” George says dryly, “but we did it.”

Their biggest project was the kitchen, large for its era and walled off from the formal dining area. They wisely left the wall, while opening things up by removing cabinets over the peninsula facing the breakfast table and family room. They put in a glistening tile backsplash, white counters, stainless-steel wall ovens, plus a new sink, faucet, and cabinet hardware.

The house looks like its old self. All that’s left is for Michael to finish a small home-gym area near the original cedar-lined sauna—which still works.

Hot rocks, open fires, stairs everywhere: One thing that never changed is the reckless air so characteristic



of the postwar, pre-seatbelt era. Never mind a fireplace open on three sides—the den still has a built-in charcoal grill with a flue. (“We grill outside,” George hastens to add.) Railings 32 inches high with balusters 42 inches apart could be seen as an invitation to swing—or jump. “When kids are here, I get a little nervous,” George only half-jokes, one eye on collectibles daringly arrayed on low vintage tables.

Despite the carefully curated interior, the house still pulls the eye to its bones and to the views outside. It was built, after all, into a slope, as if bowing to nature. “No matter what room I’m in, I can connect with the outdoors,” George says happily.

ABOVE: A Moroccan rug and Sputnik chandelier soften the formal dining area. *Rug: Persian Rug Imports. Table and upholstered armchairs: Design Within Reach*

OPPOSITE: The living room fireplace shares its glow with a gathering spot on the other side. *Hans Wegner armchair and Bitossi ceramics, including side table: vintage*

Michael agrees. “I have a few favorite things,” he says. “In winter it’s definitely the fireplace, but in mild weather it’s the indoor-outdoor vibe, and enjoying the creek and gardens from inside or out on the patio.”

Both men talk about how magical it is to move around the multilevel open space, and how it lends itself to entertaining. “Everything flows so well,” George says, “yet if there’s only a few people it still feels intimate.”

“We do Mother’s Day, Thanksgiving, and a family reunion on Memorial Day,” he adds. “Everyone stays here.” Between extra bedrooms, sofas, and a Barcelona daybed, “we always have room for guests.” ■





BEST FRONT *forward*

Where space is tight and lawn's a yawn, street-side gardens are growing lush with specimen trees, showy shrubs, bold foliage, and riotous blooms. Check out the curbside plant life here—it might just inspire a front-yard makeover of your own

CHALK IT UP TO ALL the negative press about traditional water-hogging, chemical-laden turf grass—or possibly, all the high praise community gardens have received—but more and more homeowners are trading in front lawns for flower beds. The trend is especially noticeable in suburban and city neighborhoods, where postage-stamp-size plots of land keep maintenance demands in check, and sidewalk foot traffic brings a steady stream of encouragement.

For a drive-by glimpse at street-side spaces that extend a friendly welcome—bursting at their borders with flowers, shrubs, ornamental trees, and even edibles—you need look no further than Buffalo, New York. This Rust Belt city with a neighborhood feel knows well just

how infectious gardening can be; it now hosts the largest garden tour in the country. Every year, on the last full weekend of July, over 400 residents graciously open their garden gates to the public, attracting an estimated 65,000 visitors. “And you’d be hard-pressed to find two gardens that look alike,” says the event’s past president, Jim Charlier. As he describes it, most of the gardens on the tour—including his own—grow on tight urban lots. The front yards are often packed with plants, completely absent of grass, and loaded with personal touches, such as quirky yard art and custom fence designs.

Just ahead: four distinctive stops along Garden Walk Buffalo. Each offers a unique take on creating a small front-yard garden—with passersby in mind.

BY ANN E. STRATTON * PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATTHEW BENSON * PRODUCED BY CHARLOTTE BARNARD

A two-story red house with a lush garden. The house has red horizontal siding and white trim around the windows and the front porch. The porch has a small arched roof supported by white columns. A large, rounded evergreen shrub is positioned to the right of the porch steps. To the left of the steps is a large, leafy green plant. The garden in the foreground is filled with various plants, including a large bush of white flowers, a variegated yellow and green shrub, and several smaller green plants. A stone path leads from the foreground to the porch steps. The garden is bordered by a low stone wall on the left and a concrete path on the right.

OPPOSITE: A largely evergreen plant palette of shrubs and groundcovers makes a lush, four-season alternative to lawn grass.

THIS PAGE: Mature conifers along the foundation—a juniper on the left and a cedar—offer privacy without blocking views of the garden from inside.



ABOVE: 'Annabelle' hydrangea, lavender, and gaura reflect the garden's white-purple-pink color scheme. Hot hues are confined to the hellstrip.

TOP RIGHT: A hen planter in front of boxwood spheres and an oakleaf hydrangea strikes a playful note.

RIGHT: The perfect spiller plant for pots, variegated licorice tolerates heat and drought; here, it sets off pink and purple blooms.



FOUR-SEASON APPEAL

People usually overestimate the time Phoebe McKay spends working in her garden. "Just thirty minutes, most mornings, deadheading and pulling here and there" is all it requires, she says. That's if she's even home; every summer, Phoebe and her husband, Bruce, take off for their home state of Maine for weeks at a time. As long as she lines up someone to water and tidy, the garden carries on thanks to low-maintenance plant picks and a shrub-based design.

When the McKays moved in to their 1904 house in the late '80s, the front yard already had good bones, with granite steps, a slate walk, and a mature evergreen juniper and cedar. Busy keeping up with two young sons back then, Phoebe planted some pachysandra along the front walk and replaced the grass in her sunbaked hellstrip with drought-tolerant perennials—all freebies from a neighbor. It wasn't until 2005, with both boys in college, that, she says, "I finally got serious about gardening."

That year, she dug up the remaining turf and set out to create a garden for all seasons, filling her 30-by-22-foot front plot with a framework of easy-care shrubs and pockets of flowers. By 2006, the garden was on Buffalo's Garden Walk, and it has only become more special with time, as Phoebe tucks in reminders of Maine, like the fern garden under the limbed-up cedar and collections of river rocks from her travels. Despite these personal touches, Phoebe says, "where the backyard is for us, this is for the neighborhood"—a beautiful space that's meant to be shared.



ABOVE: A mixed foundation planting that includes rose of Sharon, oakleaf hydrangea, and boxwood complements the olive-green house trimmed in white and terra-cotta.

NEAR RIGHT: A basket of hot-pink fuchsia hangs above a cheery railing planter of petunias, begonias, and succulents.

FAR RIGHT: Black-eyed Susans pick up the yellow in the tropical variegated foliage of a potted croton.



BRING ON THE SUN

The old adage “right plant, right place” recently hit close to home for Peter Quartararo and his fiancée, Michele Battistoni. After years of shade gardening under a seriously overgrown 50-foot pine planted by Peter’s father decades ago, the couple made the tough call to cut it down. “It’s tricky when you lose such a tree,” Michele says. “Suddenly you see part of your home and yard that you never saw before.”

But by eliminating one problem, they essentially created another—or rather, an opportunity to overhaul the now sunny area in front of their 1892 Queen Anne. The garden is still in transition. All shade-loving plants were either reused or unloaded via a FREE PLANTS! posting on the neighborhood’s Facebook page. “Within an hour, the hostas by the curb were gone,” Michele says. A stone water feature and seating area are planned, as are bee-friendly plants “staged to have color all season,” Peter says. Opposite to where the pine stood, flowering shrubs and a low boxwood hedge line the driveway, poured in 2006 to replace lawn; the porch hosts revolving displays of succulents, bold tropicals, and annuals, picked to pop against the olive-colored house. “You can only do so much in a given space,” says Peter, who has just 20 feet between porch and sidewalk. “You have to think about how plants will look in five years, and balance what you want versus what fits.”





BOLD FOLIAGE IN FOCUS

When Scott Dunlap and Joe Hopkins bought their Folk Victorian in Buffalo's cottage district, there were two peonies out front, some lawn, and scraggly privet along the sidewalk. "It was probably still the prettiest yard on the block," says Scott, recalling the 1990s, when drugs and crime sent his street into a tailspin.

It wasn't until Joe sold his pet-store business, in 1995, that the garden really got growing. He dug up the shrubs and planted a mixed border by the porch. Each year he turned over a little more grass, till it was gone, leaving behind a tapestry of contrasting foliage. Since Joe is color-blind, he concentrates on texture, shape, and pattern—which explains his obsession with coleus. Says Scott, "He's fearless with color because he doesn't see it like everyone else."

The garden finally got a worthy backdrop when they rebuilt their crumbling porch in 2003. Borrowing ideas from the city's historical homes for spindles, a roof gable, and railing cutouts, the couple dreamed up a custom design and recruited an architect friend to help build it. "As stunning as the back garden is, we haven't sat out there in years," Scott says. It's on their front porch that the couple spend every evening, usually with friends. A stash of folding chairs inside the front hallway means they can always make room for one more. Says Joe, "For me, a front garden is as much about socializing as it is about gardening."

ABOVE: Layered shades of green create a subtle but still exuberant design.

NEAR RIGHT: Flowers go unmissed with this array of leaf shape, size, and pattern featuring ferns, hostas, and coleus.

FAR RIGHT: Mixing light and dark pinks makes for an eye-catching display of potted petunias, leafy coleus, and mophead hydrangea.

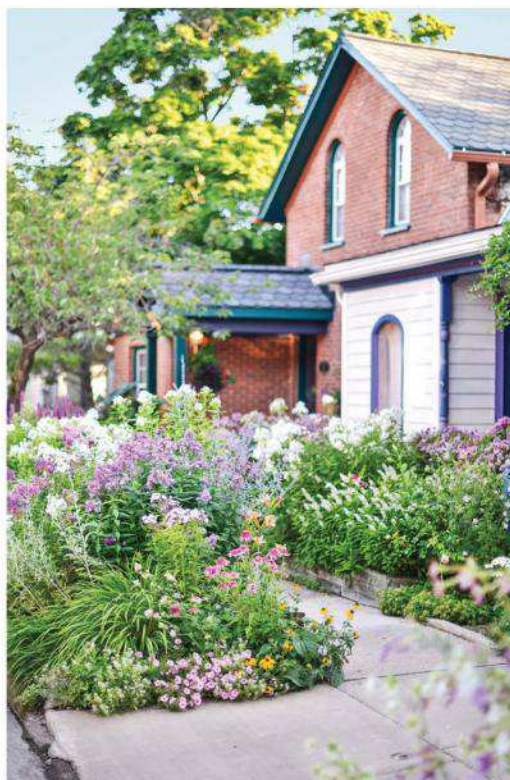




ABOVE: The hellstrip is a riot of color all summer, with scented pink and white phlox, the blue spires of Russian sage, and raspberry-hued coneflowers.

RIGHT: Fragrant sweet autumn clematis climbs both porch posts.

BELOW RIGHT: Cutting shears are intentionally left out in the front garden for passersby wishing to snip a few flowers to take home.



FREE-SPIRITED BLOOMS

Gardeners everywhere battle bugs, weeds, and weather, but a city garden has extra challenges. Since buying her 1870s brick cottage 25 years ago, Ellie Dorritie has had snowplows bulldoze plants, utility workers dig up her blooming hellstrip, and drunks fall into her flowers. But she's still at it: "I'm determined to just keep planting."

And plant she does, on every square inch of her street-side plot. But she's careful about what she puts where. The raised bed along her front porch sits mostly on concrete, with less than a foot of slow-draining soil. Plants that prefer better drainage are happier in the hellstrip. Both areas are packed with fragrant peak-summer bloomers in pink, purple, and white—though a gifted patch of yellow rudbeckia and an orange daylily have found a place, too. During the summer, daily watering, deadheading, and pinching back perennials like bee balm, loosestrife, and mallow encourages more blossoms. "I'll never admit to how much time I take in my flower beds," Ellie says. She's afraid of discouraging other people—and keeping them from discovering the joys of front-yard gardening for themselves. 🏡



MODERN LIVING

*With its low-slung lines, streamlined interior,
and openness to the outdoors, a refreshed 1955
house fully embraces its environs*

By Kathryn O'Shea-Evans
Photographs by Miki Duisterhof
Produced by Nicole Esposito-Polly
Styling by Sarah Alba



ABOVE: Broad swaths of sculptural low-water plants and a warm neutral paint scheme ground the 1955 house on its site. *Paint: Benjamin Moore's Weimaraner (siding) and Sail Cloth (trim)*

RIGHT: A Nelson saucer pendant lamp casts a warm glow over the dining room. *Paint: Benjamin Moore's Elephant Tusk (walls). Pendant: Design Within Reach. Door: Andersen*





You could have called it the house that Disney built—except that little about this Mill Valley, California, home was magical when Cathy and Charlie Wilmoth bought it back in 2006. Believed to be a kit house built in 1955 by a Disney artist, the 2,265-square-foot, four-bedroom, three-bath home had devolved into something more worthy of Hitchcock. “There were army stickers everywhere, seafoam-green carpet in the bathrooms,” says Cathy, and a “fish tank” toilet seat with faux tropical fish suspended in acrylic.

Still, with three growing kids, then ages 2, 5, and 9, the Wilmoths were desperate for larger quarters, preferably mostly on one level. “Our old house was a 1906 cottage with ceilings so low I would stretch my hands overhead and hit the beams, and taking laundry and babies up the rickety stairs was a challenge,” says Cathy, whose schedule is busy with volunteer work and an office job at the local school. The

ABOVE: The living room’s original oak floors just required refinishing. Replacement windows follow the roofline, in tempered glass—a must in earthquake country.

Wall sconces: Currey & Company

RIGHT: The round Arizona sandstone fireplace is entirely original, including the screen. Cathy Wilmoth added the custom cushions for casual seating.

property wasn’t anything like the 1920s Spanish house she and Charlie, an investment manager, thought they wanted; instead, it held things they didn’t even know they coveted. “I liked the Arizona sandstone fireplace and the windows and the heavy wood beams,” Cathy says.

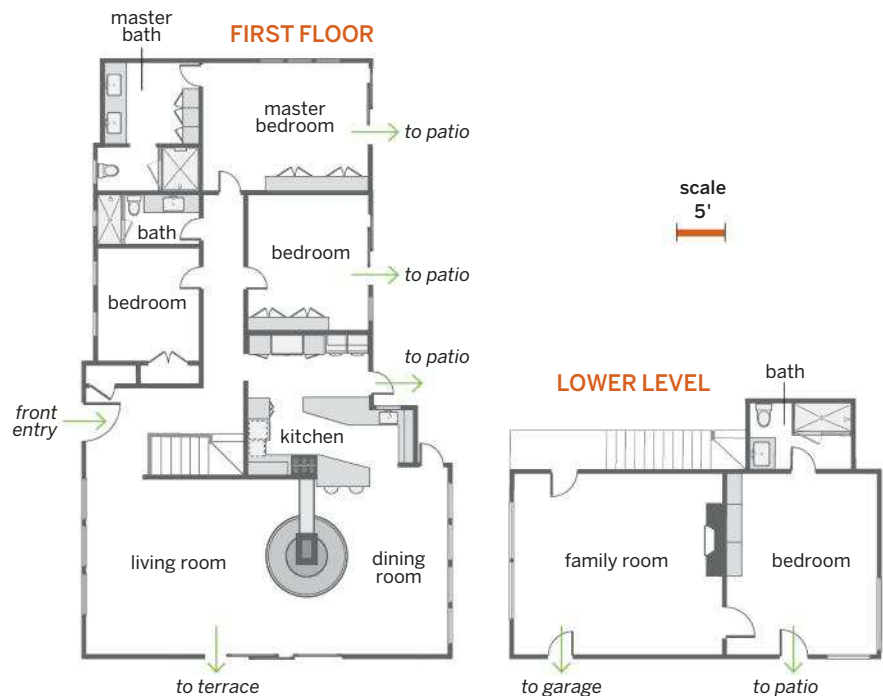
It’s also atypical for Mill Valley, which is known for quaint cottages. “Mid-century kit houses were quite uncommon here,” says architect Pierluigi Serraino, author of *NorCalMod: Icons of Northern California Modernism*. “But construction companies would customize stock plans for their clients’ needs, and California was big on owner-built houses, especially by the late 1960s, when communities were developing their own aesthetic language.”

Serraino sees nods to Frank Lloyd Wright in the Wilmoth house’s canted-outward roofline fascia and stepped horizontal balcony, and to Walter Gropius in the vertical siding. “I don’t mean to be nostalgic,



FLOOR PLANS

The interior of the 2,265-square-foot house, built in 1955, stayed largely as it was, with a master suite, two bedrooms, and a second bath on the main level; on the lower level, interior walls were added to carve out another bedroom suite. In the kitchen, the sink moved to a window location, upper cabinets came out above the bar seating, and the fridge moved next to the laundry, which stayed where it was. The baths were all gut-renovated; the master bath lost a closet to gain a second sink. The baths were all gut-renovated; the master bath lost a closet to gain a second sink.





but so much of the later mid-century architecture isn't quite as imaginative and daring. California was a definite trendsetter in 1950s home design." Two issues buyers of kit-built houses need to be aware of, says Serraino: Those homes called for tailored engineering specific to the slope of the site, and they often have waterproofing issues.

The Wilmoth house, on a terraced parcel, had all the makings of a real estate Cinderella story until, four days after the family moved in, on a 106-degree day, something horrifying happened: They had a small electrical fire in the walls. "We were unpacking boxes and my husband came from the back of the house, asking, 'Why aren't the switches working?'" The fire department came, didn't find anything, and left—but when Cathy put her hand on a wall and felt heat, the couple called them back. "They took an ax and broke through the redwood

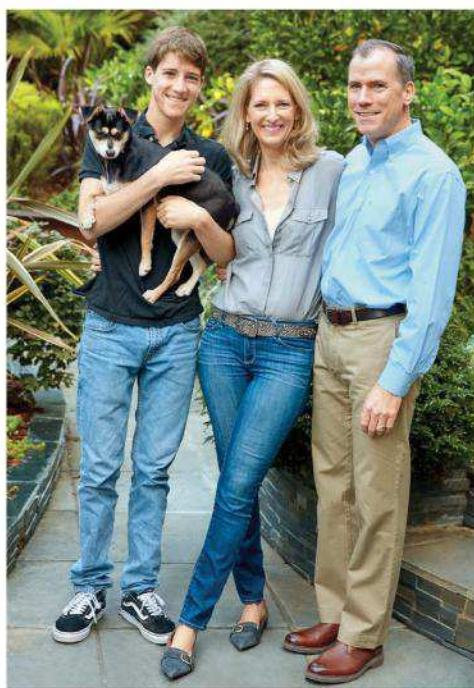
ABOVE LEFT: The corner galley kitchen got an upgrade with white oak cabinets, quartz counters, locally made ceramic tile, and warm bronze hardware. Tile: *Heath Ceramics. Ovens:* *Thermador. Cooktop:* *Viking. Vent hood:* *Zephyr. Counters:* *Caesarstone. Pulls:* *BauerWare*

ABOVE RIGHT: A skylight brightens the other end of the kitchen, which hosts the laundry and an undercounter compost bin. Pendant: *Cisco Home*

paneling in the living room—there were no junction boxes, everything was wired together with duct tape," she says. "It was bad." But ultimately it was also freeing: The fire forced the homeowners to upgrade all the electrical, which meant gutting the walls and removing the original paneling, which they donated to Habitat for Humanity.

"When you move into an old house, you think, *What do we keep, and what can we get rid of?*" Cathy explains. "We didn't want to paint the redwood because it's so beautiful, but it also felt dated and really dark." With the walls open, the couple seized the opportunity to add overhead and cabinet lights, rare in houses of this vintage. They also repaired significant rot in the eaves, a continuing problem as the roof has no gutters.

Since the unexpected expenses ate up much of their available budget (they still hadn't sold their



ABOVE: The master bedroom's original concrete-brick wall got refreshed with a soft blue-green paint color. Interior windows under the roofline usher in needed light. Paint (brick wall): Benjamin Moore's Mountain Laurel. Custom bed upholstery fabric: Rogers & Goffigon's Grange

LEFT: Cathy and Charlie Wilmoth with their son, Chris, 15, and their terrier-Chihuahua mix, Cali. Not shown: daughters Tess, 17, and Cate, 22.

previous house), the couple took the rest of the renovation slowly. Cathy had wanted to redo the kitchen, which had no working oven, soon after they moved in; instead, she cooked with a countertop convection oven for two years. But she's now the first to say the wait ended up a blessing, fending off slapdash decisions they might have come to regret.

For one thing, she had longed to replace the carport outside their master bedroom with an expanded master bath. Having to wait proved a godsend when she injured her back and desperately needed easy access to her wheels. "The remodel forced us to sit in the house for a bit, which is really important. Even expanding the kitchen, something we wanted to do, would have been a mistake—it just wouldn't have made sense with our rooflines."

The early changes they did make were critical to their current love for the house, including painting the



lofted wood ceilings—stained pinkish red—white. “I wanted it bright, because we’re in a canyon, and the light changes are extreme,” Cathy says. They also replaced original single-pane windows with triple-panes and tight-fitting trim. “That first year with the original windows was freezing,” Cathy recalls.

After several more years, finally ready to revamp the tired time-warp kitchen, master bedroom, and bath, the Wilmoths bit the bullet and hired a designer, Caitlin Moran. “She adores mid-century,” Cathy says. “Rather than rip everything out, she wanted to stay true to the house and make it better.”

Moran was thrilled to find homeowners who felt the same and had spent hours poring over *Dwell* magazine and houzz.com. “Cathy’s family loved the bones of the house, and weren’t trying to make it something it wasn’t, which was music to my ears,” she says. Moran infused each room she touched with

ABOVE LEFT and RIGHT: Placed vertically on the sink wall and in the shower, the master bath’s handmade ceramic tile—in Blue Fog—gives the ceilings the illusion of more height. A quartz vanity top echoes the kitchen countertops for a cohesive look.

Electric radiant heat mat: NuHeat. Medicine cabinets: Restoration Hardware. Wall tile: Heath Ceramics. Floor tile: Grigio Nova. Faucets and shower fittings: Kohler

finishes that reflect its California environs, like bleached-oak cabinetry and locally made clay tile.

“In the kitchen, we tried to maximize storage—Cathy cooks, and it’s also her laundry room—while being sensitive to mid-century lines with streamlined choices,” Moran says. “Because it’s visible from the dining and living rooms, the kitchen needed to feel like an updated version of what could have been there in the beginning.” Still, it gained conveniences a 1955 builder couldn’t have dreamed of—like a 3-gallon compost bin beneath a hole in the countertop.

In the master bath, Moran removed a closet in favor of double sinks, and laid herringbone marble floors with electric radiant heat. “Under-the-floor heat mats are a real life improver,” she says.

Count Cathy as a fan as well. “I walk out of this bathroom at night and get into bed with warm feet, which makes my husband happy,” she says.



But the biggest change in the bath was also the simplest: “When we moved in, the bath was open to the bedroom!” Cathy says. Adding a door put an end to that misguided moment in contemporary design.

Hiring a designer is another decision Cathy more than endorses. “I feel like I saved money in the long run—I can’t tell you how many times I’ve repainted a room because I hated it,” Cathy says. “As a homeowner, you’re overwhelmed with choices.” Moran collected furnishings from both high-end and mainstream sources to great effect, and coaxed Cathy into unorthodox moves for reasons that make sense whether or not there are kids at home. For instance, the kitchen stools are upholstered in vinyl, “but you would never know—it’s beautiful, with a cool modern pattern,” Cathy says. “Someone spilled wine on a stool not long ago, and it wiped right off.”

A favorite space is the 12-by-10-foot outdoor

ABOVE: The backyard room is defined by an ipe roof overhead and bluestone underfoot, which is interspersed with concrete-and-pebble art pieces made by the house’s original owner. It’s even wired for light—and heat.

Swing chair: Anthropologie. Outdoor sofa: Restoration Hardware

room in back, with a gurgling stone fountain similar to ones their contractor, John Long, installed at Big Sur’s famous Post Ranch Inn. They added a gas fire pit nearby, which eliminates sparks in this recently wildfire-ravaged area. “While we were doing the kitchen we had access to the gas line, and we realized if we didn’t do it then, we’d have to tear up the floor later,” Cathy says. “We go out in the rain, we entertain there; anytime we have people over, this is the best room ever.”

Landscape designer Kier Holmes planted low-water plants with year-round interest to complement the house’s architecture—and stand up to the deer. In a nod to the man who built the house, the Wilmoths incorporated art pieces he made out of concrete and pebbles in the patio paving. “Now we love where we live. I have no complaints,” Cathy says, summing up. In other words? They all lived happily ever after. ■

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COVER See the listing for "Mid-Century Mastery."

HOME SOLUTIONS (pp. 11–16) Simple privacy screen > *Thanks to* Jennifer O'Brien; cityfarmhouse.com. **Stain:** SuperDeck Exterior Waterborne Semi-Transparent Stain in Baja Beige; sherwin-williams.com. Prep your pup for the Fourth > *Thanks to* John de Jong, DVM, president elect, American Veterinary Medical Association; avma.org. Leigh Fenderbosch, DVM, assistant professor and staff emergency veterinarian, Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center at Dublin, Dublin, OH; vet.osu.edu. Bob Litkovitz, DVM, Tremont Animal Clinic, Cleveland; tremontanimalclinic.com. Paint spill? Don't panic > *Thanks to* Mauro Henrique, Mauro's Painting, Somerville, MA; maurospainting.com. Jerry Bennett, Strosniders Hardware, Silver Spring, MD; strosniders.com. Before you leave for that vacation > *Thanks to* Bob Tucker, ADT Home Security; adt.com. Glenn Greenberg, Liberty Mutual Insurance; libertymutual.com.

BEFORE + AFTER: KITCHEN Airy update (pp. 19–21) **Architects:** Benjamin Corotis and Adriana Daringa, ADBC Architecture, Oakland, CA; daringacorotis.com. **Custom cabinets:** Arturo Silva, Oakland, CA; 510-910-4973. **Custom countertop fabrication:** Jeff Ryan, Jeffco Custom Metals, Hayward, CA; jeffcocustommetals.com. **Windows and doors:** Fleetwood; fleetwoodusa.net. **Flooring:** americanfibercement.com. **Range:** gaggenau.com/us. **Refrigerator:** Jenn-Air; jennair.com. **Wine fridge:** Marvel; agamarvel.com. **Dishwasher:** Bosch; bosch-home.com. **Sink:** Blanco; blanco-germany.com. **Lighting:** B-K Lighting; bklighting.com. **Faucet:** kwc.com. **Cabinet pulls:** amerock.com.

PAINT IDEAS Candy crush (p. 28) *Thanks to* Amy Wax, architectural color consultant; amywax.com.

TOH TV Reclaiming her past (pp. 30–33) **Architectural designer:** Andrew Gould, New World Byzantine, Charleston, SC; newworldbyzantine.com. **General contractor:** Flyway Construction, Charleston, SC; flywaysc.com. **Interior designer:** Taylor King, Crown Designs, Charleston, SC; crowndesigninteriors.com. **Kitchen design consultant:** Niki Komorek, Charleston Cabinets Inc., Charleston, SC; charlestoncabinetsinc.com. **HVAC installation:** Smith's Heating & Air Conditioning Company, Inc., Charleston, SC; smithshvac.com. **Electrical contractor:** Omni Services of South Carolina, Inc., Conway, SC; omnisc.net. **Stone mason:** P.J. Sanchez Masonry, Ridgeville, SC; 843-296-8318. *Thanks to* Brittany V. Lavelle Tulla, MSHP, proprietor and lead architectural historian, BVL Historic Preservation Research; bvlhistoricpreservationresearch.com.

PHOTOSHOP REDO Rebalancing a boxy split-level (p. 34) *Thanks to* Ben Moore, AIA, Kristy Johnson, and Rebekah Lyons, Ben Moore Studio, Manhattan, KS; benmoorestudio.com.

ASK THIS OLD HOUSE (pp. 36–43) Removing faux stone > *Thanks to* Mark McCullough, MJM Masonry, Arlington, MA; mjmmasonry.com.

MID-CENTURY MASTERY (pp. 44–51) **Window installation:** Quality First Contractors, Chesapeake, VA; 757-543-5010. **HVAC contractor:** Joseph Frederick & Sons, Wilmington, DE; jfrederickandsons.com. **French drain and sump pump:** Value Dry Waterproofing, Savage, MD; valuedrywaterproofing.com. **Upholstery:** Art Craft Upholstery, Wilmington, DE; artcraftupholstery.com. **Entry > Window treatments:** theshadestore.com. **Living room > New flooring:** Avalon Flooring, Wilmington, DE; avalonflooring.com. **Floor refinishing:** Henning's Hardwood Floors, Wilmington, DE; henningshardwoodfloors.com. **Kitchen > Cork flooring:** wicanders.com. **Countertops:** Stone Masters, Kennett Square, PA; stonemastersinc.net. **Rug:** flor.com. **Wall ovens:** Bosch; bosch-home.com. **Microwave:** geappliances.com. **Faucet:** Grohe; grohe.us. **Den > Rug:** crateandbarrel.com. **Screen and multicolored pillow:** jonathanadler.com. **Master bedroom > Paint:** Navajo White (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Curtains:** potterybarn.com. **Stool:** bakerfurniture.com. **Sunburst mirror:** jonathanadler.com. **Lamps:** westelm.com.

MODERN LIVING (pp. 58–65) **Interior designer:** Caitlin Moran Interiors, Tiburon, CA; caitlinmoraninteriors.com. **Contractor:** John Pfautz, San Anselmo, CA; 415-302-9042. **Landscape designer:** Kier Holmes, M2 Design and Construction, Mill Valley, CA; m2lde.com. **Landscape contractor:** John Long, JVL Designs, Sausalito, CA; jvldesigns.com. **Living room > Paint:** Elephant Tusk (walls) and White Dove (ceiling); benjaminmoore.com. **Family room > Fireplace insert:** London Fireplace Shoppe, Mill Valley, CA; londonchimney.com. **Kitchen > Washer and dryer:** Bosch; bosch-home.com. **Wine fridge:** Marvel; agamarvel.com. **Sink:** Dawn Kitchen & Bath Products, Hayward, CA; dawnusa.net. **Faucet:** kwc.com. **Master bedroom > Paint:** White Dove (ceiling); benjaminmoore.com. **Sliding door:** andersenwindows.com. **Master bath > Quartz vanity top:** Caesarstone; caesarstoneus.com. **Scones:** The Urban Electric Co.; urbanelectricco.com.

SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE (p. 76) *Thanks to* Howard E. Butts, Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, WV; bchs.org. 🏠

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This Old House (ISSN 1086-2633), Vol. 23, No. 5, Published eight times a year (January/February, March/April, May, June, July/August, September, October, November/December) by This Old House Ventures, LLC, 262 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06902. Periodicals postage paid at Stamford, CT, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 5071.5.2); NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address corrections to P.O. Box 62330, Tampa, FL 33662-2330; 800-898-7237. U.S. subscriptions: \$19.95 for one year. This Old House and the This Old House Window are registered trademarks of This Old House Ventures, LLC. Printed in the USA (GST: 854175130RMO001). Eric Thorkelsen, CEO. ©2018 This Old House Ventures, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

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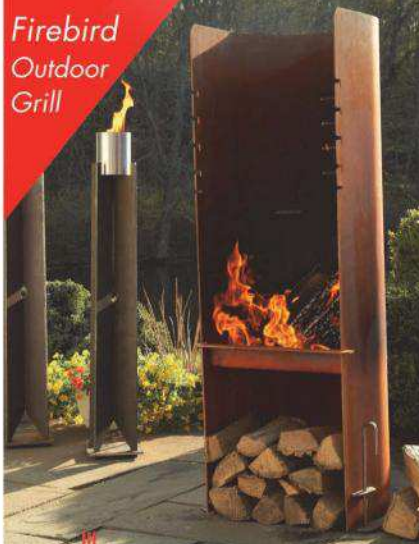
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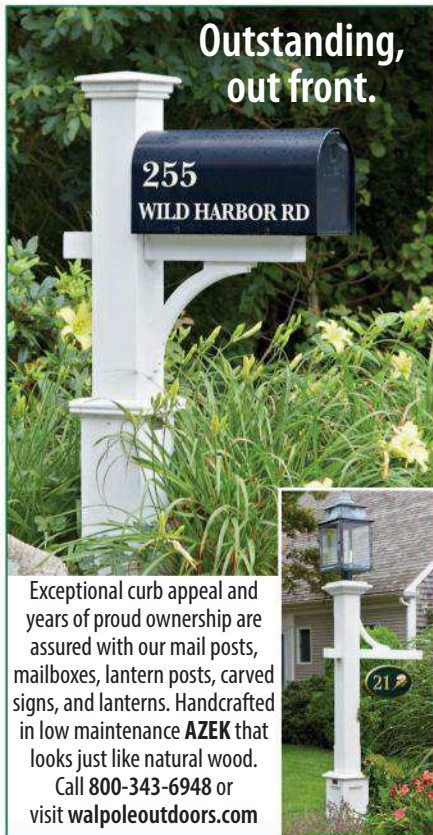
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WINDSOR DESIGN **SUPER COUPON**

60" HARDWOOD WORKBENCH WITH 4 DRAWERS

Customer Rating ★★★★★

Tools sold separately.

NOW \$129.99

COMPARE TO GRIZZLY \$534 SAVE \$404

ITEM 93454/69054/63395/62603 shown

23829572

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS **SUPER COUPON**

12" DOUBLE-BEVEL SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAW • Laser guide

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$129.99

COMPARE TO RYOBI \$249 SAVE \$119

ITEM 61970/69684 61969 shown

23834319

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

SUPER COUPON

FREE WITH ANY PURCHASE

3-1/2" SUPER BRIGHT ALUMINUM FLASHLIGHT

COMPARE TO RAYOVAC \$175

MODEL: BRSLB-8

• 9 LED

• Compact, Lightweight

ITEM 69111/63599/62522/62573 63875/63884/63886/63888/69052 shown

238224032

Cannot be used with other discounts or prior purchases. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 10/15/18 while supplies last. Limit 1 FREE gift per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

20% OFF ANY SINGLE ITEM*

23818891

LIMIT 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. *Cannot be used with other discounts, coupon or any of the following items or brands: Home Depot member price, Extended Service Plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day Parking Lot Sale item, compressors, floor jacks, saws, mallets, storage containers, clamps or clamps, nailers, blowers, welders, Airman, Ames, Bauer, Cobra, CoverPro, Dayton, Earthquake, Fisher, Hercules, Icon, Jophir, Lynx, Pirelli, Predator, Snap-on, Vortex, Vortex, Vortex. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 10/15/18.

PREDATOR **SUPER COUPON**

2000 WATT SUPER QUIET INVERTER GENERATOR • 4.7 hours run-time

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$449.99

COMPARE TO HONDA \$999 SAVE \$549

ITEM 62523

23841222

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC **SUPER COUPON**

3 GALLON, 100 PSI OIL-FREE AIR COMPRESSORS

A. HOT DOG
ITEM 69269/97080 shown

B. PANCAKE
ITEM 60637/61615 95275 shown

• Air delivery: 0.6 CFM @ 90 PSI 1 CFM @ 40 PSI

YOUR CHOICE \$39.99

COMPARE TO PORTER-CABLE \$98.62 SAVE \$58.62

Customer Rating ★★★★★

\$57.99

23841322

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

Bauer **SUPER COUPON**

15 AMP, 12-1/2" PORTABLE THICKNESS PLANNER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$249.99

COMPARE TO DEWALT \$399 SAVE \$149

ITEM 63445

23846322

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

U.S. GENERAL **SUPER COUPON**

30", 5 DRAWER MECHANIC'S CARTS

Item 64031 shown

Item 64060 shown

• 15,000 cu. in. of storage

• 700 lb. capacity

• Weighs 139 lbs.

YOUR CHOICE OF COLOR \$179.99

COMPARE TO Snap-on \$800 SAVE \$620

ITEM 64031/64061 64059/64060/64032 64030/64033 shown

23847305

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

HARDY **SUPER COUPON**

MECHANIC'S GLOVES

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$3.99

COMPARE TO MECHANIX \$14.99 SAVE 73%

MODEL: S07581

ITEM 62434, 62426, 62433, 62432, 62429, 62428 shown

23847841

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTECH **SUPER COUPON**

2/10/50 AMP, 12 VOLT BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$29.99

COMPARE TO SCHUMACHER ELECTRIC \$59.99 SAVE 50%

ITEM 60581 60553 shown

23850054

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

drillmaster **SUPER COUPON**

1/4 SHEET ORBITAL PALM SANDER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$9.99

COMPARE TO BLACK & DECKER \$20.98 SAVE 52%

ITEM 61509 61311 shown

23854065

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

SUPER COUPON

SOLAR ROPE LIGHT

Customer Rating ★★★★★

• Great outdoor accent lighting

• Super bright light

NOW \$8.99

COMPARE TO HAMPTON BAY \$29.97 SAVE 70%

ITEM 62533/63941/68353 shown

23857960

LIMIT 6 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

PORTLAND **SUPER COUPON**

1750 PSI ELECTRIC PRESSURE WASHER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

• 1.3 GPM

• Adjustable spray nozzle

NOW \$199.99

COMPARE TO BRIGGS & STRATTON \$174.44 SAVE \$94

MODEL: 20900

ITEM 63255/63254 shown

23859031

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

VOYAGER **SUPER COUPON**

15" TOOL BAG

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$6.99

COMPARE TO HUSKY \$16.97 SAVE 58%

ITEM 62348/62341 61469 shown

23861809

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

18" x 12" MOVER'S DOLLY

• 1000 lb. capacity

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$7.99

COMPARE TO BUFFALO \$19.99 SAVE 60%

ITEM 61899/63095/63096 63098/63097/93888 shown

23870690

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL MACHINERY **SUPER COUPON**

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

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$219.99

COMPARE TO JET \$919.99 SAVE \$640

ITEM 34706

23871404

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS **SUPER COUPON**

RECIPROCATING SAW WITH ROTATING HANDLE

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$199.99

COMPARE TO PORTER-CABLE \$59.98 SAVE 68%

Blade sold separately.

ITEM 61884/65570 62370 shown

23884123

LIMIT 6 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL MACHINERY **SUPER COUPON**

UNIVERSAL TOOL STAND • 500 lb. capacity

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$29.99

COMPARE TO CRAFTSMAN \$41.99 SAVE 28%

ITEM 69805

23905519

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL MACHINERY **SUPER COUPON**

2 HP, 5 MICRON INDUSTRIAL DUST COLLECTOR

• 70 gallon capacity

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$169.99

COMPARE TO SHOP FOX \$324.99 SAVE \$155

ITEM 61790/97869 shown

23906552

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

12" RATCHET BAR CLAMP/SPREADER

LIFETIME WARRANTY

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$2.99

COMPARE TO IRWIN \$19.98 SAVE 85%

ITEM 62123/63017/69222 shown

23915864

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC **SUPER COUPON**

21 GALLON, 2.5 HP, 125 PSI VERTICAL OIL-LUBE AIR COMPRESSOR

Air delivery:
5.8 CFM @ 40 PSI
4.7 CFM @ 90 PSI

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$169⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$229** HUSKY MODEL: H30218 **SAVE \$78**

ITEM 69091/61454 62803/63635/67847 shown

23393001

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

drillmaster **SUPER COUPON**

Customer Rating **★★★★★** **4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER**

NOW \$9⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$28⁹⁹** PERFORMAX MODEL: P411-5 **SAVE 85%**

ITEM 69645/60625 shown

23393937

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC **SUPER COUPON**

18 GAUGE, 2-IN-1 NAILER/STAPLER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

WE CARRY A FULL LINE OF NAILS

NOW \$15⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$69⁹⁸** PORTER-CABLE MODEL: M60200 **SAVE 77%**

ITEM 63156/64269 68019 shown

233938001

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

YUKON **SUPER COUPON**

46" MOBILE WORKBENCH WITH SOLID WOOD TOP

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

1200 lb. capacity

NOW \$229⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$269⁹⁹** KOBALT MODEL: K9900 **SAVE \$39**

ITEM 64023/64012 shown

233934045

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

PITTSBURGH #1 SELLING JACKS **SUPER COUPON**

RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINUM FLOOR JACK

3-1/2 pumps lifts most vehicles
Lifts from 3-1/2" to 14-1/8"
Weight 34 lbs.

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$59⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$125⁹⁸** K TOOL MODEL: KTB0804 **SAVE \$65**

ITEM 62496/62516/60569 shown

233935268

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

4 PIECE WOOD CHISEL SET WITH CLEAR PVC HANDLE

LIFETIME WARRANTY

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$4⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$29⁹⁷** DEWALT MODEL: DWHT1063 **SAVE 83%**

ITEM 42429/69471 shown

233936337

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL MACHINERY **SUPER COUPON**

4" x 36" BELT/6" DISC SANDER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$59⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$121** GENERAL INTERNATIONAL MODEL: BG7004 **SAVE \$61**

ITEM 62502/97181 shown

233930337

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

SUPER COUPON

FOLDABLE EAR MUFFS

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$3⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$16⁹⁶** MORRIS PRODUCTS MODEL: M0006 **SAVE 75%**

ITEM 94334

233930439

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

WARRIOR **SUPER COUPON**

29 PIECE TITANIUM DRILL BIT SET

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$9⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$64⁹⁹** DEWALT MODEL: DW7089 **SAVE 84%**

ITEM 62281 61637 shown

233931961

LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

KRAUSE & BECKER **SUPER COUPON**

AIRLESS PAINT SPRAYER KIT

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$169⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$299** GRACO MODEL: G23000 **SAVE \$129**

ITEM 62915/60600 shown

233932842

LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

STEP STOOL/WORKING PLATFORM

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

350 lb. capacity

NOW \$29⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$51⁴⁵** GPL MODEL: G-21 **SAVE 61%**

ITEM 62515/66911 shown

23393917

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL MACHINERY **SUPER COUPON**

14" OSCILLATING SPINDLE SANDER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$109⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$165⁷¹** TRITON TOOLS MODEL: TSP400 **SAVE \$55**

ITEM 62146/69257 shown

234001753

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

HYDROSTAR **SUPER COUPON**

50 FT. ELECTRIC DRAIN CLEANER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$199⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$398⁹⁵** COBRA MODEL: H0041 **SAVE \$198**

ITEM 61856/68285 shown

24026964

LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

CENTRAL MACHINERY **SUPER COUPON**

16" VARIABLE SPEED SCROLL SAW

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$69⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$199** PORTER-CABLE MODEL: P283700 **SAVE \$129**

ITEM 62519/63283 93012 shown

24031405

LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

50" CLAMP AND CUT EDGE GUIDE

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

LIFETIME WARRANTY

NOW \$14⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$39⁹⁸** BORA MODEL: S4000 **SAVE 62%**

ITEM 66581

24033287

LIMIT 6 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$5⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$19⁹⁹** BLUE HAWK MODEL: 77200 **SAVE 70%**

ITEM 69505/62418/66537 shown

24041177

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

SUPER COUPON

TILTING FLAT PANEL TV MOUNT

176 lb. capacity

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$26⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$99⁹⁹** ROCKETFISH MODEL: RV176P10 **SAVE \$85**

ITEM 62289/61807 shown

24046098

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

SUPER COUPON

4 PIECE ANTI-FATIGUE FOAM MAT SET

Each pad measures 25" x 25"

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$6⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$19⁹⁹** NORSK MODEL: N10304 **SAVE 65%**

ITEM 61607/62389 94635 shown

24046456

LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

Lynxx **SUPER COUPON**

40 VOLT LITHIUM CORDLESS 10" BAR POLE SAW

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$139⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$169⁹³** GREENWORKS MODEL: GRC0072 **SAVE \$29**

ITEM 64476 63286 shown

24048690

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/15/18*

Bauer **SUPER COUPON**

10 AMP DEEP CUT VARIABLE SPEED BAND SAW KIT

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$99⁹⁹

COMPARE TO **\$299** DEWALT MODEL: DW7820 **SAVE \$199**

ITEM 63763/64194 63444 shown

24052203

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Civil War-era classic in need of a hero!

PRICE \$45,000

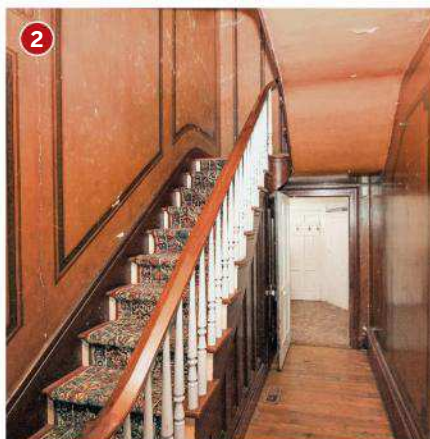
LOCATION Martinsburg, WV

CONTACT Liz McDonald, Blackwell Realty; 304-885-0772

THE HISTORY This three-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath Italianate was built by John William Keefe, a veteran of both the Mexican-American War and the American Civil War. After years of soldiering, Keefe eventually settled down in Martinsburg and became a yardmaster and train dispatcher for the B&O Railroad. The circa-1866 house was handed down to his son, Hugh Keefe, who worked in the town's thriving woolen mills, which later supplied blankets to soldiers during World War II. The Civil War-era house remained a single-family residence until about 10 years ago, when it was turned into a law office; it's located just two blocks from the courthouse. It has been vacant for two years.

WHY SAVE IT? The house retains original pine floors, decorative trompe l'oeil wallpaper in the front entry, and much of its millwork, including pocket doors and a butler's pantry. It also holds a tranquil sleeping porch with large arched openings for removable windows to usher in summer breezes. The exterior siding is in good shape. Other highlights include stained-glass transoms, a herringbone brick patio, and a spring-house outbuilding perfect for a workshop or study.

WHAT IT NEEDS The plumbing could use an overhaul, there is a leak in the roof near the chimney, and the well-trod wood floors in the front of the house require shoring up. The house also needs a kitchen and some serious cosmetic work, including fresh paint. The good news is that the building has been updated with central AC. But we'd still recommend using the sleeping porch to cool off, at least every once in a while. —KEITH PANDOLFI



1. With 1,782 square feet of living space inside, the circa-1866 Italianate is located downtown on a corner lot, with its two ornate original portico entryways intact.
2. The front hall showcases trompe l'oeil wallpaper that imitates wood-paneled walls; it carries on to the ceiling and up the stairs to the second floor.
3. The house needs a kitchen, and the one and a half existing baths require an overhaul, including this one, which holds a vintage claw-foot tub.
4. A downstairs parlor features original pine floors, as well as paneled pocket doors and a mantel.



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