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OPEN KITCHENS | COZY READING NOOKS | WARM PAINT COLORS

This Old House



Dream Remodel

A free-flowing home for a modern family

» From the TOH TV Project House

Engineered for Accuracy



The roofing is just about finished at the Cape Ann Project House.



This back view of shingles highlights LayerLock™ Technology.

A complete transformation is under way at the **This Old House Cape Ann Project House**. Here's how an innovative new roofing shingle will help modernize and protect this 1891 beauty by the sea.

A roof is so much more than shingles. It's layers of protection built to shield your home from wind, rain, snow, and sun. And here in scenic Cape Ann, our Shingle-style project house will be exposed to all four.

Finding a roofing product that is beautiful and durable was crucial. Here's why GAF's new Timberline® HDZ™ Shingles fill the bill.

The Logic of LayerLock™ Technology

When it comes to the strength of GAF Timberline® HDZ™ Shingles, the key is their patented LayerLock™ Technology that mechanically fastens the common bond between overlapping shingle layers; this added strength at the common bond allows for a larger nailing area.

Accuracy and Efficiency

Covering 6,000 square feet of roof is no quick or easy task. Timberline HDZ™ Shingles feature the StrikeZone™

Nailing Area, the industry's largest nailing zone, which provides an up to 600% larger nailing target¹ for improved accuracy and up to 30% faster nail fastening,² to help save time and labor.

Dimension

Proprietary shadow bands are applied using a sophisticated, computer-controlled "feathering" technique. When combined with a randomly blended top layer, the result is an authentic wood-shake shingle look with exceptional depth, contrast, and dimension for a striking finish.

Infinite Wind-Speed Protection

When installed with the required combination of four qualifying GAF accessories, Timberline® HDZ™ Shingles qualify for the WindProven™ limited wind warranty,³ the industry's first wind warranty with no maximum wind-speed limitation. Now that's what we call peace of mind.

1. Compared with Timberline HD® Shingles.

2. Compared with Timberline HD® Shingles. Actual results may vary.

3. 15-year WindProven™ limited wind warranty on Timberline® HDZ™ Shingles requires the use of GAF starter strips, roof deck protection, ridge cap shingles, and leak barrier or Cobra® Attic Ventilation. See GAF Roofing System Limited Warranty for complete coverage and restrictions. Visit gaf.com/LRS for qualifying GAF products.

PHOTOS: (LEFT) THIS OLD HOUSE; (RIGHT) COURTESY OF GAF



Tune in this season on PBS to see **GAF Timberline® HDZ™ Shingles** in action at the TOH Cape Ann Project House. Check local listings for details, or catch all-new episodes now at thisoldhouse.com/watchTOH.

"There's no reason to miss that new nail zone."

— Mike Suarez,
George Keller & Sons

GAF Timberline[®] HDZ[™]
High Definition[®] Shingles



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America's #1-selling shingle just got better

Introducing Timberline[®] HDZ[™] Shingles — the same shingle you know and love, now with LayerLock[™] Technology, which powers the industry's largest nailing area. With technology like this, you can't miss.

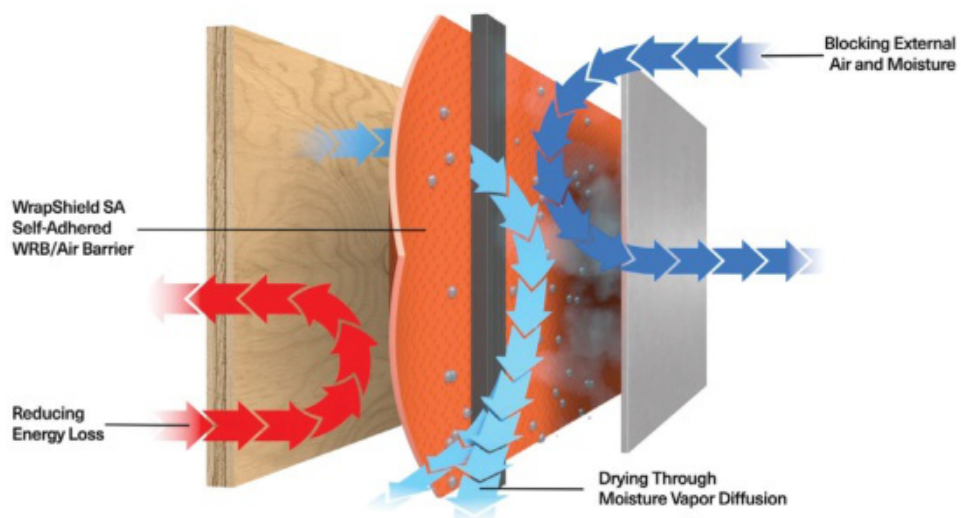
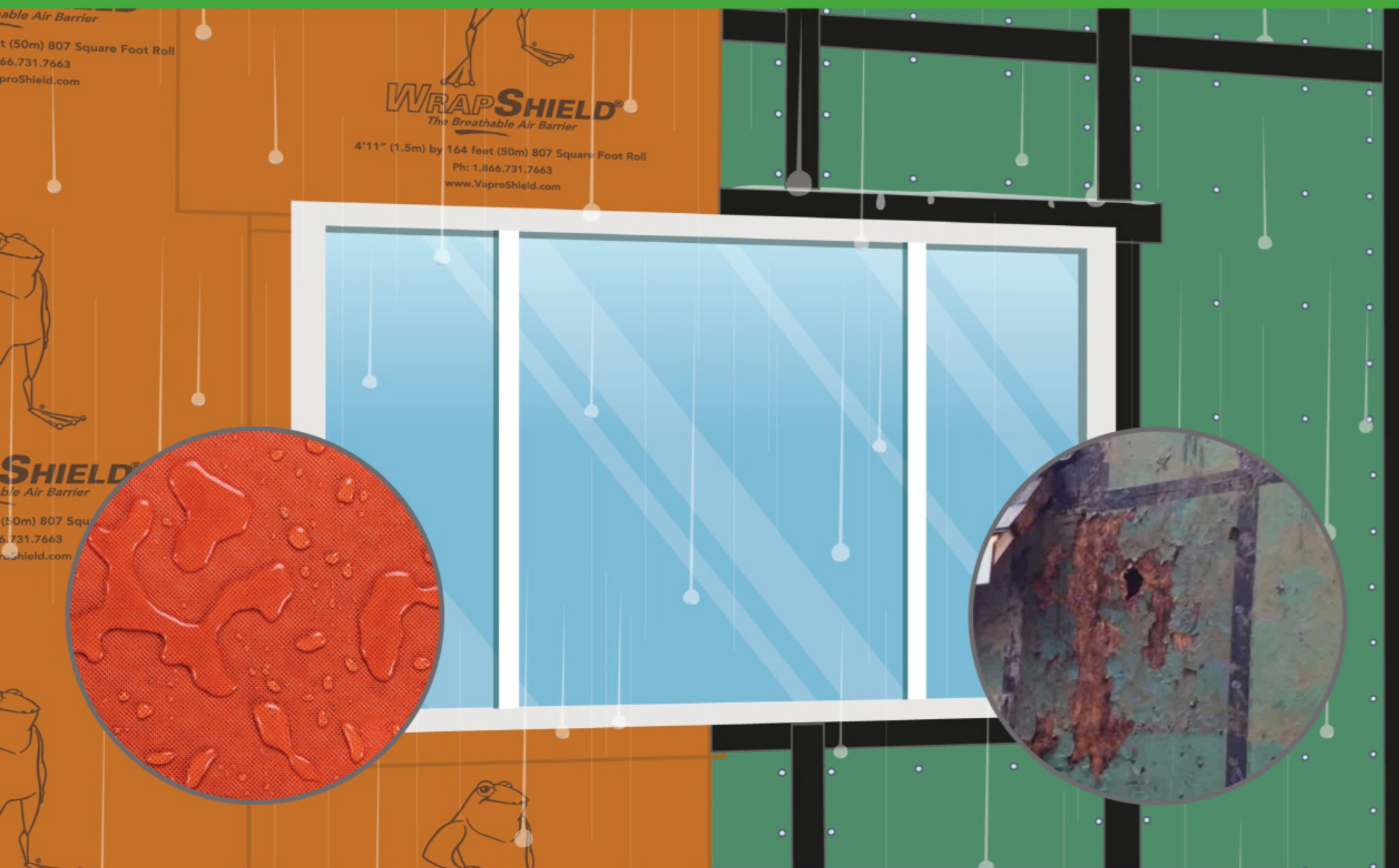
Learn more at gaf.com/LayerLock

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Cover photograph by ANTHONY TIEULI

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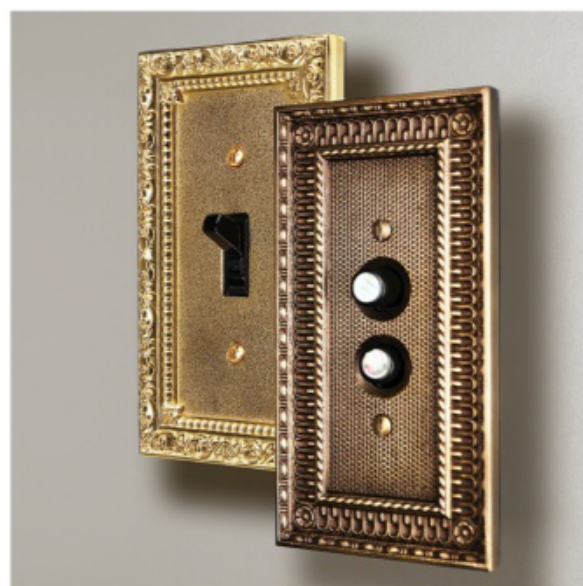
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A 1900 two-story by a well-known architect

Traditional by Design



HH HOUSE OF ANTIQUE HARDWARE

HouseofAntiqueHardware.com

Gathering space or a cozy place?

For some time now, I've been staring at the cased opening that separates living room from dining room in my house. I'm pretty sure that we could carve out a few extra feet side to side before we'd have to deal with load-bearing structure (cue stricken look on project-weary husband's face). Even a bit of extra floor space would make moving around easier and bring more light into the rooms. But with a galley kitchen to one side and a narrow sunroom on the other, that's as open and airy as our first floor is ever going to get.

Still, I have to wonder if having more open space would improve life at home. With the holiday crush now behind us, I want to say, "Yes!" Our 1925 house's small footprint just wasn't built for big family gatherings.

And there's no denying that "opening up" is on virtually everyone's renovation wish list—so parents can keep an eye on their kids more easily, and cooks can feel part of the action. The open kitchen/dining/living space is a modern invention meant to foster a more informal, connected way of living. Who doesn't want that?

But I can't help thinking about the meal-prep disarray you can't close the door on when there's no door to close. Not to mention the competing noisemakers every household has; it's hard to listen to a radio interview when the football game is on TV. Noise travels. So do cooking smells.

Like Pamela Haines, who deftly returned an 1820s Cape to its period roots (page 52), I kind of like the small, separate rooms that often come with a vintage house. They're cozy.

And that attraction to snug, sheltered spaces may account for another popular wish-list item we're seeing: the reading nook. An alcove with comfy cushions and good lighting, it's a sought-after hideaway, whether or not you ever open a book (for inspiration, see page 38).

Some folks smartly plan for both open and closed spaces, like Scott and Shayla Adams, whose renovation *TOH* TV has documented from start to showstopping finish (page 30). Just steps from the open-plan areas downstairs are a den/office and a playroom—with doors—and there's a reading alcove at the top of the stairs for their daughters to curl up in.

Ideally, I guess, we'd all have both: open space for big gatherings and cozy retreats.

As for those potential extra feet of openness on my own first floor? I think I'll take them.



Two of the coziest features in my house: the wood-burning fireplace and mystery-mixed-breed Dexter.

Kathryn

KATHRYN KELLER,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
kathryn@thisoldhouse.com

* product spotlight

A Cooler Alternative to the Water Cooler

When Sweenor Builders moved to a new HQ, president/CEO Jeff Sweenor saw an opportunity to build in some special amenities. Here's how **a new filtered water system from Elkay** proved “in-dispense-able” to his team and his company's bottom line.



Jeff installed the Elkay ezH2O LIV™ in the front entry, so anyone popping in can grab a cool drink.



Congratulations on the new digs! What prompted the move?

JEFF SWEENOR: Thanks. We've expanded the “family” quite a bit over the past few years. I've had 50 team members in the field and 16 office, shop, and design professionals working from two locations. This brings everyone together to collaborate under one roof.

Aside from its size, what's new about the space?

JS: We wanted to create a place that we can all be proud of, that would foster creativity and would be welcoming for our clients and guests. We added plenty of personal touches: custom artwork that reflects our team beliefs, built-in cubbies to keep us organized, and fun sliding barn doors. We opened up the workspaces and brought in more light. And, one of my favorite additions: We installed the new ezH2O LIV™ built-in water dispenser, so now we've got chilled, filtered water, from a very sleek-looking appliance.

Sounds like a nice perk for your employees.

JS: It is. As a business owner, one of the features I love is the “bottles saved” counter on the face. You know what happens: You grab a bottle, take a few sips, get busy, put it down, and forget about it—then you open another, and the cycle continues. It's pretty impressive when you see that number and realize how wasteful your habits once were, and how much money we were throwing away on bottled water each month. Plus, no more unsightly cases of plastic bottles stacked up in the corner.

Would you recommend the ezH2O LIV™ to your clients or other small-business owners?

JS: I already have! Wanting to be more resourceful is a common concern, and this is also an effortless way to be more eco-conscious in your day-to-day life. For homeowners who entertain often or who have a bunch of kids running in and out of the house, it really pays for itself. Plus, it will easily blend in to any kitchen plan, and it was easy to install.

You've got plumbing skills, too?

JS: Yes. But please don't tell Richard Trethewey.

ezH2O® Liv™



refresh

YOUR EVERYDAY



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LBWD06WHK

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ELKAY.



Return to Paradise

Families rebuild their homes and lives after the California wildfire.

Four-episode special starting January 30



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toolkit

Useful stuff for homeowners to know

FUEL UP FOR WINTER

A better wood splitter

This axe's off-kilter head speeds the task of breaking down logs into firewood—and makes it safer. TOH building technology editor Thomas Baker gets into the fine points.

The backstory

Since the Bronze Age, people have been splitting logs with wedge-shaped axe-heads attached to long handles. And for thousands of years, the tools worked pretty well, despite their tendency to get stuck, or skip off and slice into the ground, or, heaven forbid, a foot. In 1995, Finnish woodsman Heikki Kärnä set out to create a safer, more effective tool. After 20 prototypes, he perfected a design that uses levering action to separate wood fibers—hence its name, Leveraxe.

How it works



As Leveraxe's tapered blade strikes, it sinks about 1/4 inch into the wood, and the head rotates sharply right, prying wood fibers apart and engaging the hook. The handle must be allowed to rotate clockwise on impact.

HANDLE:
36 inches of
kiln-dried
hickory

Safety first

- Choose a clean, dry site. Do your splitting in a level area free of ice, loose logs, and other trip hazards.
- Wear protective gear. Slip on gloves to stave off blisters and splinters, leather boots (ideally steel-toed) to safeguard feet, and goggles to guard against flying wood chips.

Splitting 101

Elevate the wood.

Stand logs on a platform (a large wood round works well) so that their tops are at a comfortable height; the axe handle should be parallel to the ground when the axe-head hits wood.

Confine the logs. An old tire or two will corral the upright logs until they're all split.

Pick your strike zone.

On small or medium-size logs, aim for the far edge. On larger logs, split pieces off from the log's left side, as illustrated.

Swing strong. Face the log with your back straight. Hold the axe out in front of you, with the whole blade on the target spot, one hand on the handle end, the other about halfway down. Slide that hand back as you raise the handle to the 12 o'clock position. When both hands are about head-high, forcefully swing the axe down.

COLLAR:
Rubbery,
1/4-inch-thick
material
protects from
overstrikes

HOOK: Stops
the head from
sliding off the
log as the blade
rotates

HEAD: 4.81
pounds of drop-
forged, powder-
coated steel

BLADE: The
cove-shaped
edge minimizes
penetration to
maximize head
leverage.

Shown: Leveraxe
Classic MX, \$69;
[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Build a better fire

USE DRY WOOD. Ideally, choose logs that have been seasoned under shelter for at least six months or have been kiln-dried to a 15 percent moisture content.

READY YOUR TINDER. Crumpled or twisted newspaper supplies the burst of Btus that makes kindling burn. Place it on the fireplace floor or grate near the back of the firebox. If no newspaper is handy, make your own starter (see below).

LAYER YOUR KINDLING. Arrange layers of progressively thicker and longer twigs and sticks in a teepee over the tinder, using the back wall for support. Or surround the tinder with small sticks stacked log-cabin style, and cover the “cabin” with kindling. In either case, leave plenty of gaps for air to reach the tinder.

OPEN THE DAMPER. To get cold flue air to move in the right direction—up—light a sheet of rolled-up newspaper and hold it by the open damper for several seconds.

LIGHT IT UP. Insert a lit match or multipurpose lighter into the tinder. As the kindling catches, add slim pieces of split wood until the blaze is well established. Adding large logs too soon, or neglecting to feed the fire before the kindling burns up, can bring your carefully nurtured fire to a premature end.

No newspaper to light your fire? Make your own fire starter by loosely stuffing dryer lint into a leftover toilet-paper tube. Wrap it all in wax paper, and twist the ends. It will burn for about 10 minutes.



INSPECT YOUR ATTIC

Look up for hidden air leaks

How to spot them—and stop them from costing you money

A thick layer of insulation may blanket your unfinished attic, but it won't stop warm, moist indoor air from escaping through overlooked openings in the attic floor. The result: high energy bills, mildew, condensation, even ice dams. Luckily, it's easy to plug those leaks; just be sure to use products that are noncombustible or that meet firestop standard ASTM E814.

RECESSED LIGHTS Even so-called sealed housings allow copious amounts of conditioned air to escape, for an annual energy loss of up to \$30 per fixture. **THE FIX:** From the attic, cap each housing with a draft-stop cover, like those made by TENMAT (tenmatusa.com), and seal the cover's edge and wire opening with firestop foam such as Abesco Fire-Rated Expanding Foam (\$22; amazon.com). Just don't apply this foam in freezing conditions; it requires a surface temperature of at least 41 degrees F.

CHIMNEYS AND FLUES The code-required 2-inch air gap around masonry chimneys and 1-inch gap around heating-equipment flues protect wood framing from heat, but result in major air leaks. **THE FIX:** Cover the gap with metal flashing, then seal the edges with a firestop sealant like 3M Fire Barrier Silicone Sealant 2000+ (\$26; amazon.com).

PLUMBING VENT PIPE The opening where the pipe enters the attic tends to be wide and uneven, and therefore hard to seal. **THE FIX:** Cut a strip from a mineral-wool batt, stuff it around the base of the pipe, then seal with foil tape.



▲ **Ceiling fans and light fixtures** Their outlet boxes sit flush with the ceiling, but air still has plenty of pathways around and through them. **The fix:** Using the same firestop sealant for flashing chimneys, plug all the holes in the box, including those where the wires exit, and seal the gap between the box and the ceiling. (The same approach works to seal the housings of bathroom exhaust fans.)

A flood of fakes



Refrigerator water filters are notoriously expensive. But order a cheaper product online, and you may pay in other ways. About one in three filters purchased by U.S. consumers is a counterfeit that doesn't meet industry standards, says Jill Notini of the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers. These cheap filters may harm your appliance—causing leaks and possibly voiding the warranty—or worse, your health. In tests, AHAM found that some filters even leached harmful chemicals. But spotting a fake isn't easy. Be suspicious if the filter you buy feels lightweight—fakes may skimp on the carbon inside—or is expensive-looking (fancy packaging is often used to fool consumers). If your refrigerator requires a filter, you're safest purchasing one direct from the manufacturer or its suppliers. Find out more at filteritout.org.



PROTECT AGAINST FIRE

Space-heater safety tips

Electric space heaters can offer a fast, convenient way to take the chill out of a room. But they're also responsible for about a third of the 52,000 home fires caused each year by home-heating equipment, and more property damage and personal injury than any other source. If your heater is more than a few years old, consider upgrading to a newer model. And heed these safety guidelines.

—**Buy smart.** Opt for a heater with an output of 1,500 watts for room heating (less is for a desktop appliance), and look for these key features: a tip-over safety switch, which automatically shuts off a toppled heater; overheat protection, another shutoff mode; and a UL or ETL stamp indicating that a heater has passed independent safety tests.

—**Follow proper setup.** Keep heaters 3 feet or more from anything combustible, including furniture, curtains, cabinets, and paper, and set them on a hard, level surface. Never leave a heater unsupervised; turn it off when leaving a room or going to bed.

—**Keep cords uncovered.** An electrical cord hidden under a rug can't dissipate heat and runs the risk of arcing (when hot sparks jump the wires). It's also subject to unseen abrasion from foot traffic. Inspect the cord regularly: If you see a cracked jacket or exposed, frayed wires, replace it—or the device itself.

—**Watch the connections.** Plug only one heat-producing device into a receptacle at a time to avoid overheating the wires or tripping the breaker. Don't connect a heater to an extension cord or power strip; any time a circuit gets longer, resistance increases, and with it the risk of overheating and arcing.

What to prune now

A yard full of flowering shrubs may be just a daydream in late winter, but it's prime pruning time for these summer bloomers

PLANTS THAT PRODUCE BUDS on new growth from the current season benefit from pruning while they're dormant—and that generally means in February to early March. (By contrast, spring-flowering shrubs that bloom on old growth from the previous season should be pruned right after flowering.) Arm yourself with a pair of bypass pruners and loppers, as well as a pole pruner, to make easy work of removing branches up high or down at the base. Then get to work using these shaping strategies.



BUTTERFLY BUSH

In late winter, clip these fast growers down to within a foot or so of the ground to keep size in check and encourage new growth and flowers, which will require frequent dead-heading for repeat blooming.



MODERN SHRUB ROSES

With rebloomers, such as Knock Out roses, wait till new shoots form; prune back healthy canes till the plant is about one-third its desired final size. Every one to three years, remove one-third of old growth to rejuvenate the shrub.



SUMMERSWEET

Cut out dead or damaged branches at the base. To control size and maintain an upright oval shape, remove about one-third of the stems. To promote flowering, cut several inches off the outer branches of the canopy.



SMOOTH HYDRANGEA

While many hydrangeas develop blooms on old wood, smooth hydrangea and panicle hydrangea should be cut back to 18 to 24 inches tall in late winter, allowing slender new growth to support the heavy flower heads.



ROSE OF SHARON

Remove suckers at the base, then older inner branches that prevent an airy, upright overall appearance. As a rule of thumb, allow 8 to 12 inches between inner branches for the best flowering display.



CRAPE MYRTLE

Prune suckers at the base along with inward-growing branches. Select three to five main trunks and clip off branches up to a height of 4 or 5 feet to allow air and sunlight to penetrate the center and show off the plant's interesting bark.

toolkit

PAINT IDEA

Artful frames

Panel molding gets a painterly color treatment to create an inspiring home office. Kathryn O'Shea-Evans learns how

A pleasing workspace can be a boon to productivity. You know it's true—and so does Annie Sloan, author of 26 books, founder of the Chalk Paint empire, and creator of the painted wall treatment here. "This study had heavy, dark wood walls that were doing nothing to stimulate and inspire," she says of the existing space. "Gray is like a blank canvas for your mind, while vibrant colors are a call to action."

WHAT SHE DID: To start the transformation, Sloan gave the study walls two coats of Chalk Paint in Paris Gray—a warm, soothing neutral that pairs well with vivid hues. Then she used a small round brush to give the panels extra dimension, applying deep-pink Emperor's Silk outside the top edge, golden Arles on the left inside edge and outside the right edge, with Scandinavian Pink along the bottom rail's top edge.

THE RESULT: A lively play of light and shadow, as though sunshine were pouring in from a window just out of view—and a spirited, modern take on a serious get-to-work spot.

$\frac{3}{8}$ -inch stop molding

$\frac{1}{2}$ -inch quarter round



◀ ADDING DIMENSION

Another reason these wall frames have a distinctive look: Their two-piece profile is made up of square-edged stock lined with quarter round. For a similar effect, pair $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch stop molding, curved side down, and $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch quarter round, as shown (fivestarmillwork.com).

IT'S BETTER FOR PETS, TOO

Prevent ice by pretreating

Chloride-based ice-melt granules have a nasty way of corroding metal, spalling concrete, and fouling waterways and soil, not to mention burning pets' paws or making them sick. To avoid these issues, use an acetate or formate anti-icer instead. Most are liquids applied with pump sprayers (shown); some are pellets sprinkled from scoops. Apply them *before* the flakes start to fly, and when snow does fall, the bottom ½-inch layer will turn into slush that's easy to shovel, sweep, or blow away. Just reapply before the next storm. Here's how products compare.



ANTI-ICER	INGREDIENTS	FORM	EFFECTIVE DOWN TO	PRICE
Happy Paws	Calcium magnesium acetate	Liquid	20°F	\$19 per gallon; greenicemelt.com
NAAC Deicer	Sodium acetate	Pellets	0°F	\$68 per 25-pound pail; greenicemelt.com
PlaySAFE	Potassium acetate/calcium magnesium acetate blend	Liquid	-15°F	\$20 per gallon; playsafeiceblocker.com
Green Earth Winterizer	Potassium acetate	Liquid	-25°F	\$30 per gallon; greenicemelt.com
Entry	Potassium formate	Liquid	-30°F	\$39 per gallon; shop.synateksolutions.com

What's really pet-safe? There's no independent oversight of "pet-safe" claims made on ice-melts, so before you buy, go online and read the product's material safety data sheet (MSDS). Avoid any with chloride salts, urea (can cause vomiting and diarrhea in pets and burn plant roots), ethylene glycol (deadly to pets if swallowed), and propylene glycol (damages cats' red blood cells).

More beautiful baseboards



Shown: Wood-and-MDF covers, \$30 per linear foot unfinished; dozercompany.com

YOU WANT TO DRESS UP THE INTERIOR of your 1960s home, but something's getting in your way—specifically, those ubiquitous hydronic baseboards. Decorative covers that slip over the original steel back panel (so you don't need to remove it) are available in a variety of designs and materials, including aluminum, plastic, MDF, and wood. Because fin-tube radiation works by convection, make sure there's a gap of at least 1 inch at the bottom where cool air can enter and another inch at the top where heated air can exit. And while you're making a statement with that new cover, remember to boost your heater's performance by vacuuming out the dust around those fins before you cover them up again.

Roll on!

We decode material differences in the newest paint-roller covers

ACRYLIC

Good for: Smooth surfaces. A versatile, all-around performer indoors and out. Lint-free, but can compact with use.

Shown: **Wooster Pro/Doo-z FTP**, \$5.76; homedepot.com



MICROFIBER

Good for: Glossy paints and ceilings. This low-spatter fabric holds lots of paint but doesn't give it up readily, slowing down application. Minimal stippling and lint.

Shown: **Purdy Ultra Finish**, \$7.62; amazon.com



NYLON-POLYESTER

Good for: All interior surfaces. Maintains nap through multiple uses and cleanings. Puts down paint quickly but can leave behind some stippling.

Shown: **Purdy Marathon**, \$5.48; amazon.com



MOHAIR-POLYESTER

Good for: Oil-based paints and clear finishes. Gives the smoothest finish of any roller-cover fabric, though not entirely lint-free.

Shown: **Wooster Candy Stripe**, \$5.70; homedepot.com



POLYAMIDE

Good for: Rough surfaces like stucco. Durable fibers hold lots of paint and release it readily. Easy to clean; maintains nap over time.

Shown: **Wooster Cirrus**, \$7.67; homedepot.com



Meet the jumbo mini

Don't confuse mini paint rollers (those foam covers that spin on metal rods) with the new "jumbo mini" (shown). These scaled-down versions of the classic 9-inch roller have a 4- or 6-inch frame, and take covers made of the same fabric as their full-size cousins, so they leave a matching finish.



Colorful and comfortable

Small changes yield big gains—like nine extra feet of countertop—in this cheerful cook space

BY NINA MALKIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP HARVEY

➔ **IF CULINARY SUCCESS** is 10 percent inspiration and 90 percent preparation, a kitchen short on workstations simply can't cut it. That's one reason interior designer Cillesa Ullman was eager to renovate the cook space in the open-plan 1964 post-and-beam home she shares with her husband, Eric, in Oakland, CA. "There weren't enough countertop areas, but there were lots of underutilized spaces," Cillesa says. The island cooktop across from the sink also made two-person meal prep a problem, and the huge vent hood over the island was more eyesore than focal point. Early on, to give the kitchen a cosmetic update, the couple painted the cabinets "lipstick red" to tie in with a favorite chair in the adjacent living area, and swapped the tile counters for black granite.

When the Ullmans were finally ready to renovate—17 years later—the color was predetermined. "I love red, it's so visually stimulating," Cillesa says, adding that this time she chose a slightly deeper, "more adult" shade with blue undertones, and white counters. Moving a partition wall 8 inches into the living area freed up extra counter and cabinet space, as did consolidating cooking with a pro-style range. "Working and eating in here is a pleasure now," Cillesa says. "We love the kitchen's energy."

BEFORE The kitchen that came with the house had oak cabinets, a tiled island top, and a monolithic copper vent hood.

AFTER New red cabinets, some with aluminum-and-glass doors, plus sleek hardware and gray marble herringbone tile give the space a dynamic, modern look. A reconfigured island, an extended wall of cabinets, plus two sinks and relocated appliances make cooking easier and more convenient.



BEFORE





PRODUCED BY NICOLE ESPOSITO-POLLY. STYLING: SARAH ALBA



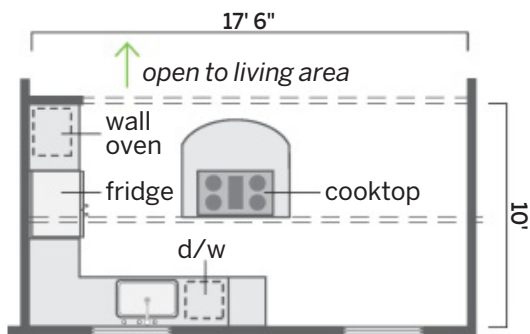
ABOVE: In its new location, the refrigerator is just steps from the island, sink, and dining table. A tall pull-out pantry built in alongside makes quick work of assembling meal ingredients.



RIGHT: “I’m an advocate of a prep sink for cleaning fruits and vegetables, with the main sink for dirty dishes,” says homeowner/designer Cillesa Ullman. The island holds a wine fridge, drawer storage, and two refrigerator drawers.

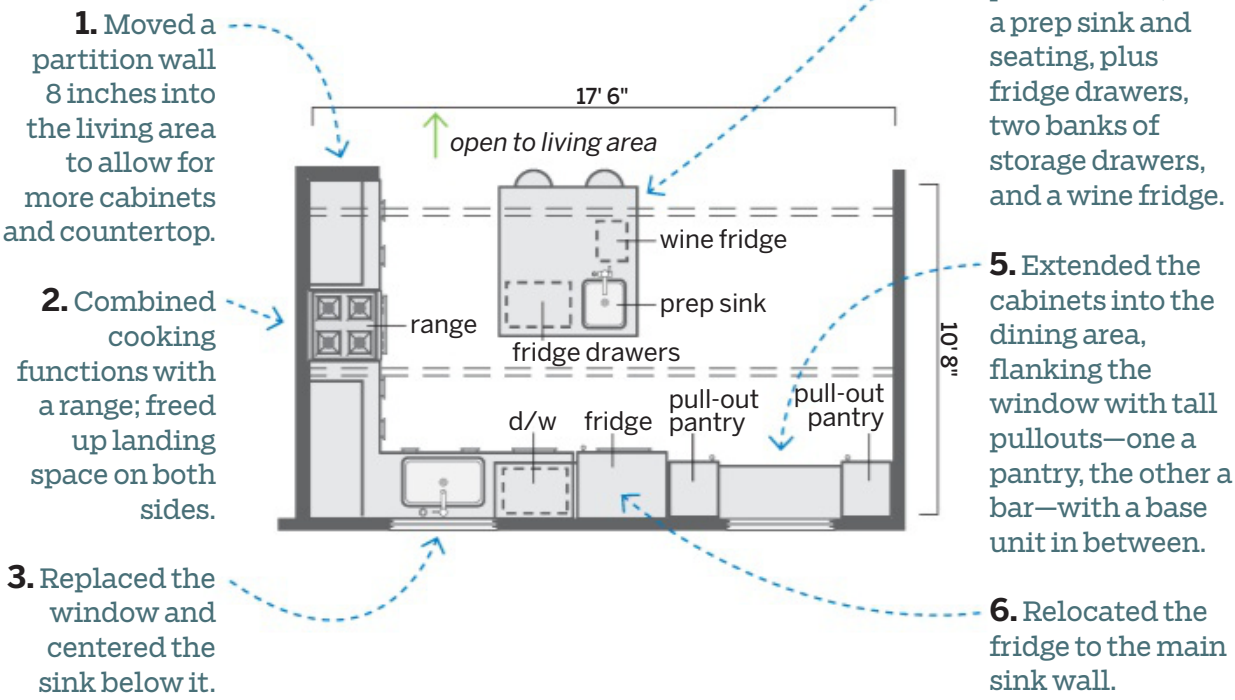
BEFORE

Separating the oven and cooktop resulted in limited workable counter space



AFTER

A new island with a prep sink and seating, a pro-style range, and cabinets in the dining area adds up to improved work, storage, and circulation space





Thank You! This Old House gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our **WESTERLY PROJECT HOUSE** partners and sponsors.



To see more of the Westerly Project House, turn to page 30.



PHOTOS: ANTHONY TIEULI



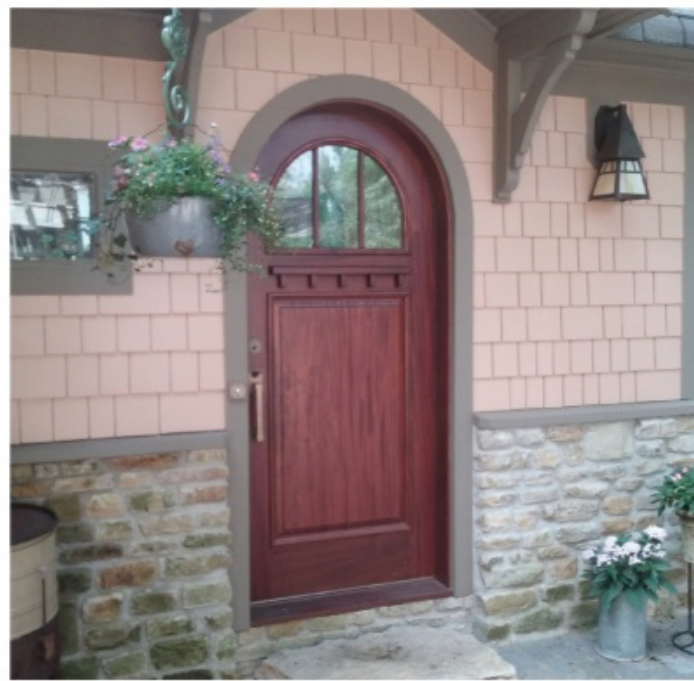
BEFORE + AFTER KITCHEN

Upper cabinets with aluminum door frames and frosted glass panels reflect light, hint at what's inside, and echo the room's other silvery-gray finishes. Flip-up doors offer easy-access storage for tall items like stockpots.



LEFT: Reducing the width of the kitchen island and slightly elongating it allowed for more comfortable circulation and seating space around the table and sliding doors that open onto a deck. Cabinets extended into the dining area, just glimpsed here, add even more storage. *Pendant: Artemide*

ABOVE: Running the herringbone-pattern tile to the top of the wall accents the post-and-beam house's ceiling vault. Varying shades of gray tile play nicely with white quartz countertops, stainless-steel appliances, chrome hardware, and a pale gray ceiling. *Tile: AKDO. Range: Miele*



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Restoring and Beautifying Homes Across the Nation — *Inside and Out* — SINCE 1990

Universally appealing

Neutral colors and barrier-free design choices work for everyone

BY NINA MALKIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY PRESTON MACK

➔ **BE HERE NOW**—and plan for later as well. Kim Kelly, who has complementary careers in both interior design and real estate in St. Simons Island, GA, had no trouble keeping that mantra in mind when reimagining the master bath of her 1982 ranch house.

“Resale value is an important consideration when renovating,” she says. “I live in a community popular with retirees, so while I wanted the clean lines of a curbless shower, I also felt I needed it for resale. And I went with warm neutrals and traditional yet interesting textures to appeal to a wide audience.”

To personalize the space, Kim chose a weathered wood table topped with concrete as a sink console, a wall-mounted coatrack for towel storage, and industrial-style lighting. “The updated bath is clean, calm, and a little rustic,” Kim says, distilling the signature elements of her design. “I love that it’s simple yet still has a lot of style.”

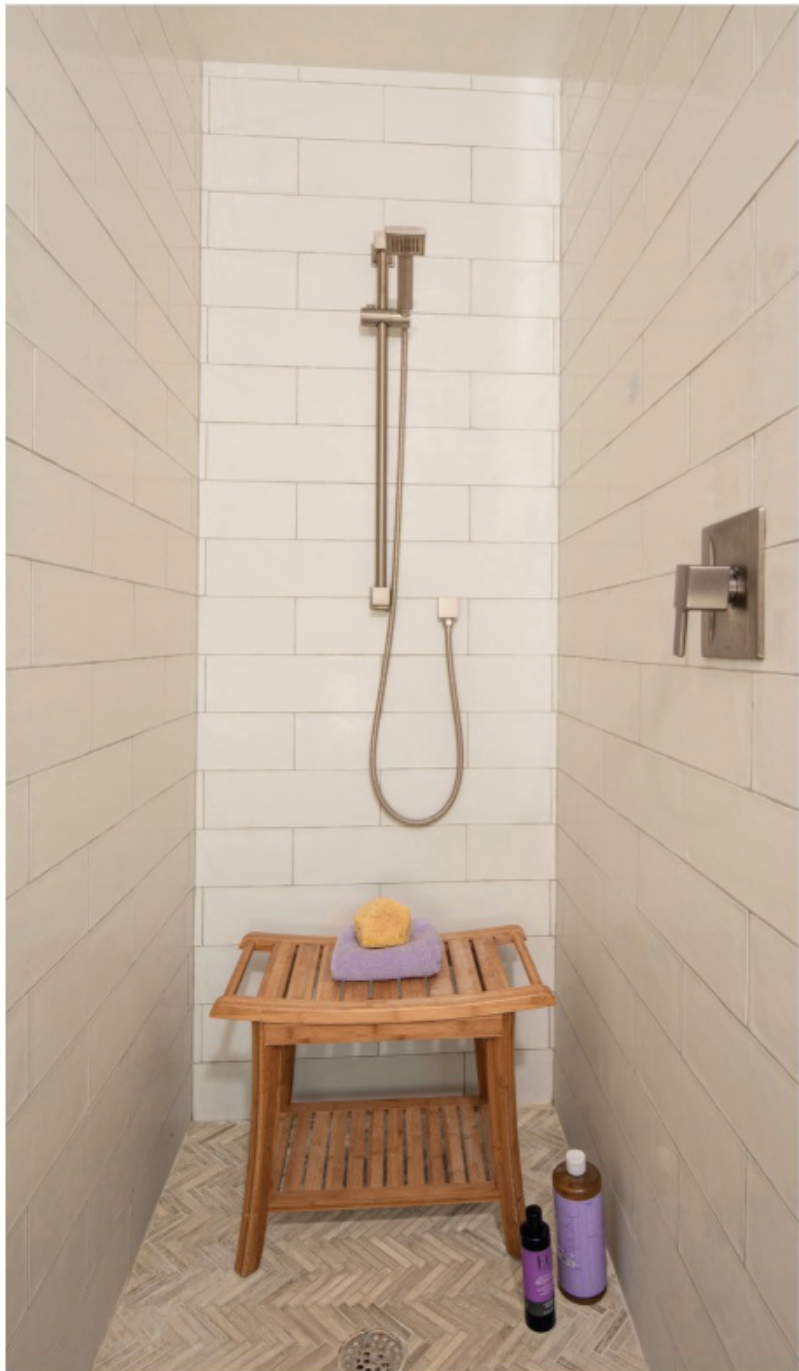
BEFORE The walls and door of the shower made the room dark and choppy. The finishes were bland.

AFTER Designer Kim Kelly combs antiques shops for furniture to repurpose, like this vanity table. Its natural wood and concrete countertop create a unique but still serene textural mix. *Faucet: Delta. Floor tile: Floor & Decor*



BEFORE





ABOVE: Scrapping the wall that partitioned the toilet from the shower opened up the 78-square-foot space and spread natural light from the one window throughout. Extra light comes from the pendant fixture.

LEFT: Luxe marble flooring is balanced with more modestly priced ceramic subway tile. A bench and handheld showerhead are aging-in-place pluses. *Shower wall tile: Daltile*



pro tip
KIM KELLY,
ST. SIMONS ISLAND, GA

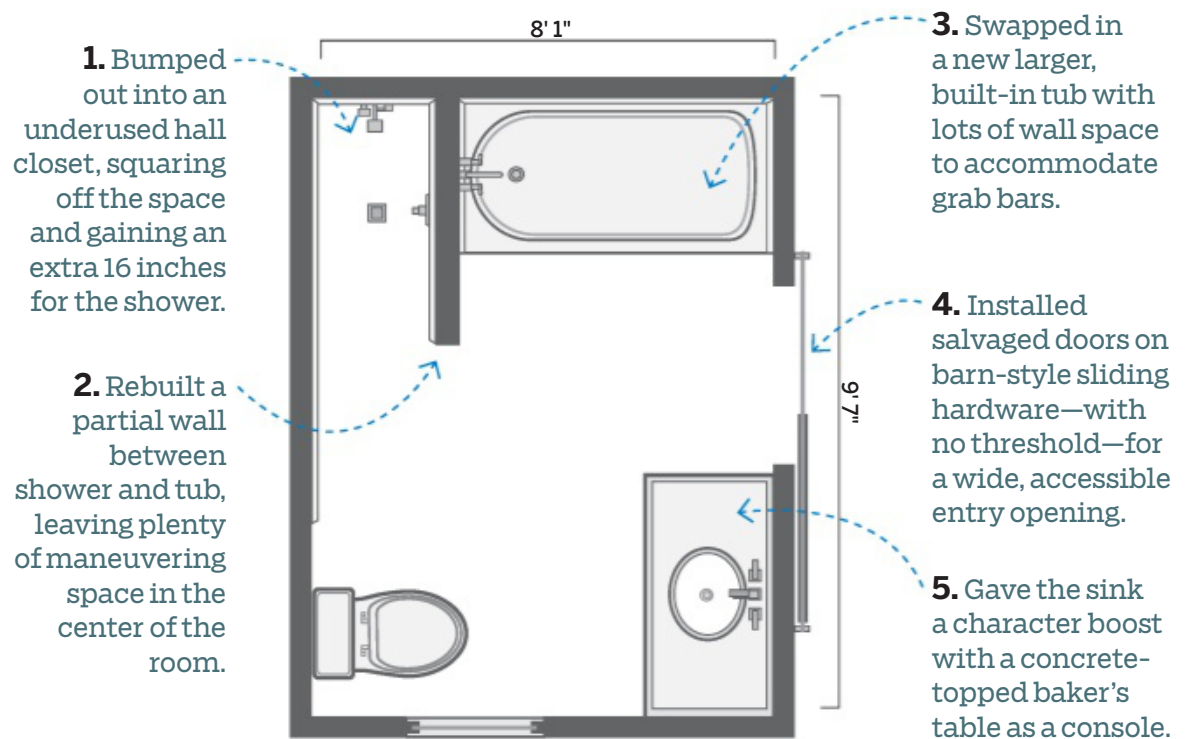
“When thinking about resale, stick to classic lines and light, neutral colors like gray and cream. It’s best to avoid bold design choices that others may not appreciate.”



Despite the popularity of walk-in showers, a full bath is still defined as one with a tub. This model, at 17³/₈ inches deep and 32 inches wide, is on the larger side of standard size. *Tub: American Standard. Faucet: Delta*

AFTER

Losing a wall from the former shower lets natural light flood the room, which now boasts a longer, curbless shower stall and a deeper tub





Mark McCullough test-fits a new brick in a fireplace. It takes the place of a damaged brick he just chiseled out.

SEE HOW IT'S DONE

Mark demonstrates his technique for replacing broken bricks at thisoldhouse.com/brick-fix

My fireplace has some cracked bricks. Can I cut them out and replace them without causing further damage?

—BYRON BARBOUR, MISSION VIEJO, CA

TOH MASON MARK McCULLOUGH: Sure you can. As long as you have the right masonry tools, and materials that match the existing fireplace, in most cases the technique of removing and replacing bricks is fairly straightforward.

The hardest part of this kind of project is finding replacement bricks. Take pictures and measurements, then visit masonry supply stores, both local and online, to identify bricks of the same size, color, and texture. With luck, you'll turn up just the ones you need.

For tools, you'll need an angle grinder with a diamond blade to cut the mortar; brick chisels and a 3-pound hand sledge to chip out

the broken bricks and the surrounding mortar; four trowels—margin, brick, pointing, and tuck-pointing—to mix and apply the mortar; a jointer to shape it; and a wet/dry vac and a stiff brush to sweep away debris. Safety goggles and hearing protection are a must when chiseling or grinding. And because cutting and mixing mortar generate silica dust, be sure to wear an N95, R95, or P95 respirator during those steps, and enclose the work area in plastic.

To extract a brick without damaging the others, you first have to cut or chisel out the mortar around it. Use the grinder to cut into the horizontal mortar joints—the bed joints—above and below the cracked brick. Then, with a cold

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

chisel, cut into the vertical head joints at the ends of the brick. Do not use the grinder on head joints because it will slice into the bricks in the courses above and below.

Once the mortar surrounding the brick is cut or gone, take a big chisel and hand sledge and break out the brick. Then chip away any leftover mortar, and brush and vacuum away the debris. Check that the new brick fits the opening.

Now, mix up some Type N mortar. When it sticks to the underside of the trowel, it's the right consistency. But before applying it, brush water on the old and the new bricks where the mortar will go. That prevents water from being sucked out of the mix and interfering with its cure.

Use the pointing trowel to lay a glob of mortar on top of the exposed brick, and spread it out evenly a bit thicker than the existing mortar joint. Then grab a margin trowel and lay more mortar against the end of a neighboring brick and on the back face of the replacement brick.

Slide this brick into the opening, above the fresh bed joint and up against the head-joint mortar. Wiggle the brick down into the wet bed joint until it's level and aligned with the other bricks in the course. Use a trowel to strike off the excess mortar that squeezes out and make it flush with the brick face.

Fill the open joints by pushing mortar into them with a narrow tuck-pointing trowel. Then go over all the fresh mortar with a jointer, which packs it firm and gives it a concave shape. Brush away the mortar crumbs, and the job is done.

Mortar will lighten as it dries, but if it still doesn't match, try staining it with a product like the Masonry Mix Colorant Kit (brickmatchkit.com).

SEE HOW IT'S DONE

Watch Mauro smooth a textured ceiling at thisoldhouse.com/smooth-ceiling

Pro Tip



Dust control

The best way to capture dust from a grinder is to fit a shroud over the blade and connect the shroud to a wet/dry HEPA vac. Shrouds and vacs are available at tool-rental stores.



Smooth a rough ceiling

We are tearing down a wall between our kitchen, which has a smooth ceiling, and our dining room, which has a sand-texture ceiling paint. Both ceilings are plaster. Can we sand off the texture and get a smooth ceiling throughout?

—SHERRI BUSHNELL, AUBURN, NY

TOH PAINTER MAURO HENRIQUE:

Well, you *can*, but holding a sander up against the ceiling will be very tiring, will use up a lot of sandpaper, and probably won't end up making the surface that smooth. I think you'll get a better result more quickly by skim-coating the textured ceiling with a setting-type joint compound.

To hide the texture on a ceiling, Mauro Henrique applies two coats of a setting-type joint compound. A plaster trowel is his favored tool for smoothing the second coat.

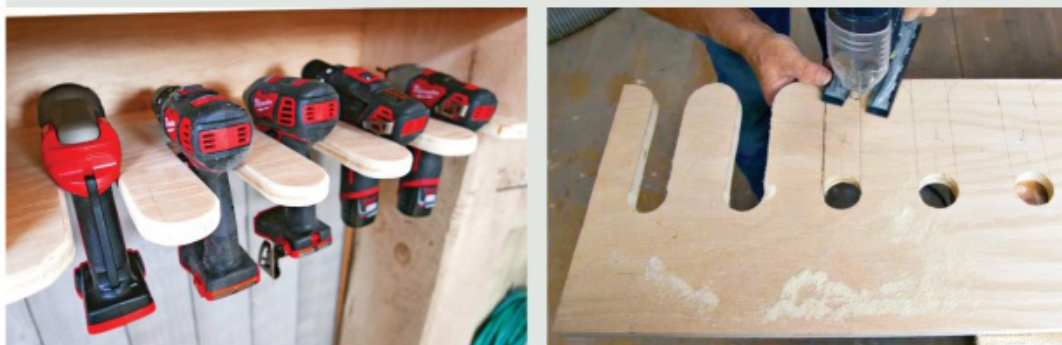
The compound is sold as a fine powder, in bags, and, like a plaster, is mixed with water before it's applied. Once mixed, it begins to harden or cure, just like plaster does. That's a good thing for this kind of project, because you can cover the texture in one day with minimal sanding and prime the ceiling just two days later.

These compounds are blended to set at different speeds: around 20, 45, or 90 minutes. A 45-minute setting time is about right for me, in most

DIY SMARTS

DIY SMARTS ONLINE

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



Tom Silva shows off the cabinet he built to store cordless tools (top). For the shelf that holds cordless drill/drivers and impact drivers (above left), he used a jigsaw to cut a series of fingers in plywood (above right).

Storage cabinet for combo-tool kits

I like these cordless combo kits, which have let me quickly multiply my tool collection. But rooting through their bags every time I need a tool, not so much. Any suggestions? —JOHN CAREW, FAIRFIELD, CT

TOH GENERAL CONTRACTOR TOM SILVA: Sounds like you need a wall-hung cabinet with open shelving, like the one above, so it will be easy to find—and put back—your tools. It's just a five-sided box with $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood sides, a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch plywood back, and some leftover 1× pine boards that divide the space into convenient compartments. The joinery is dead simple: butt joints held together with $2\frac{3}{8}$ -inch trim-head screws (grkfasteners.com). With the box lying on its back, shelf spacing is figured out on the fly by laying a tool or accessory in its intended place.

This cabinet does have a couple of custom touches. For the narrow tools, I routed slots in the top face of one shelf and the bottom face of the one above. After the shelves were installed, I slid in $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch plywood dividers, which can be removed to accommodate wider tools.

And for the drill/drivers and impact drivers, I cut four $6\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-deep fingers in the cabinet's bottom shelf. To make the curves at the base of each finger, I drilled a series of holes with a $2\frac{1}{4}$ -inch Forstner bit. Then, from the opposite sides of each hole, I drew lines straight back to the plywood edge. After scribing outside curves at that edge (see Pro Tip, right), I just jigsawed along the lines back to the drilled holes.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



Pro Tip



Drawing curves

A compass is fine for making small curves and circles, but sometimes it's quicker to turn a round-bottomed container into a circle-scribing template. Here, Tom used a drink cup to mark the curved ends of the cabinet's fingers. Over the years, he's also employed coffee cans and paint buckets in the same way.

cases, but if you find it's setting up too fast, use the 90-minute version instead. Keep in mind that the setting time will be slower in cold rooms, and faster in warm temps. Ease of sanding is the other quality to look for in these compounds. If it doesn't say "easy sand" on the label, give it a pass.

You won't need many tools for this project: a 5-gallon bucket and corded drill with a paddle for mixing the compound, a margin trowel to get it out of the bucket, a hawk to carry it, and a 12-inch taping knife and plastering trowel to apply it to the ceiling. To catch the inevitable drips, tape plastic to the walls and lay drop cloths over the floors. And to save you from many trips up and down a ladder, rent a rolling scaffold so that you can work on large areas at one time.

Clean the ceiling with a damp rag. Then mix the compound to a cake-batter consistency, about a quarter of a bag at a time; you don't want it to harden in the bucket before you have a chance to spread it. And before mixing the next batch, give the bucket a thorough scrubbing because left-over residue can shorten the setting time of the fresh batch.

Starting at the wall and working toward the center of the ceiling, use the taping knife to spread a thin, even layer of compound. The key here is to get it on the ceiling fast, with just one or two strokes. Don't worry too much about imperfections; they'll be taken care of on the second coat.

When the compound becomes thumbprint firm and is still damp, switch to a plastering trowel. Using long strokes, apply a second thin coat. This is also the time to flatten any ridges and fill any indents; a low-angled, raking light will help you see them. And if the trowel blade starts to drag as the compound dries, lubricate it with a spritz of water.

The ceiling will be ready to paint in about 24 hours. Sand it lightly with 220-grit mesh on a sanding pole, vacuum it clean, then roll on a primer and a flat or matte paint.

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Richard Trethewey sets up a smartphone to communicate with the Invita 564 WiFi thermostat, which operates on just two wires.

Old-thermostat upgrade without adding wires

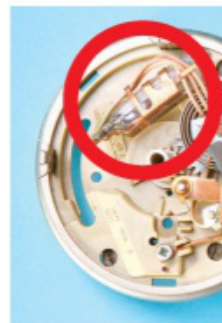
I'd like to install a smart thermostat in my old house, but I only have two wires running to my thermostat—just heat, no AC—and adding more wires really isn't an option. What do you recommend?

—JOSH GOOD, NORTH VANCOUVER, BC

TOH PLUMBING AND HEATING EXPERT RICHARD TRETHEWEY:

You're not the only one with this problem. Until the advent of smart, Wi-Fi-enabled thermostats, most household thermostats were nothing more than temperature-sensitive switches that turned a furnace, boiler, or AC system on and off. And for that purpose, two low-voltage wires were sufficient. Smart thermostats, by contrast, have so many operating functions, they need to be connected to a 24-volt

Pro Tip



Toxic switch

If your old thermostat has a switch with a vial of liquid mercury, don't toss it; find an approved drop-off location by going to thermostat-recycle.org.

power source. This is typically done via a C wire, or common wire.

For many older homes, that meant the only practical way to enjoy the benefits of the new thermostats was to fish new wires back to the heating-and-cooling system. But thanks to new technology, there are now smart devices like the Invita 564 WiFi thermostat (tekmarcontrols.com) that can operate on the same two wires as the old first-generation thermostats; no rewiring needed.

The system consists of two devices: a control module wired directly to the indoor HVAC equipment and a "user interface" that takes the place of your old thermostat. The interface, which displays system status, weather, and indoor and outdoor temperatures and humidity, gets its power from the module via the old wires; no batteries needed. It lets you control



PHOTO: CARL TREMBLAY

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the system remotely via smartphone, or voice control.

The module allows you to add more equipment, if you ever want to, including an air-conditioning system, heat pump, energy recovery ventilator, and central dehumidifiers and humidifiers. It also tracks energy use and sends e-mails when problems occur, including water-heater leaks.

Installation isn't challenging, but it does require opening the equipment's housing and attaching the right wires to the right terminals. If you're not comfortable doing that, call in an HVAC professional.

Attic playroom

Our house has an attic that I've always wanted to convert to a playroom for grandchildren. What's the best way to insulate it so that it will be relatively comfortable most of the time? Part of the charm of the space is the rough-sawn wood rafters, which are about 6 inches deep. When the attic is finished, we'd like to cover the insulation with beadboard and have the old rafters protrude slightly.

—JUDITH CARPENTER, RICHMOND, VA

TOH GENERAL CONTRACTOR TOM SILVA:

The only way to make that space comfortable would be to insulate the rafter bays. And the only insulation that's going to give you the code-required R-value—38 for your climate zone—in a 6-inch-deep cavity is closed-cell spray foam or layers of rigid, polyisocyanurate foam board. (Well, you could also remove your roofing, insulate the top of the roof deck, and reinstall the roofing, but I doubt that's a practical option.)

Closed-cell spray foam, which has an R-value of 6.5 per inch, is costly but quick to apply, and, if done correctly, forms a tight seal against air and moisture. (Open-cell spray foam doesn't have the R-value to get your ceiling to R-38.) You only need about 3 inches of this foam to seal things up and prevent interior condensation in

Pro Tip



Foil tape

It's not just for wrapping duct joints or sealing the edges of foam panels. Because the foil reflects heat, the tape protects surfaces from being damaged by heat guns.



What is it?

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 28

- A Rope clamp
- B Tree swing
- C Paint-can hanger
- D Rug sling

the winter. The rest of the cavity could be filled with much less expensive mineral-wool batts, which have an R-value of 4.3 per inch.

Filling the cavity with foam panels might not cost as much as spray foam, but it will take a lot longer. Each panel will have to be cut to fit into the rafter bay, and have its edges carefully sealed with canned spray foam. Make sure the last layer facing the interior is covered in foil—it protects the panels from being ignited—and then cover the seam between rafters and panels with foil tape.

Either way, your rafters just aren't deep enough to leave any part of them projecting into the play space. In fact, the ceiling as a whole won't deliver the expected R-value, because those rafters are conducting heat into and out of the space. This process, called thermal bridging, can actually cut the ceiling's overall R-value in half. Solving that problem is simple: Just lay insulation over the rafters. Mineral-wool panels would be a good choice because they're non-combustible and would deaden the

noise of boisterous kids. The beadboard could go over those panels.

If you still want the look of the exposed rafters, and there's enough headroom, you could buy some old salvaged lumber and rip it into long pieces. Attached to the beadboard in line with the real rafters, they'd mimic the look that you're after.

All that insulation will make the attic, and the rest of the house, much more comfortable, but be sure to run some HVAC ducts up to the play space to minimize moisture buildup.

Stop the bounce

I'm planning to remodel my kitchen and add floor tile and granite countertops, but the kitchen floor is already very bouncy. What can I do to strengthen it? I have ready access to the underside of the floor, but there are obstacles in the way like plumbing and wiring.

—JOHN WASCO, CHARLOTTE, NC

TOH HOME BUILDER CHARLIE SILVA: Tile has to be laid over a stiff, no-bounce subfloor, or it's likely to



crack or pop out its grout. Adding heavy granite countertops will also increase joist deflection, which the tile will accentuate.

There are many ways to beef up joists. One good option is to reduce the joist span by erecting a sheathed stud wall or a beam that runs under and perpendicular to the joists in the middle of the span. That would eliminate the bounce and won't interfere with any pipes or electric cables.

But if having an extra wall or beam in the basement doesn't appeal, then adding 2× blocking or cross bracing between the joists can help. This approach allows neighboring joists to share the load, which can cut floor deflection by half, and won't get in the way of pipes and wires. If the floor already has blocking or bracing at the

Charlie Silva (top) sisters an LVL to an old sawn joist. The code-approved GRK structural screws he's using (above) have a no-strip Torx drive and a notched tip that drills its own pilot hole.

midspan, then installing more of them halfway between the midpoint and either end can also reduce deflection. In old houses, cross bracing is often easier to install than blocking because warped or cupped lumber doesn't get in the way.

Sistering, the technique of attaching a second, full-length joist to the side of the original one, is another way to add stiffness. That's what we did under the kitchen floor at one *TOH* project where the old joists had sagged and weren't flat enough for the planned tile installation.

There, we sistered laminated veneer lumber (LVL) to the old joists using construction adhesive and structural screws arranged in a zig-zag pattern. LVLs are superstiff, almost like steel beams, and so do a great job over long spans. And because they're made of wood, they're much easier to incorporate into a wood-frame house than steel. But LVLs come with a serious price tag and may be overkill in less demanding situations where sawn-lumber or plywood sisters will suffice. Have a structural engineer assess your project and recommend the best approach.

Sistering is a bit trickier if you have engineered joists, a.k.a. I-joists. You have to rip $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch or $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood into strips the same depth as the joists, and "glue" and screw them to both sides of the joists at the flanges, top and bottom. (In this case, the glue would be construction adhesive.) The plywood joints must be staggered, and the screws must be spaced 6 inches apart on each side and offset from those on the opposite side by 3 inches. And every screw must have a pilot hole; if a screw causes an I-joist flange to split, the entire joist is compromised.

The drawback of sistering is that any plumbing or wiring running through the existing joists has to be removed and relocated before the sister can be put in place. If that's not an option, then use one of the other methods discussed above.

What is it?

A Rope clamp

To tighten the BowTie Clamp, hook one end of the rope in the slot on the Tie and give it a spin. Its grip is much stronger than any bungee cord. And when you're done, unhooking the Tie is faster than untying a knot. \$11 for four; fastcap.com



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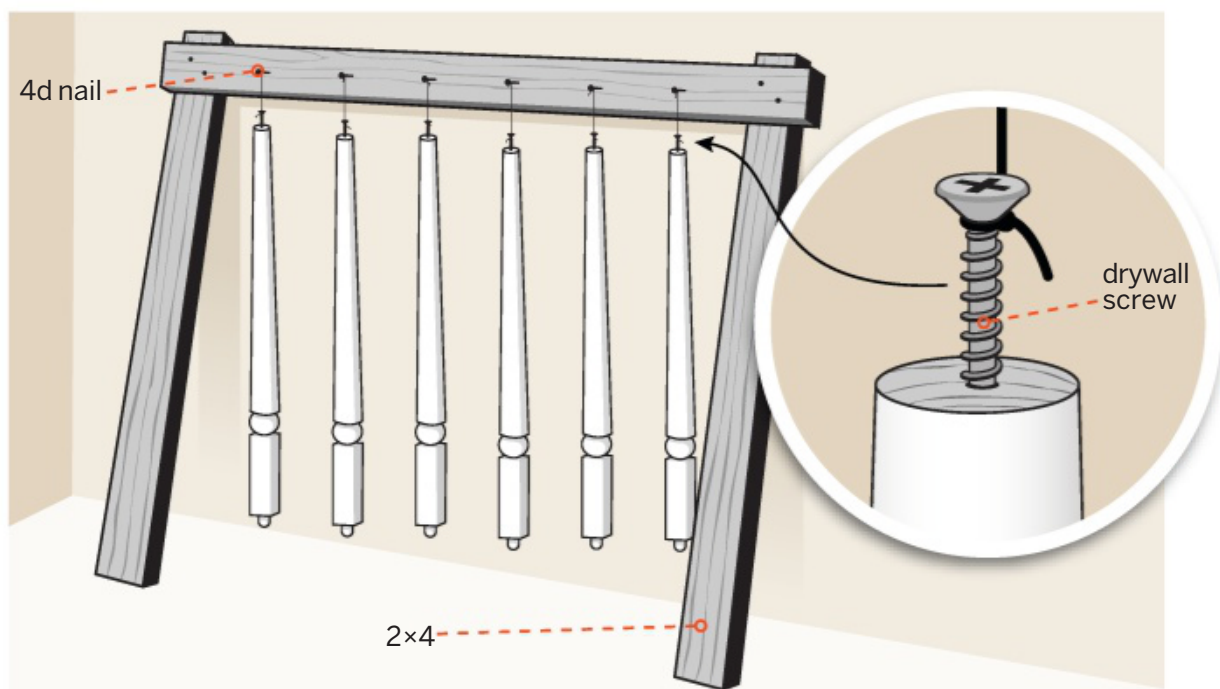
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Norm's TRICKS OF THE TRADE

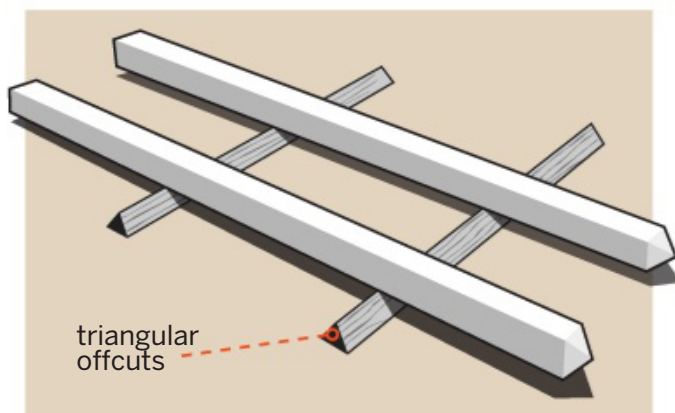
We are getting new spindles for our staircase. They come primed. What is the best, easiest way to apply the finish coat? —RON KOSTKA, CHESTERBROOK, PA



TOH MASTER CARPENTER NORM ABRAM: When I had to paint 47 new balusters for the stairway at my house, I built this simple rack out of 2x4s, drove some 4d finishing nails into the crossbar, and leaned the whole assembly against the wall. Then I drove a drywall screw into the top end of each baluster, tied a length of string to the screw, and hung the pieces from the crossbar nails.

Painting them was a snap. I held the baluster tenon in one hand and brushed on the paint with the other. The setup allowed me to spin the baluster as I brushed, so I could reach every crevice; it also let me inspect for holidays (missed spots), and when I was satisfied with my work, I just let it hang until it was dry.

The rack saved me a ton of time. I'll bet it will do the same for you. 🏠



Offcut paint stands

For stair balusters and fence pickets that are square in cross section, triangular stands, made from rip cuts on a table saw, elevate the work so you can paint three sides and both ends in one go. You can also paint the fourth side at the same time, if you don't mind the slight marks these stands leave in wet paint, marks you'll have to touch up later.

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Photographs by Anthony Tieuli
Styling by Jennifer Vreeland McDermott



LEFT: With what turned out to be a nine-month renovation behind them, Scott and Shayla Adams gather happily at their new kitchen island with Malin, 6, and Emily, 2.

ABOVE: The living/dining/kitchen area gains a new sense of spaciousness with an open plan, wide expanses of glass, and ceilings that rise to almost 10 feet high in the step-down living area. A coffered ceiling and white oak flooring unify the spaces. *TOH* master carpenter Norm Abram built the two-tiered salvaged-pine coffee table.





Within hours of moving into their renovated house, Scott and Shayla Adams and their two daughters felt right at home. There was food on the table, toys were spread out in the playroom—and even more toys spilled into the living area. But that’s just what Shayla had envisioned. “I knew I wanted the main living area to have an open floor plan. Now I can stand in the kitchen and be part of the action while the girls play,” she says. “This is what home should be, somewhere the girls can play, run around, do whatever they want.”

The Adamses’ dream-house journey began in August 2018, when the couple purchased a run-down ranch in Westerly, Rhode Island. When they moved in a little over a year later, that ranch had been transformed into the perfect home for their young

THESE PAGES

WINDOWS AND PATIO DOORS:

Marvin Windows and Doors

WHITE OAK FLOORING:

Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods

BOOKCASES AND COFFERED CEILING:

Sweenor Builders Cabinetry Shop

RUG: **Dash & Albert**

QUARTZ COUNTERTOPS: **Cambria**

WALL PAINT: **Benjamin Moore’s**

Stonington Gray

DINING ROOM CHANDELIER:

Pottery Barn

WINDOW TREATMENTS: **Eileen & Taylor**

“It wasn’t until this project that I came to appreciate just how efficient the gambrel roofline is for creating more space.”

—KEVIN O’CONNOR,
TOH HOST



ABOVE: The house’s New England–style elements include a gambrel-roofed addition, cedar shingle siding, and white trim. Bluestone steps lead to the front and side doors.

TOP RIGHT: The working area of the kitchen has an L-shaped layout with white flat-panel cabinets and custom crown molding.

BOTTOM LEFT: The mudroom is lined with a combination of closed and open storage.

BOTTOM RIGHT: South-facing patio doors provide easy access from the dining area to the deck.

THESE PAGES

RAFTER TAILS: **Lamco**
CEDAR SHINGLES: **SBC**
ROOF SHINGLES: **GAF**
EXTERIOR TRIM: **Lifespan**
SOD: **Sodco**
KITCHEN CABINETS: **Signature Custom Cabinetry**
QUARTZ COUNTERTOPS: **Cambria**
KITCHEN SINKS AND FAUCETS: **Kohler**
RANGE HOOD: **Panasonic**
WINDOWS: **Marvin Windows and Doors**
THERMOSTAT: **Bryant**
FLOORING: **Baird Brothers**
Fine Hardwoods
RUGS: **Dash & Albert**
KITCHEN PENDANTS: **Rejuvenation**
BACKSPLASH: **SomerTile**
DINING TABLE: **Serena & Lily**
MUDROOM FLOOR TILE: **Merola**

family—a spacious two-story, gambrel-roofed Dutch Colonial.

Their first decision after buying the house proved fateful: They hired *TOH* home builder Jeff Sweenor, whose work along the Rhode Island coast Scott had long admired, and soon after, the renovation became a subject of *This Old House*’s 41st television season.

“From the very start, Scott’s idea was to incorporate the gambrel style, which he had seen in other houses we did,” says Jeff. “The twist was that we were taking a one-story ranch and turning it into a two-story, but the house had a solid foundation, so we knew there would be no problem, structurally, adding a second floor.”

The gambrel made all the difference in *TOH* host Kevin O’Connor’s mind: “It wasn’t until this project that I appreciated just how efficient the gambrel roofline is for creating more space,” Kevin says. “They just added a second floor, and it feels like they tripled the space because of the gambrel shape.” In fact, the remodel added 1,250 square feet to the original 1,850-square-foot house.

Still, the Sweenor Builders design team, led by architectural designer Lori Foley, managed to incorporate all of Scott and Shayla’s wish-list spaces: an open-plan kitchen/dining/living area on the main part of the first floor; three bedrooms and two baths on the second floor; a den/office, a laundry, a playroom, plus one and a half baths in the remaining one-story section of the original house; and outdoor living spaces that include a stone patio, a wrap-around deck, and a pergola.

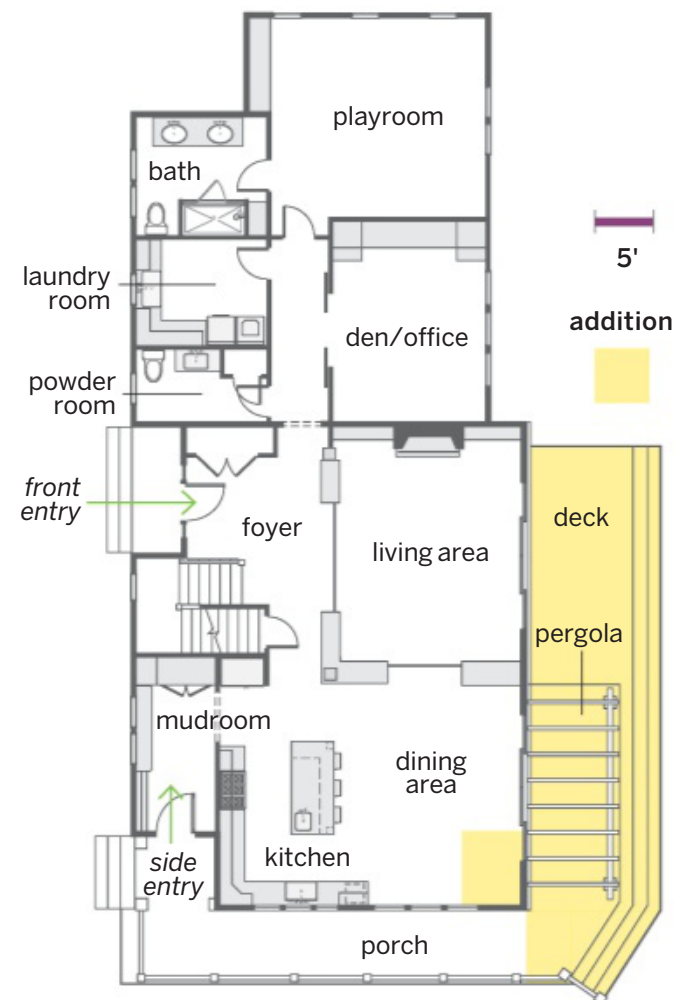
But the showpiece of the finished house is definitely the main floor’s open kitchen/dining/living space, which is brightened by an abundance of windows and patio doors, and enhanced by traditional trimwork that reflects a high level of craftsmanship.



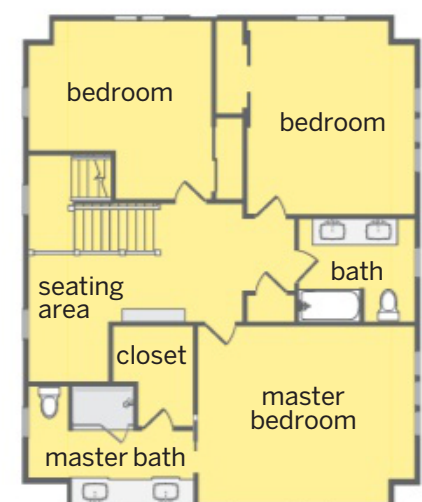
floor plans

The original ranch's footprint was only enlarged by about 25 square feet, to square off a corner of the new dining area. The second floor added another 1,225 square feet, creating a 3,100-square-foot house with three bedrooms, three and a half baths, a mudroom, a laundry, a playroom, and an office.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



FLOOR PLANS: IAN WORPOLE



“The knotty pine that was everywhere in the original 1949 house was so true to the era. It’s great that we could reuse some of it in the playroom.”
—JEFF SWEENOR, TOH HOME BUILDER





MORE TO EXPLORE

See additional photos of the Adamses' home at thisoldhouse.com/westerly-ranch-house

OPPOSITE, TOP: The playroom occupies a former bedroom; the room's knotty pine wainscoting boards were salvaged from the original house and given a whitewash finish.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT: The bathroom off the playroom evokes mid-century modern style with its minimalist vanity and black accents.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT: The stairway to the second floor is located in the front entry and features custom-milled newel posts.

ABOVE: Sliding barn-style doors with glass panels allow parents to close off the den/office while maintaining sight lines.

The flowing spaces are unified by a coffered ceiling, which Jeff put together using preassembled picture-frame molding fitted inside beams that crisscross a ceiling of white oak tongue-and-groove boards. Low bookcase built-ins with integrated posts and pilasters define the step-down living area. The fireplace wall's nickel-gap cladding, with floating shelves and lower cabinets on either side, establishes the space as a casual gathering spot for a modern family. In the kitchen, marble-look quartz countertops offer a durable complement to the classic woodwork.

"I like the detail in this house," says *TOH* general contractor Tom Silva. "Details like coffered ceilings and built-ins are why people love old houses, and here those details are done really well."

Beyond the kitchen/dining/living area, the trim details become just slightly simpler, the atmosphere just a bit more casual. The den and playroom, for example, have no crown molding and simple base molding, but the wide door and window casings reflect the robust trim used elsewhere in the house.

In the playroom, knotty pine boards salvaged from the house's original walls have been whitewashed and recast as wainscoting. The cladding protects the walls from the dings of active play at the same time that it allows the old house a continued presence in the new home.

Throughout, furniture with contemporary lines in tones of gray, taupe, and white reflects a modern mind-set. Natural light spills into the first floor, where wide glass doors also provide access to the deck. "The house has a nice balance of iconic New England elements on the outside—shingle siding, gambrel roof—and lighter tones and a mid-century modern feeling on the inside," says interior designer Kristen Martone.

Color is placed strategically throughout, mostly as an accent: A cheerful orange all-weather-fabric seat cushion brightens the mudroom; the blue island adds coastal cool to the kitchen; more blue cabinets turn up flanking the living room fireplace. Upstairs, the girls' bedrooms are painted and accessorized in their chosen pinks and purples.

One noteworthy piece of furniture in the house is the oval coffee table in the living room: It was crafted by *TOH* master carpenter Norm Abram, using eastern white pine that was culled from a property in Scott Adams's family and was being stored in a barn. "The elliptical pieces are 1⅜ inches thick, but the boards were much thicker at the start," says Norm. "It was old, wavy wood, so we planed it quite a bit." The project was built in Jeff Sweenor's new cabinetry shop, with Scott helping in the final steps.

"I used to watch *This Old House* with my great-

THESE PAGES

FLOORING, SLIDING BARN DOORS: **Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods**
BATH TILE: **Merola**
BATH VANITY, SINK, FAUCET: **Kohler**
BATH FAN: **Panasonic**
RADIANT FLOOR SYSTEM: **Schluter-Systems**
STAIRCASE: **Sweenor Builders**
ENTRY CEILING LIGHT: **West Elm**
OFFICE SHELVING: **California Closets**



“Details like coffered ceilings and built-ins are why people love old houses, and here those details are done really well.”

—TOM SILVA,
TOH GENERAL
CONTRACTOR



uncle, who was a carpenter,” says Scott. “The pine is from his barn, where he stored a lot of wood, so it really means a lot.”

For comfortable living, the house has all-new HVAC, including a high-efficiency propane-fired furnace and variable-speed air conditioners. The furnace is state-of-the-art in terms of gas-fueled systems, says *TOH* plumbing and heating expert Richard Trethewey. “This type of furnace just keeps getting smarter and smarter,” he says. “It’s a high-efficiency furnace with modulating burners, variable fans, and dampers that communicate with each other, so everything is working together.” The house has four heating and cooling zones, with two on the first floor and two on the second.

“Our former house only had one zone, so we are really happy about the level of control we’ll have in this house,” says Scott.

Another big plus for Scott and Shayla is the property itself, which sits on about one and three-quarters of an acre, 10 times the size of their former property. “There are so many more possibilities here for the girls to play and for us to enjoy the outdoors,” says Shayla. The landscape plan, created by *TOH* landscape contractor Roger Cook and *TOH* landscape designer Jenn Nawada, emphasizes privacy and





OPPOSITE, TOP: The second-floor landing holds a sitting area/reading alcove for the two daughters, with a custom built-in bookcase to fill with favorite titles.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Pink walls and a beaded chandelier sweeten the older daughter's bedroom. Original oak flooring from the existing house was carefully removed and reinstalled in both girls' bedrooms, where it was refinished to blend in with the new white oak flooring used in the rest of the house.

LEFT: In the master bedroom, light-hued and natural elements—including pale blue walls, white oak floors, a beige-linen upholstered headboard, and wood furniture—create a serene retreat.

BELOW LEFT: The master bath's marble floor tiles and marble-look quartz countertop add a luxurious touch to the wood vanity.



found features. “We moved some rhododendron on the property to complete a hedge along the front of the house to make it more private, and in the backyard we cleared out brush to expose an old stone wall and create a big open play area near the existing flagpole,” says Roger. A wraparound deck along the kitchen, dining, and living areas offers easy access to the outdoors.

If its bright, open interior and comfortable outdoor living spaces weren't enough to make this a dream home for Scott and Shayla, there is one more “found” element that really capped the project: the ocean views.

Where the original one-story ranch offered no glimpse of the ocean that's just a half mile away, the two-story Dutch Colonial provides water views from most of the second-floor rooms. On a clear day, even when there are leaves on the trees, the family can spot Block Island in the distance. “We knew there would be something of a view, but we thought it would mainly be in the winter, and we never imagined it would be this much,” says Scott.

Adding up, it turns out, equals much more than the sum of a place's total square footage. As Scott says, “This house is even more than I had hoped it would be.” ■

THESE PAGES

BOOKCASE, STAIR RAILING:

Sweenor Builders

GIRL'S BEDROOM FURNITURE:

Maine Woodworks

MASTER BATH SINKS, FAUCETS:

Kohler

MASTER BATH VANITY: **Signature**

Custom Cabinetry

MASTER BATH COUNTERTOP:

Cambria

MASTER BATH FLOOR TILE:

Bedrosians

RADIANT FLOOR SYSTEM:

Schluter-Systems

COZIEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE

Everybody loves a
built-in nook for curling
up with (or without)
a good book





READING MAY SEEM outmoded as a way to while away an afternoon, but there just might be more interest than ever in carving out a reading nook at home. Nestled into an alcove or tucked alongside a window, a snug spot in which to retreat with the latest page-turner—or just unplug for a while—has an irresistible pull, often evoking times (and homes) gone by. “These kinds of built-ins trigger so many memories and emotions,” says New York–based architect Gil Schafer, author most recently of *A Place to Call Home*. “It might be the bunk bed you had as a child, or feelings of other places you remember, like being belowdecks in a boat.” Whatever the memory, the appeal is universal. Here and on the following pages, some of Schafer’s signature nooks.

BY **KATHRYN KELLER**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ERIC PIASECKI**

A WORLD AWAY

A bunk niche offers separate-but-together seclusion in this lower-level game room in an upstate New York lake house. Sea-blue grasscloth and crisply painted millwork brighten the surrounding walls, while white-washed wood planks give the alcove its own identity. Framed prints are hung at one end, and bookshelves fill the other; plush cushions and an articulating sconce make it a comfortable destination for delving into a new novel—or simply daydreaming.



GATHERING SPOT

A living room's expansive bay window with a built-in seat was a locus of activity in the childhood home of one of the owners of this house. Her family pulled up tables to eat meals or play games there, or just perched to pore over the newspaper. To call up fond memories and be a spot that would foster new ones, Schafer added a similar feature in this home for the owners to use the same way.



INTEGRATED ALCOVE

In a family room with a fireplace, floor-to-ceiling bookcases, and French doors to the outside, this reading nook's robin's-egg-blue paneling settles it snugly into its surroundings. A perfect retreat on a rainy day, it's also deep enough for overnight guests—a frequent need where lots of kids come and go. Another thoughtful detail: As he usually does, Schafer specified a panel below the open shelves to allow for comfortably propping up head pillows when it's time to recline.

DOUBLE DAYBED

Two custom mattresses run toe to toe along the length of the living room wall in a casual California home that's lined in mismatched, reclaimed wood boards. Long enough for two to stretch out with a good read—the heat register doesn't hurt—this daybed is sufficiently deep for extra overnight guests, too. Storage drawers are a practical feature that also give the bench more graceful proportions, as does the skirt detail.





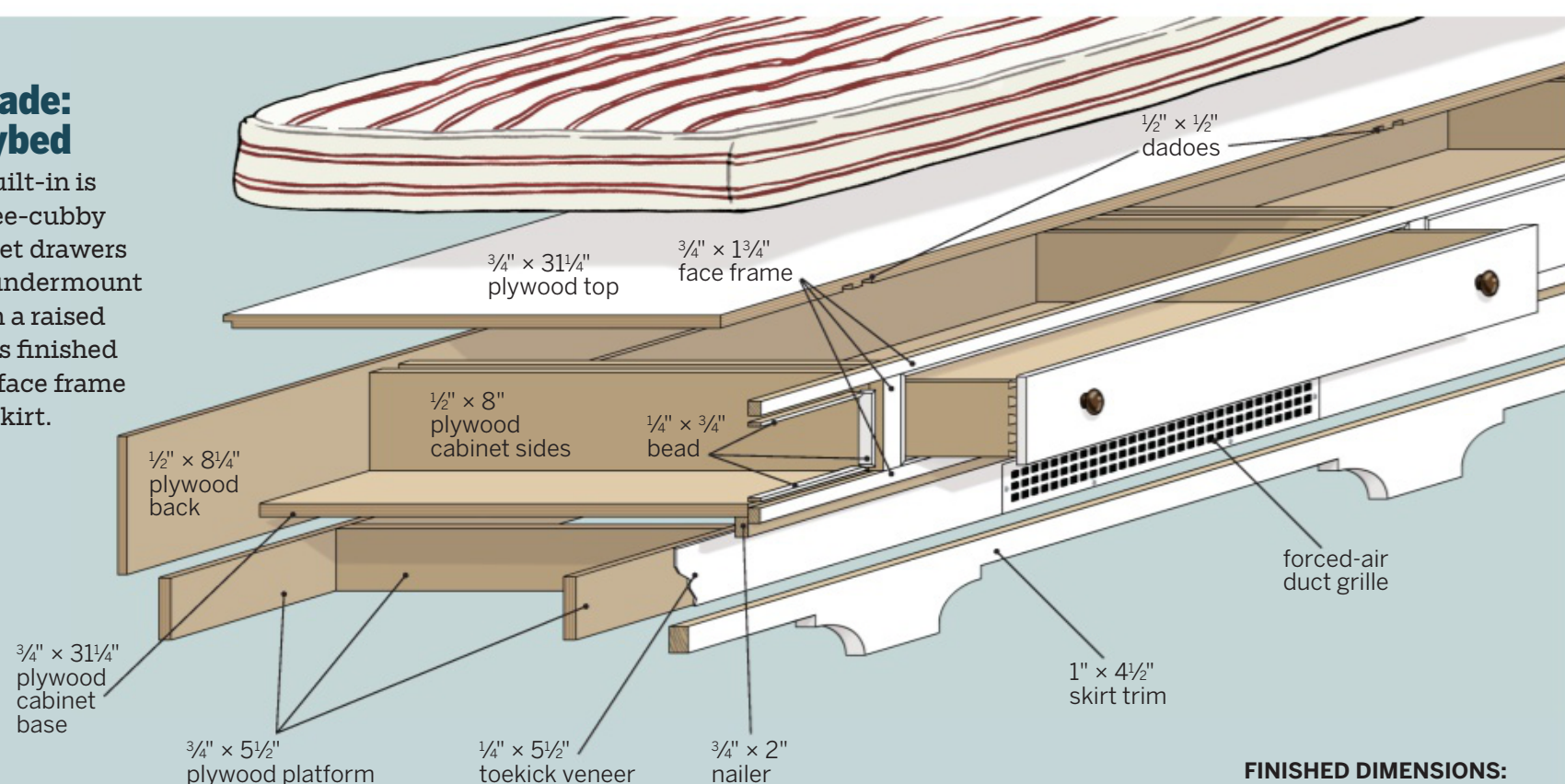
DORMER ENCLOSURE

In the top-floor guest room of Schafer's own house in Maine, the architecture presented a natural niche for an extra-deep window seat in a new dormer. The large casement windows offer fresh air and water views. The seat is also big enough to rest a suitcase on while unpacking. Drawers store extra comforters—a welcome addition in a climate that has big temperature swings day to night, even in summer.



How it's made: double daybed

This custom built-in is basically a three-cubby bench with inset drawers that travel on undermount slides. It sits on a raised platform, and is finished with a beaded face frame and a cut-out skirt.



FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
10' 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ " LONG $\times$ 2' 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " DEEP $\times$ 1' 2" HIGH

BEDROOM RECESS

To add a nook “for livability and comfort” in this girl’s bedroom, Schafer annexed space from an adjacent room. Wrapped on three sides and the ceiling with fabric that matches the curtains and the upholstered headboard, it’s a cheery architectural feature that helps to brighten the whole room. Having the built-in bench stand slightly proud of the recess means less depth is needed, but doesn’t diminish the feeling of a protected alcove.



NATURAL NICHE

Chimneys on either side of a window form a ready-made alcove for this built-in bedroom bench. Framing it with trim painted the same blue as the bench seat—and adding more blue on the window sashes—give the nook special prominence. A collection of plush pillows, plus a good seat cushion, provide comfort and support in a spot made for enjoying the breeze and views of the treetops.

NOSTALGIC NOOK

Built-ins aren't the only route to creating a quiet spot that inspires the imagination. Schafer designed this under-the-stairs alcove just outside a lower-level family room to be finished with furniture. To transform it into a special hangout space, interior designer Rita König hung generations of family photos, installed old-school lighting, and added a curvy settee that literally gives its occupants a hug. What could be cozier than that? ■





CLEARING THE AIR

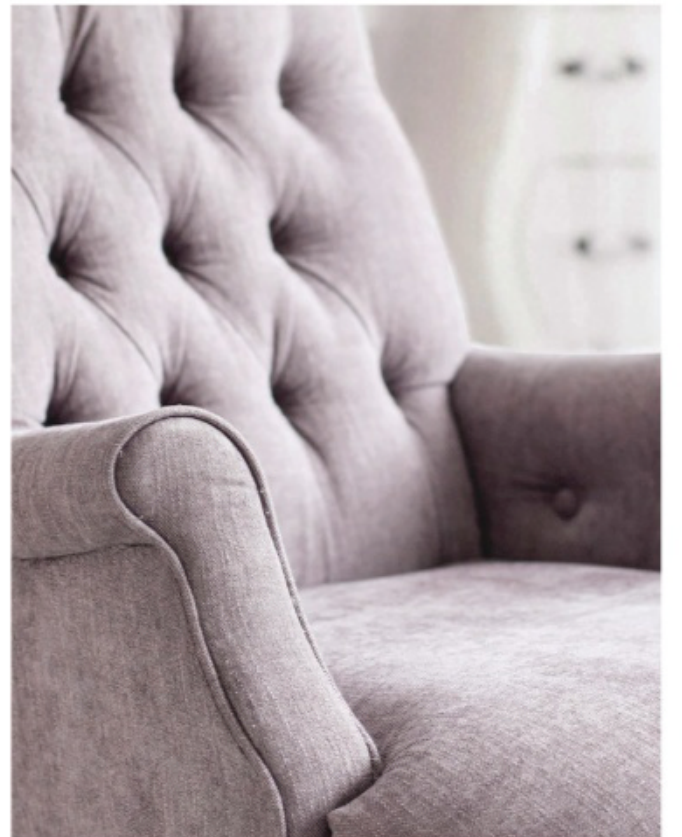
While a tight, well-insulated home is great for saving energy, trapping lots of stale air indoors can undermine your health. **Here's what you need to know** to ensure that the quality of the air inside is as good as—or even better than—the fresh stuff outside. BY DEBRA JUDGE SILBER

We all want homes that are comfortable and energy efficient. But all our efforts to replace drafty windows, seal up air leaks, and blanket wall cavities with insulation have had an unfortunate consequence: They've made the air in our houses less healthy to breathe. More of the airborne pollutants that once might have found their way outside—household chemicals, smoke, pet dander, and cooking gases, to name a few—are building up inside. Our well-intentioned efforts to restrict the flow of air in and out of our houses have led to indoor air-pollution levels that can be two to five times higher than those outside, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

That doesn't mean we should give up on making our houses tighter, of course. But it does mean now is a good time to pay as much attention to indoor air quality, or IAQ, as we do to energy efficiency. That begins by getting a better understanding of how to balance the movement of air in and out of a house, and of mechanical systems that usher in fresh air and expel stale air without compromising energy efficiency—or comfort—in all seasons. Monitoring your IAQ is a useful first step in raising awareness, too. Because when we know what we're up against, and how to minimize our exposure, we can all breathe easier.

OPPOSITE: Most of the common contributors to poor indoor air quality are right under our noses. They include many items we welcome into our homes, from synthetic furnishings and fresh paint to gas ranges and steamy showers. Learn more about these and other potential sources of indoor air pollution, plus how to control them, on page 50.

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) WILL STANTON/ALAMY; JOSE A. BERNAT BACETE; DAISY-DAISY/ALAMY; NOELIA VIDAL/EYE EM; SERGEY MIKHEEV/ALAMY; GEORGE CASWELL; EKATERINA MINAEVA/ALAMY; B.A.E. INC./ALAMY; MAGDALENA BUJAK/ALAMY





TOH's Richard Trethewey explains the ins and outs of an ERV.

Houses need to breathe, too

Ventilation is the key to good indoor air quality. In the past, houses mostly relied on natural ventilation—air moving freely through windows, doors, and leaky walls—to flush out stagnant, contaminated air.

But sealing a house to prevent energy loss halts the healthy level of air exchange you get with natural ventilation. In 2012, as building codes demanded tighter construction for energy efficiency, requirements were added for whole-house mechanical ventilation. As *TOH* expert Richard Trethewey puts it: “If you’re going to insulate, you’ve got to ventilate.”

In most existing houses, mechanical ventilation is limited to bath fans and range hoods that exhaust steam or cooking odors. These fans remove the bad air, but often the fresh air needed to replace it—called makeup air—simply slips in through cracks in walls, down chimneys, and through basements and attached garages. Not only is this air as hot or cold as the air outside, it’s very

likely picking up contaminants on its way in. Extreme lack of makeup air can cause dangerous back-drafting of combustion appliances such as furnaces and gas-fired water heaters.

A home’s ventilation system

“It’s a balance between getting fresh air and not wasting energy.”

—RICHARD TRETHEWEY,
TOH PLUMBING & HEATING EXPERT

should balance the amount of air going out and coming in. And to save energy, you want to make sure the energy used (and paid for) to heat or cool your home doesn’t flow out with the stale air. Enter the energy recovery ventilator, or ERV. This box-like device moves air in and out of the house while conditioning it to about the same temperature and humidity level as the air inside. You get fresh air, customized for a healthy, energy-efficient home.

INSIDE AN ERV

An energy recovery ventilator ensures a steady supply of clean, conditioned air.

How it works

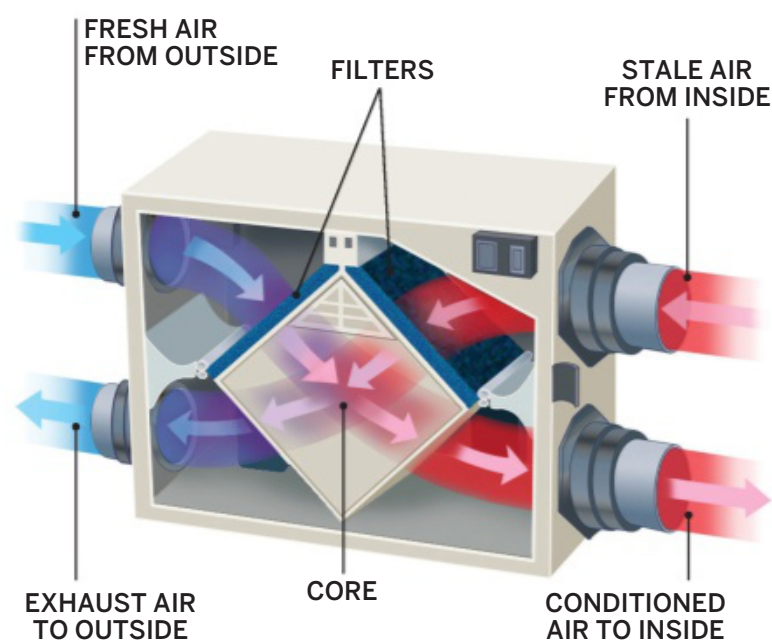
Two fans draw air into the ERV: One brings fresh air in from outside the house, the other draws stale air from inside. The two airstreams are channeled past each other—but do not mix—in an exchange core made of a conductive material such as aluminum or plastic that allows the heat and moisture from one stream to transfer to the other. The ERV may be programmed to run periodically on its own, or may be activated along with a furnace blower.

How it’s installed

The way fresh air is moved through a house via an ERV depends on factors such as the presence of existing ductwork, the age and efficiency of the furnace, and the layout of the home. Usually an ERV is tied into existing ductwork in a forced-air system (as shown, opposite). But an ERV can also be installed independent of the HVAC system, along with its own 6-inch ducts. This approach is typical in homes with electric or hydronic heat.

What it costs

ERV units cost between \$800 and \$1,500, with installation running \$1,000 to \$2,000, depending on the scope of the work. Some states offer rebates; to see if yours does, check the database of the NC Clean Energy Technology Center at dsireusa.org.



Fresh air in, stale air out

This home's balanced ventilation system relies on an ERV tied to an existing forced-air HVAC system. Along with kitchen and bath fans, it maintains indoor air quality without compromising energy efficiency.

1 > ERV INTAKE Fresh air is drawn in through a duct and passes through the ERV's core, where heat and moisture are exchanged. In this case, cold winter air is warmed by the outgoing conditioned air so the furnace does not have to work so hard to bring it to room temperature.

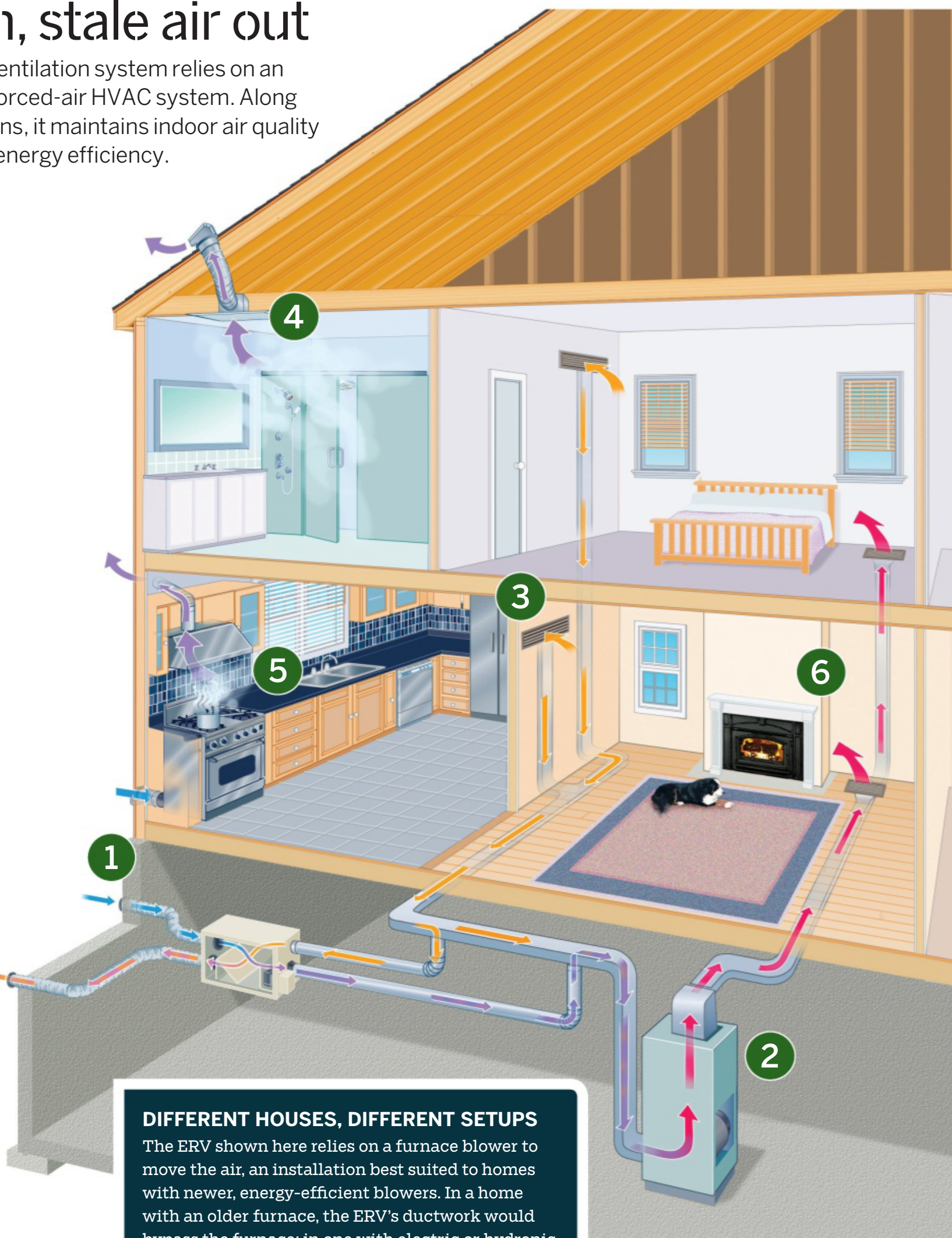
2 > FURNACE In this home, air that is conditioned by the ERV passes through the furnace, where it is fully heated and then distributed through the HVAC ductwork.

3 > AIR RETURN Stale, conditioned air from bedrooms and living areas is drawn back toward the ERV, where most of it is exhausted outside after transferring its heat to the incoming air.

4 > BATH VENT FAN Odorous, moist air that can lead to mold and mildew vents directly outside to prevent recirculation through the house's HVAC system.

5 > RANGE HOOD Cooking gases drawn through the range hood are ducted outdoors. This high-powered hood requires dedicated makeup air, which enters through a vent behind the cabinet that is activated when the vent fan is turned on.

6 > SEALED FIREPLACE A sealed insert helps control both indoor air pollution and energy loss by sending combustion gases up the chimney, not into the room.



DIFFERENT HOUSES, DIFFERENT SETUPS

The ERV shown here relies on a furnace blower to move the air, an installation best suited to homes with newer, energy-efficient blowers. In a home with an older furnace, the ERV's ductwork would bypass the furnace; in one with electric or hydronic heat, an ERV requires ductwork of its own.



Other ways to improve IAQ

While a balanced system of mechanical ventilation is the most effective way to improve indoor air quality, here are some more steps you can take.

BOOST YOUR EXISTING EXHAUST SYSTEM

Make sure bath fans vent outdoors (and not into a ceiling or attic). Run them for 20 minutes each time the room is used, or install a switch that activates the fan when the lights come on. Replace a recirculating range hood fan with one that vents outside, and, if you can, add a makeup air damper nearby that opens when the hood is operating.

UPGRADE AIR-HANDLER FILTERS Filtration is no substitute for ventilation; still, regular replacement of your air-handler filter or, better yet, upgrading to a more effective electrostatic filter can cut down on the recirculation of irritants. Look for a filter with a MERV (minimum efficiency reporting value)

rating between 11 and 14. Check filters monthly and replace if dirty, or at least every six months.

SPOT-CLEAN THE AIR Stand-alone air purifiers can effectively remove airborne contaminants in a confined space, says the EPA. Some filter both gases and particulates; others address one or the other. The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers' Verifide program tests air cleaners' performance; check ratings at ahamverifide.org.

SHUT THE DOOR ON POLLUTANTS Seek out no-VOC paints, cleaning products, and furnishings; look for third-party green certification seals. If you must introduce chemicals into your home, buy only what you need, and dispose of leftovers promptly.

CAN PLANTS HELP?

An indoor jungle may brighten up your surroundings, but while laboratory experiments have shown plants can reduce levels of some airborne chemicals, there's no evidence that a few houseplants can significantly improve household air.

What could be polluting your air—and what to do about it

CONTAMINANT	POTENTIAL SOURCES	HOW TO LIMIT EXPOSURE
Carbon monoxide , a colorless, odorless gas that is a product of combustion	Home heating equipment, gas cooking appliances, cars in attached garages, fireplaces	Vent sources directly outdoors; check the operation of appliances; seal cracks between your garage and home. Install CO detectors to alert you to unsafe levels.
Nitrogen dioxide , a product of combustion	Home heating equipment, gas cooking appliances, cars in attached garages, fireplaces	Vent sources directly outdoors; check the operation of appliances; seal cracks between your garage and home.
Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) , a variety of household chemicals including toluene, benzene, and formaldehyde	Cleaning products, building materials, paints, solvents, wood preservatives, fuels, aerosols, air fresheners, pesticides, dry-cleaning fluid, scented candles, printer ink, adhesives	Ventilate. Look for no-VOC paints, building materials, and cleaning products; urea formaldehyde-free furnishings; and certification seals from Greenguard, Green Seal, and Green Label Plus. Let items (dry cleaning, too) off-gas before they come inside.
Particulate matter , tiny airborne particles small enough to be inhaled; those under 2.5 microns (denoted as PM2.5) are the most dangerous	Smoking, wood-burning fireplaces, woodstoves, household dust, pollen	Vent all combustion appliances directly outside; don't smoke indoors; have a pro inspect and clean flues and home heating equipment annually; change filters on HVAC systems when dirty, or at least every six months.
Biological pollutants , including bacteria, mold, mildew, viruses, pet dander, pests, dust mites, pollen	Areas with food debris and moist humidity, such as kitchens and baths; dust; pets; insects and other household pests	Ventilate to remove moist air; eliminate plumbing and foundation leaks; remove shoes at the door; keep your house clean and free of pests.
Asbestos , a mineral fiber used in many building products before the 1970s	Roofing and siding shingles, pipe coatings, vermiculite insulation, some vinyl flooring and adhesives, fire-resistant materials	Intact asbestos can be left alone; if the material is damaged or might be affected by a remodel, call in a professional for an assessment.
Lead , a naturally occurring element that can be present in soil and in paints prior to 1978	Aging paint and the dust it produces as it degrades; contaminated soil	Test for lead paint before remodeling; never sand, scrape, or use a heat gun to remove lead paint. If intact, lead paint can be encapsulated by painting over it. For large-scale removal, call in an EPA-certified Lead-Safe pro.
Radon , a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in rock, soil, and water	Cracks in basements and foundations can provide a pathway into the house, as can water supply lines.	Test when you move into a house, and after any renovation that disturbs the surrounding soil. Some experts suggest testing every few years. Install a radon mitigation system if warranted.

Testing, testing

New interest in IAQ has led to a wave of devices that will keep tabs on your home's air quality. Many will alert you via smartphone to changes in IAQ, or communicate with your smart thermostat to activate the ventilation system. "Knowledge is power," says TOH home technology expert Ross Trethewey. "A monitor will let you know if your air quality is not that great, so you can do something about it."

CHOOSING A HOME IAQ MONITOR



Ross Trethewey
TOH home technology expert

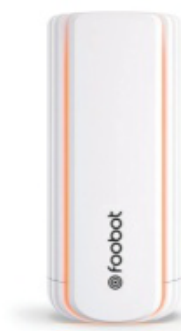
Decide what pollutant you want to monitor. Not all devices track all pollutants. If someone in your home is allergic to dust or pollen, for example, you'll want to make sure the one you select tracks those specific particulates.

Pay attention to the sensor. The sensor is the most critical part of the monitor. A table of sensors tested by the EPA is available at epa.gov/air-sensor-toolbox. Be prepared to pay more for a good one.

Consider the next step. Knowing that your indoor air is unhealthy only gets you so far. A monitor that can trigger ventilation either directly or through a smart thermostat ensures a quick response to poor IAQ.

MUST-DO MONITORING

While most monitors use carbon dioxide (CO₂) as a general indicator of air quality, few track carbon monoxide (CO) or radon. Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the U.S.; all homes should have a CO detector installed on each level. Radon, a carcinogenic gas, can be detected with an at-home test kit; if levels are high, a dedicated mitigation system that vents the gas outside should be installed.



FOOBOT
Airboxlab

The Foobot tracks tiny respirable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), total VOCs (TVOCs), temperature, and humidity. Its LED display indicates overall air quality by glowing blue (good) or orange (bad); the app rates your IAQ on a numerical scale from 0 to 100. \$199; foobot.io



AWAIR, GLOW C
Awair

The retro-styled Awair 2nd edition (left) tracks temperature, humidity, CO₂, TVOCs, and PM_{2.5}. The plug-in Glow C measures only TVOCs, temperature, and humidity, but will trigger "non-smart" devices like air purifiers or fans that are plugged into it. \$199 and \$89; getawair.com



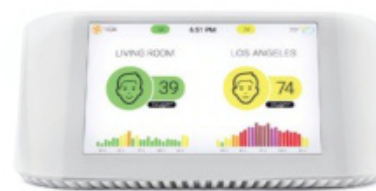
LASER EGG
Kaiterra

With a clock-like appearance, both the Laser Egg (left) and Laser Egg+Chemical track PM_{2.5}, temperature, and humidity; the latter also monitors TVOCs. Both are Wi-Fi-enabled and work with other home appliances via Apple HomeKit and IFTTT. \$149 and \$199; amazon.com



TEMTOP M10
Temtop

The Temtop M10 has no Wi-Fi connectivity and no app, but offers at-a-glance readings of PM_{2.5}, TVOCs, and formaldehyde with a series of clicks. Two other versions are available: The P10 measures only particulates; the M10i offers Wi-Fi connectivity. \$80; temtopus.com



AIRVISUAL PRO
iQAir

The AirVisual Pro rates household air using EPA's Air Quality Index of 0 (good) to 500 (hazardous) and compares that score with locally reported conditions. It tracks PM_{2.5}, temperature, humidity, and CO₂, and recommends remedial action when IAQ is poor. \$269; iqair.com/us



WAVE PLUS AND MINI
Airthings

The Wave Plus (shown) monitors temperature, humidity, air pressure, TVOCs, CO₂, and radon, but not particulates. The desktop Wave Mini tracks temperature, humidity, air pressure, and TVOCs. Both offer app control and a color-coded display. \$269 and \$79; airthings.com





IN WITH THE OLD

And out with the mash-up of eras. An antiques lover restores authenticity to her 1820s Cape with vintage furniture, salvaged flooring, period-style trim, and paint colors that bring back its time-honored patina

By Deborah Baldwin • Photographs by Gridley + Graves
Produced by Nicole Esposito-Polly
Styling by Janice Dunwoody

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE what drove settlers to rural Maine in the 1800s. It couldn't have been the weather.

But all that cold and snow had an upside, says Pamela Haines, owner of a 19th-century Cape Cod-style house in the river town of Buxton. Houses like hers have an assortment of small rooms, the better to close off ones not worth heating, and that configuration can itself be a source of warmth. "Capes are just cozy," she says. "Rooms tend to be small and separate, which I like."

A Buxton native and longtime old-house enthusiast, Pamela was unfazed 20 years ago when she and her then husband, James, discovered the well-used 19th-century find at the end of a country lane. While other prospective buyers saw only vinyl siding, dark rooms with low ceilings, an exhausted infrastructure, and no closets, Pamela saw a long-deferred dream—hidden behind overgrowth and a cluttered front yard.

LEFT: Homeowner Pamela Haines, an antiques dealer, furnished the dining room of her snug home with a well-worn trestle table and a vintage Welsh dresser. Colorful casings and trim enliven the plaster walls.



“I went to grade school a quarter mile from this house, and I remembered seeing it from the school bus,” she recalls. Having just overhauled another old house 140 miles north, in Winterport, “I was driving around to see if I could find it, and I came down the road, and, unbelievably, the house was for sale.”

Though the find was fortuitous, the house was run-down, worn-out, and abused by hoarding and neglect. The original 890-square-foot Cape, believed to date to 1823 (the local historical society can confirm it only as pre-1852), held a downstairs bedroom, a faded bath, and stairs to a semifinished half floor. A more recent 780-square-foot addition boasted linoleum floors, sliding glass patio doors, two bedrooms upstairs, and no pretense of any period style—its bay window suggested the 1960s, Pamela says, but there are no records.

More important, the original core was solid, with three fireplaces sharing one interior chimney, a granite root cellar—complete with petrified squashes—a dry-laid stone foundation, and original pine floors. Pamela, an antiques dealer, saw the kind of potential she might have found in a worn walnut hutch compromised by pink paint and a chrome wineglass rack.

But before the game couple could restore the

ABOVE: The custom kitchen cabinets were brush-painted, then finished with a scrubbable wax-and-polish that contains carnauba wax and beeswax. The random-width floorboards are salvaged pine; the island is a 19th-century grain bin.

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: The garden room’s trio of windows, coupled with a French door and a skylight, usher in sunlight and open the house to the side yard and patio. The floor is dry-laid reclaimed brick.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Gutted and rebuilt, the downstairs bath has a salvaged slate sink and a vintage mirror with artfully peeling paint.

plaster walls, they had to dig into them, while also carving out immediate living space—in other words, months of hauling trash, scrubbing, scraping, and yanking up linoleum. Acting as general contractor, Pamela hired crews to replace pipes and wiring and install wood siding, windows, and doors. With nearly 35 acres to care for, the new owners, meanwhile, had more than a little work to do outside.

During this time they lived in the attic apartment above Pamela’s sister’s garage, about a mile away. “It went on for a whole year,” Pamela recalls. “A long, long time.”

Most of the early activity centered on the kitchen addition and removing the shaky cinder-block exterior chimney (no big deal—“we pulled it down with a big rope,” says Pamela). A hands-on homeowner who enjoys cooking, she was eager to hook up a decent range, and she happened to have one in mind: a four-burner Viking she had landed on deep discount while renovating the place in Winterport. “We were not leaving without the stove!” she says, laughing as she recalls rounding up enough friends to lift the behemoth into a truck and get it down to Buxton.

While casting about for subs, Pamela lucked out with Jim Shula, a skilled carpenter who, before turn-



warm welcome

Pamela Haines, ABOVE, leans toward colors that evoke foliage, forests, butterscotch, and barns, but she greets visitors at a door painted with Clark + Kensington's Sapphire Earrings, a French blue. "I am in love with the blues of Provence," she confesses. Inside, however, she opted for historical hues. "I started out painting the interior trim beige, but it was drab. So I switched to colors that bring the woodwork to life." Here are a few.



BAYBERRY WAX

California Paints

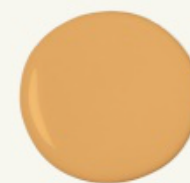
This stone green highlights the parlor trim, with related hues in the kitchen and foyer.



WARREN TAVERN

California Paints

Fittingly, this forest green accents much of the millwork in the garden room.



OLD GOLD

Benjamin Moore

This bold mustard yellow brightens the bathrooms and the garden room cabinets.



THAMES FOG

Valspar

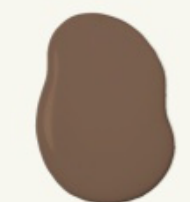
A mercurial blue-green that gives the front parlor a light, airy look.



CINNAMON

Benjamin Moore

A red with brown undertones, it forms a classic palette with earthy greens and gold.



HICKORY NUT

California Paints

This gray-brown warms up the attic master bedroom's window and door casings.





ing to boat-building, made the house's custom cupboards. He and his crew also put down "new" floors in the addition—varied-width pine planks another friend of a friend had salvaged and was storing in his pond. "This is the craziest story ever," Pamela says. "He said he put the wood in the pond so it wouldn't rot until he was ready to dry it and plane it down."

The crew excised the addition's sliding patio doors, and relocated and rebuilt the staircase, making room for a much-needed closet. The new staircase has a period-style balustrade and a small window of its own. "Capes tend to be pretty dark because the rooflines are so low," says Pamela, who would later punch holes for skylights and for extra windows in the original attic space—now a master suite.

Fixing up the Cape's fireplaces was high on the early to-do list. "They were filled to the top with debris—so I got a wheelbarrow and shoveled my way to the bottom," Pamela says matter-of-factly. A mason, Richard Irons, arrived and stayed for a while, restoring the fireplaces in the dining room and den and adding a chimney to vent the new wood-

ABOVE: The front parlor has its original pine floors and a fireplace that previous owners had clad with cement bricks. The gas-burning stove is new.

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: The den's brick fireplace surround was parged, or smoothed with a thin coat of mortar, then finished with milk paint. The mantel is believed to date to before the Civil War. The chair rail is new.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: The front parlor's new nine-over-six windows, corner cabinet, and paneling reinforce the period style of the house.

stove in the foyer (the house burns through a couple of cords a year). The gas-burning stove in the front parlor vents through the original chimney.

The master suite and sitting area materialized several years later, along with a one-story addition at the back of the house: a garden room with a gas stove for warmth, leafy-green paneling, and a brick floor that Pamela dry-laid in stone dust. Then came new finishes in the front parlor, including a custom corner cabinet and vintage furniture.

Four years in and eager to preserve the original walls, Pamela researched recipes for plaster and tried smoothing it over damaged drywall in the dining room. Then she threw in the trowel and hired a seasoned plasterer, Peter Lord.

"Lime plaster gives you that old look you can't get any other way," says Lord, who patched and replaced plaster in the den and new stairwell, occasionally cutting through 19th-century lath and cow hair. "What I'll do is push on the wall and see where there's movement—do I hear or feel the wood or fasteners move? That makes sags," he says, adding, "It's like pulling a string on a sweater—you don't know how far it's

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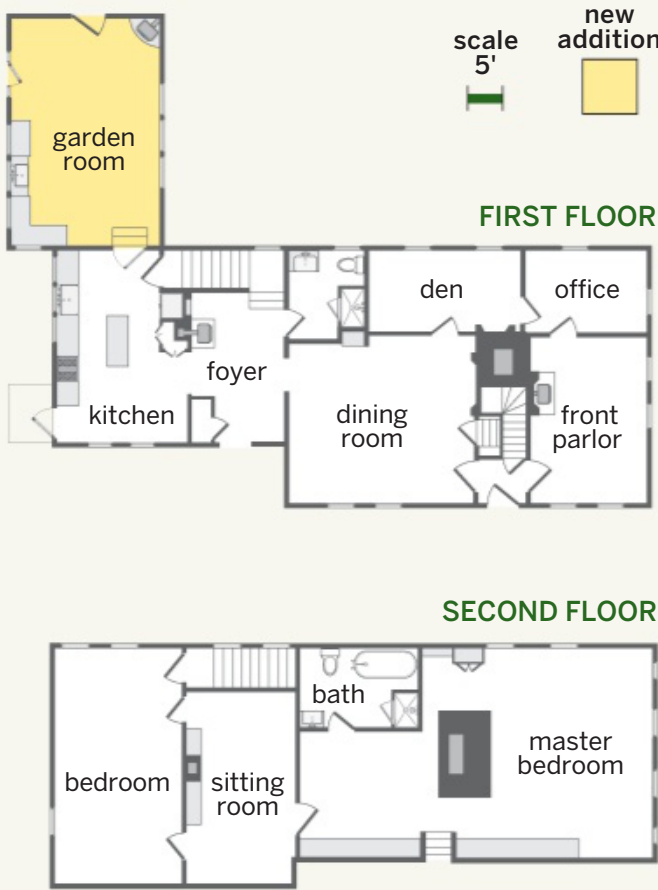


BELOW: The house's vinyl siding was replaced with low-maintenance quartersawn pine clapboards stained with a mix of linseed oil and turpentine and weathered to a nearly black gray.



floor plans

Pre-renovation, the 1,670-square-foot house had a downstairs bedroom and bath and a side addition with two bedrooms above a kitchen and dining room. The kitchen and lower-level bath were rebuilt within their existing footprints and the stairs in between them were relocated, creating a large foyer with a new woodstove and chimney. The attic in the original portion of the house was finished as a master suite. A 384-square-foot, step-down garden room was added in back.





LEFT: Former dead space in the attic became a master suite with skylights, exposed beams, and reclaimed pine flooring. Attic windows, including light-capturing ones just above the floor, are new, as in the rest of the house.

BELOW: A set of stairs in the old addition was demolished, and a period-style staircase with a window was added in a more graceful spot, yielding a foyer. The woodstove sits on a granite slab; the door under the stairs opens to a new closet.

OPPOSITE: A salvaged claw-foot tub, painted gold to match trim found elsewhere in the house, anchors the master bath. A high-arc faucet filler complements the tub's timeless profile.

going to unravel.” The goal was not a glass-smooth finish, he says, but “three-dimensional character, complete with pockmarks and undulations.”

After Pamela and James split up in 2008, she kept the house—and kept going with the reno. She had pried pieces of the original trim out of two rooms and had it replicated, allowing carpenters to case the windows and doors in a way that gave the small rooms more texture and dimension.

Pamela took it from there, experimenting with historical paint colors and warm neutrals. “I wanted the house to have an earthy, outdoor kind of feel,” she says. “I decided the transitions should not be too jarring, but at the same time, I wanted each room to have its own character.”

Nowhere is that more evident than in the garden room, now outfitted with a comfy sofa, a TV, and a rescue dog named Ever. “It’s my favorite room in summer,” Pamela says. But come winter, you’ll find her in a toastier perch: “There’s a sitting area just above the staircase, right above the new woodstove.”

And in this neck of Maine, there’s no shortage of wood. ■





New and improved

Problem-solvers, project helpers, and home-remodeling advances we're excited about **BY THOMAS BAKER**

1. Up against the wall

LIFTMASTER 8500W

This wall-mount garage-door opener offers two big benefits: quiet operation thanks to its DC motor and chain-free direct drive, and increased overhead space (where other openers reside). It's also Wi-Fi-compatible—you can control it remotely with a smartphone—and it has a built-in backup battery that takes over when power is lost. \$599; liftmaster.com

2. Built for abuse

CRESCENT LUFKIN SHOCKFORCE

These tough tape measures are built to survive 100-foot drops onto hard pavement. And their blades, which have measurements printed on both sides, sport big, diamond-encrusted hooks that grab on every side. The Nite Eye (right) has a black blade with green markings for low-light conditions. \$30 for a 25-foot tape; crescenttool.com

3. Easy lacquer look

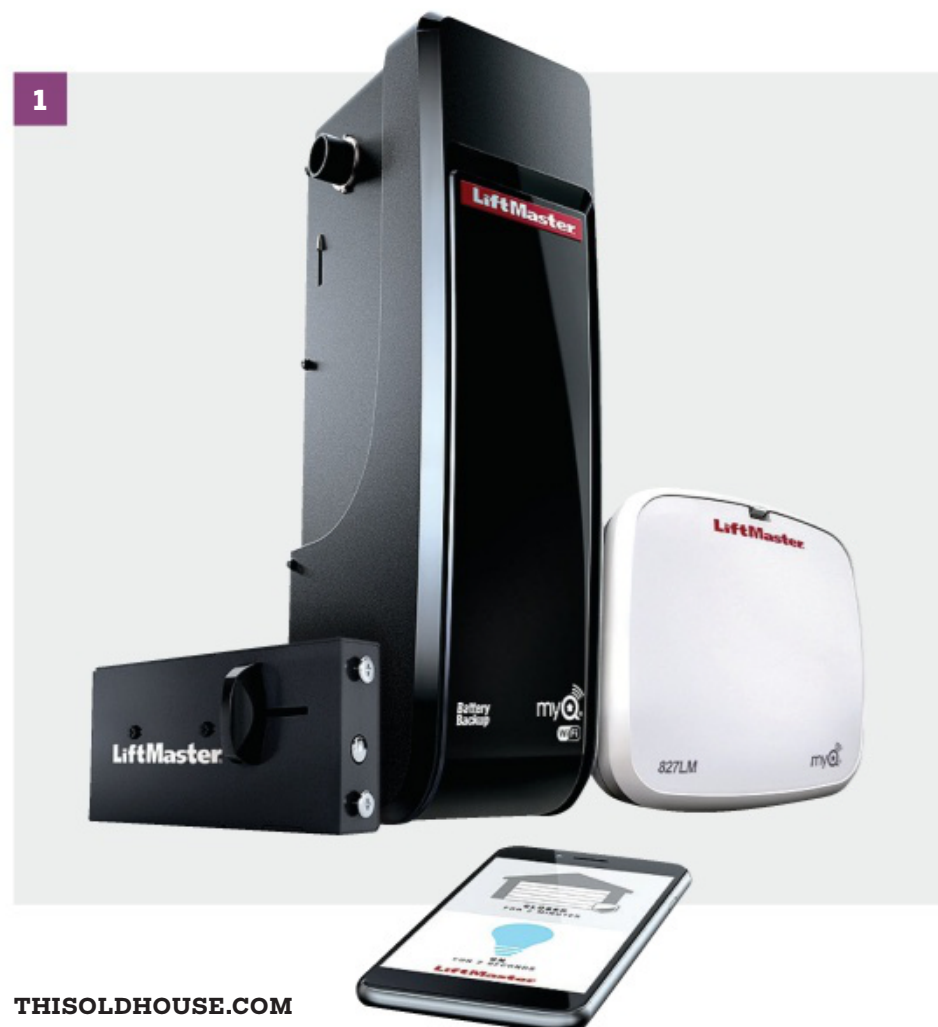
WATCO ALL-IN-ONE LACQUER+COLOR

This brush-on, water-based finish offers the same high-gloss, no-sand, fast-drying qualities as a traditional lacquer paint, but without the noxious fumes. It's really a self-leveling polyurethane, with better abrasion and chemical resistance than classic lacquers. Choose from 21 opaque colors that dry in less than an hour. \$20 for a quart; rustoleum.com

4. Pop-out flooring

STELLER HARDWOOD FLOORING

Plastic strips, not nails, hold this 3/4-inch, solid-wood flooring in place, so damaged or worn strips can be removed (using a suction cup), repaired or refinished off-site, then popped back in place with a mallet. To reduce wood movement, each 6-inch-wide piece comes factory finished on all sides. \$13 per square foot; stellerinnovations.com

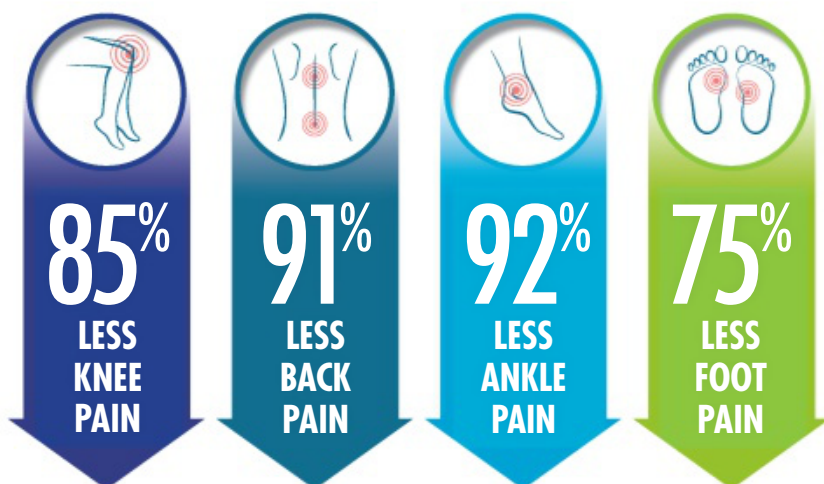


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5. Faster screwdriving WIHA SPEED E SET

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6. Rustic sliders, secured

INOX PRIVACY BARN DOOR LOCK

Sliding barn doors are the newest thing for interiors, but how do you lock them? INOX offers two elegant solutions—a low-profile lock mortised in the jamb (shown), and one mounted on the jamb—that engage with a strike on the door. In an emergency, the lock's bolt can be retracted via a discreet metal button situated on the outside of the door. From \$88; inoxproducts.com

7. One hot jacket

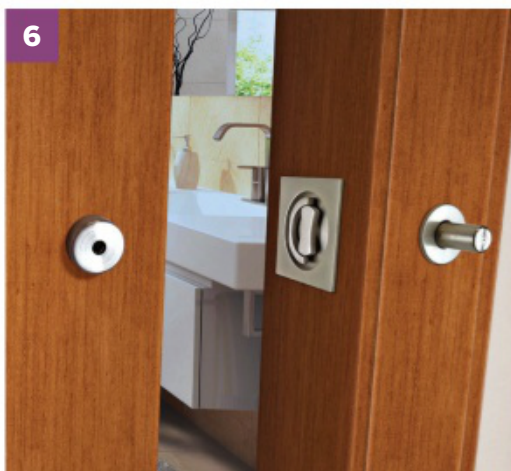
MILWAUKEE TOUGHShell

Wintry outdoor work is more comfortable when your jacket has battery-powered, carbon-fiber heating elements keeping your chest, back, and pockets toasty (choose from three heat settings). And when the wind- and water-resistant outer shell needs cleaning, just toss it in the wash, after removing the 12-volt battery. \$199; milwaukeeetool.com

8. Power both ways

METABO HPT MULTIVOLT CIRCULAR SAW

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70-74	\$27.40	\$21.40	\$45.00	\$35.00	\$89.00	\$69.00	\$221.00	\$171.00
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10. Clog-free sanding

DIABLO SANDNET DISCS

The see-through mesh backing on these hook-and-loop discs allows dust to be sucked away from the entire sanding surface, so they're slower to clog, easier to clean (with water or a wet/dry vac), and last 10 times longer than regular paper-backed discs. Their aluminum-oxide grit ranges from 60 to 400. \$15 for 10 discs; diablotools.com



LEGAL NOTICE

IF YOU HAVE AN ASBESTOS PERSONAL INJURY CLAIM AGAINST KAISER GYPSUM COMPANY, INC. OR KAISER CEMENT CORPORATION

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE OF VOTING RIGHTS AND RIGHT TO OBJECT.

Kaiser Gypsum Company, Inc. and Kaiser Cement Corporation (now known as Hanson Permanente Cement, Inc.) (together, the "Debtors") made certain products that contained asbestos. These products included various exterior stucco materials, joint compounds for wallboard and radiant heating components, texturizing paint and other related products (the "Products"). A full list of the Products can be found at <https://cases.primeclerk.com/kaisergypsum>. People using these Products (and family members and others who came into contact with these people) may have been exposed to asbestos. The Debtors are now in bankruptcy and people with claims of injury caused by exposure to asbestos in the Products have certain rights that may be affected by the bankruptcy filing.

The Debtors have filed a Joint Plan of Reorganization (the "Plan") and a Disclosure Statement, a document that provides important information about the Plan. The Disclosure Statement has been approved and will be sent to individuals with asbestos-related personal injury claims so that they can vote whether to accept or reject the Plan. A hearing to consider confirmation of the Plan (the "Confirmation Hearing") has been scheduled for March 30, 2020 to April 4, 2020 in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of North Carolina, 401 W. Trade St., Charlotte, NC 28202. Information on the Confirmation Hearing and all Plan-related documents is available at <https://cases.primeclerk.com/kaisergypsum>.

Am I Affected by the Plan?

If you claim to have been injured by asbestos in any of the Products, you are entitled to vote to approve or reject the Plan. The full Disclosure Statement and a ballot were sent to all lawyers representing individuals with current asbestos-related personal injury claims against the Debtors or directly to those individuals. A vote to accept or reject the Plan must be received by **5:00 p.m., prevailing Eastern Time, on February 20, 2020**. If you believe you have an asbestos-related personal injury claim against the Debtors and have questions, then you should contact your lawyer immediately.

What does the Plan do?

The Plan is the result of a settlement between the Debtors and court-appointed representatives of current and future asbestos claimants. The Plan preserves the Debtors' asbestos insurance coverage and permits asbestos personal injury claimants to pursue insurance recoveries in the tort system. The Plan also proposes to create a trust to pay asbestos-related personal injury claims to the extent the claims are not covered by insurance. If the Plan is approved, money can only be received from insurance and the trust; asbestos personal injury claimants will not be able to recover money from the Debtors or other protected parties listed in the Plan. If you have a pending lawsuit against the Debtors, you should talk to your lawyer about how the Plan may affect you.

How to Obtain Documents.

Copies of the Disclosure Statement, which includes the Plan, the voting materials and the notice of the Confirmation Hearing may be obtained by visiting this website: <https://cases.primeclerk.com/kaisergypsum>. You may also obtain copies of these documents by sending a request, in writing, to Prime Clerk, LLC, Kaiser Gypsum Company, Inc. Ballot Processing, c/o Prime Clerk, One Grand Central Place, 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 1440, New York, New York 10165 or by calling (855) 855-7644.

What if I want to Object to the Plan?

If you have a lawyer, you should talk to him or her about any concerns you may have about the Plan. You may object to the Plan if you do not like all or part of it. The deadline for filing and serving objections to the confirmation of the Plan is **5:00 p.m., prevailing Eastern Time, on February 20, 2020**. All objections must comply with the requirements set forth in paragraph 12 of the notice of the Confirmation Hearing, which is posted on the website below.

For more information, visit the website or call the toll-free number below.

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11



12



11. Easy-reach sash lock

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12. Stylish air supply

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COVER See the listing for “Modern Classic.”

TOOLKIT (pp. 9–13) **Prevent ice by pretreating** > *Thanks to* Kimberley E. Engle, senior chemist, Cryotech Deicing Technology; cryotech.com. **Roll on!** > *Thanks to* Sheree Brownson, quality manager, The Wooster Brush Co., woosterbrush.com. Mark R. Eichelberger, director of marketing, applicators, The Sherwin-Williams Company; sherwin-williams.com. **Artful frames** > **Moldings:** Stop Moulding WM888, \$3.64 per 7-foot piece, ½-inch Quarter Round 8063, 36 cents per foot; fivestarmillwork.com.

BEFORE + AFTER: KITCHEN **Colorful and comfortable** (pp. 14–18) **Designer:** Cillesa Ullman, CID, Cillesa Interior Design & Space Planning, Oakland, CA; 510-735-9265. **General contractor:** Miguel Garcia, MG Construction, Oakland, CA; 510-350-7302. **Custom cabinets:** SKM Construction, Walnut Creek, CA; 925-788-2986. **Cabinet color:** Chanticleer, sherwin-williams.com. **Paint:** Smoke Embers (walls), Rodeo (ceiling), Decorator’s White (trim), Black (beams); benjaminmoore.com. **Quartz countertops:** Teltos, Bianco Supremo; marbletrend.com. **Range, built-in fridge, dishwasher:** miele.com. **Refrigerator drawers (in island):** subzero-wolf.com. **Wine fridge:** u-line.com. **Range hood:** modernaire.com. **Microwave:** sharp.com. **Sinks and faucets:** franke.com. **Cabinet hardware:** atlashomewaresdirect.com. **Windows:** marvin.com. **Large vase, pedestal bowl, pitcher:** hudsongracesf.com.

BEFORE + AFTER: BATH **Universally appealing** (pp. 20–21) **Designer:** Kim Kelly, Bella Rustica Homes, Style & Design; bellarusticadesign.com. **Tile setter:** Scott Willis Tile, LLC, Brunswick, GA. **Paint (walls):** Agreeable Gray; sherwin-williams.com. **Toilet:** americanstandard-us.com. **Showerhead:** moen.com. **Lighting:** troylightinglights.com. **Mirror:** vagabondvintage.com. **Window treatment:** restorationhardware.com.

MODERN CLASSIC (pp. 30–37) **General contractor:** Jeff Sweenor, Sweenor Builders, Wakefield, RI; sweenorbuilders.com. **Architectural designer:** Lori Foley, Sweenor Builders. **Interior designer:** Kristen Martone, Sweenor Builders. **Kitchen cabinet design:** Completely Custom, North Kingstown, RI; completelycustom.com. **Color consultant:** Justin S. Hobart, Hobart & Company; 860-367-7362. **Hardwood floor installation:** GQ Hardwood Floors, Central Falls, RI; gqhardwoodfloors.com. **Insulation installation:** Ecologic Insulation, Tiverton, RI; ecologicinsulation.com. **Landscape contractor:** Jonathan Zeyl, Landscape Creations of Rhode Island; landscapcreationsri.com. **Media installation:** completelycustom.com. **HVAC contractor:** AGS HVAC Services, Westport, MA; agshvacservices.com. **Plumbing contractor:** J. N. Jordan Plumbing, Narragansett, RI; 401-284-1617. **Electrical contractor:** Ben Giles, South Shore Electrical Contractors, LLC,

Wakefield, RI; 401-935-1051. **Painting contractor:** Parker Painting, Warwick, RI; 401-243-5910. **Propane installation:** Newport Propane, Middletown, RI; newportpropane.com. **Land surveying/civil engineering:** Frisella-Balch & Associates, Wakefield, RI; 401-783-5949. **Septic system installation:** Green Wastewater Solutions, Warwick, RI; gwsne.com. **Concrete:** South County Concrete Foundations, Wakefield, RI; 401-783-3830. **Foundation assistance:** South County Habitat for Humanity, Charlestown, RI; southcountyhabitat.org. **Foundation cutting:** RI Concrete Coring & Cutting, Exeter, RI; 401-295-7137. **Masonry:** Sharpe Construction, Kingston, RI; sharpeconstructionri.com. **Custom built-ins, millwork, finish carpentry:** Sweenor Builders. **Oak flooring, interior doors, interior trim:** Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods; bairdbrothers.com. **Framing material:** weyerhaeuser.com. **Batt insulation:** rockwool.com. **Spray foam insulation:** Gaco Western; gaco.com. **Underlayment:** GCP Applied Technologies; gcpat.com. **HVAC:** Evolution by Bryant Heating & Cooling Systems; bryant.com. **Ductwork:** Homans Associates, Warwick, RI; 401-732-7090. **Septic system:** AdvanTex; orenco.com. **Interior door hardware:** emtek.com. **Exterior** > **Arbor/pergola:** Walpole Woodworkers; walpoleoutdoors.com. **Stone veneer:** El Dorado; eldoradostone.com. **Shingles:** SBC Cedar’s white cedar, prestained in Buzzards Bay Gray; sbccedar.com. **Roof shingles:** GAF’s Timberline UHD in Pewter Gray; gaf.com. **Rainscreen:** mortairvent.com. **Plants:** Clark Farms, Wakefield, RI; clarkfarms.com. **Westerly granite steps:** Comolli Granite, Ashaway, RI; comolligraniteinc.com. **Deck, cable railing, stair lights:** deckorators.com. **Landscape lighting:** statelineirrigationsupply.com. **Kitchen** > **Paint:** Decorator’s White (perimeter cabinetry), Stillwater (island cabinetry); benjaminmoore.com. **Range:** thermador.com. **Living area** > **Paint:** Stonington Gray at 25% (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Sofa:** McKay’s Furniture, North Kingstown, RI; mckaysfurniture.com. **Decorative pillows, throws:** craneandcompany.com. **Window treatment fabrication:** Eileen & Taylor, Deep River, CT; eileenandtaylor.com. **Surround sound system:** sonos.com. **Dining area** > **Side chairs:** mckaysfurniture.com. **Mudroom** > **Bench upholstery:** Sunbrella’s Cayenne; sunbrella.com. **Artwork:** avondalearts.com. **First-floor bath** > **Glass shower door:** dreamline.com. **Office** > **Desk:** roomandboard.com. **Grasscloth wall covering:** phillipjeffries.com. **Entry/stairway** > **Artwork:** avondalearts.com. **Paint:** Stonington Gray at 25% (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Second-floor landing** > **Upholstered chairs:** Miceli’s Furniture, Westerly, RI; 401-596-5333. **Girl’s bedroom** > **Paint:** Paisley Pink (walls); benjaminmoore.com. **Master bedroom** > **Bedding:** craneandcompany.com.

COZIEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE (pp. 38–45) *Thanks to* Gil Schafer, author of *A Place to Call Home: Tradition, Style, and Memory in the New American House* (Rizzoli); gpschafer.com.

CLEARING THE AIR (pp. 46–51) *Thanks to* Rich Bialobrzewski, engineered products division manager, RST Thermal; rstthermal.com. Fred Grable, senior staff engineer, International Code Council; iccsafe.org. Nick Agopian, vice president, sales and marketing, RenewAire; renewaire.com.

IN WITH THE OLD (pp. 52–59) **Carpentry (cabinets and woodwork), roofing, siding, and flooring:** Saco River Remodeling, Buxton, ME; 207-929-4006. **Foundation work:** Merry Building Movers; merrybuildingmovers.com. **Masonry:** Richard Irons; restorationmasons.com. **Plasterwork:** Peter Lord Plaster & Paint; plasterlord.com. **Siding:** Ward Clapboard Mill; wardclapboard.com. **Windows:** broscow.com. **Skylights:** Velux; veluxusa.com. **Dining room** > **Windsor chairs:** The Workshops of David T. Smith; davidtsmith.com. **Candle-bulb chandelier:** timelesslighting.com. **Paint:** Old Prairie (walls), benjaminmoore.com; Bayberry Wax (trim), californiapaints.com. **Kitchen** > **Pendant:** timelesslighting.com. **Range and range hood:** Viking; vikingrange.com. **Dishwasher:** kitchenaid.com. **Countertops:** Morningstar Stone and Tile; morningstarmarble.com. **Faucet:** Kohler; us.kohler.com. **Paint:** Sheepskin Rug (walls), valsparpaint.com; Northampton Putty (cabinets and trim), benjaminmoore.com. **Dark wax-polish:** briwax.com. **Den** > **Paint:** Old Prairie (walls), benjaminmoore.com; Thames Fog (trim) and Sheepskin Rug (fireplace), valsparpaint.com; Pitch Black (brick) and Old-Fashioned Milk Paint, milkpaint.com. **Front parlor** > **Built-in cabinet and paneling:** Saco River Remodeling. **Master bedroom** > **Bed:** davidtsmith.com. **Paint:** Old Prairie (walls), benjaminmoore.com; Hickory Nut (trim), californiapaints.com. **Foyer** > **Staircase:** Saco River Remodeling. **Woodstove:** jotul.com. **Paint:** Desert Mountains (stair treads) and Green Tea (risers and trim), Clark+Kensington, thepaintstudio.com; Oyster Shoal (walls), valsparpaint.com. **Master bath** > **Tub filler:** us.kohler.com. **Door handle:** historichousefitters.com. **Paint:** Old Prairie (walls) and Old Gold (tub); benjaminmoore.com.

SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE (p. 72) *Thanks to* John Hunter, City of Brunswick, GA; brunswickga.org. Dennis Lovello, The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, Atlanta; georgiatrust.org. 🏠

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This Old House (ISSN 1086-2633), Vol. 25, No. 1. Published bimonthly by This Old House Ventures, LLC, 262 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06902. Periodicals postage paid at Stamford, CT, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 5071.5.2); NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address corrections to P.O. Box 3241, Harlan, IA 51593; 800-898-7237. U.S. subscriptions: \$19.95 for one year. This Old House and the This Old House Window are registered trademarks of This Old House Ventures, LLC. Printed in the USA (GST: 854175130RM0001). Daniel Suratt, CEO. ©2020 This Old House Ventures, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

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THE HISTORY This large, rambling two-story home was designed by a prominent architect from Knoxville, TN, George F. Barber, who included the design in *Modern Dwellings*, his house plans catalog. Thorvald and Ella Winter built the house around 1900, likely with help from Ella's family, who owned a local construction company. The house changed hands a few times over the next 100 years. At one point it was reworked into a multiunit dwelling. Most recently the building was used as commercial office space. It has dodged the wrecking ball three times in recent years.

WHY SAVE IT? Located in the Brunswick Old Town Historic District, just a two-block walk from downtown, the house retains lots of original exterior details—many in need of some TLC—including its wood siding, prominent brick chimneys, a curved veranda with Corinthian columns, and a turret with a pressed-tin frieze. Original wood floors (likely oak), a staircase trimmed with paneling, two fireplace mantels, and a pair of pocket doors also remain.

WHAT IT NEEDS Despite the house's distressed appearance, the structure and foundation are sound, though new HVAC, plumbing, and wiring are required, and the floor plan needs to be reworked to serve as a single-family home. The siding can probably be patched and painted, the main roof is 10 years old, and the wood floors are salvageable. Just eight miles from the coast, this could be a beach getaway or a four-season family home. The house just needs someone to give it, and Barber's vision, another chance. —KATELIN HILL



1. A century of renovations have altered the footprint of the 4,200-square-foot house, which lost a bay window, a dormer, and a gable in favor of more square footage and an extended front porch. Most of the missing windows are stored inside.

2. Ionic columns flank a formal first-floor fireplace.

3. An arch-top dormer lets light into the attic, which is spacious enough for a top-floor master suite.

4. The staircase features a paneled skirtboard and turned balusters, likely made of pine.



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