

This Old House

Come on in!

**Take home some inspiration
from our 2018 Idea House**



Easy mudroom bench
Affordable home theater
Block door drafts
Buyer's guide to primers
Fire-safety update

A Healthier Home Solution

At the TOH 2018 Idea House, we've incorporated the latest technologies for an efficient, healthy home, including **Panasonic's newest kitchen range hood**—a perfect combination of high-powered ventilation with ultra-quiet operation. Here's why the **WhisperHood IAQ™** might be right for you.

THE OPEN AND EFFICIENT layout of the TOH 2018 Idea House kitchen was designed for cooking and entertaining enthusiasts. And even if you're not exactly a pro behind the stove, the kitchen will still become the epicenter of your home.

But however delicious your dinner may smell, the very act of cooking releases harmful pollutants that compromise your indoor air quality. That's why it's so important to implement proper ventilation measures, especially for those with allergies or breathing issues.

A powerful kitchen range hood is invaluable. The problem with most range hoods is that they tend to be noisy and disruptive, discouraging frequent use. Panasonic's new **WhisperHood IAQ** provides quiet operation, allowing families to enjoy conversation, while it quickly and effectively clears the air.



Why Choose the WhisperHood IAQ:

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- Unique removable, dishwasher-safe **metallic grease filter**



*The Panasonic
WhisperHood IAQ,
as featured in the
TOH 2018 Idea House
in Narragansett,
Rhode Island*

Panasonic's line of indoor air-quality solutions have been thoughtfully designed with the health of your home—and all of its occupants—in mind. Find out how healthy living starts with good kitchen ventilation at whisperhoodiaq.com



Panasonic

You have a healthy meal plan,
now you need a healthy home plan.



We believe the air you breathe should be as healthy as the food you prepare. The new Panasonic WhisperHood IAQ™ range hoods use ultra-quiet ventilation technology to quickly trap and remove moist, contaminated air from the source without disturbing your dinner conversation.

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Tour our 2018 Idea House!

Come inside for a room-by-room reveal of this updated Craftsman-inspired home in Narragansett, RI. **PAGE 34**



PHOTO: NAT REA

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Cover Photograph by
NAT REA



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Reader mail NOV/DEC 2018



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THE OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT *for This Old House landscape contractor Roger Cook has kept our mailboxes and in-boxes full since his letter was published in the September issue. While readers also wrote in to share ideas and projects (and to check our math), your admiration and affection for Roger came through loud and clear.*

Well wishes

We were so sorry to read the open letter from Roger Cook in the most recent issue of *This Old House* magazine (September 2018). He was correct; it was obvious something was different. We hope and pray for his recovery and comfort. Roger is enjoyable to watch and has been integral to the show, but his well-being, and that of his family and friends, is much more vital.

—STEPHEN ORMEROD AND FAMILY, RUMFORD, RI

I was watching the Charleston episodes of *TOH TV* and noticed, like many viewers, that Roger Cook was not feeling 100 percent. I think of Roger's job as the most physically demanding of them all, and I am wishing him a speedy and full recovery so he can continue to educate viewers like me on the finer points of landscaping.

—LYNN REED, BREVARD, NC

I always think of Roger as I'm planting a new shrub or tree: *Now how would the big guy do this?* He is going to be so missed! Best wishes to Roger and his family.

—JON PIERSON, FORT BLACKMORE, VA

A fix for hard-water spots

For those spots on your black engineered-stone sink (Ask This Old House, September 2018), try this: After cleaning the sink, dry it off, then apply a teaspoon or two of mineral oil to the surface with a paper towel. It makes mine look great.

—JEFF ZINN, RAYTOWN, MO

Mortgage math

It was lovely, as always, to receive the latest issue of *This Old House*, but I wanted to alert you to an error in the article "Should You Pay Off Your Mortgage?" (Dollars and Sense, September 2018). In the right-hand column of the table at the bottom of page 28, the row labeled "Total interest due over 30 years, including the first 10 years of original mortgage" should list a value of \$237,321 (this is \$135,971 from the line above, plus \$101,350 from the left-hand column), not \$344,779, which is the sum of the total interest from both mortgages due over 30 years (\$208,808 + \$135,971).

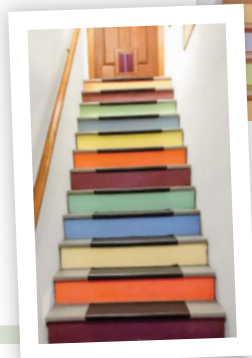
—DAVID WHELAN, SHERMAN, TX

READER
PROJECT
OF THE
MONTH

A colorful run

—AMY HUCKABY, LOVELAND, CO

I did a double take when I saw the painted stair risers in the July/August issue's Paint Ideas ("Candy Crush"). A while back, I painted my basement stairs [inset] using all the colors left over from my kids' bedroom walls. Since we change things up so often around here, our stairwell is an evolving palette. Great minds think alike!



THE EDITORS REPLY: *More than one careful reader noticed this slipup; we apologize for the error and appreciate your bringing it to our attention. The correct figure drops the total interest due by \$107,458, making refinancing more attractive.*

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home solutions

Edited by Kate Wood

INSIDE

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DRAFT BLOCKERS

MORE



Deck the walls for winter

Set a seasonal scene right inside the door with an entryway gallery wall. It's a doable DIY project that can cost as little as \$2.99 per print if you do as homeowner Lauren Shaver did here and start with public-domain art: The Biodiversity Heritage Library ([flickr.com/biodivlibrary](https://www.flickr.com/photos/biodivlibrary/)) boasts an enormous cache of rights-free images of flora and fauna. Download your favorites (choose "original size" to get the largest file) and print them at an office supply store that has a printer for blueprints. Also called engineering prints, these are an inexpensive option for scaled-up drawings—the conifers in this cold-weather collection are 16 by 20 inches. Come spring, Lauren, who blogs at blesserhouse.com, will swap in bulbs and blooms.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WWW.BLESSERHOUSE.COM



DIY wreath with staying power

Need some quick front-door decor? A ring crafted from pinecones you foraged—or bought, if your yard's in short supply—with a grapevine wreath as a base takes minutes to make and will last till the new year (and beyond).



1 GATHER YOUR MATERIALS:

Look for pinecones that are totally dry, with scales that are standing up. Hit the crafts store for a grapevine wreath, a glue gun, glue sticks, and ribbon.



2 ASSEMBLE THE WREATH:

Lay the grapevine ring flat and use hot glue to attach the largest pinecones along the center. Fill in on either side with smaller cones to cover the form.

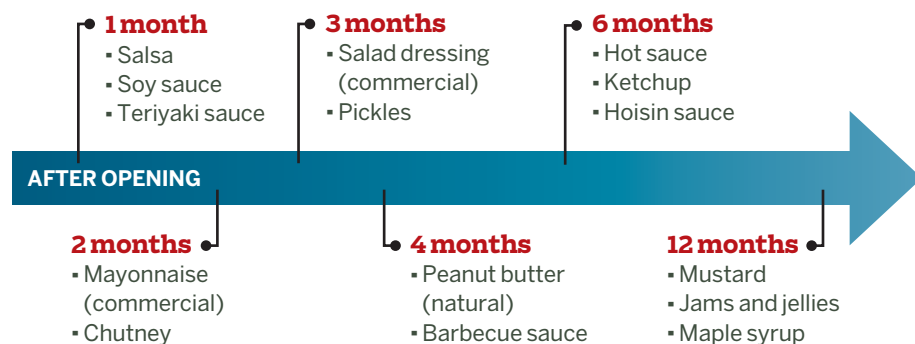
3 HANG IT:

You can stick this lightweight wreath onto an existing nail or hook, or secure it to the other side of the door with a wide ribbon threaded through the back of the wreath that runs over the top of the door. This burlap works for fall; one in crimson would add some holiday cheer.



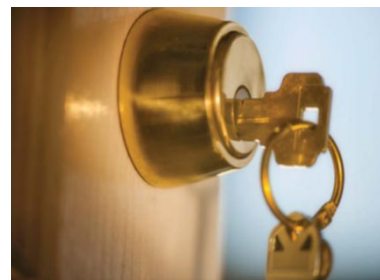
Clear out old condiments

Need fridge space for holiday cooking? Inventory seldom-used sauces and condiments to free up more room. Keep in mind that, per the USDA, “best by” dates and other labels describe quality ideals, not safety—so that months-old mayo may not be bad for you, but you might not want to eat it, either. Use this cheat sheet to skip the taste test. —LAURA D. TESTINO



NOW, GET (AND STAY) ORGANIZED

When you buy new condiments, add a label noting the first-use date—the shelf life of most items is based on when the bottle, can, or jar is opened. Place your most-used condiments in the door. To keep the rest from taking over your fridge (or getting shoved to the back and forgotten), store on a stainless-steel lazy Susan (like the one at right, \$20; containerstore.com) or a tiered organizer.



Don't get shut out in the cold

Moisture gets into exterior locks year-round, but you're more likely to notice it in winter—when it freezes, and you're stuck outside. Before the mercury drops, give your lock a quick squirt of lubricant. Ingredients like ethanol or isopropyl alcohol thwart freezing, and lubing up your lock's interior makes it harder for moisture to accumulate in the first place. Look for silicone-based products like DuPont Easy Lock Lubricant with Teflon (\$4.99 for 30 ml; amazon.com); they're cleaner than graphite. —K.W.

A primer on primers

In this era of one-coat paint, priming might seem unnecessary. But primers are still your best bet to ensure a long-lasting, even paint job, and to block stains and odors. Here's a quick guide to help you select the right primer for your painting project. —THOMAS BAKER



	WATER-BASED	OIL-BASED	SHELLAC-BASED
BEST FOR	Preparing previously finished surfaces, including drywall, concrete, fiber cement, stucco, metals, fiberglass, and PVC.	Coating raw wood, MDF, spackled spots, and rust-prone steel or wrought iron.	Spot priming exterior rust stains and knots. Sealing smoke damage and odors. Prepping glossy, greasy surfaces without sanding.
PROS	Low odor; fast drying; cleans up with soap and water; adheres well without sanding; blocks oily stains.	Penetrates wood without raising grain. Blocks water and mildew stains, cedar and redwood bleed.	Works on all surfaces and blocks all stains and smells; some DIYers rely on it to seal cut edges on MDF.
CONS	Water will rough up raw wood and MDF, and cause cedar and redwood to bleed.	Requires good ventilation during application and mineral spirits for cleanup.	Pricey. Strong odor when wet. Cleanup calls for denatured alcohol.
ONE TO LOOK FOR	KILZ Premium Interior/Exterior Multi-purpose Water-based Wall and Ceiling Primer, \$23 per gallon; lowes.com	XIM X-Seal Solvent Primer/Sealer/Stain Blocker, \$35 per gallon; amazon.com	Zinsser B-I-N Shellac-Based White Interior/Spot Exterior Primer and Sealer, \$45 per gallon; homedepot.com



Wise up about smoke alarms

The end of Daylight Saving Time (November 4, this year) serves as an informal reminder to replace smoke-alarm batteries. Changes to fire code mean now's a good time to consider these Qs, too.

✓ Do you have enough? Each floor—which now means a basement level, too, even if it's unfinished—needs a smoke alarm. This includes an alarm within 20 feet of each bedroom (in a small home, that could mean just one in the hall), plus one inside each bedroom. In garages and unfinished attics, install a heat alarm; these sense temperature rather than smoke.

☐ Are they connected? As of 2007, interconnected alarms are a code requirement for homes old and new: When one alarm goes off, all should sound. Newer homes have hardwired systems, but it's easy to retrofit an older house with wireless, battery-powered units linked via Wi-Fi or radio frequency (RF). Upgrade your whole house at once; not all models are compatible, even within the same brand.

☐ Are the batteries fresh? Even hardwired alarms need battery backup in case of a power outage. Many newer smoke alarms are sold with sealed 10-year batteries—which is the life span of any smoke alarm. Toss any units that are older (check the date of manufacture on the back). And sealed or not, test any alarm with a battery monthly to make sure it's working. —SKYE McEOWEN



Shine tarnished silver in minutes

Breaking out the fine flatware for the holidays? Make sure sterling silver looks its best by reversing the chemical reaction that created silver sulfide, a.k.a. tarnish, in the first place. Put silverware in a single layer in a glass baking dish lined with aluminum foil; each piece needs to touch the foil. Cover with baking soda, add a little salt, then pour hot (not boiling) water over it. The dry ingredients facilitate the transfer of electrons from the silver to the aluminum with the water as a conductor, turning tarnish into aluminum sulfide and revealing the silver without scratching or pitting it. Remove each piece with tongs when it looks shiny (from 10 seconds to a few minutes, depending on the level of tarnish), then rinse and pat dry. —L.T.

Historical holiday decor

Step up your home's December decorations by stealing an idea or two from Christmases past. In addition to boasting exceptional period elegance, these architecturally significant homes put on outstanding holiday displays.

Christmas at the Newport Mansions *Newport, RI • November 17, 2018–January 1, 2019 • adult admission \$30 • newportmansions.org*
Ring in the holidays in Gilded Age style with a tour of three of the period's most iconic mansions—The Elms, Marble House, and The Breakers. Among the over-the-top yuletide adornments, note details like the dining tables set for Christmas supper with antique sterling silver and china.

Holiday Evening Tours at Whitehall Mansion *Palm Beach, FL • December 19–23, 2018 • adult admission \$25 • flaglermuseum.us*
In 1902, the *New York Herald* called Henry Flagler's swanky 75-plus-room mansion (shown) "grander and more magnificent than any other private dwelling in the world." Winter evenings find this Beaux Arts beauty decked out in holiday splendor and lit by the glow of its original fixtures.

Christmas at Mount Vernon *Mount Vernon, VA • November 23–December 31, 2018 • adult admission \$20 • mountvernon.org*
Just outside Washington, D.C., experience an Early American holiday at George Washington's beloved home. The celebration includes period fife music, era-authentic food and drink, and a camel—a throwback to 1787, when Washington paid 18 shillings to have an exotic dromedary stop by.

Twilight Tours at Boscobel House and Gardens *Garrison, NY • November 23–25, December 1–2, 8–9, 2018 • adult admission \$26 • boscobel.org*
Overlooking the Hudson River, stately Boscobel House hosts a 19th-century Christmas: Think candlelight, string music, and naturalistic displays of fruit and live greenery. The Neoclassical manse also houses a fine collection of Federal-style furniture. —MONICA MICHAEL WILLIS



MORE PLACES TO SEE

Check out more historic-home holiday displays at thisoldhouse.com/holiday-decor

Stop drafts at the door

Spread across the bottom of a standard 3-foot-wide entry door, a ¼-inch space can let in as much air as a 3.4-inch hole in the wall. Keep cold out and precious heated air in by closing the gap with a door sweep. Here, three types of "door bottoms" (as they're also called) to consider. —T.B.

Least visible

Not crazy about seeing a sweep? This hidden device's metal housing fits into a groove routed into a wood door's bottom edge; the sweep automatically raises and lowers. When the door closes, a pin on one end is pushed in, lowering the gasket flush with the threshold. Opening the door releases the pin and lifts the sweep. *Shown: National Guard Auto Door Bottom 335N-36, \$37; zoro.com*

Easiest to install

If you don't have a solid-wood door (or don't want to alter yours), a surface-mount automatic door bottom may work. Fastened to the door's outside face, a spring-loaded vinyl strip swivels up when the door opens. It's long lasting and won't impede swing—but it will be visible from outside. *Shown: M-D Building Products Flex-O-Matic Door Sweep 07179, \$11; homedepot.com*

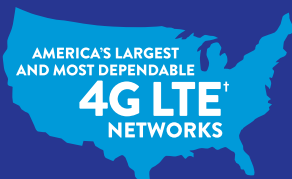
Best for uneven floors

An automatic door bottom only maintains tight contact with a flat surface. If your threshold isn't level, a brush-style sweep that conforms to the floor's contours is a better option. The dense nylon bristles on this UL-listed, commercial-grade sweep block drafts and smoke. *Shown: Hager Door Bottom Sweep with Brush Insert, \$16; globalindustrial.com*

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Going deep

Lightening up overhead—and underfoot—allows a windowless bath to be wrapped in a warm dark shade

BY KATELIN HILL • PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DYER

➔ A SMALL SPACE can be the perfect place to add some drama. Even though designer Laura Ulam's Yountville, CA, home was a light and bright mix of modern-farmhouse and cottage styles, she envisioned a darker, "more masculine" look for the small guest bath in her 1982 home.

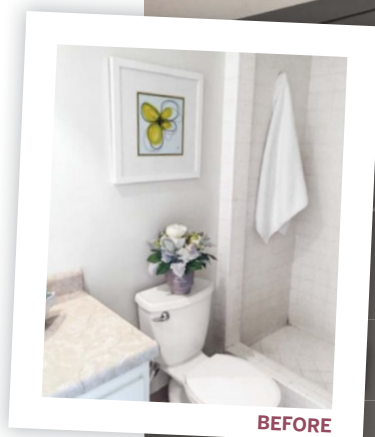
But first she added some much-needed light in the windowless space, installing a skylight in the shower and recessed lights in the ceiling. Oversize white-marble hex tile on the floor brightened the room even more, allowing Laura to add shiplap walls painted a warm dark gray, making the bath more cohesive with the rest of the house and softening the room's sleek modern fixtures and finishes. A shower door on a rolling track suggests a sliding barn door, while saving floor space.

The result is a comfortable yet refined bath that Laura—and her guests—love. "In fact," she says, "it's become my favorite room in the house."

BEFORE The guest bath lacked personality, with washed-out colors and builder-basic materials.

AFTER With a dramatic paint color and a mix of rustic and modern finishes, the updated guest bath has a style all its own.

Paint (walls): Benjamin Moore's Iron Mountain.
Sconces: Restoration Hardware.
Vanity top: Caesarstone



BEFORE





homeowner tip

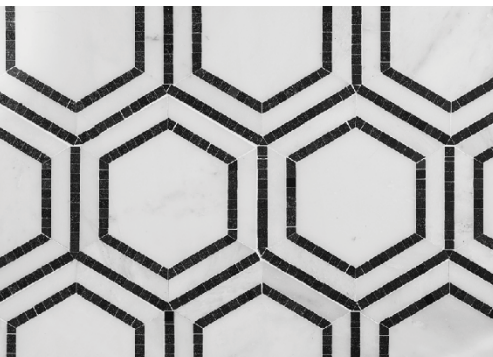
LAURA ULAM,
YOUNTVILLE, CA

“In small spaces, experiment with different colors than you normally use. The rest of my house is light and bright. It’s nice to have a dark, cozy room, too!”

V-groove shiplap helps take the edge off the sharp lines of the quartz countertop, while echoing the farmhouse style found in other rooms in the house. A custom vanity optimizes storage. *Vanity: Smith’s Custom Cabinets*



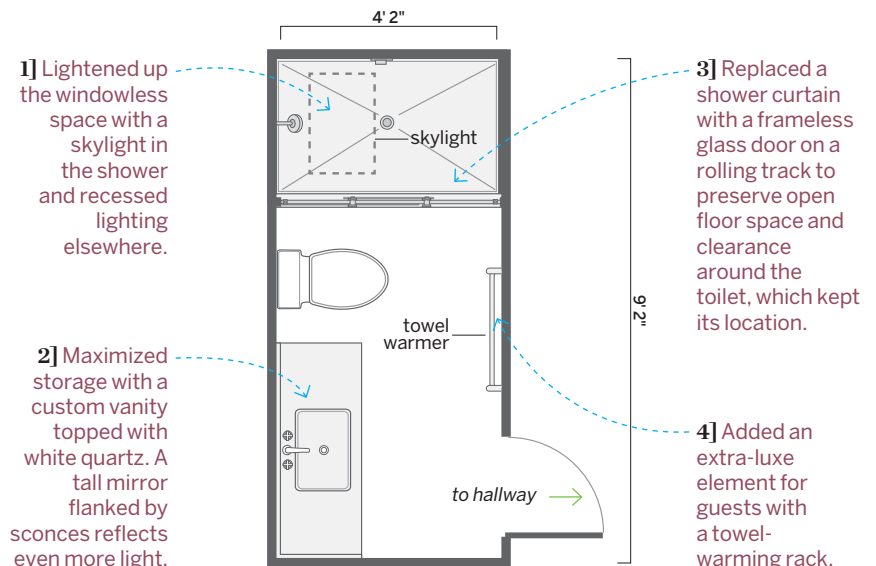
With a tight footprint, the bathroom wasn’t large enough to accommodate a shower door swing, so the contractor suggested a rolling door on a barn-door-style track to save space. *Shower door: OVE Decors*



Five-inch marble-and-basalt hex tile makes for a stunning surprise on the floor. It also adds another brightening element in the windowless space. *Tile: Mission Stone & Tile*

after

While the layout stayed the same, a skylight and improved lighting brightened the room; all-new finishes gave it a style boost



Pinwheel-pattern floor

A design inspired by traditional inlaid wood gives a classic white kitchen unexpected charm BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS

➔ **MORE THAN EVER,** kitchens need to look good while they work hard. So for this Nantucket, MA, home, interior decorator Thomas Jayne, author of the new book *Classical Principles for Modern Design*, created a quilt-look floor that can take a spill in style. His surprising inspiration: 18th-century Russian marquetry. “It’s a pinwheel design that works as camouflage,” Jayne says, noting that the deep-green paint will help conceal wear and tear on the bleached pine—and dog fur in a house with multiple rescues. “I like that the pattern is geometric but seems to move, and travels well around the room.”

Local decorative painter Karen Ward laid out the pattern to start and end—and break—in pleasing places, including around the base of the two islands. She marked the grid of half squares using a laser level and a chalk line, then outlined each triangle with painter’s tape, patiently cutting out perfect points with a razor blade. After putting down latex paint, Ward topped it with three coats of clear finish for durability; Bona Traffic is her go-to. “It dries in three hours and doesn’t yellow,” she says. “It lasts four years, then needs light sanding and recoating. With beach sand and dogs, not quite as long.” ■



PHOTO: KERRI MCCAFFETY. CLASSICAL PRINCIPLES FOR MODERN DESIGN

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Better home theater

It might be time to up your living room's game, now that prices have dropped dramatically **BY NATHANIEL WICE • ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARTIN GEE**

➔ **THIS MAY BE THE YEAR** to go for a home theater upgrade. TV makers have been pushing 3-D and curved-screen gimmicks for years, but TV tech just went through a meaningful growth spurt. For \$650 you can now get a better 55-inch picture than could be had for \$5,000 five years ago. And despite some lingering rivalries among competing video standards, most popular current movies are now conveniently available in the latest formats that show off bigger, brighter colors and more-detailed shadows in the latest 4K resolution (also known as “Ultra HD,” compared with

720p and 1080p “HD”). Movie night at home can now discernibly, without much fuss, rival the multiplex for image quality.

Our benchmark TV at this price, the TCL 6-Series (TCL 55R617) refreshed for 2018, comes with built-in Roku to connect over the Internet and play popular streaming services you subscribe to separately, including Netflix, Hulu, Amazon’s Prime Video, MLB At Bat baseball games, and all sorts of more-esoteric subscriptions like an art-house favorite of ours called FilmStruck. The TCL brand may not be as familiar a consumer name as Sony or Samsung, but

A Few Recommendations

- › **TCL 4K TV** TCL 55R617 is the 2018 model, \$650 (tclusa.com). We also like the newer OLED screen technology in LG’s 2018 model 4K HDR Smart OLED TV, \$2,100 (OLED55C8PUA).
- › **Sony 4K Ultra Blu-ray Player** UBP-X800, \$230, or UBP-X700, \$250.
- › **Apple TV 4K** from \$179 (apple.com/apple-tv-4k); Dolby Atmos surround sound added with tvOS 12.
- › **Sonos Playbase soundbar**, \$699 (sonos.com/playbase).

the Chinese conglomerate used to supply Samsung and has since grown into one of the largest TV producers in the world. TCL is also well rated for reliability.

The TCL's built-in Roku competes in function with Internet-streaming video devices like Google's Chromecast Ultra (\$69), Amazon's Fire TV with 4K Ultra HD (\$70), and Apple TV 4K (from \$179). With Roku included, you don't need any of these other devices. Our experience, however, is that the Apple TV 4K will give you better 4K streaming than the built-in Roku, though mainly with movies from Apple's iTunes store. People who have already bought into the Apple world with iCloud or iTunes should give Apple TV a look, for handy tricks like slideshows of your photos, or wirelessly "throwing" the screen of an iPhone, iPad, or Mac to the TV. For the same reasons, people who use Google Photos should consider Chromecast Ultra. We especially like the Apple TV's "TV" app, which now maintains a consolidated TV watch list across various video services, allowing you to go from *The Expanse* on the Syfy Channel to *Jessica Jones* on Netflix, Conan O'Brien on TBS, NBA on ESPN, and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* on Prime Video. You can even switch back and forth between your iPhone and iPad to binge-watch the same shows on the go.

Whether you stream with the built-in Roku or an external device, there is a hit-or-miss aspect to what will stream in the highest-quality format, with services that will start to throttle quality if the Internet connection isn't working fast enough. (We recommend minimum speeds of 25 Mbps, but even 100 Mbps can experience slowdowns.)

If you're a stickler for the best picture, then don't leave streaming speeds to chance on a Saturday night. The surefire method is a Blu-ray player and disc, which connects directly to the TV without the need for a fast Internet connection. Yes, we are actually recommending buying movies on what is basically the plastic-disc technology of

the 1980s. "4K Ultra HD" Blu-ray discs tend to sell at a slight premium—we've seen *The Martian* for \$20, versus \$15 for regular Blu-ray or \$10 for a regular DVD, and the player itself should be about \$250. Sony's 4K Blu-ray player sells for about \$250 (see sidebar, p. 19), versus less than half that for a regular Blu-ray player (Sony BDP-S1500, BDP-S3500, or BDP-S3700).

As you shop, we recommend glossing over the format wars now being fought between the HDR10+ standard and a

competing standard called Dolby Vision. The key requirements to enjoy the great new TV tech are HDR—High Dynamic Range—which adds more lifelike detail that would otherwise be lost in light or shadow, and WCG—Wide Color Gamut—for a deeper range of possible colors, like those in red bricks and yellow flowers, that are clearly better looking in side-by-side comparisons. You'll notice the difference in improved brightness and color, even when the source isn't necessarily a 4K Ultra HD Blu-ray disc. ■



IS MY TV SPYING ON ME?

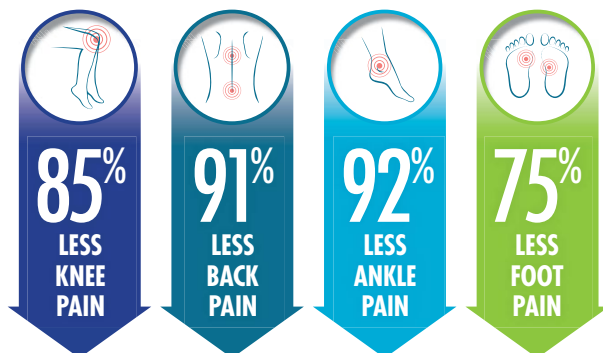
Yes, your new TV is probably spying on you, akin to how Google and Facebook track you online. Internet-connected TVs are a great convenience, but they usually want to track viewing habits, which are then sold to advertisers. You can opt out of some of the tracking, but if you are really uncomfortable with the practice, consider leaving your TV off the Internet entirely. Roku, like Samsung and other companies, has posted opt-out instructions online (<https://docs.roku.com/doc/userprivacypolicy/en-ca>) for its own hardware and for TVs that have built-in Roku software, such as the TCL model we recommend. The wording can be a little passive-aggressive, suggesting that you are doing yourself a disservice by turning off ad and other tracking, but the steps are nevertheless explained clearly: "If you do not wish for us to enhance your TV viewing experience using ACR technology to collect viewing information...you can uncheck this option during device setup or de-select 'Use Info from TV Inputs' under Settings > Privacy > Smart TV Experience on your Roku TV's Settings menu."

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Mudroom bench

In just a few hours, Tom Silva and Kevin O'Connor turn a single sheet of MDF into a piece of furniture that provides both storage and seating

BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLLEEN McQUAID



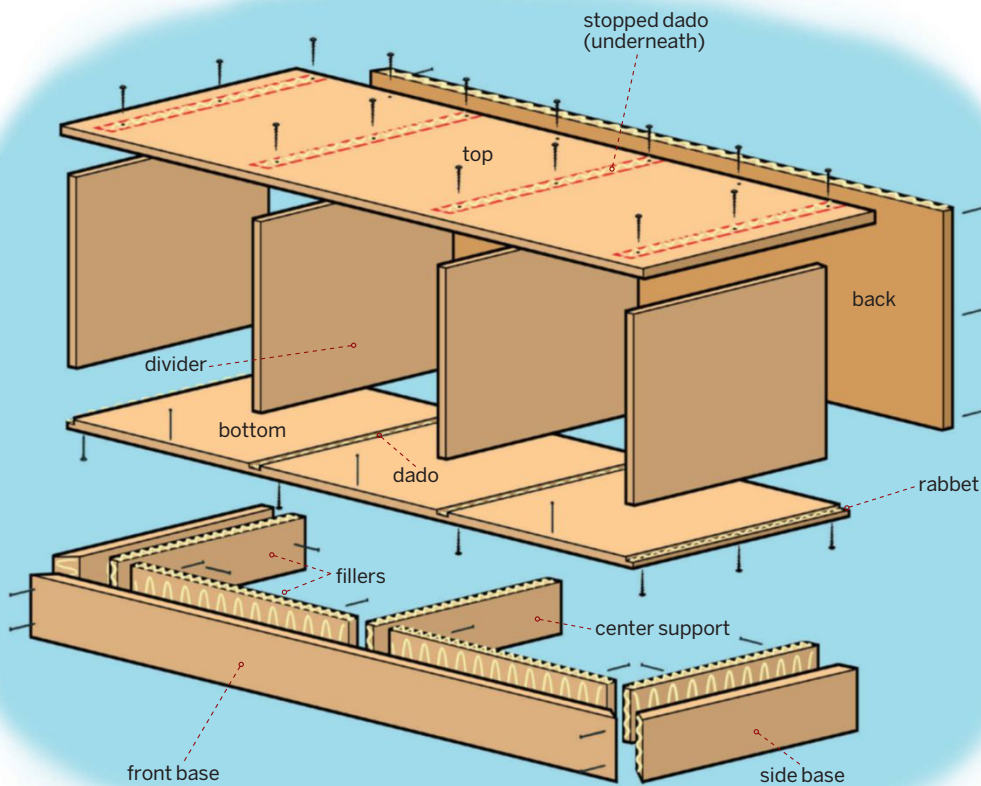
➔ **SHOES, BOOTS, AND ALL SORTS OF MESSES** tend to accumulate in our houses' rear entries and mudrooms as we transition from the outdoors to the inside. The pileup reaches a peak in winter when gloves, hats, and other outerwear are shed and then mysteriously go missing the next time they're needed.

Therein lies the value of a mudroom bench, one with cubbies to corral the accoutrements of the season and keep them neatly organized. It can also provide a welcome place to sit while donning and removing footwear.

TOH general contractor Tom Silva designed this bench to be made from just one 4x8 sheet of medium-density fiberboard (MDF), a solid, uniform, affordable material that takes paint beautifully. He sized the bench to hold three woven baskets, but they're optional. What's not optional for such a heavily used piece of furniture is sturdy building techniques employing strong deck screws, grooved joints, and plenty of wood glue. Follow along on these pages as Tom uses these methods to assemble this useful mudroom organizer.



ABOVE: Tom and Kevin show off their latest project: a three-cubby storage bench that took them just a couple of hours to make from scratch. **INSET:** For the finish, they applied a shellac-based primer and two coats of semigloss acrylic-latex paint. A cushion makes for comfortable seating.



TOOLS

- > table saw, track saw, or circular saw with guide
- > random-orbit or orbital sander
- > framing square
- > router with $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch straight bit
- > $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch bench chisel
- > drill/driver
- > No. 8 countersink drill bit
- > bar clamps
- > rubber mallet
- > brad nailer

MATERIALS

- > $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch 4x8 MDF panel
- > 180- and 220-grit sandpaper
- > wood glue and acid brush
- > $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch deck screws
- > 18-gauge, $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch brads (for the nailer)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS
18"W x 48"L x 18"H

STEP-BY-STEP

Mudroom bench



1] Cut pieces to size Following the cut list at thisoldhouse.com, saw the MDF into 14 parts. Leave the top and bottom as a single 3-by-4-foot panel for now. Smooth the faces and edges with 180-grit sandpaper. Mark a line widthwise on the 3-by-4-foot panel $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from each end, then two evenly spaced parallel lines between them.



2] Rout the 3-by-4-foot panel Using a guide, rout a $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch-deep dado along the inside edges of the end marks and down the middle of the other marks. Stop the bit $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from one edge, as shown. Square that end with a chisel, and saw the panel lengthwise into two pieces. The top piece has the stopped dados.



3] Drill pilot holes Make $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch rabbets at the ends of the bottom piece by slicing off one side of each dado. Then use a countersink bit to drill three evenly spaced pilot holes into every dado and rabbet, top and bottom, and along the back edge of the top piece. Countersink each hole through the board's opposite face.

MORE PROJECT HOW-TOS

Watch Tom and Kevin build useful projects in the TOH workshop at thisoldhouse.com/build-it

STEP-BY-STEP



4] Glue the first divider Lay a bead of wood glue, such as Gorilla Wood Glue (gorillatough.com), in the rabbet and brush it over both sides of the cut. Set the first divider in the rabbet, then turn the assembly on its side to expose the countersunk pilot holes in the bottom piece. Enlist a helper or use clamps to steady the corner.



5] Secure with screws Align the ends and edges, then drive a deck screw into each of the three pilot holes and recess its head slightly. Flip the assembly back upright and wipe off excess glue with a damp cloth. Spread glue in the next dado, tap in a divider with a mallet, then flip and screw as before. Repeat with the other dividers.



6] Fit the top Spread glue into the top's dadoes, and, with the dividers resting upright, set the top in place, as shown. Tap it down with the mallet. Check that the chiseled dado ends are tight against the dividers' front edges, and that there's a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch overhang at the back. Drive three screws through the top and into each divider.

TIP



Put away the tape measure

• **For tight miters in trim**, line up your base pieces against the cubby assembly, as shown above, then mark the cuts directly on the pieces themselves. That ensures your miters will be tight, and that the cubby assembly will fit snugly in its base.



7] Fasten the back Lay a bead of glue along the top edge of the back piece and the back edges of the dividers and bottom piece. Press the back into the glue lines, and drive three screws through the top and into the back. Hold the back in place with clamps or pneumatically driven brads.



8] Assemble the base Cut miters in both ends of the base's front and one end of each side piece. Glue and nail a filler to the inside of each side piece; glue and nail an end of those pairs to each of the front's miters. Glue and nail the center support, then the fillers, to the front's back side.



9] Set cubbies in base Put glue on the top edges of the fillers and center support, then, with a helper, drop the cubby assembly onto them. Shoot a brad through the midpoint at the front of each cubby and into the front fillers. Smooth the wiped areas with 220-grit sandpaper, then prime and paint. ■

• **For perfectly aligned dadoes**, top and bottom, run the router across both pieces at one time. In this case, Tom carved long dadoes across the face of one panel, then cut the panel in two lengthwise, creating two pieces with matched dadoes. This same technique also comes in handy when building cabinets with fixed shelves.

This Old House blueprint

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Q I recently slipped on the stairs of my 100-year-old home and on the way down broke three balusters. I'm fine, but where am I going to find replacement balusters that match the originals?

—DAN D'ONOFRIO, WINTHROP, MA

A It's unlikely that there are ready-made balusters that match your century-old ones. But it's not difficult to find a stair-parts company that can make custom balusters identical to your originals. You just need to provide some intact balusters, the same lengths as the broken ones, for the company to copy. While many of them now use computer-controlled lathes, a small job like this is often done the old-fashioned way, by hand, with gouges to remove the wood, and spring-type outside calipers, like the one at right. Woodturners use calipers to transfer the exact diameters of the original baluster's profile to the new one. By the way, when placing your order, consider having a few extras made, just in case.

—TOM SILVA,
TOH GENERAL CONTRACTOR



45
tips, tricks, and
answers to
your home-
improvement
questions

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Host

PHOTOS: (5 PORTRAITS) CARL TREMBLAY; (RIGHT) COLLEEN MCQUAID



I would like to paint the brick around my working, wood-burning fireplace. Is there a particular paint I should use? I'm concerned that it might bubble or peel when the fire is going. —PAULETTE HOLLAND, CARTERSVILLE, GA

MAURO HENRIQUE REPLIES: Before I undertake any project that involves painting brick, I always ask the homeowners if they are absolutely sure they want to do that. Once brick is painted, it's next to impossible to get it back to its original appearance.

If your mind is made up to paint, the next question is: What look do you want? If you prefer some of the brick color to show through, then a one-coat "whitewash" of thinned, flat acrylic-latex paint, like what I'm applying above, is the easy way to go. If you want to hide the bricks' color completely and see only their texture, it will take more time and materials because you'll be applying at least two coats.

Either way, the first step is to clean the brick with a cleaner/degreaser such as Dawn

dishwashing liquid. Protect the hearth and other surfaces next to the fireplace with plastic sheeting, then scrub the brick with the cleaner and a stiff bristle brush. Rinse thoroughly with water, remove the plastic, and wait at least 24 hours for the brick to dry. Then cover the surface with a clear, alkali-resistant primer such as Loxon Acrylic Conditioner (sherwin-williams.com). It locks down any residual grit and provides a protection against the mortar's high pH, which can "burn" acrylic paint, turning it brown.

When whitewashing, mask the area as before; thinned paint is

Painting contractor Mauro Henrique has worked on more than a dozen This Old House TV projects.

Mauro Henrique brushes a thinned coat of acrylic-latex paint onto a brick fireplace. That's the first step in the process of mimicking the whitewashed look.

DIY
SMARTS



Richard Trethewey points to a plastic bolt and nut, the kind typically used these days to attach toilet seats. These fasteners can't corrode, but they often loosen up and allow the seat to move.

Q Loose toilet seat

My toilet seat uses nylon bolts with nuts that are meant to be turned by hand, but I can never tighten them enough to stop the seat from sliding from side to side. What's the secret to keeping the seat from wiggling? —JIM HODGES, POLLOCK PINES, CA

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES: Back in the days when toilet seats were only mounted with metal bolts and nuts, loose seats weren't that common because you could really torque the nuts against the underside of the bowl, with a rubber washer for cushioning, of course. But cranking down too hard could crack the ceramic. That's one reason toilet-seat-makers started using plastic bolts: They're hard to overtighten.

To fix the wiggle, you can replace your toilet seat with one that has locking nuts, like the Sta-Tite feature on seats made by Bemis and Church (toiletseats.com). They use good old metal bolts, but to protect against overtightening, the nuts are plastic. After a few turns of the wrench, part of the nut snaps off while the remaining part locks the bolt—and the seat—to the toilet. These locking nuts can be removed if you ever want to change the seat.

Now, if you don't want to buy a new seat, try a Toilet-Seat Tightening Kit (ginsey.com). It has flexible, synthetic-rubber washers that fill the gap between the bolts and the toilet's ceramic seat holes, preventing side-to-side movement. And they grip the plastic nuts so they can't come loose. For less than \$4, you get enough washers in the kit to fix three seats, along with a wrench for tightening the nuts.



likely to spatter. Make a 50:50 mix of water and paint and apply it with a square-end 4-inch wall brush. If the consistency is right, about like milk, the brick will soak up the paint. Cover only a course or two of the brick at a time; then, before the paint dries, dab it with a rag to make it more transparent and to obscure the brushstrokes. Done right, the dabbing will have no discernible pattern.

Paint and dab in this way, a few courses at a time, making sure to stand back occasionally and check the overall appearance. If the coating is too thin in places, just brush on more paint and dab until it looks right. And if dark-colored mortar is showing through, apply straight, unthinned paint to the joint, then wipe it with a rag. Continue this process until the entire fireplace is covered.

If you'd rather have a uniform color, don't thin the paint. Just brush two coats of 100 percent acrylic-latex paint over the alkali-resistant primer. A semigloss will be easier to clean than a flat sheen.

The ends of the bricks facing the firebox opening need a different treatment. Because that location can get as hot as 1,200 degrees F—and acrylic-latex paints only tolerate temperatures up to 250 degrees—mask off and coat the ends with a solvent-based, high-heat spray paint. Then wait at least 14 days before lighting a fire. Paint shouldn't be subjected to intense heat until it has had a chance to fully cure.

Q Thermostats for radiators

My house is heated by hot-water radiators, so I was intrigued when I saw Richard Trethewey installing thermostatic valves

DIY SMARTS ONLINE

Find more information about this topic—and many others—at thisoldhouse.com/DIY-smarts

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that “make each radiator its own zone.” Would it make sense to put those valves in our upstairs bedrooms?

—BERNARD E. SMALLWOOD, ISLIP, NY

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES:

Absolutely! And by doing so, you’d save energy and be much more comfortable.

One problem with many of the hot-water radiator systems in use today is that much of the heat goes straight from the boiler up to the radiators on the top floor, leaving the rest of the house in a chill.

With a thermostatic valve on the incoming pipe of each upstairs radiator, however, the valve senses when the room has reached its temperature setting and automatically restricts the flow of

hot water. The radiator doesn’t overheat; it just silently emits a steady, comfortable warmth that would be the envy of anyone living with forced-air heat. The side benefit of limiting the flow of hot water upstairs is that hotter water flows through the downstairs radiators, keeping those spaces more comfortable, too.

Thermostatic valves, which were developed and perfected in Europe, have an adjustable dial for setting the radiator temperature. The dial has numbers from 0 to 5. The midpoint—3—represents about 66 degrees F. It may take a few tries to find the setting that works best for each room, but once you do, you can leave it be.

Now, if you have radiator covers, you’ll need a slightly

different type of valve: one with a separate dial mounted on the outside of the cover. The dial connects to a temperature sensor that hangs inside the cover, and to the valve on the radiator’s pipe.

Q Cracked and drooping plaster ceiling

The plaster ceiling in our hallway is cracked and drooping. Nothing has fallen yet, but it could any day now. I’ve seen Tom Silva repair plaster walls with a glue. Can the same thing be done on ceilings?

—TRENT DOHSE, OMAHA

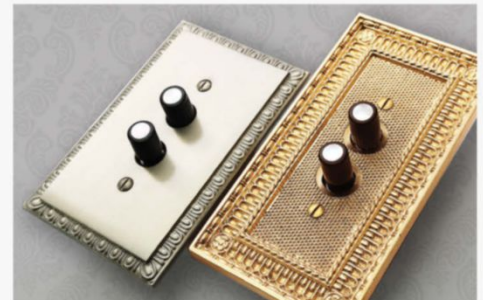
TOM SILVA REPLIES: Yes, it can. The process of reattaching loose plaster to wood lath with an adhesive such as Plaster Magic

RADIATOR UPGRADE

Watch Richard install a thermostatic radiator valve at thisoldhouse.com/radiator-valve

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(plastermagic.com) is virtually the same for both walls and ceilings. And while this may seem like a lot of work, it's easier, cleaner, and less expensive than replacing the plaster with drywall.

The first step is to stabilize the plaster so it doesn't drop any further. Starting along the edge of the bulge and working toward the crack, use a $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch masonry bit to drill holes every 8 inches or so through the plaster directly beneath the wood lath. Stay at least 2 inches away from the crack.

Now put a $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter plastic washer—the kind used for attaching foam insulation panels—on a drywall screw and drive it through each hole and into the lath. Don't pull the bulge back into position yet; just snug the washer

What is it?

A
Potted-plant stands

B
Rigid-foam washers

C
Paint-roller gauges

D
Ceiling-tile anchors

FOR THE ANSWER,
SEE PAGE 32



gently up against the plaster to hold it in place.

Next, find the size of the gap between the plaster and the lath. The adhesive can bridge gaps up to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. A wider gap usually indicates that debris is in the way, which has to be removed.

To measure this gap, make a feeler gauge by straightening a paper clip and bending it 90

degrees from one end. Where the bulge hangs down the most, drill a couple of holes through the plaster and stick the gauge's bent end through the hole until it hits the lath. Mark the gauge where it meets the ceiling. Now, pull the gauge down until the leg catches on the back side of the plaster. Mark the gauge again. The distance between the two marks

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What is it?

C Paint-roller gauges

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represents how far the plaster is separated from the lath.

For gaps of more than ¼ inch, you'll have to go behind the plaster at the crack and clear out the debris. (If there is no crack, use a 5-in-1 tool to open up a ⅜-inch-wide slit down the center of the bulge, perpendicular to the lath direction, the length of the bulge.)

Open the crack or slit by gently pulling up the bulge on one side with the screws and washers. This will give you space to get in and remove debris from the bulge's other side. A good tool for this job is a straightened-out wire coat hanger that has a 90-degree bend 1 inch from the end. Feed the hooked end between the plaster and the lath and carefully pull out the loose plaster bits. Check to see if any more debris needs to be removed by pushing the plaster up with your hand. If debris is still there, the plaster will rock at that point. Take care not to crack it.

When you have pulled out all the loose debris, ease the plaster back into place and slowly tighten the screws by hand to hold it there. Now lower the other side of the crack or slit by loosening the screws, then follow the same procedure to clear the debris from that side and pull up the plaster to within ⅛ inch of the lath. When you're

done, the bulge should be gone.

Remove some screws and washers and use the curved-tip syringe to spray Plaster Magic conditioner into the open holes. Move the remaining screws and washers to the conditioned holes and spray the unconditioned ones, as well as the edges of the cracks. The conditioner acts like a primer, ensuring that the adhesive bonds well with the lath and plaster. After 10 minutes, use a caulk gun to inject Plaster Magic adhesive into all the holes and tighten the screws slightly. Tightening too much can squeeze out the adhesive.

Clean the wall with a damp sponge, and let the adhesive cure for 24 hours. Remove all the screws and washers and fill the holes and cracks with thin layers of ready-mix joint compound until the ceiling is smooth and ready for paint.

Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

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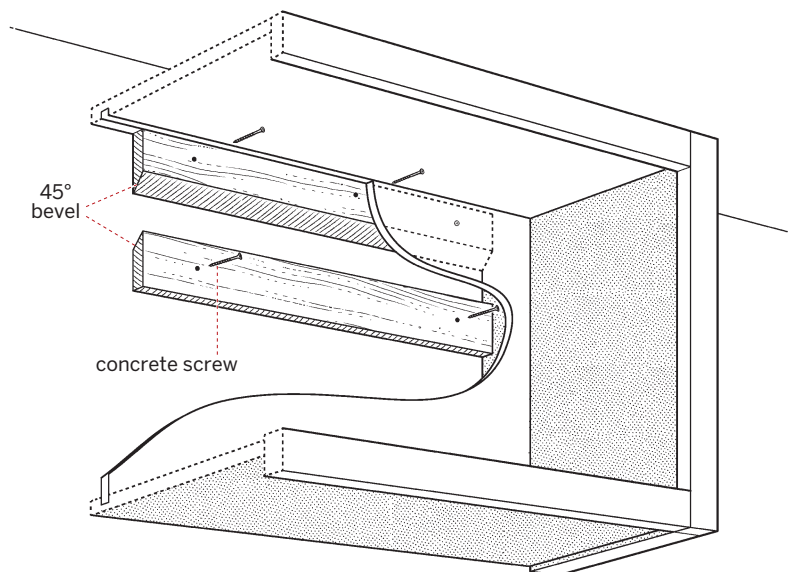
Include a complete address and daytime phone number. Published questions will be edited for clarity and length and may be used in other media. We regret that, because of the volume of mail received, we're unable to reply to unpublished questions.



Norm's tricks of the trade

I'm hanging new kitchen cabinets over old plastered concrete-block walls. How should I fasten them to the walls? My over-the-range microwave is heavy!

—BUD GORDON, SIOUX CITY, IA



A I can't think of a stronger or easier way to hang upper cabinets than with a French cleat: two pieces of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch stock with beveled edges. The upper piece is attached to the back of the cabinet with its bevel facing away from the wall. The lower piece is fastened to the wall so its bevel faces toward the wall. Make sure the upper piece is square to the cabinet, and that the lower piece is level. Then, when the cabinet is set in place and gravity locks the bevels together, the cabinet will be square and level too.

For block walls like yours, fasten the cleats with concrete screws such as Tapcons. Leave at least 4 inches between their pilot holes, and don't space them farther than 16 inches apart. (When hanging cabinets on wood studs, I put construction adhesive on the cleats and drive two wood or deck screws at least 1 inch into each stud.)

French cleats work best with cabinets with a back panel that's inset slightly. If your cabinet isn't built that way, shim out the bottom and cover the gap with trim. ■

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In Fine Detail

Take a tour of our 2018 Idea House, an updated bungalow that showcases next-level craftsmanship at every turn



Climb the front steps, past the stone-clad porch piers, and the Craftsman-style architectural elements all around give the house a familiar, homey feel. But once inside, it's clear this is no standard bungalow home. A glass-framed entry ushers light into a cozy foyer with a herringbone oak floor. Just beyond, a hall accented with handcrafted cherry ceiling insets opens onto a living space that soars to double height.

Welcome to *TOH*'s newest Idea House, a 2,700-square-foot home located in Narragansett, Rhode Island, brimming with custom features inside and out. "The level of craftsmanship really gets your attention at this house," says *TOH* host Kevin O'Connor, who was particularly taken with the swooping roofline. "That curve took extra effort, and it's a beautiful flared detail."

It's also a defining element of the Craftsman-inspired

By **Jill Connors** • Photographs by **Nat Rea**
Produced and styled by **Claudia Jepsen**

THESE PAGES

SHINGLE SIDING: **SBC Cedar**
EXTERIOR STAIN: **Olympic's Steely Sea**
WESTERN RED CEDAR: **Real Cedar**
RADIATA PINE CLAPBOARDS, SOFFITS, AND TRIM: **LIFESPAN Solid Select**
MANUFACTURED-STONE VENEER: **Eldorado Stone**
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WINDOWS AND PATIO DOORS: **Andersen**
LAMPPOST: **Walpole Outdoors**
GARAGE DOORS: **Haas Door**
LANDSCAPE PLANTS: **Sodco, Fast-Growing-Trees.com, and Instant Hedge**
IRRIGATION: **Orbit B-Hyve and Orbit Irrigation**
FLOORING: **Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods**
SKYLIGHTS: **VELUX**
CHANDELIER: **Clarkson Lighting**
LAMPS: **Circa Lighting**
FURNISHINGS: **hayneedle.com**
GREEN SETTEE: **O&G Studio**
STONEWARE: **Cynthia Brown Studio**
WINDOW TREATMENTS: **Smith & Noble**
FRAME TELEVISION: **Samsung**
GAS FIREPLACE: **Ortal from Wakefield Fireplace**

THIS PAGE: A vaulted ceiling, skylights, and a full-height limestone-clad fireplace add drama to the living area. Custom walnut built-ins provide sculptural storage; the TV displays art when not in use.

LEFT: The updated Craftsman-style house has a sweeping roofline with deep overhangs that shelter a full-width porch.







1

architectural design by Union Studio architect Christina Carlson, in collaboration with The House Designers. And executing that roof detail is just one example of the skill Sweenor Builders applied in making the plan on paper a reality. Each of the massive rafters had to be constructed in sections on the ground, then lifted into place. As builder Jeff Sweenor recalls with a smile, “It took three guys on the ground, three on ladders, and three on the roof—and a lot of rope and muscle.”

Inside, the house’s flexible layout includes two master suites, an additional two bedrooms and one and a half baths, first- and second-floor laundry rooms, a basement media room and gym, plus garage guest quarters and a raft of outdoor amenities. Interior designer Kristen Martone gave it all a fresh, modern look with clean-lined furnishings and a lively palette of blues and greens.

Best of all, the free-flowing plan offers lots of options for gathering with family and friends, from the open kitchen/dining/living area to the rear courtyard’s outdoor kitchen and fire-pit patio. Between the open-air and interior spaces is the back sunporch, where skylights and south-facing windows allow the breezy summer hangout to morph into a cool-weather comfort zone. Indoors or out, this is a house crafted to enjoy life in.

THIS PAGE
WHITE OAK FLOORING AND BLACK WALNUT BORDER INSET, CHERRY CEILING TRAYS, ENTRY AND INTERIOR DOORS, AND OAK AND POPLAR STAIR PARTS: **Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods**
ENTRY LIGHT: **Circa Lighting**
INTERIOR DOOR HARDWARE: **House of Antique Hardware**
LIVING AREA BUILT-INS: **Sweenor Builders Mill Shop**
WOOD GLUE: **Gorilla Glue**
PAINT: **Glidden’s Swan White (walls)**
FURNISHINGS: **hayneedle.com**
ARTWORK: **Jessica Hagen Fine Art + Design**

Warm and welcoming

1. Greeting visitors with custom elements right inside the front door makes it clear that this is a distinctive house. The foyer features a hand-laid herringbone “rug” of white oak floorboards framed in black walnut. It leads to a hallway with a coffered ceiling that is accented with a series of stepped cherry inlays, creating a dramatic transition from the entry’s 9-foot ceiling to the double-height great-room living area.

2. For convenient daily comings and goings, the back door connects to the freestanding garage via a covered walkway, offering protection from the elements. This secondary entry gets the first-class treatment with a small sitting porch that echoes the full-width porch out front, with a cedar floor and ceiling and tapered wood columns set on manufactured-stone-veneer bases. Also making everyday life easier: a smart-home system that allows for adjusting the lighting and setting its schedule by remote access.

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2

Easy living

3. Inside the back door, custom mudroom cubbies and a built-in bench offer a convenient drop spot for outerwear and grocery bags. Poplar shiplap is installed with a nickel gap reminiscent of wall cladding found in older beach cottages in the area. For a high-contrast look, the walls' crisp white paint is accented by deep green on the built-ins and trim. Durable black ceramic tile underfoot stands up to wet umbrellas and sandy feet with ease.

4. The adjacent powder room repeats the same black-and-green color scheme and gets its vintage charm from vertical shiplap wainscoting, old-school penny-round floor tile, and a dresser-turned-vanity finished with a washstand-style top in glossy marble-look quartz and a simple vessel sink. Malachite-patterned wallpaper makes the ceiling a focal point and is repeated in a trim for the round mirror. Modern wall lights update the idea of classic candle-style sconces.



3



4

THIS PAGE

CLAPBOARDS, WINDOW TRIM, AND SOFFITS: **LIFESPAN Solid Select**
 WESTERN RED CEDAR: **Real Cedar**
 EXTERIOR SEALER (ON CEDAR ELEMENTS): **Olympic**
 WALKWAY PAVERS: **Unilock**
 BACK DOOR AND INTERIOR SHIPLAP: **Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods**
 PORCH FURNISHINGS: **hayneedle.com**
 OUTDOOR SCONCES: **Circa Lighting**
 SMART LIGHTING CONTROL: **Leviton**
 PAINT: **Glidden's Swan White** (mudroom and powder room walls), **Hunter Green** (mudroom built-ins and trim), and **Black Magic** (powder room trim)
 FLOOR TILE: **Merola Tile**
 INTERIOR LIGHTING: **Clarkson Lighting**
 HARDWARE: **House of Antique Hardware**
 MUDROOM BUILT-INS: **Sweener Builders Mill Shop**
 BENCH CUSHION AND WINDOW TREATMENT: **Smith & Noble**
 WALLPAPER (ON CEILING): **Malachite by York**
 QUARTZ COUNTERTOP: **Cosentino**
 VESSEL SINK: **American Standard**
 FAUCET: **DXV**



5



Stylish hub

5. Natural wood elements carry the Craftsman aesthetic into the open-plan kitchen, which features quartersawn white oak floors, a black walnut island top, walnut open shelves and vegetable drawers, and wood-seat barstools. Around the perimeter, quartz counters with a soapstone look offer an easy-care alternative to natural stone. To anchor the space, the island base is painted graphite, while perimeter cabinets and backsplash tile are a fresh white. The sleek stainless-steel appliances and vent hood add a contemporary touch. Layered lighting helps the space work hard and feel good, with a carriage-house-style pendant over the island, task library lights above the sink, recessed ceiling cans, and LEDs set into channels in the open shelves. Sink windows look out onto the driveway's custom pergola.

6. Off the kitchen, the butler's pantry meets modern-day storage needs in classic early-20th-century style. Painted floor-to-ceiling cabinets feature glass doors, a built-in rack for platters, open shelves, shallow drawers (easier to keep orderly!), bin pulls, and glass knobs. The walnut shelf and countertops warm up the space even more.

7. Around the corner is a convenient first-floor laundry, where all the essentials are given a style upgrade: a stackable washer and dryer, a vintage-style apron sink and wall-mount faucet, and mosaic-tile walls. A hanging rod, space for folding—or ironing on a countertop board—and laundry bins that roll out of the way pack a lot of efficiency into the compact space.

THESE PAGES

KITCHEN AND PANTRY CABINETS, ISLAND BASE, AND VEGETABLE DRAWERS: **Signature Custom Cabinetry**
 QUARTZ COUNTERTOPS: **Cosentino**
 WOOD COUNTERTOPS AND FLOATING SHELVES: **Grothouse**
 LIGHT FIXTURES: **Clarkson Lighting**
 APPLIANCES: **Miele**
 VENT HOOD: **Panasonic**
 FLOOR AND BACKSPLASH TILE: **Merola Tile**
 STOOLS: **hayneedle.com**
 KITCHEN SINK: **DXV**
 KITCHEN FAUCET: **GROHE**
 LAUNDRY SINK AND FAUCET: **American Standard**
 LAUNDRY CABINETS: **Sweenor Builders Mill Shop**
 WASHER AND DRYER: **Electrolux**
 TANKLESS WATER HEATERS (not shown): **Rinnai**
 WINDOWS: **Andersen**



8

Light and airy

8. “The back of this house is all about entertaining, and the sunroom provides a connection from indoors to outdoors,” says architect Christina Carlson. With windowed walls and skylights overhead, the bright, inviting space connects to the main living area through sliding patio doors. A vaulted V-groove cedar ceiling, stained tongue-and-groove poplar walls, and wood-look

PVC flooring give the room a breezy porch feel. The nearly floor-to-ceiling windows’ innovative system of sliding glass panels and retractable screens at top and bottom preserves views while channeling fresh air—and makes the room comfortable spring through fall. A teak dining set, synthetic-wicker chairs, and a painted porch swing give it comfortable and practical beach-house style.

THIS PAGE

SKYLIGHTS: **VELUX**
 PVC PORCH FLOOR: **Aeratis**
 WESTERN RED CEDAR:
Real Cedar
 STAIN: **Olympic’s Steely Sea**
 PATIO DOORS: **Andersen**
 PORCH WINDOWS WITH
 RETRACTABLE SCREENS:
Scenix by Larson
 CEILING FAN: **Clarkson**
 Lighting
 FURNISHINGS:
hayneedle.com



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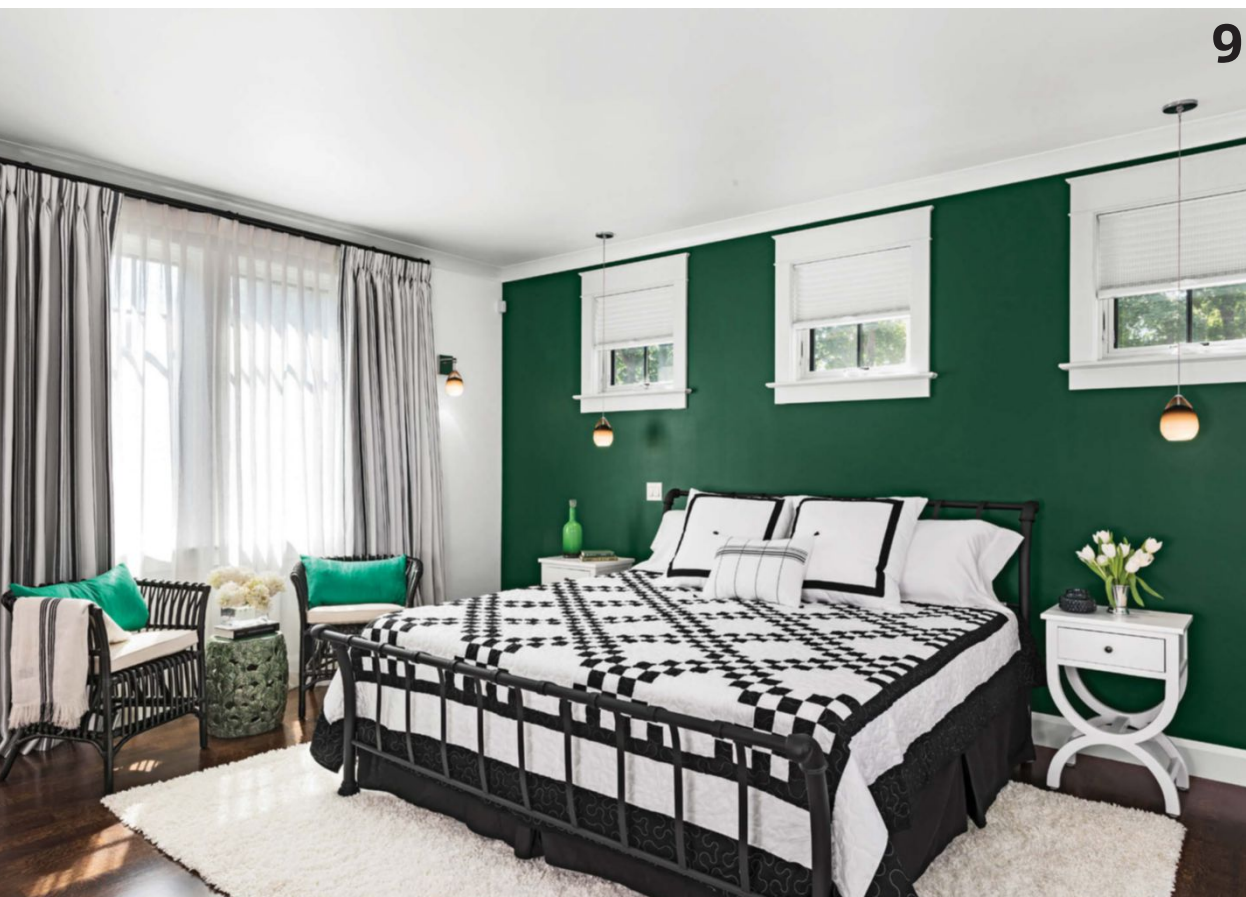
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9

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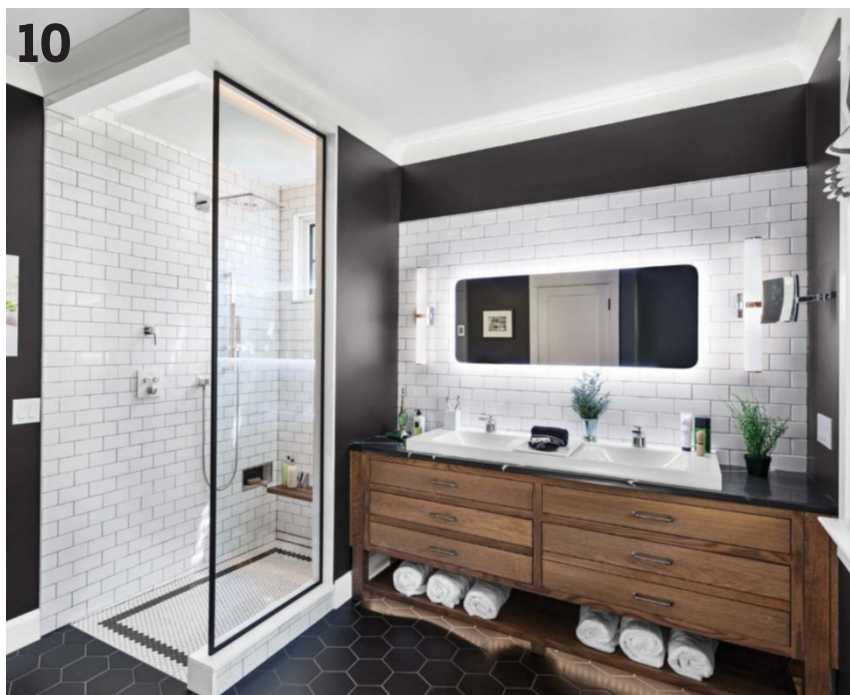
PAINT: Glidden's Brunswick (bedroom accent wall) and Black Magic (bath walls)
 LIGHTING: Clarkson Lighting
 KING BED, SHEETS, AND BED PILLOWS: Sleep Number
 QUILT: Barn Red Quilts
 ACCENT PILLOWS: Malabar
 WINDOW TREATMENTS AND BED SHAMS: Smith & Noble
 GARDEN STOOL: hayneedle.com
 VANITY AND BUILT-INS: Sweenor Builders Mill Shop
 BATH SINK AND FAUCETS: DXV
 SHOWER FITTINGS: GROHE
 TILE: Merola Tile
 SHOWER WATERPROOFING SYSTEM AND BATHROOM ELECTRIC IN-FLOOR HEATING: Schluter-Systems' KERDI Waterproofing Membranes and DITRA-HEAT Electric Floor Warming
 GLASS SHOWER ENCLOSURE: Herald Glass

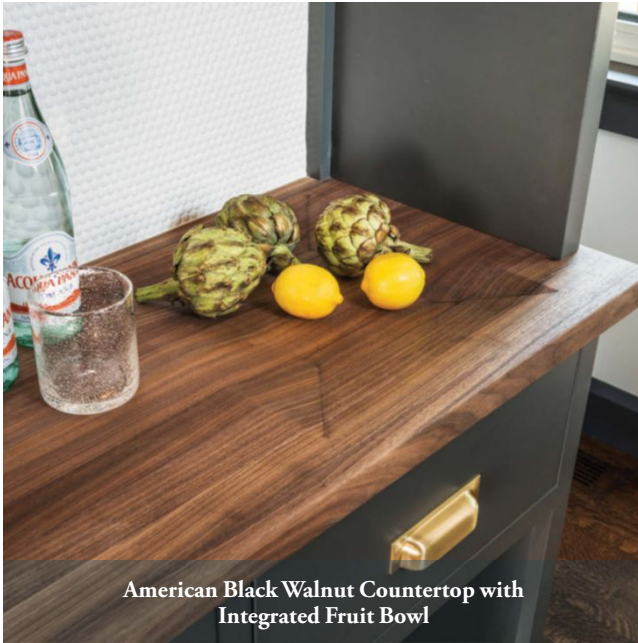
Suite flexibility

9. A first-floor master bedroom with bath offers homeowners the option of moving into it now—or later. It would be just as welcoming as a guest or in-law suite. The bedroom looks sharp with a bold black, white, and green color scheme. Simply trimmed clerestory windows below the curved cove crown molding usher in light while blocking views of the neighbors; tall tri-muntin casement windows look out over the deep backyard.

10. The high-contrast theme continues in the adjoining black-and-white bath. The custom vanity maximizes storage with drawers as well as an open shelf; toe-kick LED lighting alleviates having to fumble around in the dark. The shower is more than just a glistening tile-and-glass attraction: It features a curbless design and a drop-down bench to make it ultra-functional for users of every age and ability.

10





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PHOTOS: NAT REA

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Custom touches

11. Upstairs, a gallery-style hallway puts a spotlight on special features, making it more of a showpiece than a pass-through. Decorative cedar trusses accent the ceiling vault above the open railing. A nook for a library/home office is defined by a bright-blue bookcase built-in that incorporates salvaged glass panels. Under the front gable is a built-in desk sized to fit right below the windows, making the most of natural light for daytime work.

12. The second-floor master suite's bath is a spa-like retreat with a soaking tub and tiled shower, in calming beige, white, and wood tones. The custom vanity is flanked by tall storage cabinets; toe-kick lighting is both pretty and practical. Iridescent seashell mosaic tile forms a shimmering frame for the mirror; the tile is also used as an accent in the wood wall niche, which has built-in LED lighting.

13. The upstairs master bedroom's simple, streamlined furnishings and earth-toned color palette set the scene for relaxation. A glossy, white-painted tongue-and-groove ceiling adds a textural contrast to the natural wood surfaces in the room. A built-in niche above the headboard provides a place to display collected objects or tuck a few extra books.



11



12



13

THIS PAGE

KNOTTY WESTERN RED CEDAR (TRUSSES):
Real Cedar
PAINT: Glidden's Celestial Blue (library built-in) and White on White (library/office walls, trim, and desk), Colonial White (master suite walls) and White on White (master suite trim)
CUSTOM BUILT-INS AND VANITY: Sweenor Builders
Mill Shop
TUB AND FIXTURES: DXV
COUNTERTOP AND ACCENTS: Cosentino
BATH TILE: Merola Tile
TILE EDGING AND TRIM PROFILES: Schluter-Systems
LIGHTING: Clarkson Lighting
TABLE LAMP: Circa Lighting
KING BED, SHEETS, AND BED PILLOWS: Sleep Number
FURNISHINGS AND BED QUILT: hayneedle.com
HARDWARE: House of Antique Hardware

ASK THE ARCHITECT:

Choosing the Right Windows for a Contemporary Craftsman



We asked architect **Christina Carlson** of Union Studio Architecture & Community Design to tell us how the windows and patio doors created a seamless connection between the interior and exterior living spaces at the *TOH* 2018 Idea House.

Tell us about the grouping of windows.

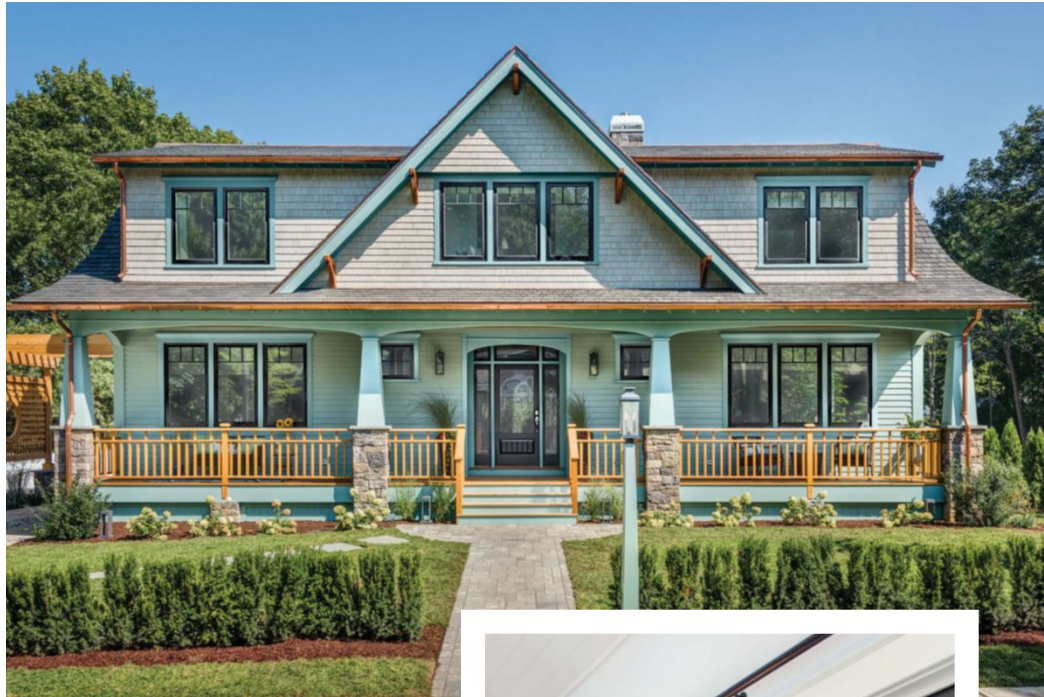
The “ganged” windows are a feature common to the Craftsman style. It’s a technique that uses smaller windows to create large areas of glazing. They serve a double purpose—to let in lots of natural light and to frame views to the exterior. On the sides adjacent to neighboring homes, however, we chose small clerestory windows; set high in the wall, they let in daylight from above and prevent views into bedroom areas.

Why casement, not double-hung?

Double-hung windows are the go-to in our region, but in this house, we wanted to mix contemporary elements with traditional forms. By eliminating the central lock rail (which divides a double-hung window across the middle), the muntin pattern shifts to the top third, making the casements feel taller. This was advantageous where the rooflines limited the height of the window openings. We also love that the entire window opens to capture sea breezes!

The windows feature black muntins. Is this a growing trend?

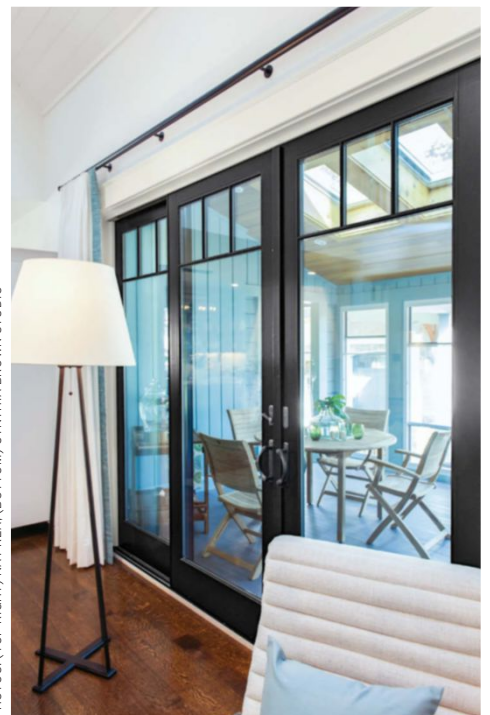
You will find dark or colorful sashes on almost every historical home, but over the last few decades, white vinyl has become ubiquitous. When looking at a house, the windows are where our attention is naturally drawn—like looking into the eyes of a face. I think it’s an important place to put a little personality. This contrast between the window sash and trim colors



can add great depth and interest. Black is an especially nice choice because it can feel modern or classic, and it looks great with almost any color palette.

What can you tell us about the wide-panel patio doors?

I love using patio doors because they essentially create a floor-to-ceiling glass wall. These gliding doors from Andersen are particularly flexible; the homeowner can choose which door to use, so it doesn’t interfere with furniture layouts; they are hingeless, so they save valuable floor space; and you can open them all at once for continuous indoor-outdoor flow.



PHOTOS: (TOP RIGHT) NAT REA, (BOTTOM) CYNTHIA BROWN STUDIO



To see more of Andersen Windows and Patio Doors in the *TOH* Idea House, go to page 34.



14



15

It's a colorful life

14. "There's a coziness to having living space tucked under the roofline," says architect Carlson. In the second-floor bunk room, gray-blue paint with a hint of green covers the ceiling as well as angled walls that reflect the roof's steep pitch, creating a perfect room for cocooning. A patterned rug, polka-dot bed linens, even a pop-up teepee, continue the color theme.

15. Throughout the house, shades of blue brighten a predominantly neutral backdrop. Here, aqua blues mix with teal greens in the second-floor guest bedroom, designed to be a serene retreat. The ivory-linen-upholstered headboard provides plush comfort, setting off the floral-themed textiles. Custom valances give curtains an architectural framework with a scaled-up version of the curved cove crown molding that appears in most of the rooms.

16. A high-gloss floating vanity lends a vivid look in the second-floor shared bathroom, where the walls and countertop provide bright-white contrast. The laminate cabinetry's dazzling hue picks up the shower's accent tile (reflected in the mirror), which suggests a waterfall cascading down the wall.



16

THIS PAGE

PAINT: Glidden's Mountain Stream (bunk room walls and ceiling), Morning Song (guest room walls), and White on White (bath)
BUNK BEDS AND BEDROOM FURNISHINGS: hayneedle.com
QUEEN BED, SHEETS, AND BED PILLOWS: Sleep Number
LIGHTING: Clarkson Lighting
LAMPS: Circa Lighting
CUSTOM VANITY: Sweenor Builders Mill Shop
BATH FIXTURES AND FITTINGS: American Standard
BATH TILE: Merola Tile
WINDOW TREATMENTS: Smith & Noble

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Outdoor oasis

17. Come summer, the courtyard is the prime activity zone. “The idea was to not just create one huge rectangle,” says landscape designer Jon Zeyl of the area between the back of the house and a garage sidewall. “We wanted welcoming spaces, logically broken up by geometry, that people would want to use.” An outdoor kitchen and dining area set the stage for alfresco meals; off the sunroom, a seating area complete with sectional sofa invites lounging. And when the mercury climbs, the plunge pool is prime territory for a cooling soak. Uniting all the areas are concrete pavers in a variety of sizes and patterns.

18. Both fun and functional, an outdoor shower is a sought-after amenity at any house near the beach. Sweenor Builders went all out creating this one, with a door decorated with laser-cut schooling fish (see Photo 17), chevron-pattern cutouts on the privacy panels, and a pergola-style roof. Inside, the curved seat and plumbing wall got a natural accent with moisture-resistant knotty western red cedar.

19. On evenings when there's a chill in the air, the gas fire bowl has a magnetic attraction. Casual Adirondack-style seating, including a bench swing hung from an angled pergola—echoed in the circular paving design—offers plenty of options for gathering around into the wee hours.



THESE PAGES

PLUNGE POOL: **Soake Pools**
 BASEMENT EGRESS: **The BILCO Company**
 SHOWER AND PERGOLA: **Sweenor Builders Mill Shop**
 SHOWER FITTINGS: **DXV**
 PATIO PAVERS: **Unilock**
 OUTDOOR FURNISHINGS AND APPLIANCES: **hayneedle.com**
 MANUFACTURED-STONE VENEER, KITCHEN ISLAND, AND FIRE BOWL: **Eldorado Stone**

DEKTON COUNTERTOP: **Cosentino**
 LIGHTING: **Clarkson Lighting**
 HOUSE HYDRANT (not shown): **Aquor Water Systems**
 GENERATOR (not shown): **Champion Power Equipment**
 KNOTTY WESTERN RED CEDAR: **Real Cedar**
 ROOFING: **DaVinci Roofscapes**
 SKYLIGHTS: **VELUX**



20



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VIP treatment

20. Shiplap walls, plantation shutters, a coral-hued accent in the dormered ceiling, and pickled oak floors add up to a luxurious beach-house look in the guest suite above the garage. There are glam touches, too, from the beaded chandelier to the starburst mirror. “I call this my ‘she shed,’ a separate living space off the main house that functions as a guesthouse or weekend retreat,” says interior designer Kristen Martone. Operated by remote control, the retractable queen-size Murphy bed slides up into the back of the cabinetry, leaving just the bookcase and flat-screen TV to be enjoyed from the comfort of the sofa.

21. The garage repeats many of the house’s Craftsman-style details: a curved roof, a central gable, exposed brackets, and a textural mix of siding materials, with cedar shingles above manufactured-stone veneer. An exposed aggregate concrete driveway provides an aesthetically pleasing (and snow-removal-friendlier) alternative to gravel. The covered walkway connects the two structures and offers protection from the weather.

22. The basement in the main house holds more amenities fit for company—or just more extras for the family who lives there—with a media room and a home gym, complete with sauna. Although nestled below grade, the rooms gain natural light from a deep window-well system that doubles as egress from the basement space.



21



22

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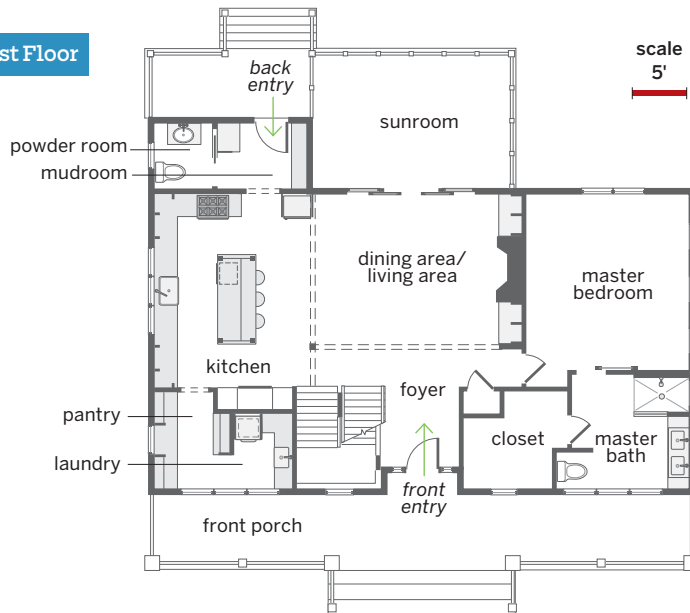
PAINT: Glidden’s Warm White (guest suite walls), Coral Blush (ceiling accent), and Fog (media room walls)
GUEST SUITE FURNISHINGS: Cabot House
RETRACTABLE MURPHY BED: Zoom-Room
BUILT-INS: Signature Custom Cabinetry
GARAGE DOORS: Haas Door

MEDIA ROOM FURNISHINGS: Article
EGRESS WINDOWS: The BILCO Company
BASEMENT GYM EQUIPMENT: hayneedle.com
LOCKERS: Jorgenson Lockers
LOAD CENTER (not shown): Leviton
SAUNA: Finlandia Sauna from Country Saunas by Design

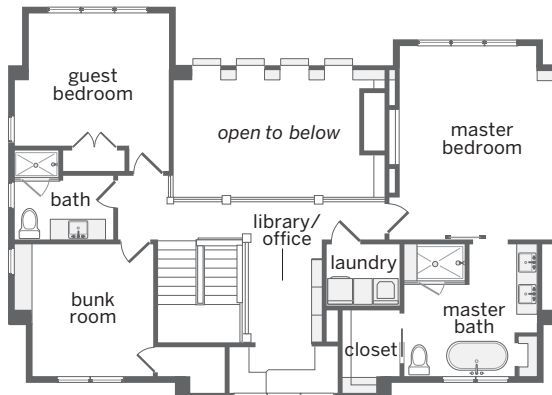
FLOOR PLANS

The 2,700-square-foot layout offers free-flowing gathering space on the first floor with open kitchen/dining/living areas. Sliding doors to the adjoining sunroom encourage passage through it to the rear courtyard's entertaining space. With four bedrooms and three and a half baths, the house features upstairs and downstairs master suites, two laundry rooms, a library/office, and basement media and exercise rooms. The garage holds an upstairs guest suite.

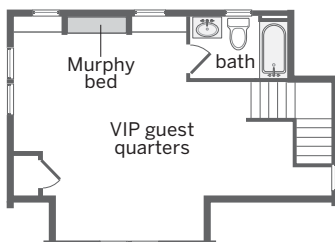
First Floor



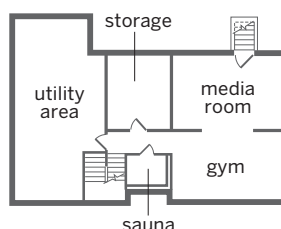
Second Floor



Garage



Basement



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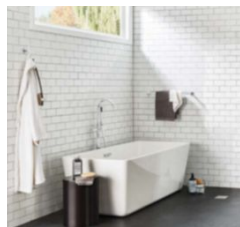
Subflooring
AdvanTech

CustomHomeResource.com



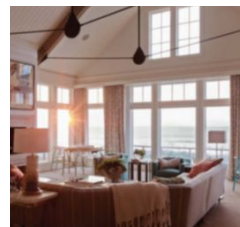
PVC Porch Floor
Aeratis

aeratis.com



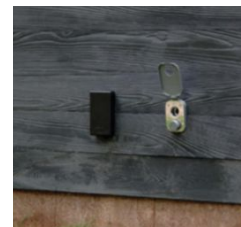
Plumbing Fixtures
American Standard

americanstandard.com



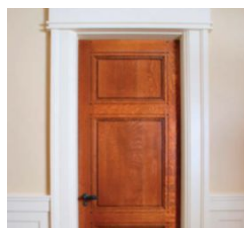
Windows & Patio Doors
Andersen

andersenwindows.com



Outdoor Water Systems
Aquor

aquorwatersystems.com



Hardwoods
Baird Brothers
Fine Hardwoods

bairdbrothers.com



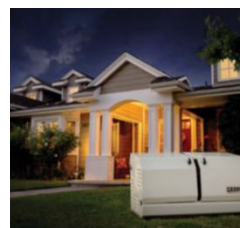
Basement Egress
The BILCO Company

www.bilco.com



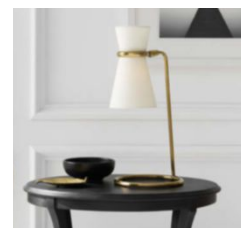
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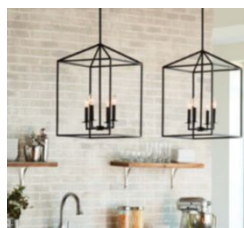
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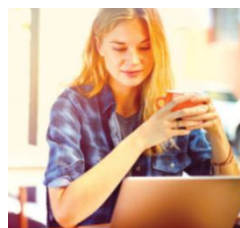
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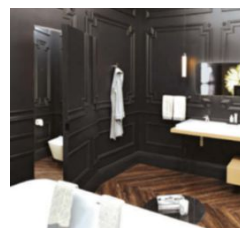
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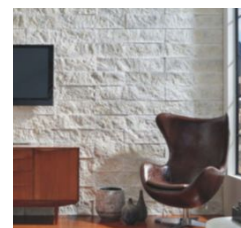
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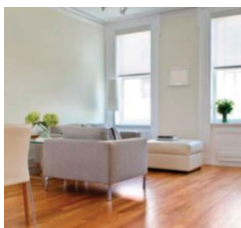
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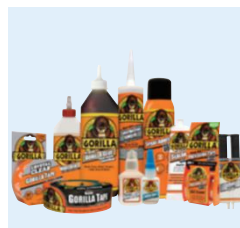
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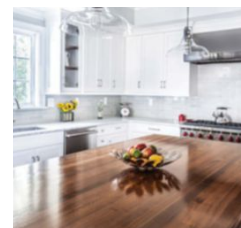
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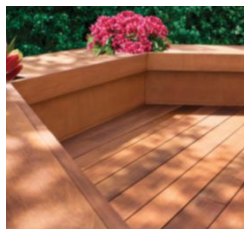
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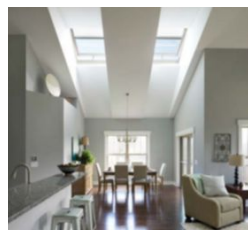
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Colonial Reviver

A DIYer builds her skills—and an online following—filling her family's **18th-century saltbox** with handmade charm

BY DEBRA J. SILBER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURA MOSS

PRODUCED BY NICOLE ESPOSITO-POLLY

STYLING BY ANNA MOLVIK

SUCCESSFUL DO-IT-YOURSELFERS share an important trait: a steadfast confidence that whatever they put their hand to will turn out well in the end—even if it takes a few attempts to get it just right. It's an attitude that Jaime Costiglio has embraced since the first time she lowered the blade on her miter saw, 10 years ago. "That's the great thing about DIY," she says. "You always have the chance to do it over to get it exactly the way you want it."

Since 2013, Jaime has fearlessly finished and furnished her family's saltbox-style farmhouse to make it, well, just the way she wants it. For Jaime and her husband, Mark, that means a bright, casual home that celebrates its age while functioning flawlessly for a 21st-century family with three active kids. Somewhat serendipitously, it has also meant a new part-time career for Jaime as a blogger.

For nearly eight years, the family lived a half mile from the Samuel Brown House, one of the two oldest homes in Port Chester, New York. "I always thought if it ever came up for sale I would go for it," she says. In 2013, she did. "I relished the idea of having something different, and this was our opportunity," she recalls.

Moving from a postwar Cape to a colonial-era home with steep stairways and low plaster ceilings took some

The homeowner, who blogs at jaimecostiglio.com, built the living room's table, interior shutters, sliding-door cabinet, mirror, and side table (from an old library card catalog).



adjustment, but Jaime delighted in her new home's challenges. "It has all kinds of nooks and crannies, nothing is level, nothing is plumb," she says. "I just like all that character."

The little red saltbox had, in fact, nearly 300 years' worth of character. A plaque installed by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1967 marks the home's origin as 1740, but newspaper accounts say it may date to 1660. It was built by Samuel Brown, a farmer, whose family lived there during the Revolutionary War. The lawlessness of the time comes up in an oft-told tale regarding a French Continental soldier who escaped a murderous local outlaw by diving through the home's basement window. As the story goes, the Browns distracted the pursuer with dinner, later sending the soldier safely on his way.

That window now hides behind a wall beneath a large family room added in the 1980s. An earlier 1943 renovation added about 10 feet to the back of the house, expanding the dining room and back entry, adding a proper kitchen, and connecting the home to the once-separate garage (now a laundry room). Previous owners also installed three baths, updated the electrical, and dug out and waterproofed the basement. Here, where the Continental soldier had huddled, is Jaime's workshop, stocked with tools and stacks of wood. She drags her project materials to the back patio to build, weather permitting.

Admire any piece of furniture in her house, and chances are she made it, either from scratch or by artfully combining other people's castoffs. One of her first—and possibly most ambitious—furniture projects for this house was her four-poster bed. She's built desks for each of her children, night-

ABOVE: Dating to at least 1740, the Samuel Brown saltbox is one of the two oldest houses in Port Chester, NY. True to form, its tall side faces south.

ABOVE RIGHT: To help the dining room feel more spacious, homeowner Jaime Costiglio painted the walls white and tore down a plaster ceiling to reveal original timbers that show off the house's post-and-beam construction. The table is a refinished castoff from a friend. Chairs: Restoration Hardware



FAR RIGHT: In the kitchen, Jaime painted rust-colored base cabinets gray, added open shelving, and painted the remaining wall cabinets white, helping them disappear. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Iron Mountain (lower cabinets) and Simply White (upper cabinets)

BOTTOM RIGHT: In between projects, the family can enjoy the back patio, where Jaime does most of her building. Gathered here around a coffee table she made are, from left: Jaime; Andrew, 11; Ava, 14; husband Mark; and Emma, 12.

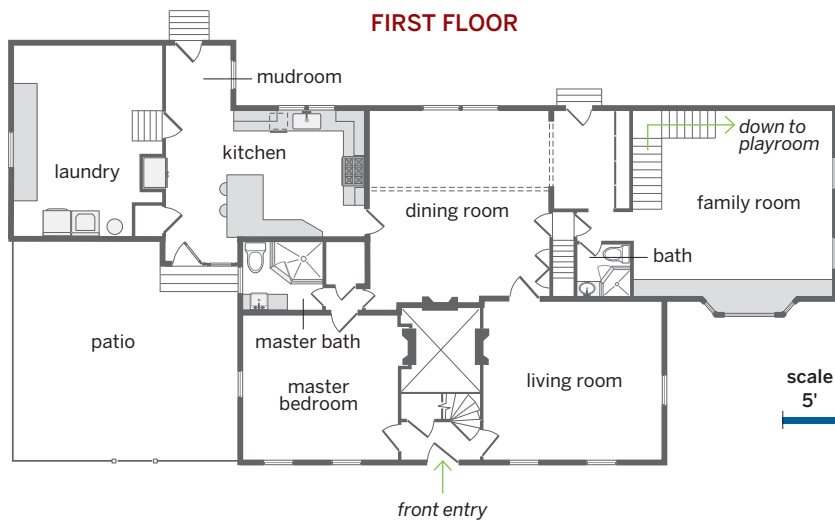




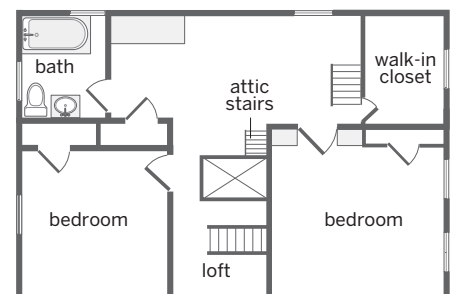
FLOOR PLANS

The home's 18th-century footprint was expanded in 1943, when owners moved the rear wall out about 10 feet, enlarging the kitchen and incorporating a garage (later converted to a laundry). A family room with a playroom beneath was added on the opposite side of the house in the 1980s. The second floor of the original house now includes two bedrooms, a walk-in closet, and a comfortably sized bath.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR





stands for her daughters, a homework station, and numerous cabinets and tables.

At the same time, she worked her way through the house, focusing on finishes and features to revive the home's Colonial spirit. "I went with the living spaces first, just painting and adding electrical, room by room." She covered the dark earth tones on most of the walls with white paint and added texture—shiplap, cedar paneling, and faux wainscot—to others. She designed and built farmhouse-style details throughout: interior window shutters in the living room, sliding barn-door-style window coverings upstairs, a rope handrail on the back stairs.

She was thankful for the modern kitchen, but felt it lacked the centuries-old vibe of the rest of the house. So she struck a balance between old and new by painting the rust-colored cabinets gray and replacing the uppers on one side with open shelves of Douglas fir on iron brackets.

The home's bathrooms got face-lifts, too. Jaime clad the walls of a first-floor bath once used as a birthing room in shiplap and hung a wall cabinet

ABOVE: After exposing the beams in the dining room, Jaime did the same in the master bedroom. The bed, which she designed with fellow blogger Ana White, was inspired by one sold at Pottery Barn. Jaime built the bench and the wood-framed mirror, too; the matching dressers are 1880s antiques.

OPPOSITE: Not restricting herself to interior furnishings, Jaime also built the outdoor dining table for the family's patio, which is located just off the kitchen.

with an old window for a door; in the children's bath, she added cedar paneling and towel racks made out of pipe parts. In the master bath, she moved a door to make room for a shower and a larger bedroom closet. She rescued a cast-iron wall-hung sink from a refuse pile at a local art school and built a vanity around it. To finish, she applied battens to the walls for faux wainscot and painted a buffalo plaid pattern above it using three variations of navy blue.

In other places, she simply let the house show its age: in the deeply cupped treads of the three staircases, in the possibly-original dining room door she freed from layers of paint, in the old post—saved from the 1943 renovation—she mounted as a mantel over the dining room fireplace. While her blog is one thing that keeps her building, the other is that in a 278-year-old home, there are always delights yet to be revealed. "It's part of having an old house," she says. "It wants to show you how old it is; it's proud of that. I try not to take away from what was there in 1740. So I keep all the stuff I find." She pulls out a box filled with objects discovered

NEAR RIGHT: The master bath was reconfigured to make room for a shower and more closet space. Jaime cleaned up and painted the vintage sink, then built the vanity around it. She completed the bath's cheerful look by painting a buffalo plaid pattern on the wall over cottage-style wainscot.



FAR RIGHT: A string of well-worn and precariously steep stairs leads from the second floor to the attic, which is used for storage.



during various renovations: a spool, a spoon, a tiny horseshoe, the business card of a carriage-maker, a multitude of handwritten lists.

Many of those items came tumbling down when, on a hunch, Jaime tore open the dining room ceiling. "I just knew there had to be beams under there," she says. "And I needed the headroom." The possibility that the beams might not be as she imagined barely crossed her mind. "I figured, if it's not great we'll just Sheetrock it up again." The hand-hewn timbers were nearly perfect, so Jaime simply cleaned and de-nailed them before calling Brian Smith, her go-to contractor, to drywall the spaces in between.

"She's not afraid—that's what I like about Jaime. She'll jump right in," says Smith, who also worked on the master bath. "I do all the rough stuff for her—and then she takes it and runs with it," he says. He's duly impressed with her furniture-building skills, recalling the reaction he and two of his best carpenters had when they saw a picnic table she'd made. "All three of us were like, 'Wow!' She's very talented with that kind of stuff."

Though she'd always enjoyed crafts and sewing, Jaime hadn't built much of anything before making stools for the renovated kitchen in her previous house. Husband Mark, while supportive, had no building experience either. So Jaime went online, watching hours of YouTube videos before plunging in. "I never used a miter saw before 2007," she says. "But I just picked it up and tried it. You just have to do it." ■



ROOM TO *grow*

A tucked-back addition preserves a 1920s bungalow's historical facade, while providing plenty of gathering space for a young family

REMEMBER THAT POPULAR MUSICAL with the catchy title *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*? That conundrum turns out to apply to not only many couples but also more than a few homeowners. Like Jason and Tera Starr.

"After having toured about a half-dozen homes over the course of several months, we came upon our current property," says Jason, referring to the 1,392-square-foot rescue house he and his wife, Tera, discovered while scouting one of Houston's coveted neighborhoods. "We immediately fell in love with it."

But. "With a growing family, having enough space was important."

And about its claustrophobic cooking space:

By **Deborah Baldwin** Photographs by **Jill Hunter**
Produced by **Nicole Esposito-Polly**
Styling by **Amanda Medsger**



A rear addition holds the expansive new kitchen, which shows off some of the salvaged materials used in the remodel, including the oak floors, a leaded-glass window framed by barn-wood posts, and a breakfast table made with a gear and horseshoes.

TOP LEFT: The front of the house still suggests the 1920s one-story bungalow the homeowners fell in love with.





“In our old house everyone wanted to be in the kitchen,” says Tera. “I wanted a big island with a lot of chairs.”

The couple also craved a master suite. And an attached garage. Not to mention an open plan with a family room where a kid could raise Cain within eyeshot of that island.

The cottage they fell for still had its 1920s hipped roof, gabled portico, and wood windows, and some of the original shiplap inside was shipshape. Says Jason, “The charm was still very much alive.”

So it was perfect—now it just needed to change. Never mind extra legroom. The roof was a goner, the floors were ruined, the wiring and plumbing were obsolete. Many of the old double-hungs no longer moved up and down: The sash weights were missing. And naturally nothing was level or plumb.

“I’d raze it,” said the owner of a 1901 house next door at a city meeting, pointing to water damage, evidence of rodents, and weeds run amok—and expressing awe that the couple had decided to build the place back up.

Literally. They envisioned a two-story addition piggybacking on the original two-bedroom, one-bath house, allowing more air and light along with a total of four bedrooms, four and a half baths, a garage, and ample living space for what would soon be a family of four, plus a whippet named Barkley.



It was right where they wanted to be, in Houston Heights, a rapidly gentrifying historic district prized for its early-20th-century houses and more-recent-vintage restaurants, coffee shops, and bike trail.

The scope of the remodel would be daunting to some. “But I like the charm of older homes, so I was excited,” Tera says. “The house had character and history.”

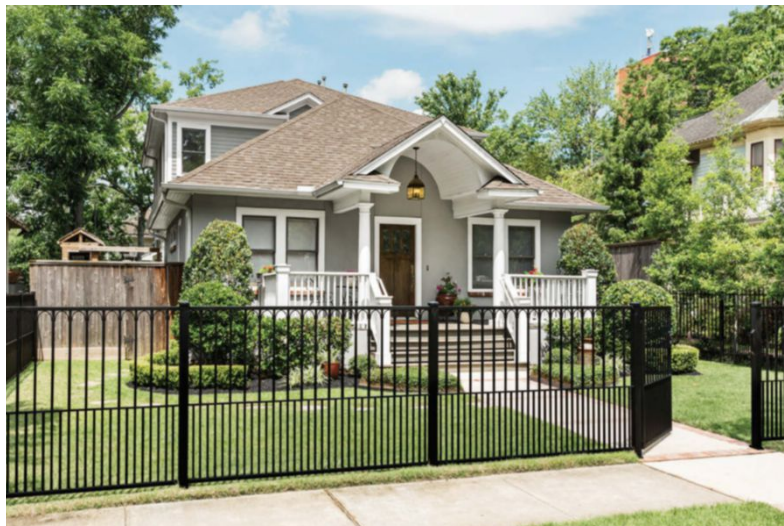
Its path from A (anachronistic) to P (present day) did not run easy, as it rarely does when a 90-something-year-old house needs to be drawn out of its funk and into the 21st century.

But the job yielded unexpected pleasures. “For Houston, 100 years is super old,” says the couple’s general contractor, Conor Thompson, who does a lot of work in the neighborhood. “It’s cool to see how they built then, and to see a house that’s still

TOP LEFT: At home in the city: Tera and Jason Starr with Ryder, 5, and Stone, 3.
Porch furniture: Hayneedle

ABOVE: A custom built-in sets off the dining area. The wainscot and crown molding are also new; the chandelier is a vintage find.
Table runner: Pottery Barn

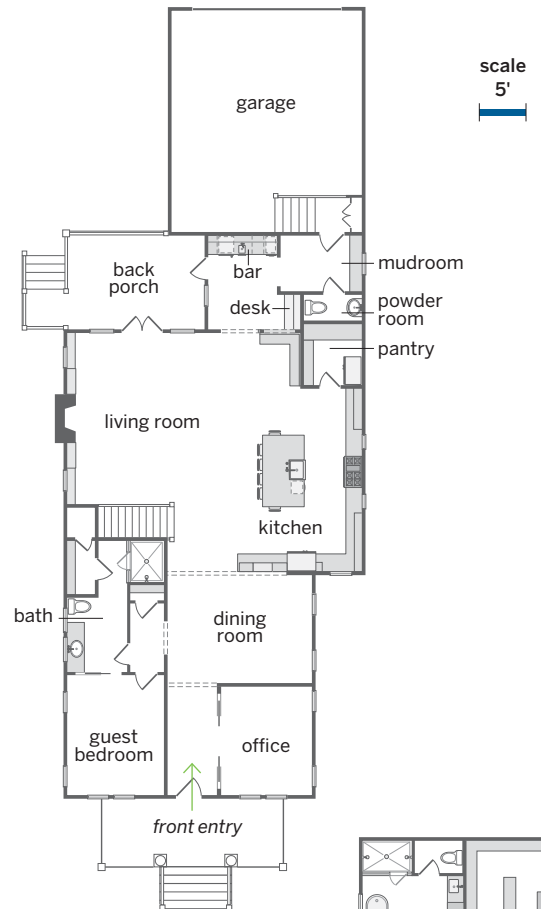
RIGHT: The addition is set back and deeper than it is wide. Its new windows were matched to the originals in front. *Landscaping: Texas Design Source Landscaping*



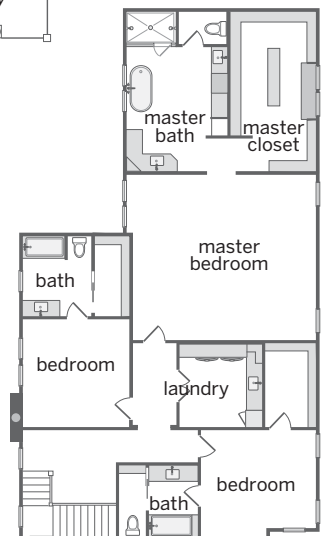
FLOOR PLANS: IAN WORPOLE

FLOOR PLANS

About 30 percent of the existing 1,392-square-foot, two-bedroom, one-bath 1920s house was sacrificed to allow for an additional two bedrooms, three and a half baths, and 2,604 square feet of space in a two-story rear extension. The foundation, front and back porches, and attached garage are also new.



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



standing strong after however many hurricanes and changes. It's fun to add in modern AC and good insulation while retaining many of the architectural elements—and a whole lot more interesting than building something new.”

Standing strong in this case being a manner of speaking. The house was sitting uncertainly on cinder blocks and had to be lifted up long enough for them to be replaced with reinforced concrete footings. “The footings have to be perfectly aligned and the elevation set, then you slowly lower the house down,” Thompson explains, a hair-raising undertaking that, he calmly notes, “gave us a new, solid, level foundation to start with, and that helps.”

Equally hair-raising was the discovery of asbestos in the stucco siding. Removing it would entail “a very detailed process,” in Thompson’s words, not only because it would alter the historic exterior but because the house would have to be tented, ventilated, and treated by a licensed abatement company.

There was meanwhile the business of tearing off the rear exterior wall plus a bit more so the addition could sidle up and form a seamless bond. And there was a hitch.

Before any of the work began the city’s Archaeological and Historical Commission took a close look at the plan, which would remove 30 percent of the original structure, swapping in an addition 6 feet wider and double the cottage’s length. While a staff review said the plan met all 11 of the criteria for such renovations at the time, the commission voted 6 to 4 to shut it down. Along with the loss of old materials, there was the matter of the addition’s sheer bulk.

The homeowners’ architectural designer, Sam Gianukos, was stunned but not unprepared. He has lived in the neighborhood since 1976 and has worked on old and new houses there for 25 years, or long enough to have heard it all, including commissioners who conclude, he says dryly, “You met all the criteria, but I just don’t like it.” He took the case to a higher

ABOVE: The living room was finished with a new gas fireplace and a pair of window seats. Homeowner Tera Starr had a hand in the design of the stairs’ newel post and oak balustrade. The rolling end table, found at an antiques fair, started out as a mining cart. Ceiling fan: Ellington. Furniture and rug: Arhaus. Yellow stripe pillows: Anthropologie. Other pillows: Marshalls



ABOVE LEFT: The most heavily frequented entrance, at the back of the house, leads to a mudroom with built-in storage for outdoor gear.

Pillow: Anthropologie. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Smoke Embers (walls) and Gray Mountain (built-in)

ABOVE RIGHT: A new first-floor bath has a roomy custom vanity, a trio of library lights, and a towel rack that did time as a ladder in Tera's grandfather's house. *Sink and faucet: Kohler. Wall lights: Heights Lights & Things. Rug: Target*

LEFT: Artful letters spell out the name of the boy who nests in this bedroom.

Letters and cow painting: Hobby Lobby Arts & Crafts. Bedding: Target. Paint: Sherwin-Williams's Mega Greige (walls) and Pure White (trim)





court, namely the city's planning commission, where over the years, he says, he has managed to turn around 11 of 12 rejections, including this one. (The commission has since been disbanded in favor of a new appeals board, and some historic guidelines have changed as well.)

The maneuver may have cost the homeowners whatever capital they had banked with the historical commission, but they forged ahead—gingerly. As Jason diplomatically puts it, “We found the process of obtaining our Certificate of Appropriateness to be extremely challenging and unpredictable.”

The project progressed slowly. “The old structure took a lot of work, to level everything up and square walls and fit ceilings so they tied into the new structure the way we wanted,” Thompson recalls.

Sandwiched between the new foundation and roof came a new HVAC system and a gas fireplace, new plumbing, wiring, and insulation—plus two water heaters and an additional 2,604 square feet of space. During the 20 months it all took, from permitting to completion, the family hunkered down in their old place, a townhouse about three miles away.

Once the cottage-plus was up and humming, Tera plunged into the question of finishes. She consulted



ABOVE: In the master bedroom, a salvaged door mounted barn-style leads to a walk-in closet and master bath. *Lighted ceiling fan: Heights Lights & Things*

OPPOSITE, TOP: In the master bath, an acrylic pedestal tub with old-fashioned fittings pays homage to the house's past. *Tub and faucet: Randolph Morris. Floor tile: Crossville Studios*

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Built-ins keep the master bath serene and clutter-free. *Faucet: Brizo. Vanity top: Caesarstone*

with interior designer Andra White, then brought in her top adviser—her mother, Lexine Goehring, who lives in Delmont, South Dakota. Growing up, Tera recalls her mom enthusiastically hanging fresh wallpaper and changing paint colors, often inspired by *This Old House* magazine—when not helping to run the family farm. Pitching in here, Lexine packed up an 1880s window from a cousin's farmhouse, and Tera's father installed it over the new breakfast nook, furnished with a concrete-top table made by a friend back home.

"That little nook, that's my boys' disaster area," says Tera, proud mom of Ryder, 5, and Stone, 3.

Built-ins designed and constructed on-site; reclaimed beams, doors, and floorboards; and the surviving shiplap give the new spaces a broken-in look. A front porch railing now sets off the painstakingly

restored windows and barrel-vaulted portico.

The addition's wood windows were custom-made to meet historic guidelines, but the fiber-cement siding doesn't pretend to be vintage. As Matthew Kriegl, of the city's Planning & Development Department, explains, while the goal is to mimic the same "massing" and the existing elements, the focus should remain on the historical details. In other words, let the new construction say it's new.

And it's in that airy new structure that most of the action takes place. An alley behind the house allows the family to pull into the garage and head inside. As Tera predicted, everyone goes right for the kitchen, the heart of the house and her favorite spot.

But the thing she thinks is best of all, right up there with the great neighborhood? "It still looks like a bungalow from the front." ■

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17. SIGNATURE AND DATE: Michael Burton, Chief Revenue Officer of This Old House Ventures, LLC

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Michael Burton

9/20/2018

Michael Burton, Chief Revenue Officer, This Old House Ventures, LLC

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directory

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

COVER See the listing for "In Fine Detail."

HOME SOLUTIONS (pp. 9–12) Clear out old condiments > *Thanks* to Katherine DiGiovanni, professional organizer, Refine Home Concepts, Bethesda, MD; refinehomeconcepts.com. Wise up about smoke alarms > *Thanks to* Richard Roux, senior electrical specialist, National Fire Protection Association; nfpa.org.

BEFORE + AFTER: BATH Going deep (pp. 14–15) **Designer:** Laura Ulam, Courtney Heaton Design, San Francisco; courtneyheatondesign.com. **Contractor:** Mario Samayoa, Napa, CA; 415-608-0822. **Shower door:** ovedecors.com. **Floor tile:** missionstonetile.com. **Shower tile:** Agora Natural Surfaces, Los Angeles; agorasurfaces.com. **Toilet:** American Standard; americanstandard-us.com. **Faucets and showerhead:** Rohl; rohlhome.com. **Towel bar:** Warmrails; onlytowelwarmers.com. **Drawer pulls:** rejuvenation.com.

PAINT IDEAS Pinwheel-pattern floor (p. 16) **Decorative painter:** Karen Ward, Nantucket Decorative Painting, Nantucket, MA; nantucketdecorativepainting.com.

IN FINE DETAIL (pp. 34–53) **Architects:** Christina Carlson, Union Studio Architecture & Community Design, Providence, RI, unionstudioarch.com; The House Designers, Monroe, CT, thehousedesigners.com. **General contractor:** Jeff Sweenor, Sweenor Builders, Wakefield, RI; sweenorbuilders.com. **Interior designer:** Kristen Martone, Graceke Design, Narragansett, RI; gracekedesign.com. **Landscape contractor:** Jonathan Zeyl, Landscape Creations of Rhode Island, Saunderstown, RI; landscapecreationsri.com. **Masonry:** Sharpe Construction, Kingston, RI; sharpeconstructionri.com. **HVAC contractor:** AGS HVAC Services, Westport, MA; agshvacservices.com. **Electrical work:** Ben Giles, South Shore Electrical Contractors, LLC, Wakefield, RI; 401-935-1051. **Tile installation:** Procaccini Tile & Stone, East Greenwich, RI; 401-398-2100. **Building materials distributor:** Arnold Lumber; arnoldlumber.com. **Lot clearing:** New England Land Clearing, South Kingstown, RI; 401-789-3300. **Excavation:** John Stedman and Son Excavation, Wakefield, RI; 401-789-6322. **Concrete:** South County Concrete Foundations, Wakefield, RI; 401-783-3830. **Concrete flatwork:** Jimmy's Concrete Specialist, Woonsocket, RI; jimmysconcreteinc.com. **Copper work:** J & R Senior Sheet Metal, Westerly, RI; 401-322-1509. **Board hanger:** Imperial Drywall & Plastering, Cranston, RI; 401-248-8245. **Plaster:** Lafrenaye Plastering, LLC, Coventry, RI; 401-688-0174. **Plumbing:** J.N. Jordan Plumbing, Narragansett, RI; 401-284-1617. **Appliances:** Wickford Appliance & Lighting, North Kingstown, RI; wickfordappliance.com. **Hardwood floor installation and finishing:** GQ Hardwoods, Central Falls, RI; gqhardwoodfloors.com. **Wallpapering:** Creative Walls by Tiffany, Exeter, RI; 401-741-2473. **Whole house > Custom built-ins:** Sweenor Builders Mill Shop, Wakefield, RI; sweenorbuilders.com. **Hardwood flooring, wall and ceiling paneling, and doors:** Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods; bairdbrothers.com. **HVAC:** Bryant

Heating & Cooling Systems; bryant.com. **Ventilation:** Panasonic; us.panasonic.com/ventfans. **Lighting controls and load center:** leviton.com. **Tile:** Merola Tile; merolatile.com. **Window treatments:** smithandnoble.com. **Door hardware, knobs, and pulls:** houseofantiquehardware.com. **Exterior > Siding:** Pre-dipped white cedar shingles with Enviro Bleach; sbccedar.com. **Trim and clapboard siding:** lifespansolidselect.com. **Stain:** Steely Sea (siding); olympic.com. **Roofing:** Multi-width Shake Composite Roof Tiles in Black Oak; davinciroofscapes.com. **Stone veneer:** York limestone; eldoradostone.com. **Pergola, corbels, brackets, and porch floor:** realcedar.com. **Windows:** Andersen Architectural Collection A-Series; andersenwindows.com. **Walkways:** Treo EnduraColor in Steel Mountain; unilock.com. **Lantern post:** Walpole Outdoors Washington lantern post in AZEK; walpolewoodworkers.com. **Entry sconce:** E.F. Chapman; circalighting.com. **Trees and perennials:** fast-growing-trees.com. **Hedge:** Hicks Hybrid Yew; instanthedge.com. **Sod:** Black Beauty Microclover Sod; sodco.net. **Living/dining room > Patio doors:** Andersen Architectural Collection A-Series Gliding Patio Doors; andersenwindows.com. **Fireplace surround:** Vantage30 Stone Veneer in White Elm; eldoradostone.com. **Fireplace:** Ortal, Wakefield Fireplace and Grills, Wakefield, RI; wakefieldfireplaceandgrills.com. **Green settee:** Colt low-back settee, O&G Studio, Warren, RI; oandgstudio.com. **Dining table, sofa, accent chairs, coffee table, area rug, side table, console, vases, throw pillows:** hayneedle.com. **Skylights:** VELUX; veluxusa.com. **Television:** 65" Class The Frame Premium 4K UHD TV; samsung.com. **Chandelier:** Tech Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Lamps:** Thomas O'Brien (floor), Barbara Barry (table); circalighting.com. **Foyer > Bench:** Walker Edison; hayneedle.com. **Light fixture:** Tech Lighting; circalighting.com. **Artwork:** Jessica Hagen Fine Art + Design; jessicahagen.com. **Back porch > Floor and ceiling:** Knotty Western Red Cedar; realcedar.com. **Sconces:** E.F. Chapman; circalighting.com. **Furnishings:** hayneedle.com. **Mudroom > Pendant light:** Feiss Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Powder room > Wallpaper:** York Wallcoverings Malachite RK4503; yorkwall.com. **Vanity:** Repurposed dresser by Painted Karma, Wakefield, RI; paintedkarma.com. **Countertop:** Cosentino Dekton X-Gloss in Tundra; dektion.com. **Sink:** American Standard; americanstandard-us.com. **Faucet:** dxv.com. **Sconces:** Feiss Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Kitchen > Cabinetry:** Signature Custom Cabinetry, Inc.; signaturecustomcabinetry.com. **Paint:** Swan White (kitchen and pantry walls), Muslin White (kitchen trim), Zombie (kitchen island base, pantry built-ins and trim); glidden.com. **Countertops:** Cosentino Silestone Charcoal Soapstone (perimeter); silestoneusa.com; Grothouse American Black Walnut (island and pantry); glumber.com. **Open shelves:** Grothouse American Black Walnut; glumber.com. **Range hood:** panasonic.com. **Refrigerator, oven, range, and dishwasher:** Miele; wickfordappliance.com. **Sink:** dxv.com. **Faucet:** grohe.us. **Barstools:** Universal Furniture; hayneedle.com. **Light fixtures:** Seagull Lighting (island), E.F. Chapman (above windows), Feiss Lighting (pantry); clarksonlighting.com. **First-floor laundry > Countertop:** Cosentino

Build Your Own Mudroom Bench



We asked *TOH* fans on Facebook to vote on a woodworking project for Tommy and Kevin to build, and this handy combination mudroom bench/organizer won by a landslide. They constructed it from a single sheet of MDF in just a few hours.



Tune in to Ask This Old House on PBS this November and we'll show you how to build it, or go to page 22 in this issue for complete step-by-step instructions.



PHOTOS: (TOP) COLLEEN McQUAID; (BOTTOM) ANTHONY TIEULI

Silestone Charcoal Soapstone; silestoneusa.com.
Sink and faucet: American Standard; americanstandard-us.com. **Appliances:** Electrolux; electroluxappliances.com. **Sunroom > Stain:** Steely Sea (walls), Red Cedar (ceiling); olympic.com.
Windows: Larson Scenix Porch Windows with Retractable Screens; larsondoors.com. **Ceiling:** Clear Vertical Grain Western Red Cedar; realcedar.com.
Flooring: Aeratis Heritage in Vintage Slate; aeratis.com. **Furnishings:** hayneedle.com. **Fan:** Monte Carlo; clarksonlighting.com. **First-floor master bedroom > Mattress:** Sleep Number King 360 p6 Smart Bed; sleepnumber.com. **Bed frame:** Porch & Den; overstock.com. **Light fixtures:** clarksonlighting.com. **Bedside tables:** Safavieh; overstock.com. **Accent chairs:** williams-sonoma.com. **Rug:** allmodern.com. **First-floor master bath > Countertop:** Cosentino Silestone Eternal Marquina; silestoneusa.com. **Sink:** dxv.com. **Shower hardware:** grohe.us. **Tile edging and trim:** schluter.com. **Library > Light fixtures:** Thomas O'Brien (bookcase sconces), Aerin (table lamp); circularighting.com. **Desk chair:** Wayland Elbow Chair, O&G Studio, Warren, RI; oandgstudio.com. **Second-floor master bathroom > Countertop:** Cosentino Silestone Pulsar; silestoneusa.com. **Tub, tub filler, sink, and faucet:** dxv.com. **Tile edging and trim:** schluter.com. **Light fixtures:** Feiss Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Tub tray:** Kai Industries; amazon.com. **Second-floor master bedroom > Mattress:** Sleep Number FlexTop King 360 i8 Smart Bed with FlexFit 1 Smart Adjustable Base; sleepnumber.com. **Furnishings:** hayneedle.com. **Pendant lights:** Tech Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Bunk room > Bed:** Donco Kids; hayneedle.com. **Rug:** Safavieh Ikat IK T631A; hayneedle.com. **Guest bedroom > Bed:** Sleep Number Soft Modern Upholstered Bed in Ivory Textured Linen with Queen 360 i7 Smart Mattress; sleepnumber.com. **Rug:** Nourisan Madera MAD03; hayneedle.com. **Table lamp:** Alexa Hampton; circularighting.com. **Bedside table:** allmodern.com. **Second-floor shared bath > Countertop:** Cosentino Silestone White Zeus Extreme; silestoneusa.com. **Sink and faucet:** American Standard; americanstandard-us.com. **Light fixtures:** Tech Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Outdoor living space > Outdoor kitchen:** Metropolitan Signature Kitchen in Nantucket Stacked Stone; eldoradostone.com. **Plunge pool:** soakpools.com. **Pavers:** Unilock Mattoni in Sable Blend (fire-pit area), Beacon Hill Flagstone in Fossil (rear patio), and Mattoni in Dark Charcoal (borders); unilock.com. **Outdoor water system:** Aquor Water Systems House Hydrant V2 System; aquorwatersystems.com. **Irrigation:** Orbit B-Hyve and Orbit Irrigation; orbitonline.com. **Fire bowl:** Infinite Fire Bowl; eldoradostone.com. **Grill:** Cal Flame; hayneedle.com. **Outdoor shower fittings:** dxv.com. **Lighting:** Tech Lighting (path lights, stake lights), Seagull Lighting (recessed lights); clarksonlighting.com. **Trees, shrubs, and perennials:** fast-growing-trees.com. **Succulents and cement planter:** modpotsandplants.com. **VIP guest quarters > Murphy bed built-ins:** Signature Custom Cabinetry, Inc.; signaturecustomcabinetry.com. **Bed:** Zoom-Bed Queen Remote-controlled Retractable Murphy Bed; zoom-room.com. **Light fixture:** Feiss Lighting; clarksonlighting.com. **Rug:** Dash & Albert; annieselke.com. **Mirror:** Vanguard Furniture;

cabothouse.com. **Ceiling fan:** Monte Carlo; clarkson lighting.com. **Garage > Garage doors:** Haas Door American Tradition Series; haasdoor.com. **Backup generator:** Champion Power Equipment; champion powerequipment.com. **Basement > Media room furnishings:** article.com. **Egress door and windows:** The BILCO Company; www.bilco.com. **Gym lockers:** jorgensonlockers.com. **Gym equipment:** hayneedle.com. **Sauna:** Country Saunas by Design Western Red Cedar Finlandia Sauna #FPC57; finlandiasauna.com.

COLONIAL REVIVER (pp. 54–59) **Dining room > Paint:** Simply White (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Chandelier:** Katie's Wilcox Chandelier; countrylivingprimitives.com. **Exterior > Paint:** Cottage Red (siding); benjaminmoore.com. **Kitchen > Paint:** Dune White (walls), London Fog (trim); benjaminmoore.com. **Knobs and pulls:** dlawlesshardware.com. **Master bedroom > Paint:** Simply White (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Master bath > Paint:** Hale Navy and Decorator's White; benjaminmoore.com. **Faucet:** American Standard; americanstandard-us.com.

ROOM TO GROW (pp. 60–67) **Architect:** Creole Design, Houston; creoledesign.com. **Builder:** Conor Thompson, Southland Homes of Texas, Houston; buildsouthland.com. **Built-ins designer:** Andra White, Houston; 832-630-6388. **Exterior > Siding:** HardiePlank Smooth; jameshardie.com. **Roofing:** Supreme shingles in Weathered Wood; owenscorning.com. **Windows:** Tradition Plus Wood Windows; jeld-wen.com. **Stain:** Jacobean (front door); minwax.com. **Kitchen > Chandelier:** restorationhardware.com. **Range and refrigerator:** subzero-wolf.com. **Custom range hood:** Accents In Iron, Houston; fe2accents.com. **Sinks:** kohler.com. **Paint:** Smoke Embers (walls), Eagle Rock (island base), benjamin moore.com; Pure White (trim, banquette), sherwin-williams.com. **Faucets:** Blanco; blanco-germany.com. **Wine fridge:** GE Monogram; geappliances.com. **First-floor bath > Paint:** Willow Creek (vanity, trim), Smoke Embers (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Windows:** Sitaline Wood Casement; jeld-wen.com. **Master bedroom > Paint:** Mega Greige (walls), Pure White (trim); sherwin-williams.com. **Master bath > Floor and shower tile:** crossvillstudios.com. **Paint:** Agreeable Gray; sherwinwilliams.com. **Shower glass:** Mirror Gallery Incorporated, Houston; mirrorgallery.com. **Showerheads:** Baliza Bath Collection; brizo.com.

SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE (p. 78) *Thanks to* Eric Whisman, executive director, The Kentucky Trust for Historic Preservation; thekentuckytrust.org. ■

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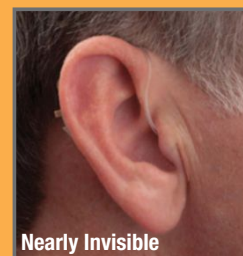
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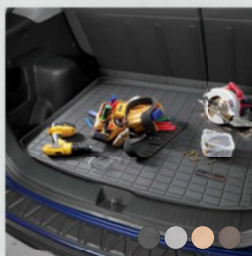
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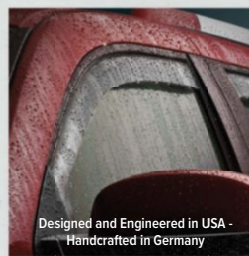
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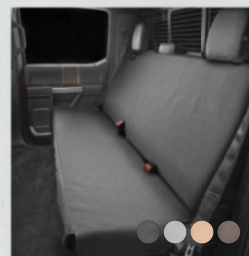
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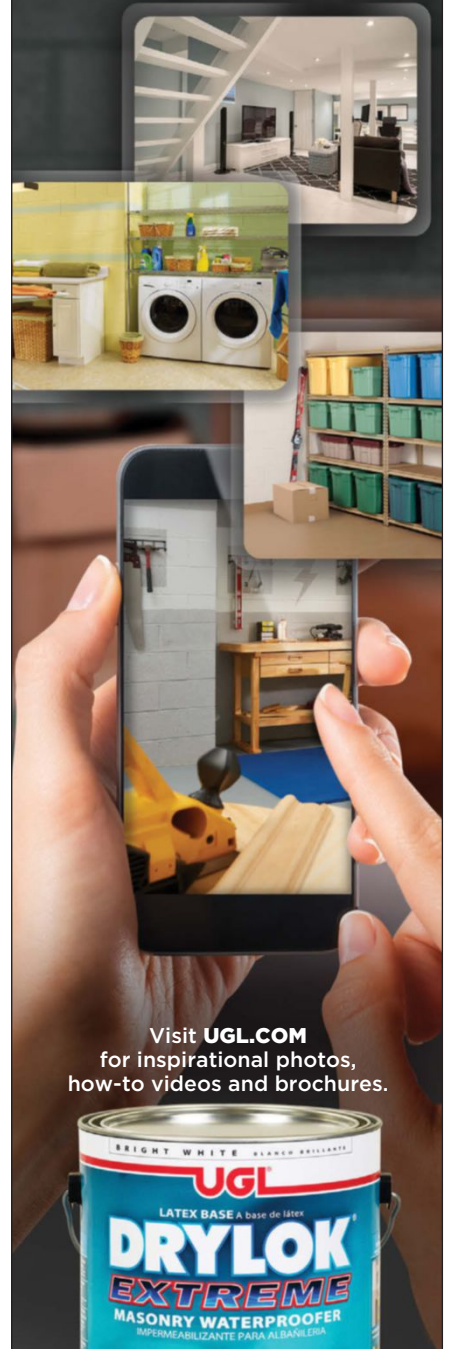
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THE HISTORY Long before the city of Prospect was incorporated, its industry thrived thanks to the area's fertile land, wooded acreage, and nearby Harrods Creek. The Wolf Pen Branch Mill anchored the town, serving as a gristmill and a sawmill over its more than 100-year history. Today, the 400-plus acres surrounding the mill are protected from further development; not so the handful of historical houses that remain nearby, including this Italianate. Built by Peter Fredrick Hoke in 1871, it sat on a working farm until 11 years ago, when a developer bought the property; now the house must be moved.

WHY SAVE IT? The 1,750-square-foot Hoke House is a rare survivor of its style and size in the area. Though some characteristic exterior details, such as decorative eaves brackets, seem to have been lost over time, the home retains its heart-pine floors, interior window casings and baseboards, staircase, some doors, and tall two-over-two windows that flood the large rooms with natural light.

WHAT IT NEEDS The house is structurally sound, but will require new plumbing, electrical, and HVAC when it arrives in its new location, as well as a new roof, kitchen, and bathroom, plus exterior and cosmetic repairs. Preserved under the vinyl siding are original clapboards, which appear to have years of life left once restored. A good selection of suitable parcels are available nearby, starting at around \$50,000. Located in the Ohio River Valley, about 12 miles from Louisville, the town has many multimillion-dollar homes. This house just needs the right owner to give it a shot at another 100 years. —KATELIN HILL



1. Set on a functioning farm for most of its history, the house is a side-hall plan, with two living spaces on the main floor as well as a kitchen, added later.

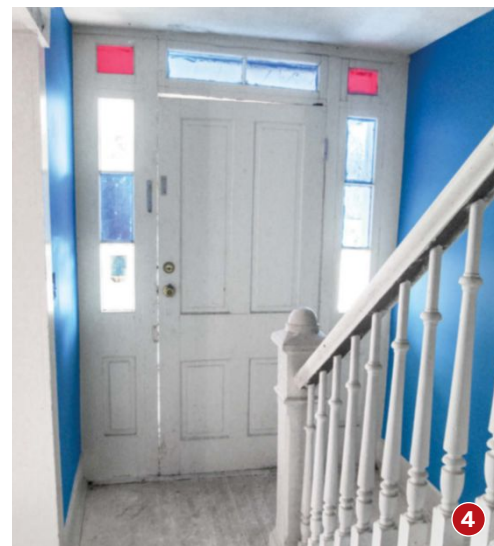
2. The rooms still retain their substantial baseboards and window casings.

3. A bathroom/laundry addition, seen here on the right, is not practical to move with the house, so a new one will need to be added after relocation.

4. Stained glass enlivens the entry door surround; the original staircase leads to two large bedrooms.

GOT A HOUSE?

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



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