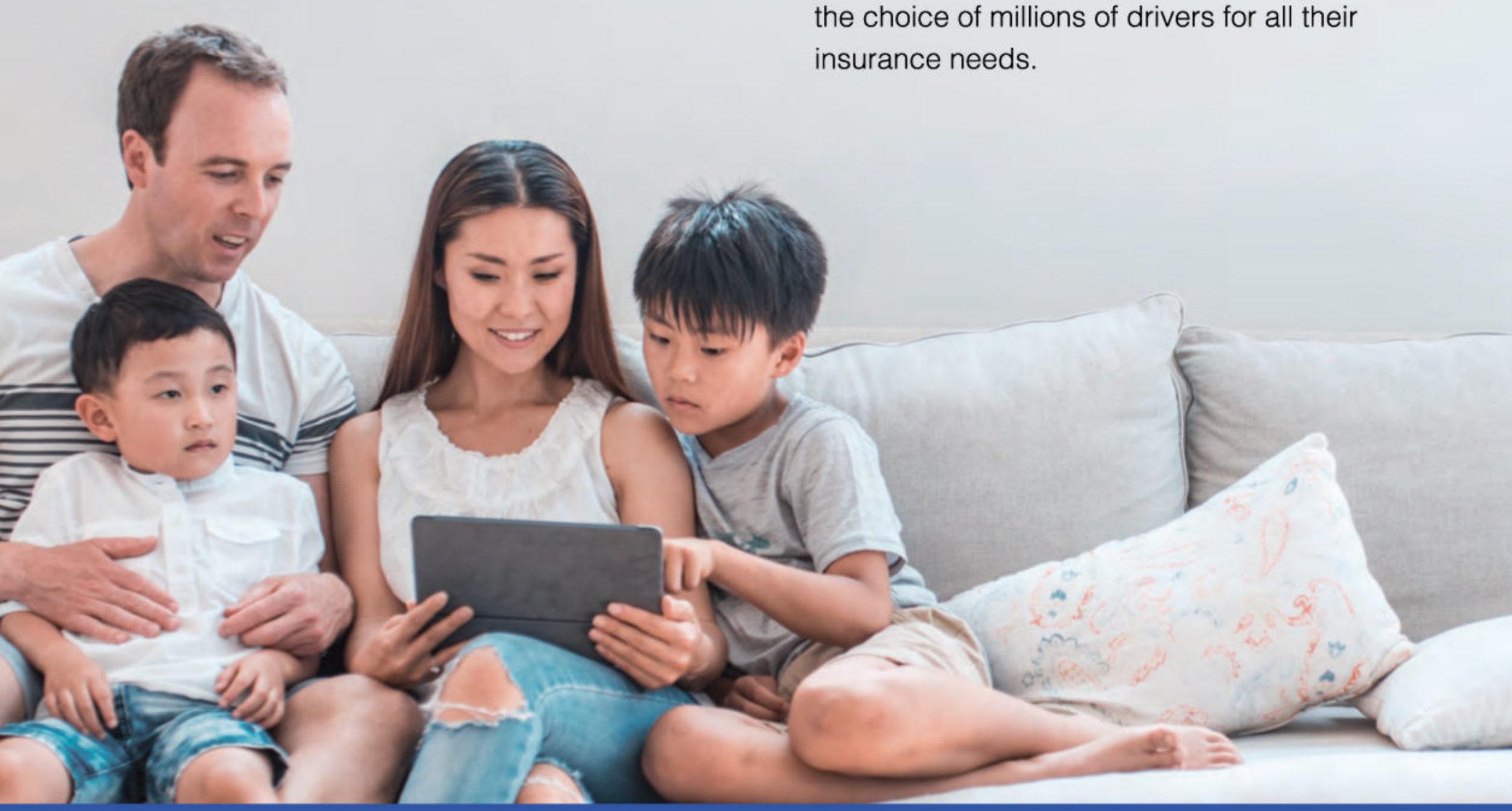
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ENERGY SAVERS | COFFEE TABLE HOW-TO | SMART-HOME TECH

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p. 39

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CONTENTS NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020



39
2020 IDEA HOUSE: FAIRFIELD COUNTY FARMHOUSE

features

39 **2020 Idea House: Farmhouse in Fairfield County, CT**
Our luxury-loaded new build is an updated take on a farmhouse that's filled with modern must-haves

68 **Light touch**
A 1929 Tudor Revival's kitchen gets a bright expansion and all-new finishes without forfeiting its classic look

72 **Queen for a new day**
The *TOH* team tackles the renovation of a historical Queen Anne house in Narragansett, RI, opening up its interior while preserving and replicating its distinctive exterior details

74 **Just right**
A design-minded homeowner turns a 1920 Cape-style cottage into a home that fits her to a T

COVER Photograph by Adam Kane Macchia

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NAT REA



departments

07 **toolkit**
An ultra-versatile block plane; marble kitchen accents; battery-powered snow movers; thorny recycling questions answered; energy-saving myths; and more

29 **before + after: attic**
Adding a bath to serve three bedrooms in finished attic space turns into a much-needed top-floor refresh

32 **smart home**
Our picks for smart-home products that really can improve life at home—right now

56 **build it**
Norm Abram and Jeff Sweenor show how to make a sleek oval coffee table, assembling it using only glue and precise joinery

60 **ask this old house**
How to install a steel-cable railing system, refinish stair treads, put in an outdoor outlet, safely strip old paint from trim, draw a perfect elliptical shape, and more

88 **save this old house**

TABLE: ANTHONY TIEULI

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Indow Window Inserts Save Original 1930's Windows

Homeowners Delighted by Surprises After Installation

Kim and Scott of **Yellow Brick Home** are known for "nurturing old homes back to health". When they started renovating their 1930's Michigan house, they quickly realized they needed better window insulation, but wanted the original windows to stay. Indow window inserts met all of their needs: increased energy efficiency, sound blocking, and a profile so slim it allows the original brass hardware to shine through. Plus a few unexpected extras.

See what surprises they met after installation: **go.indowwindows.com/yellow-brick-home**

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Keep warm, stay connected

One small positive of the months spent in lockdown has been how we've embraced our outdoor spaces. We just feel better, and safer, outside. Where friends and neighbors were once away from home all day or ensconced indoors with climate control, the warm-weather months saw every backyard where I live—and even more noticeably, many front yards—being more sociable than ever before, as families set up outside and visitors hung out at responsible distances. Those summertime gatherings often lasted well into the evening, with fire pits crackling, string lights glowing, and even movies projected on wall-hung screens offering a comforting, muffled soundtrack all around. It was the ultimate in "together apart."



With autumn now in full swing, I'm wondering how we can keep the good times going outdoors. I hate the idea that big Thanksgiving gatherings are in jeopardy. At my house, "turkey day" is the one holiday that we prep for with days of cooking (and cleaning), and then pull the table wide for friends, out-of-town family, and the random last-minute guest.

So I've been scheming how to move the meal outside—and spread tables end to end on our small deck—while chasing away the chill. There are lots of good ideas out there, from stocking up on lap blankets to lining seats with sheepskins or heated stadium cushions, to placing ice-melting electric mats underneath outdoor rugs. My research turned up some amazing products, including pricey heated furniture and high-design heat lamps (top right) that turn outdoor spaces into year-round destinations, even in snow country.

Equally useful—and a lot more affordable—are a pair of fun app-controlled products (bottom right) that we didn't have room for in our story about smart-home devices that can improve life at home right now (page 32). Maybe this is the year I finally get around to adding some mood-setting smarts to our deck with voice-controlled lighting, and some speakers, too. Both are fun forays into smart-home tech, which has improved considerably in recent years. In that regard, at least, connecting has never been easier.

Wishing you and yours safe and warm holidays,



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

PORTRAIT: DAVID YELLEN. HAIR AND MAKEUP: ROBERT HUITRON/ART & STYLE NYC

On my winter wish list

Grab a blanket and bundle up? For sure. But there are lots of cool products to extend the outdoor gathering season, too

The (unlikely) dream



Hot seat: The latest in a line of heated outdoor furniture, the Kosmos Chair has a temperature-controllable cast-stone seat. Just plug it in to a 120V outdoor outlet. *$1,700; galanterandjones.com*



Warm glow: The plug-in Dome by Heatsail delivers infrared heat beneath the shade of an arc-style lamp. It can be equipped with Bluetooth speakers, too. *To the trade only; sutherlandfurniture.com*

The (more likely) reality



Portable fire pit: It may look like a bread box, but the leggy FirePit's perforated steel body and battery-powered, app-controllable fan shoo away smoke while showcasing a sculptural, s'mores-friendly "floating" fire. *$250; bioliteenergy.com*

Sound and light: With hurricane-lamp styling, this app-controlled LED Lantern Speaker delivers up to 7 hours of dimmable light and crisp, omnidirectional sound on a single battery charge. *$110; store.moma.org*



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AS FEATURED IN This Old House Idea House — Cape Cod, MA — 2020

Idea House designer Denise Enright quickly and easily transformed a loft ladder into a sculptural showpiece with some ingenuity and **Varathane® Premium Fast Dry Wood Stain**.

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toolkit

Useful stuff for homeowners to know

SMALL WONDER

Tom's pocket plane

The No. 102 low-angle block plane has a permanent place in Tom Silva's tool belt. Here's why. **BY THOMAS BAKER**

The backstory

The No. 102 low-angle block plane that made its debut in the 1877 catalog of Stanley Rule & Level Co. was a 5½-inch-long, all-steel tool designed to slice through tough end grain, such as butcher blocks. But carpenters found that the palm-size No. 102 neatly fit in a tool belt, and put it to use trimming cabinet doors, shaving shingles, scribe-fitting baseboards, and fine-tuning miters.

Stanley made its last No. 102 in 1962. Twenty-five years later, in 1987, Lie-Nielsen Toolworks issued an upgraded version with a cap iron and body made of rustproof manganese bronze, a stainless-steel blade-depth adjustment with fine micrometer threads, and a ⅛-inch blade—twice as thick as the original—for vibration-free cutting. The result: a handy, portable plane that makes shavings just .008 to .010 inch thick right out of the box.



cap iron *Holds blade in place*

cross pin *Levers the cap iron against the blade*

body

mouth

finger rest

blade-adjuster nut *Controls depth of cut*

blade *Held in the plane body at a 12-degree angle, its bevel faces up.*

spinwheel *Tightens and loosens the cap's pressure on the blade*

nose

sole *The bottom surface (not shown)*

How to adjust it

When the blade gets dull, it has to be taken out, sharpened, then put back in and realigned. To do that:

Cradle the tool upside down in one hand, nose facing you; give the spinwheel a quarter turn counterclockwise to loosen the cap iron. Sighting down the underside, retract the blade into the slit in the bottom by turning the blade-adjuster nut counterclockwise. Then turn it clockwise until the blade edge emerges. If the edge isn't square to the sole, nudge the blade sideways and tighten the cap.

Clamp a thin strip of wood edge up and run the plane's right side over it, then the left. If no shaving comes up, loosen the cap, turn the adjuster nut clockwise, and retighten the cap. If only one side makes a shaving, nudge the blade sideways a bit. Keep adjusting and testing until both sides produce equal-size shavings.



"I love this little tool. I use it for everything from beveling edges to sharpening pencils."

—TOM SILVA
TOH **GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

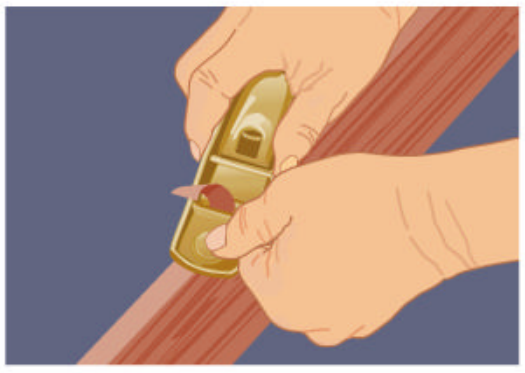
Is the blade sharp enough? Tom takes his out of the plane, and holding it vertically, rests its edge on his thumbnail, tilted down. If the blade sticks to his nail, it's sharp enough for the next job. If it slides off, he holds its bevel flat against a 1,000-grit sharpening stone, and gives the blade a quick honing.

Shown: No. 102 Low Angle Block Plane, $125; lie-nielsen.com

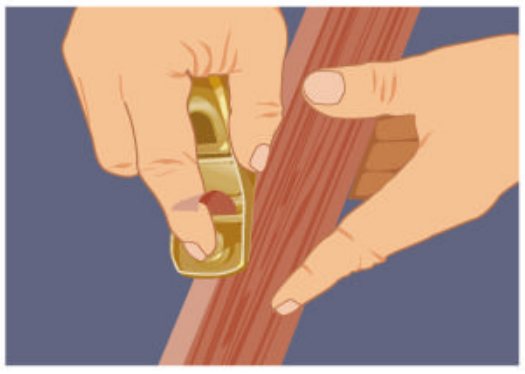
PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLLE CLEMETSON

One plane, three ways to work it

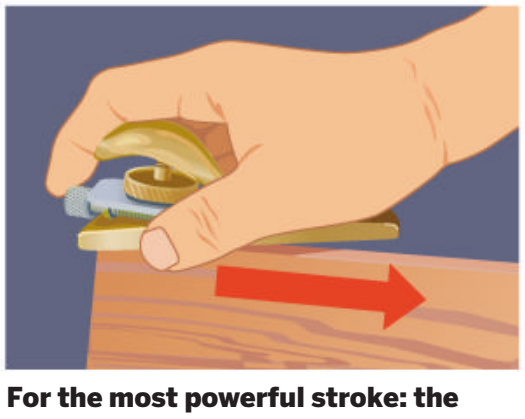
Big planes require two hands. But small block planes offer more flexibility. With all the grips here, skew the plane slightly as you push or pull it along the workpiece. This effectively lowers the angle of the blade, making for a smoother cut.



For maximum control: the two-handed push stroke Place the thumb of one hand on the finger rest, grab the sides of the plane body with the thumb and fingers of your other hand, and nestle the cap in your palm. Then push away from your body.



For the longest reach: the one-handed push stroke Place your forefinger on the finger rest, grab the sides of the plane with your thumb on one side and the remaining fingers on the other, and seat the cap in your palm. Then push away from your body.



For the most powerful stroke: the one-handed pull stroke With the tool's nose facing you, grip its body with your thumb and fingers as you pull the plane toward you. This allows you to brace the work against your body.

LESS FUSS, LOWER COST

Wary of marble? Try it as an accent

Stains and scratches can make marble countertops a challenge in the kitchen. Here are some stylish ideas for adding a touch of the luxe stone with fewer worries.



Add just a splash

As a vertical surface, a marble backsplash sustains fewer spills and less wear and tear than a horizontal work top—like this showstopping mosaic set in a field of ceramic subway tile. To help keep both marble and grout fresh-looking and to protect from grease and splatters, apply an impregnating sealer. Reduce costs—and upkeep—by doing as designer Kristi Patterson did here by surrounding the marble with less-pricey tile. Shown: Talya Collection marble mosaic; marblesystems.com



Roll it out as a work surface

A dedicated baking station topped with easy-to-wipe-down marble is a classic addition to keep dough cool. One with a polished surface adds shine, though a honed stone hides wear. For optimal ergonomics, drop the height to 30 to 32 inches (as compared with standard 36-inch-high counters), and for optimal economy, check local stone yards for a discounted remnant—like the ½-inch-thick piece of Carrara Venatino designer Francie Milano used here. Top with an impregnating sealer, such as Stain-Proof's Dense Stone Impregnating Sealer (drytreat.com), and you're ready to roll.



Shelve it up high

A marble shelf adds drama and beauty to a kitchen, safe from the splatters and dings that mar countertops. Small ones can be made economically from stone-yard remnants or door thresholds. Solid ones, like this Calacatta Gold shelf by architect Joe Serrins, can be supported from underneath using steel L-brackets fastened to the wall studs. For a thicker floating shelf with no visible support, have a stone fabricator assemble a hollow box of mitered marble pieces that can slide onto metal supports fastened to the studs. Coat the supports with adhesive to hold the shelf in place.

BACKSPLASH: SPACECRAFTING PHOTOGRAPHY; COUNTER: JOHN MARTINELLI; SHELVES: ANNIE SCHLECHTER. ILLUSTRATIONS: IAN WORPOLE



JUST PULL THE TRIGGER AND PLOW

Battery-powered snow movers make the grade

A FEW YEARS AGO, you couldn't be blamed for giving the cordless snowblowers at home centers a pass. Their anemic builds, with weak batteries and narrow augers, limited their usefulness to modest walkways. But now efficient brushless motors and better batteries—with more voltage power and higher amp-hour ratings for extended run time—deliver enough muscle to chew through up to a foot of fluff without rousing the entire neighborhood. Here are three models to tackle winter's worst.



GOOD FOR: SMALL WALKWAYS, STEPS, AND PORCHES

Toro 60V Battery Flex-Force Power Shovel; $299; toro.com/60v

Nimble and narrow, this 22-pound cordless shovel works where larger snowblowers can't. The auger hurls snow directly in front, so you will need to take some time to plan your path. But when you're done, this model takes up about as much room as a traditional snow shovel hanging on your garage wall.
Power: One 60-volt battery @ 2.5 amp hours
Run time: Up to 45 minutes
Clears an area: 1 foot wide by 6 inches deep; throws snow up to 25 feet



GOOD FOR: MEDIUM-SIZE DRIVEWAYS OR LARGE WALKWAYS

EGO Power+ Peak Power Snow Blower with Steel Auger SNT2114; $799; egopowerplus.com

You'll appreciate this blower's tidy footprint and manageable 64-pound weight when it's time to clear around your car. And with a folding handle, it takes up about as much space as a recycling bin in the garage. Its steel auger adds durability, while a handy control lever on the handle makes it easy to direct the chute without stopping.
Power: Two 56-volt batteries @ 7.5 amp hours
Run time: Up to 1 hour
Clears an area: 21 inches wide by 13 inches deep; throws snow up to 40 feet



GOOD FOR: LARGE DRIVEWAYS

Snow Joe 80V iONMAX Cordless Two-Stage Snow Blower iON8024-XR; $899; snowjoe.com

With many of the same features as brawny gas-powered snowblowers—check out those gnarly pneumatic tires—this two-stage blower's steel auger hands snow off to a secondary impeller that flings it out of the chute for maximum clearing distance. The electronic dashboard simplifies adjustments to the self-propelling transmission, checking charge level and chute position.
Power: Two 40-volt batteries @ 5.0 amp hours
Run time: Up to 30 minutes
Clears an area: 2 feet wide by 13 inches deep; throws snow up to 32 feet

GOT A LIGHT DUSTING? TRY THESE TOOLS



GO ON, BLOW IT OFF

Don't hang up your leaf blower come winter—use it to zap light snow from entry steps and porch railings. The **Ryobi 40470VNM** is one of the quietest; powered by a 40V, 4-amp-hour battery, its brushless motor blasts snow away at 550 CFM. $199; ryobitools.com



POWER SWEEP IT AWAY

Prefer a multiuse outdoor tool that can whack weeds, till soil, edge beds, and more? **Stihl's Kombi-System** (not shown) has added this Power Sweep to its arsenal of 16 other attachments, to clear paving of debris, including snow. From $940; stihl.com

HOME: ISTOCK

Recycling realities

Blue bin or trash bag? Here's how to decide in a toss-up

MORE TIME AT HOME has meant more deliveries, and fuller households have led to fuller recycling bins, increasing the confusion about what exactly goes in them. What to do with all the plastic bags? Do bottle caps stay on? What if there's a bit of peanut butter left in the jar? Ultimately, your local government decides whether an item is recyclable (check its website for a list). Private haulers can also provide this information. Here, how to handle some common household materials.



Plastic clamshells These hinged (or sometimes heat-sealed) molded clear plastic packages hold everything from berries to batteries. But recycling them requires a different process than other single-use plastics, so consult your municipality or private hauler for guidance on whether they're accepted.
WHAT TO DO: Recycle if you can; otherwise they're trash.



Soiled jars, cans, and bottles These items should be empty and wiped clean, but don't need to be completely spotless.
WHAT TO DO: A simple rinse or swipe with a napkin will generally suffice, but seriously gunked-up vessels—like peanut butter jars and yogurt containers—should be washed well before they go into the blue bin.



Plastic caps With improved technology, plastic bottle caps can now be handled by some local recycling programs.
WHAT TO DO: If your program accepts them, screw them back on—they'll be shredded with the bottle or jar, then the shreds will be sorted. Unsure? Just place them in the bin.



Packing peanuts These lightweight polystyrene products take up so much space relative to their weight that they make recycling a losing proposition.
WHAT TO DO: If you can't reuse them, donate them to a local shipping center or post them on your local Freecycle or Craigslist "free" item group. Otherwise, bag them (to keep them from spilling everywhere) and toss them in the trash.



Metal bottle caps, can lids, and jar tops Most haulers accept these covers, along with the glass or metal containers they came with. Nonmetal coatings on cans, caps, and lids will generally get burned off during the recycling process.
WHAT TO DO: Check your local program's instructions first; most require caps from glass containers to be placed in bins unattached. Sharp metal lids should be pushed deep into cans.



Pizza boxes The cardboard they're made of is recyclable, of course, but some programs reject them because of the likelihood of contamination from grease and food waste.
WHAT TO DO: Recycle them or toss them in the garbage, as your hauler dictates.



Aluminum foil If it's clean, it absolutely can be recycled.
WHAT TO DO: Wad it up softball-size and recycle it with other metals. If it's encrusted with food scraps, greasy, or burned, toss it in the garbage.



Single-use plastic bags Grocery, produce, newspaper, bread, and dry-cleaning bags, as well as bubble wrap, are rarely accepted because they require specialized processing equipment without which they can damage a facility's machinery.
WHAT TO DO: Drop them in a dedicated collection bin at local grocery stores or big-box retailers. Your local recycling program also may be able to provide a list of plastic-bag recycling sites in your area.

WINDOW BOX: KRISTIN PLADSON. ICONS: ISTOCK (8)

GREEN SCENE

Keep winter displays looking fresh

Help outdoor arrangements last through the winter with these pointers from *TOH* landscape contractor Jenn Nawada. Get off to a good start by **rehydrating clippings** as soon as you gather them: **Cut stems at a 45-degree angle** to maximize water absorption and **place them in a bucket of water** for 1 to 3 hours. **Spray with an antidesiccant**, such as Wilt-Pruf, to seal the pores of leaves and needles and protect against drying. Jenn likes to mix broadleaf evergreens such as holly, magnolia, boxwood, and andromeda; needled evergreens like spruce, fir, pine, incense cedar, and juniper; and red-twigged dogwood, winterberries, juniper berries, and pinecones for interest. And she doesn't fuss with a base: "I put them in the same soil the fall and summer annuals were potted in," she says. "That way, they freeze in place in the soil."



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Save energy, save money? Maybe...

Reducing energy use is always a good thing. But not every energy-conserving strategy is guaranteed to reduce your overall costs. We take a look at some common misconceptions.

1 Closing forced-air registers in unused rooms saves on heating and cooling costs. In fact, the opposite is true. Shutting down the flow of heated or cooled air to a room increases pressure (known as "back pressure") in a forced-air system, so the blower has to work harder, using more electricity. A better move: Ask your HVAC pro to create more zones by adding motorized dampers to your ductwork. Or install smart registers, such as Ecovent (keenhome.io). These battery-powered devices automatically open or close as needed to maintain a set room temperature, while monitoring back pressure and communicating with one another wirelessly to balance airflow. Ecovent says a typical system costs about $1,200, delivers average energy savings of 25 percent, and could pay for itself in about three years.

TOP: Restored original leaded-glass windows at *TOH*'s Cape Ann project house were fitted with interior storm windows from Indow Windows (indowwindows.com). The tight-fitting inserts are a cost-effective way to block drafts and conductive heat loss through single-pane glass.

2 Replacing old windows is a cost-effective way to save energy. Installing new, insulated windows is a sure way to reduce the heat loss and air infiltration typical of older, single-pane units and boost comfort and convenience. But their high initial cost means you can wait as long as 40 years to break even, based on energy savings for whole-house replacement. For about a quarter of that cost, you can add Energy Star–certified storm windows. When fitted with heat-reflecting low-e glass, these can lower heating and cooling bills by about 10 percent and pay for themselves in five to seven years, according to Energy Star. Interior storms control air leakage better than exterior storms because they fit tightly into the window opening. With either type of storm, updating the weatherstripping on the old windows is an inexpensive way to improve overall performance even more.

3 A tankless water heater is the most cost-effective way to generate hot water. It depends. Tankless heaters do save energy by eliminating standby heat losses—the energy lost while keeping water hot in tank-type heaters. In a household that uses less than 42 gallons of hot water per day, tankless units are 24 to 34 percent more efficient, saving an average of $100 per year, or more. But in a busy household, standby losses are less of a factor, and increased efficiency falls to 8 to 14 percent. In that case, it could take 12 to 15 years to recoup the $2,800 cost of installing a gas-fired tankless water heater. (Fortunately, these heaters last 20 years or more.) For about the same price, you can buy an Energy Star tank-type water heater with a condensing gas burner or a hybrid electric heat pump. While tankless heaters don't run out of hot water, simultaneous or high-volume use may be limited by the size of your gas supply line. Tank-style heaters don't have that limitation, and, in the case of condensing-gas heaters, bounce back so quickly that running out of hot water isn't an issue. When heavily used, these gas heaters achieve payback in about eight years. In warm climates with high electricity rates, the payback on heat-pump heaters is just four years.

4 An electric space heater is a cost-saving way to warm a room. At best, it's a temporary, occasional solution. Regular use can be pricey: about $3.20 per 16-hour day, based on the average cost of electricity in the U.S. The more energy-efficient—and safer—cures for chronically cold rooms include extending forced-air ductwork to them. Or, if you have a boiler, you can run pipes to a wall-mounted hot-water radiator, which, unlike a space heater, produces comfortable radiant heat. A third option: Add a wall-mounted gas- or propane-fired furnace that vents to the outside. It costs about 85 cents per day to run either a 3,000-Btu hot-water panel radiator or a natural-gas wall furnace with the same output.

5 If you want to save on energy, go solar. There are lots of reasons to go solar: Rooftop photovoltaic cells produce clean energy, reduce carbon emissions, and can lower your electric bills (although pushback by utilities may limit savings in some areas). But in terms of bang for your buck, a better investment is to properly insulate the big gaps in a house: the attic floor, floors above a crawl space, and the rim joist that sits on the foundation. Doing that saves an average of 15 percent on heating and cooling at a cost of only $1.50 to $3.50 per square foot. Unlike solar panels, these improvements don't wear out in 30 years, and they do their job 24/7, whether the sun is shining or not.

JARED KUZIA

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 80

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"The weight is easy on the shoulders...It's now become my personal main hedge trimmer."

★★★★★

– VeniVidiFenumSecare



Check out this review and others on the product pages at STIHLdealers.com.

18+

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

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Brand new content
One site



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AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

STIHL

STIHL

MSA 140 C-B

TOUGH LITTLE MACHINE

"My wife loves this tough machine. Light weight, powerful and long lasting battery."

★★★★★

– copwilli



Check out this review and others on the product pages at STIHLdealers.com.


STIHL
STIHL
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BGA 57

BEST BLOWER EVER.

"It has a very strong air flow that gets all the dirt and leaves out of the crevices while being light and easy to use."

★★★★★

– Gina3823



Check out this review and others on the product pages at STIHLdealers.com.

FSA 57

OUTSTANDING PRODUCT

"This battery-powered trimmer is light, easy to handle, versatile, powerful, and a great product."

★★★★★

– Sam13



Check out this review and others on the product pages at STIHLdealers.com.


STIHL
STIHL

RMA 460

ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!!!

"You'll never want anything else."

★★★★★

– Batteriesrock4

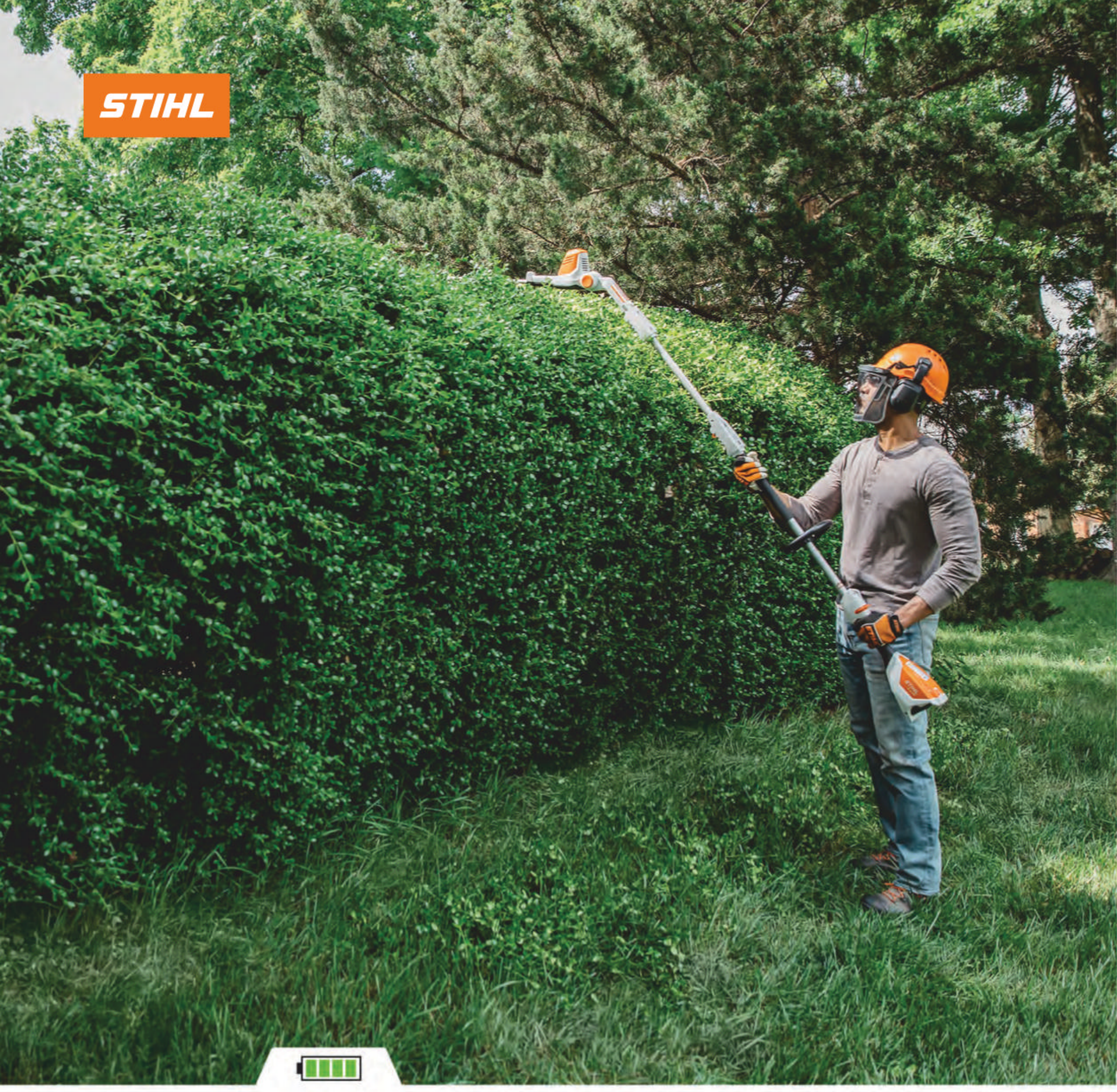


Check out this review and others on the product pages at STIHLdealers.com.

STIHL


REAL
STIHL.
FIND
YOURS.


STIHL



FIND YOUR STIHL.

Regardless of your landscape challenge, STIHL has a battery-powered tool that's up to the task. From small yards to large properties, the STIHL battery lineup combines real power with real choice, empowering you to take on any sized job or project.

AI SERIES

Integrated batteries make this series perfect for smaller yards and condominiums.

HSA 45
Hedge Trimmer



BGA 45
Blower



FSA 45
Trimmer



AK SERIES

With **multiple battery** options, this series is ideal for maintaining suburban yards.

FSA 57
Trimmer



RMA 460
Lawn Mower



HSA 56
Hedge Trimmer



BGA 57
Blower



CHAIN SAWS



AP SERIES

More power and **longer run times** make this series great for a wide range of properties.

TRIMMERS



BLOWERS



CHAIN SAWS



HEDGE TRIMMERS



LAWN MOWERS



CUT-OFF MACHINE
Professional Use

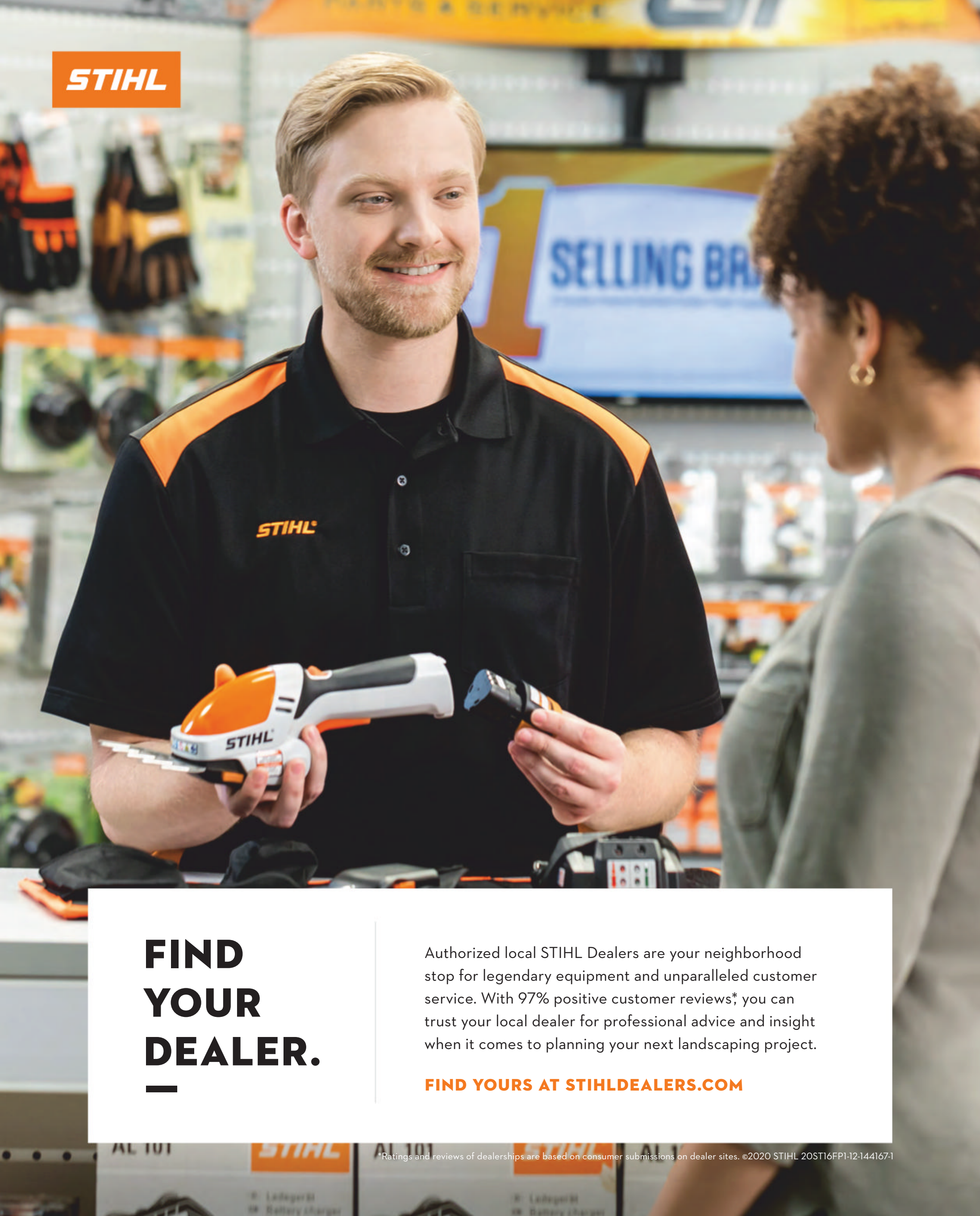


EXTENDED HEDGE TRIMMERS



POLE PRUNERS





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*Ratings and reviews of dealerships are based on consumer submissions on dealer sites. ©2020 STIHL 20ST16FP1-12-144167-1

Room at the top

Adding a bathroom to serve three third-floor bedrooms was the starting point for a total refresh of the former attic space **BY NINA MALKIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HNATOV FOR SWEETEN**



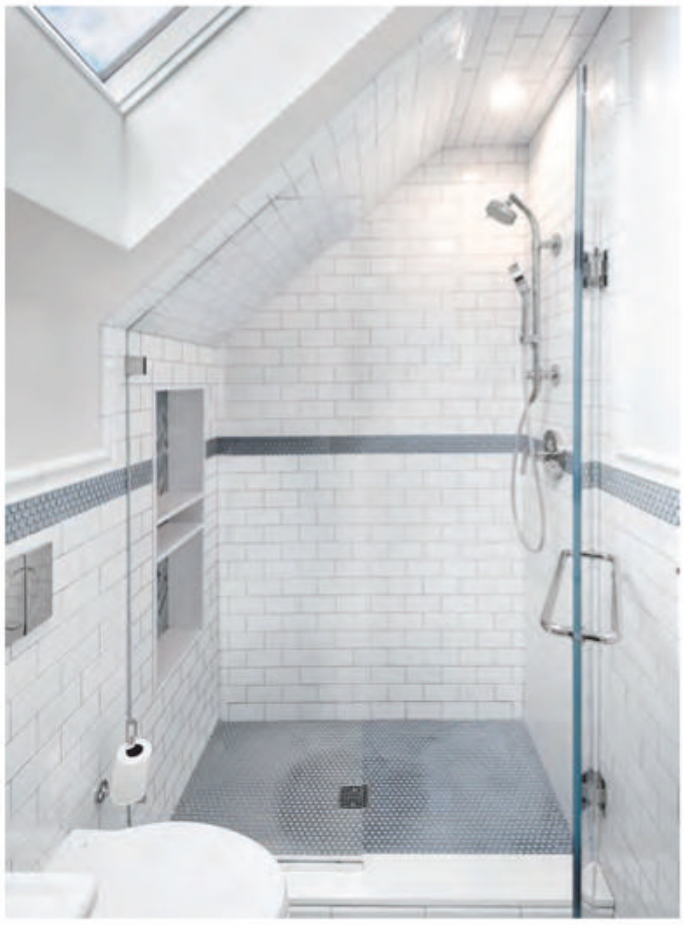


BEFORE The parents' bedroom was crammed with furniture, and the painted vintage-pine subfloor was splintery. A stingy window let in little natural light.

AFTER Space-saving built-ins create a clutter-free master bedroom made more pleasant with a larger window and new floors. Deep clothing drawers tap eaves space, bookshelves combine with side tables, and sconce-style reading lights are tucked up high.

ONE THING LEADS to another is as true in renovating as in the rest of life. Just ask Kusum Mathews and Dave Schwaderer, owners of a 1920 Colonial Revival in Pelham, NY, who set out to fit a bath in the former attic that holds all of the bedrooms for the family of four. When they moved in, the first floor was finished as a rental apartment, which the couple initially let to their nanny, then filled with extended family. But after six years of stumbling down the stairs to the second-floor bath at night, and with their kids getting older, the couple decided the time was right to add the third-floor bath they deserved.

To find professional help, they turned to Sweeten, a free service that matches homeowners with general contractors. With their pro on board, they determined they could grab 42 square feet from unfinished attic space and a corner of the main bedroom for the bath. A skylight in the sloped ceiling would usher in light. Lost bedroom storage could be regained with built-ins. And while they were at it (those budget-busting words), why not fix the floors, replace and enlarge the windows, upgrade the casings, and paint? Then add a code-required fire sprinkler system (stairway included). But this couple has zero regrets. Says Kusum, "We now have an effective living space and a true Zen zone."



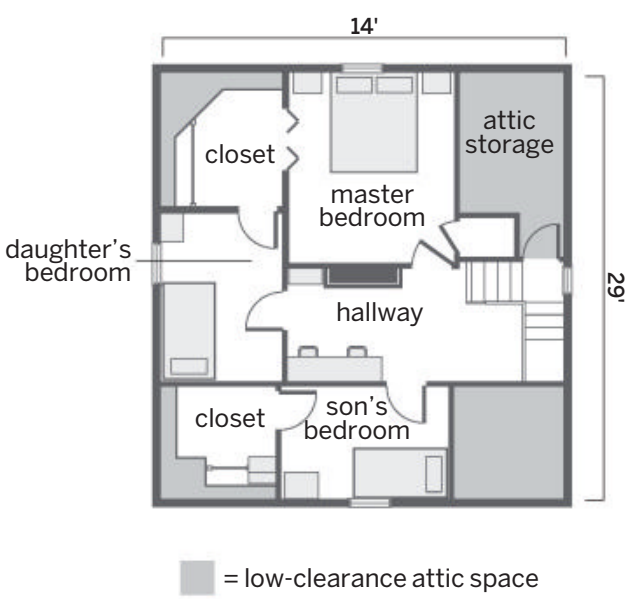


ABOVE: The bath's sloped ceiling was a challenge, but smart design allowed for enough headroom inside the shower, with an ample niche for supplies.

RIGHT: The slim, tankless, wall-mount toilet offers clearance in front for the shower door to open fully, as required by code. The console sink has an airy look, with a bonus towel bar and a glass storage shelf.

BEFORE

The 700-square-foot finished attic had no bath; unfinished eaves spaces were difficult to access for storage



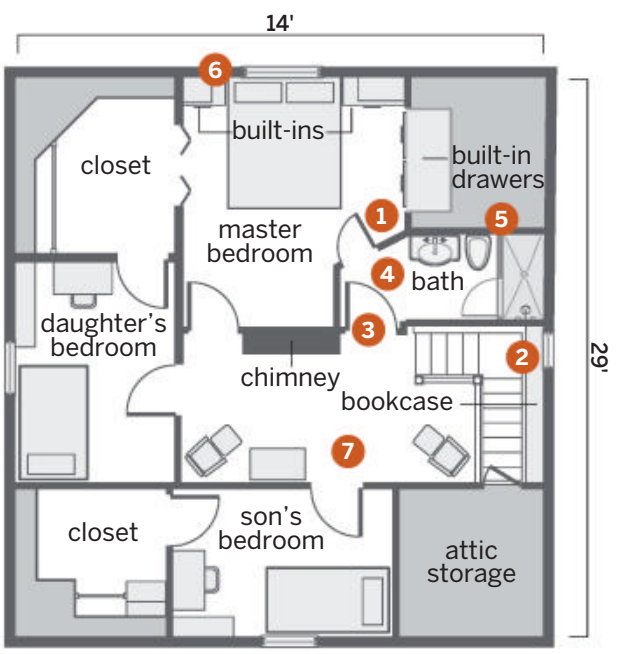
AFTER

A 42-square-foot full bath was created from unfinished space and a master bedroom closet. New doorways allow access to it from the hall and the master bedroom

1. Grabbed unfinished attic space, plus a corner of the master bedroom, including a closet, to carve out a footprint for the bath.

2. Closed off a doorway at the top of the stairs.

3. Added a door to the hallway, and another leading to the main bedroom.



4. Placed the sink and toilet along low-ceilinged eaves space, and the shower plumbing on a full-height wall at the top of the stairs.

5. Installed a skylight in the sloping roof to light the room.

6. Added built-in storage in the master bedroom; replaced the drafty windows and warped doors.

7. Installed a sprinkler system, including in the stairwell, using unobtrusive flat-disk sprinkler heads.

FLOOR PLANS: IAN WORPOLE

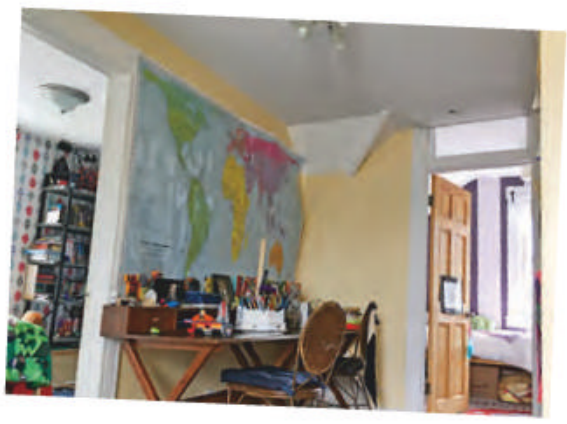
BELOW: David Schwaderer and Kusum Mathews, with their son Niraj, 9, and daughter Kiran, 11. "With so much natural light, clean lines, and no clutter, this space is really our sanctuary," Kusum says of the remodeled top floor.



RIGHT: Daughter Kiran's bedroom is now a bright, tidy retreat, with organized study space. "The larger windows and deeper sills are a huge improvement in the bedrooms," Kusum says. "More light makes the rooms feel bigger."







BEFORE

BEFORE: The spacious hallway at the top of the stairs was a dimly lit catchall for craft supplies that mom Kusum calls "absolute chaos."

LEFT: With elegant new millwork, oak floors, recessed lights, and a pair of comfortable chairs, what was a clutter magnet is now a pleasant spot for quiet time with a good book. "All members of the family retreat to this sitting area for relaxation and reading," Kusum says. With the doors open, light from new, larger, draft-free windows is channeled into the space, and neat under-bed storage helps contain and organize the kids' stuff in their respective bedrooms.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 80



Live-smarter jump start

Maybe you've dabbled in smart-home tech with a speaker you can command to tune to public radio or a doorbell camera to thwart porch pirates. But as 2020 draws to a close, smart tech now touches every corner of the house, from the HVAC equipment in the attic to the water supply in the basement. It can be difficult to keep up with what you really need—and what's really worth shelling out for. **Here are some picks for smart-home upgrades that can make life at home safer, easier, more comfortable, and a little bit more fun, right now.**

BY NATHANIEL WICE

WHO'S IN CONTROL

Seeking assistants

Much of the charm of a smart home is being able to control lights, music, thermostats—you name it—with simple voice commands, so it matters what is listening. While an open smart-home connectivity standard is in development, which promises a universal smart home of the future where products that operate with Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant all work together, we're not there yet. For now, it's helpful to know the scope of your options. While many devices work with two or all three assistants, some do not. Amazon leads the way in voice control, having Alexa in everything from stereo speakers to microwaves.

AMAZON'S ALEXA

100,000+

COMPATIBLE PRODUCTS

▶ Introduced just six years ago, Alexa pioneered the idea of a home listening for your voice. Lacking a popular smartphone, Amazon knew it had a hit on its hands, and has led the race for the greatest number of gadgets.

GOOGLE ASSISTANT (VIA GOOGLE HOME)

50,000+

COMPATIBLE PRODUCTS

▶ Enjoy requesting facts? Google Assistant likely has the answers, thanks to its search engine. Like Apple, Google builds its assistant into its smartphones and tablets, so you can control your tech even without a smart speaker.

APPLE'S SIRI (VIA HOMEKIT)

640+

COMPATIBLE PRODUCTS

▶ Despite Apple's smartphone success, its HomeKit framework boasts many fewer devices. But HomeKit does reflect the company's higher standards for security and privacy; automations are easy to set up with Siri Shortcuts.

NAT REA

SMART SPEAKERS

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

For many, a speaker with built-in microphones, placed in a central location such as on a kitchen counter or family room bookcase, is the easiest way to control smart-home devices, rather than a phone or tablet. Once valued more for convenience than for quality, **these speakers now pack better sound**, with microphones that can hear through dinnertime commotion, and sleek design that blends in with most rooms. You can use these for routine tasks, like setting timers, and for more advanced tricks like adding pantry staples to your Amazon cart.



AMAZON ECHO STUDIO

Despite the small size—8 inches high, 7 inches across—the Echo Studio delivers room-filling sound from its five internal speakers. It's also one of **the first to play Dolby Atmos music**, a standard of recording that produces the immersive sound you hear in movie theaters. Sounds high tech, but it still plays your popular streaming services like Pandora and Spotify. *$200; amazon.com*

GOOGLE NEST HUB MAX

This new Nest **angled, 10-inch HD touch screen is large enough to host video calls**, feed you a YouTube recipe, or keep your Netflix binge running. Think of it as a dashboard to display calendars, weather, and your photo stream, all while playing music and following voice commands like a traditional smart speaker. *$229; store.google.com*





APPLE HOMEPOD

Like the Echo Studio, the cylindrical HomePod sends out music in all directions, so you can set it on a coffee or end table. Stash it on a bookcase and **its sensors auto-calibrate to optimize the sound of your playlist**. With its six microphones, Siri can hear your commands through the noise of a bustling household. *$299; apple.com*

GET MORE OUT OF YOUR SMART SPEAKER. Alexa and Google Assistant have some fun games—just say "Alexa, start Song Quiz" or "OK, Google, talk to Brainstormer Trivia." Siri fans can set up a cocktail hour using the Shortcuts app on an iPhone. Saying "Hey, Siri, cocktail hour" can dim the living room lights and fire up a playlist on your HomePod.

STAY CONNECTED

Better Internet

Sure, it can be fun getting lost in all the cool, constantly evolving home-tech gadgetry, but the smartest house (or phone) isn't worth much if your Internet connection is lacking. Here's a crash course in bolstering your smart home's backbone.



Netgear CM500, $70; netgear.com

START WITH THE MODEM

▶ Consider ditching the modem you're renting and buying one; **depending on your cable bill, it could pay for itself in a year and deliver better performance**. Pocket the savings, or boost your Internet speed—although 200 Mbps is likely plenty for a family of users. **Before you buy, check with your Internet provider for compatible models.** For speeds of 400 Mbps or faster, a DOCSIS 3.0 modem—a specification on the box of models like the Netgear CM500—will be sufficient. But upgrading to DOCSIS 3.1 can help future-proof your setup.



Nest Wifi router, $169; store.google.com

ADD MESH WI-FI

▶ Smart-home technology needs a good Wi-Fi network to stay connected through the home's Internet service. **A Wi-Fi mesh network kit makes it easy to get a reliable signal** throughout the house. These kits consist of →

Better Internet
(continued)

a router, which receives the Internet signal from the modem, and satellites that plug in to outlets and wirelessly share your network. The Nest Wifi router is simple to set up, and covers up to 2,200 square feet. Add a Nest Wifi point ($149) to cover up to 1,600 additional square feet, or get the Nest Wifi bundle ($349) for up to 5,400 square feet of coverage.

TIP → **Better placement of existing Wi-Fi gear and updating router firmware may fix sluggish performance. Log in to your router to check its firmware (for help, search by brand at routeripaddress.com) and update it. Use NetSpot (netspotapp.com) to find dead zones and help place mesh satellites up high and in a central spot, like on top of a bookcase, and away from the microwave and masonry walls, which rob signal strength.**

PLAN FOR BACKUP

▶ Last year's luxury is this year's necessity: **A second Internet connection keeps you online—and prevents Zoom meetings from freezing—even if the main connection goes out.** Ubiquiti's UniFi LTE ($199; unifi-lte.ui.com) adds a failover connection to your home network, so if the main DSL, fiber, or cable connection goes down, the UniFi LTE uses AT&T's 4G LTE mobile phone network to keep you connected. Plans start at just $5 per month for 1GB of data. Orbi's 4G LTE Advanced Tri-band Router ($400; netgear.com) works the same way, but can also serve as your main router: If your cable Internet goes down, you put your smartphone SIM card into the router to get back online in no time.

COMFORT BOOSTS

Control key systems

Adding digital smarts to your home's systems not only increases comfort and convenience, it can also save energy—and in some cases will pay for itself in less than a year. While first-generation smart-home controls promised the same benefits, this new breed of technology is better and easier to set up and use.

1 HELP THE HVAC

The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that nearly 90 percent of homeowners queried rarely adjusted their programmable thermostats because it was too complicated. If the screen on yours still flashes 12:00 A.M., you're not alone. Even with all their sophisticated algorithms and promised energy savings (around 25 percent), smart thermostats are now far simpler to use, with clear screens, intuitive controls, and helpful smartphone apps. What sets EcoBee's SmartThermostat with Voice Control apart is its ability to pair with wireless temperature sensors. **If your HVAC system has more than one zone, you can stash these sensors in notoriously hot or cold rooms for more comfortable microzoning.**



Need things warmer? You can control the EcoBee using your voice and any of the three major virtual assistants. *$249; ecobee.com*

2 CLEAR THE AIR

For many with seasonal allergies and sensitivity to chemicals that get trapped indoors, ridding indoor air of pollen and pollutants is a necessity. Smart air-quality monitors either alert you to a wide range of contaminants or deal with them by cleaning or exchanging the air. The Panasonic Cosmos Healthy Home System, a professionally installed, custom-designed kit, uses a hub and sensors you place around the house to control smarter versions of the vent fans you normally have, like those in a bathroom and a kitchen range hood. **Once the system detects high levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), particulate matter, carbon dioxide, or humidity, it turns the fans on, expelling the stale air.**



If you have pets, the Cosmos system works to suck out dander. *From $1,500; cosmoshealthyhomesystem.com*

3 LIGHT IT UP

A voice- or smartphone-controlled LED bulb is a great foray into smart-home technology. The quality of the LEDs has been improved, their prices have dropped, and now many are easier to set up. Previously, smart bulbs required a bridge plugged in to an outlet to act as a gateway between the bulbs and your Wi-Fi. But now, a four-pack of Wyze 800-lumen (60-watt-equivalent) bulbs costs the same as what one smart LED bulb did only a few years ago. **With Wi-Fi built into the base of each bulb, these are ready to sync to your network and be controlled with Alexa or Google Assistant, as soon as you screw them in—no bridge required.**



Not only are Wyze bulbs dimmable, but you can adjust the color temperature from cool and crisp to a soft, warm white. *$30 for four; wyze.com*

STORM PROOFING

WHOLE-HOUSE POWER

A generator was important even when doorbells didn't include an Internet-connected video camera. But now, a constant source of juice is vital. Here, two new ways to keep it flowing.



BATTERY ASSIST

Tesla Powerwalls passed 100,000 in number this year, driven in part by incentives in California. Paired with a solar array, the sleek-looking Powerwall 2 works like a giant battery: During the day the sun charges its cells; at night or in a power outage, the batteries turn on automatically. A single Powerwall will keep essentials running, but a series can power the whole house. From $5,000; tesla.com



GENERATOR CONTROL

Standby generators fueled by natural gas or liquid propane now have added brains to increase their flexibility. **Briggs & Stratton's Amplify Power Management** (inset) allows you to pick 32 high-wattage appliances for your Briggs generator to power, then make changes on the fly using a smartphone app. So you can redirect energy away from, say, the range and into the fridge. From $3,550; briggsandstratton.com



Ross Trethewey
TOH home technology expert

"Imagine being able to use the sensors that track motion, water and electrical consumption, or air quality in a senior relative's home, and **use that information to make adjustments remotely or to know if something's wrong."**

SMART SURVEILLANCE

Assemble your team of watchers

While a lot of technology is a nice bonus—like a smart TV you can bark at to launch Netflix—the kinds of gadgets that alert you to a small problem before it becomes a big one are money well spent. These three sensors have your back 24/7.



LOOK OUT FOR LEAKS

Installed at the water main by a plumber, Phyn Plus monitors water use, so you know how many gallons each fixture uses. If it detects a leak—from a burst pipe or a washing-machine hose—**it shuts off the water main and sends you a text**, so you can prevent that basement flood. *$699; phyn.com*



FIND POWER VAMPIRES

Once it's hooked up to your breaker box by an electrician, Sense gets to work learning and naming everything that draws power. **The app gives you a bird's-eye view of your electrical consumption by device**, helping you identify vampire electricity use you might have missed, turning kilowatt-hours into dollars and cents. *$299; sense.com*



PREVENT FROZEN PIPES

Mount the Water Leak & Freeze Detector in the basement near pipes that might freeze, and **the wireless thermometer will send you temperature notifications**. To alert you before a leak becomes a flood, place its 4-foot-long sensor under a water heater or in the kitchen sink base cabinet. *$80; honeywellhome.com*

IMPROVED SECURITY

Easy armor for your house

DIY home monitoring is coming into its own with outdoor cameras that differentiate between squirrels and pizza deliveries, door locks that know when you're approaching, and security kits that you can set up and customize to your home over a weekend.



CAMERA READY

The quality and smarts of cameras just get better, as they're less likely to send false alarms—when a dog-walking neighbor passes by, for instance—to your phone. Many are wireless, so they're easy to install if you're comfortable on a ladder, but they require strong Wi-Fi. On a budget? A good option is the eufy Security 2K Indoor Cam ($40; eufylife .com), which works with Apple HomeKit, Google Assistant, and Amazon Alexa. **OUR PICK:** The weather-resistant Arlo Pro 2 camera (shown above) syncs with the major digital assistants, and can run off batteries for months; its two-way audio lets you talk to those you see on camera. Arlo's free basic cloud service saves the past week of motion- and sound-triggered recordings, for up to five cameras. *$200; arlo.com*



INVISIBLE LOCK

A smart lock can make it easy for busy families to come and go without a key. But early versions required changing your existing lock, which on the interior side meant looking at a chunky battery pack mounted to the door stile. **OUR PICK:** The Level Bolt (shown above) is the first smart lock that works with most existing door hardware. With just a screwdriver, you replace a standard deadbolt with the Bolt, reinstall your escutcheons, and then use the app to sync it to your network. The smart lock runs for about a year on a single, replaceable lithium-ion battery hidden inside for a sleek look. Use the lock with a smartphone or a traditional key. HomeKit users can ask Siri to open the door, lock it, or check its status before going to bed at night. *$229; level.co*



SECURITY KIT

Security systems have become their own ecosystems. Ring, which started as a video doorbell, is now a whole-house system that coordinates your home's response to a threat including turning on landscape lighting. Google Assistant users can skip the spendy plans of Nest Secure, and go with SimpliSafe for a cost-effective option that can call for help using your Wi-Fi or its own mobile network if the power's out (from $229, plus about $25 a month for monitoring; simplisafe.com). Apple HomeKit fans should look at the iota Security Kit (from $329; goabode.com); its handy add-on panic button ($35) can also call for help. **OUR PICK:** Ring Alarm (shown above) is a good choice for Alexa households and provides alerts without monthly monitoring fees. *From $200; ring.com*

EFFORTLESS ENTRY

SMARTEN UP YOUR REAL FRONT DOOR

For those with an attached garage, that overhead door is often the main entrance. The Tailwind iQ3 adds brains to an existing garage door opener with a **control module and sensors designed for DIY installation**. Once it's on your network, the door will open and close automatically when you pull up or out of the driveway, as long as your smartphone is with you. *From $60; gotailwind.com*

This Old House

Victorian Restoration

Narragansett, Rhode Island

Season 42 Airing Now

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ask This Old House

You've Got Projects, We've Got the Experts!

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Craftsman Redux

If you only think of Arts & Crafts as rugged and rustic, think again. With updated finishes and streamlined designs, today's take on this classic style is a fresh addition to any home.

Colonial Revival to mid-century modern, House of Antique Hardware is the place to go for period reproduction and vintage-inspired lighting, hardware and accessories. Shop online or call their helpful hardware specialists at 888-223-2545

HouseofAntiqueHardware.com

Farmhouse fusion

Set on a grassy hill above the shore, our second **2020 Idea House** takes a nostalgic style up a notch with modern must-haves and tons of extras



STYLED BY JENNIFER VREELAND AND NICOLE ESPOSITO-POLLY

ABOVE: Open-air relaxation and entertaining areas, including a full kitchen and plunge pool, make this one nontraditional farmhouse. An unimpeded view of Long Island Sound can be enjoyed from the second-floor deck or through the tall window-and-door units along the front face of the barn-like great room.

When you've been building houses for nearly 40 years, you know what excites the people who will someday live in them. Expansive gathering spaces. Luxurious personal spaces. Flexible spaces for work or for play.

Jerry and Sandy Effren, the husband-and-wife team behind Greyrock Homes, brought this experience to the table as they planned *TOH*'s second Idea House of 2020. The 3,700-square-foot farmhouse they built in Norwalk, Connecticut, would fuse their years of home-building know-how with the latest innovations in materials, features, and finishes—as well as a few items from their personal wish list.

They chose a hilltop site that overlooks a golf course bordered by the grassy tidal waters of Long Island Sound. Knowing this would be a house that's all about the views, architect Jim Jamieson, the Effrens' longtime collaborator, sketched out a 21st-century version of the sort of building

BY DEBRA JUDGE SILBER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY NAT REA

THIS PAGE
ROOF SHINGLES: **GAF***
SIDING (BACK HOUSE): **LP SmartSide***
WINDOWS, DOORS: **Marvin***
SKYLIGHTS, SUN TUNNELS: **VELUX***
OUTDOOR KITCHEN: **NatureKast**
PLUNGE POOL: **Soake Pools**
SOD: **Sodco**
DECK RAILING: **Green Oxen**
PUTTING GREEN: **IntelliTurf**
RETRACTABLE SCREENS: **Phantom Screens**

*through **Ring's End**



1

that might have occupied that slope more than a century ago. “Jerry had a vision of an old barn or farmhouse that might have been there, something that would blend into the landscape,” says Sandy. “Jim was able to bring what Jerry imagined to life.”

The heart of the house—“the barn”—is a vaulted, 22-by-44-foot great room in which living area, dining area, and kitchen all rub shoulders. But even with exposed collar ties and a windowed cupola, this barn is thoroughly modern, built with leading-edge materials and with smart controls for its lighting, media, HVAC, and security systems. The furnishings are unfussy. “It’s a very laid-back house,” says Jerry.

Laid-back, perhaps, but loaded with luxuries. The first-floor master suite, accessed through a private sitting room, holds a deep soaking tub and a steam shower, and is just steps away from outdoor amenities such as a plunge pool, putting green, open-air kitchen, and fire-pit patio. Upstairs is a gracious guest suite, and a second bath serving a third bedroom that can work equally well as a home gym or office. An outdoor deck links it to a bunk room that turns the second floor into sleep-over central when young visitors arrive.

“We tirelessly think through how to ‘live’ in our homes—what people’s needs are based on location and demographics,” says Sandy. In this house, those needs were more familiar than most. Shortly after they started planning, Jerry and Sandy recognized that the house they were building was the house they needed for themselves. It’s not so surprising. After all, says Sandy, “we design every home as if we will live there.”



2



3



THIS PAGE
FLOORING, BEAM VENEER, TRIM: **Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods**
DRYWALL: **National Gypsum**
PAINT: **Curator***
TV, AUDIO: **SnapAV**
HOME AUTOMATION: **Control4**
SINK, FAUCET: **Kohler**
WINDOWS, DOORS: **Marvin***
TV: **Sony**
FIREPLACE: **Kozy Heat**
BENCH PENDANTS: **Kuzco, from Chloe Winston Lighting Design**
CHANDELIER, ISLAND PENDANTS: **Chloe Winston Lighting Design**
WINDOW SHADES: **Hunter Douglas***
ROOM STYLING BY LEIA T. WARD, LTW DESIGN

*through **Ring's End**

Home base

"What we have is a really big kitchen that happens to have a dining room and a family room in it," says Jerry. He's joking, but just a bit: The 22-by-44-foot great room combines comfortable seating around a 72-inch-wide gas fireplace and an 85-inch TV, a table for sit-down dinners, and a chef's kitchen beneath its vaulted ceiling. Spaced across the long wall, three sets of 8-foot-tall casement windows—the middle one with a sliding door in the center—offer broad shoreline views.

1. Jerry and Sandy Effren stand in front of the farmhouse's double entry doors, located between the great-room "barn" and the two-story back wing of the house. Natural stone veneer blends the colors of the house's two types of siding.

2. Dividing the great room into smaller zones keeps it from feeling cavernous, says architect Jim Jamieson. "The key is to scale the room so it feels comfortable for a lot of people or a few people," he notes. The hefty 10×12 collar ties, veneered with the same character-grade white oak used on the floors, help by lowering the ceiling visually, as does the dining area chandelier that drops from the cupola.

3. In the living area, two sleek wall-mounted storage benches update a traditional feature: the fireside nook. Wavy ridges on the surface of the fireplace's porcelain tiles add textural interest. Avoiding attention are the 10 speakers embedded in the wall and ceiling to provide surround sound for the entire space.



THIS PAGE
CABINETRY: **Wood-Mode**
PULLS, UNDERCABINET LIGHTING, TOEKICK LIGHTING: **Häfele**
SINKS, FAUCETS: **Kohler**
GARBAGE DISPOSALS/HOT WATER DISPENSER: **InSinkErator**
APPLIANCES: **Sub-Zero/Wolf/Cove, from Aitoro Appliance**
COUNTERTOPS, BACKSPLASH: **Caesarstone**
ISLAND PENDANTS: **Kuzco, from Chloe Winston Lighting Design**
WINDOWS, DOORS: **Marvin***

*through **Ring's End**



SEE IT ALL! Get a closer look at all the features of this 2020 Idea House at **thisoldhouse.com/farmhouse-in-fairfield**

Invite the family

The showcase kitchen you see is just the beginning. Out of sight from the dining and living areas are a hardworking butler's pantry with its own sink, dishwasher, and full-size refrigerator, along with a handy beverage bar for quick refreshments.

4. The approximately 5-by-8½-foot island holds a dishwasher, a microwave drawer, and on top, a 45-inch-long stainless-steel sink with a pot-washer-style faucet positioned to allow the cook on duty to be part of the action. The cabinets are rough-sawn European oak stained dark on the island and lighter on the perimeter; the quartz countertops and backsplash mimic concrete.

5. In the butler's pantry, a pass-through to the kitchen allows dirty dishes to slip out of sight for cleanup in the pantry sink or dishwasher. A specialty faucet dispenses instant hot water for morning tea, and garbage disposals on both the kitchen and pantry sinks use a biochemical process to make waste septic-system safe.

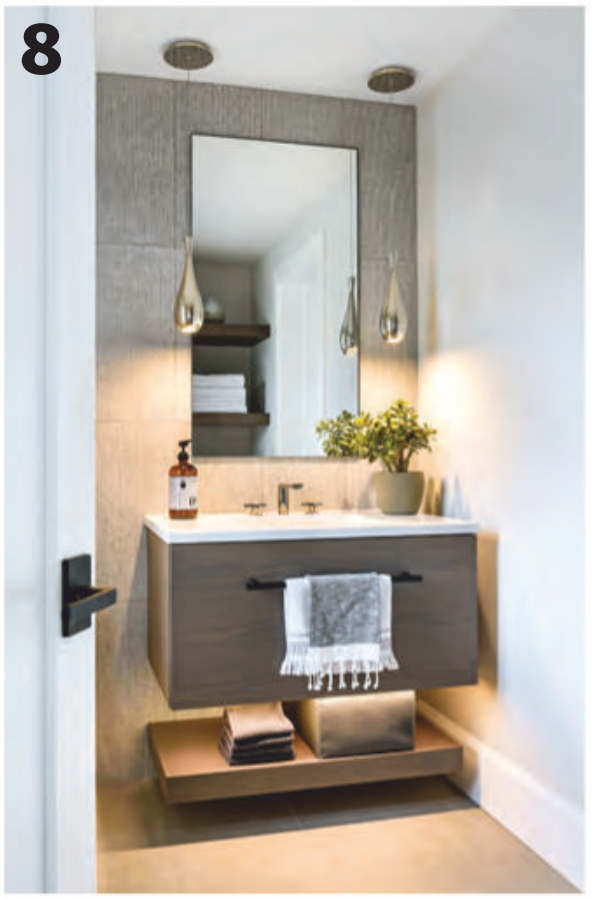
6. The dining room table offers everyday seating for eight, but is positioned to extend another 11 feet into the entryway—the Effrens like to welcome up to 30 friends and family for the holidays.



Two coats of water-based finish and four of sealer will keep the white oak floor pristine.

6







Practical luxury

Meeting everyday needs with extraordinary style sets this farmhouse apart. Beyond the great room, the first floor of the farmhouse includes places to hang up a coat, grab a snack, or do a quick rinse before heading out to the plunge pool.

7. A heated floor greets stockinged feet in a mudroom that combines laundry duties with a spot to drop packages and peel off outerwear. Located off the garage, the mudroom's large coat closet, utility sink, and pull-out ironing board make it a convenient stop when coming home or getting ready to set out.

8. Undercabinet lighting and a feature wall of raked limestone tile elevate the first-floor full bath, conveniently located near the door leading to the outdoor kitchen, plunge pool, and putting green.

9. Steps from the kitchen, master suite, and outdoor entertaining spaces, the beverage bar is well situated for snagging a snack or refreshing a glass. Two refrigerated drawers below the wine cooler provide additional chilled storage, and a built-in water dispenser on the opposite wall cuts down on plastic-bottle use. Extra-wide pullouts behind the center doors accommodate snack platters for entertaining.

THIS PAGE

CABINETRY, BATH VANITY: **Wood-Mode**
SINK, FAUCETS: **Kohler**
UNDERCABINET LIGHTING, PULLS, PULL-OUT IRONING BOARD (NOT SHOWN): **Häfele**
CHILLED WATER DISPENSER (NOT SHOWN): **Elkay**
WINE COOLER: **Sub-Zero**
MUDROOM FLOORING: **Artistic Tile**
WASHER/DRYER: **GE Appliances, from Aitoro Appliance**
DOOR HARDWARE: **Emtek**
MUDROOM IN-FLOOR HEAT: **Schluter-Systems**
MUDROOM DOOR: **Marvin***
SUN TUNNELS: **VELUX***
BATH PENDANTS: **Chloe Winston Lighting Design**

*through **Ring's End**

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Masterful ease

What makes a first-floor master first-rate? Building in a buffer from the rest of the household: In our Farmhouse, that means two handsome character-oak pocket doors that slide back to reveal a sitting room separating the bedroom and bath from the busy hallway. Add luxurious bath fixtures, a double walk-in closet, and a great view, and you're there.

10. Pocket doors reveal the master sitting room, furnished for watching TV without disturbing a sleeping partner—or competing with the view.

11. The same sliding patio door unit used in the great room gives the master bedroom a wide view of the shore as well as a shortcut to the plunge pool.

12. The heftier-than-usual windowsill in the master bath is a clue to the double-thick exterior wall built to protect plumbing lines from freezing, but which also allows for built-in medicine cabinets and a niche over the tub without compromising insulation.

13. A steam shower with aromatherapy and chromotherapy also has a deluge rainhead and a handshower. A toilet with a built-in bidet resides around the corner.

THIS PAGE

WINDOWS, SLIDER: **Marvin***
WINDOW BLINDS: **Hunter Douglas***
PAINT: **Curator***
POCKET DOORS: **Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods**
SOUNDPROOFING INSULATION: **ROCKWOOL**
CEILING FAN: **Chloe Winston Lighting Design**
SITTING ROOM FURNISHINGS: **Stowed**
SITTING ROOM LIGHTING: **House of Antique Hardware**
ARTWORK: **Anouk Masson Krantz**
ROOM STYLING BY LEIA T. WARD, LTW DESIGN

*through **Ring's End**



12

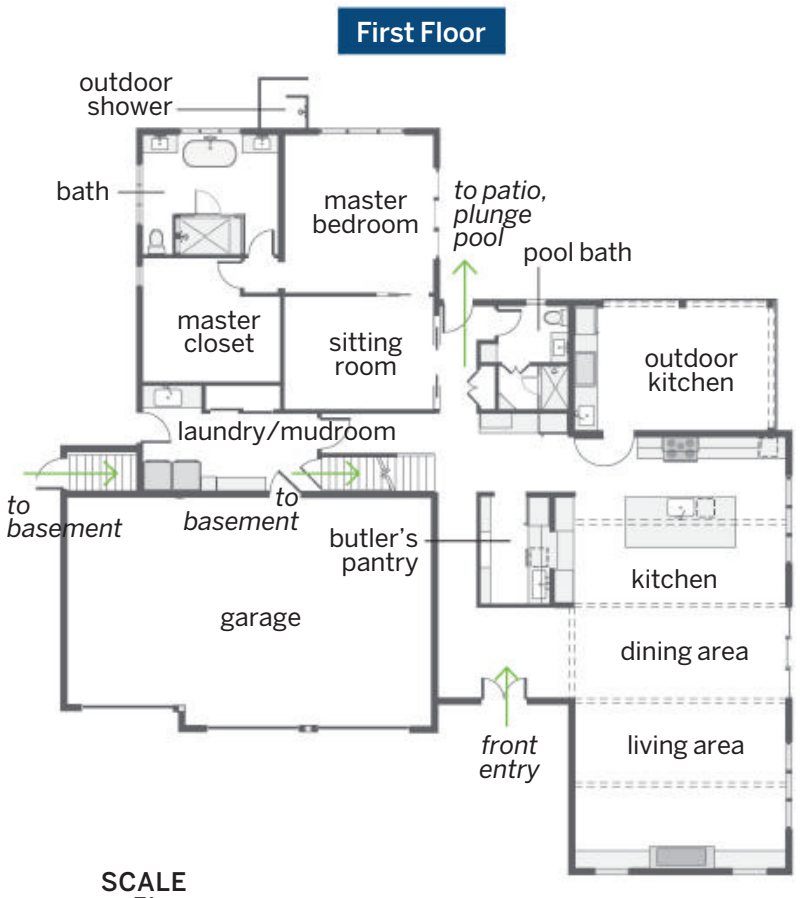


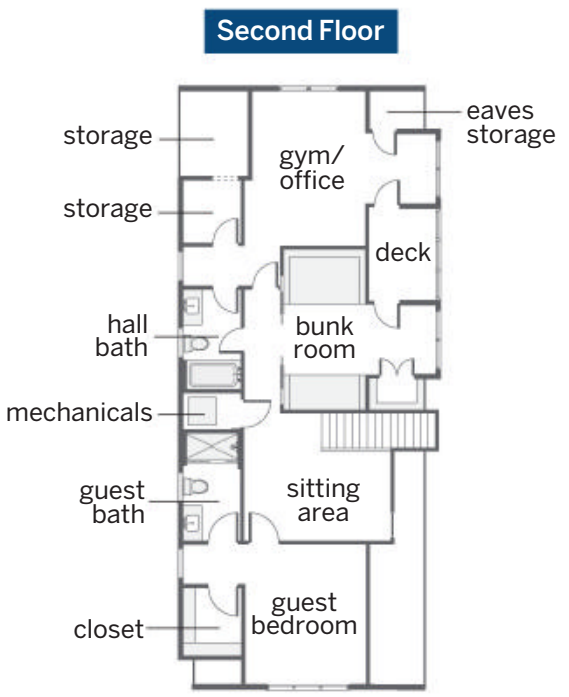
13

THIS PAGE
BATH VANITIES: **Wood-Mode**
STEAM SHOWER: **MrSteam**
SHOWER DOOR: **American Frameless by Westport Glass**
TUB, FAUCETS, FIXTURES: **Kohler**
PROFILES, NICHE, SHELVES: **Schluter-Systems**
FLOOR TILE: **Artistic Tile**
TILE GROUT: **Laticrete**
CEILING LIGHT: **Kuzco, from Chloe Winston Lighting Design**
VENTILATION: **Panasonic**

Floor plans

Our 3,700-square-foot Fairfield Farmhouse draws its rural character from a 968-square-foot wing that's designed to mimic a vintage barn and houses living, dining, and kitchen areas in a great room. A butler's pantry and beverage bar are conveniently located alongside. The main entry and garage are on the side of the house to preserve water views in front. A first-floor master, mudroom/laundry, and full bath fill out the main level. The second floor is designed for versatility, and includes a bedroom with en suite bath, a hall bath, a sitting area, and a bunk room and gym/office linked by an outdoor deck.





FLOOR PLANS: IAN WORPOLE



Jerry stays comfortable upstairs, while Sandy keeps cool on the ground floor.



Customized Comfort

WHEN IT COMES to building a home from the ground up, indoor comfort should always be at the core of your design—and take it from us, one size does not fit all. With the lower level featuring an open floor plan and an upstairs structured for more privacy, builder-and-designer duo **Jerry and Sandy Effren of Greyrock Homes** knew that the *TOH* 2020 Farmhouse in Fairfield County needed to be highly efficient while also offering a comfortable environment in every area of the home. The solution? Equip the house with a multizoned heating and cooling system that includes the Trane XV20i™ TruComfort Variable Speed Air Conditioner, to keep the home balanced and the temperatures just right.

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be managed by using the Trane ComfortLink™ II XL1050 Zoning Control with built-in Nexia Bridge, which combines zoning technology and a home automation hub to remotely control the home, personal comfort, and energy use. "We were able to create individualized zones that maintain even temperatures in our everyday living spaces, while pumping less warmed or cooled air into areas that we don't use on a regular basis," explains Jerry. Here are just a few of the reasons he chose to collaborate with the leading indoor-comfort provider, Trane Residential:

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Flex spaces

The second floor is all about versatility. A guest bedroom with a walk-in closet and en suite bath keeps with tradition, but the balance of the second-floor spaces are ready for anything.

14. The Effrens had grandchildren in mind when they lined an awkward, viewless area in the center of the second floor with built-in bunks, each equipped with an articulating night-light for reading or reassurance. With two bunks that have full-size mattresses and two twins, Sandy chose a graphic wallpaper of silhouetted gulls to keep the space ageless. "I wanted something that was child-like, but had a little sophistication," she says.

15. The second-floor guest bath doesn't need color to make an impact thanks to its bold black-and-white-patterned marble hex-tile floor, coordinating with a shower door's matte black frame.

16. A large room above the master suite can serve as both a casual workplace and an exercise room, with surrounding eaves storage providing convenient opportunities to stash equipment and supplies.

THIS PAGE

BATH VANITY, FAUCETS, FIXTURES, MEDICINE CABINETS, TOILET: **Kohler**
SHOWER DRAIN, PROFILES, SHELF, NICHE: **Schluter-Systems**
FLOOR TILE: **Artistic Tile**
WINDOW BLINDS: **Hunter Douglas***
BUNK ROOM AND GYM/OFFICE LIGHTS: **Chloe Winston Lighting Design**
BATH VENTILATION: **Panasonic**
SHOWER DOOR: **American Frameless**
BUNK ROOM WALLPAPER: **Wallquest***

*through **Ring's End**

Photography by M. Buck Studios



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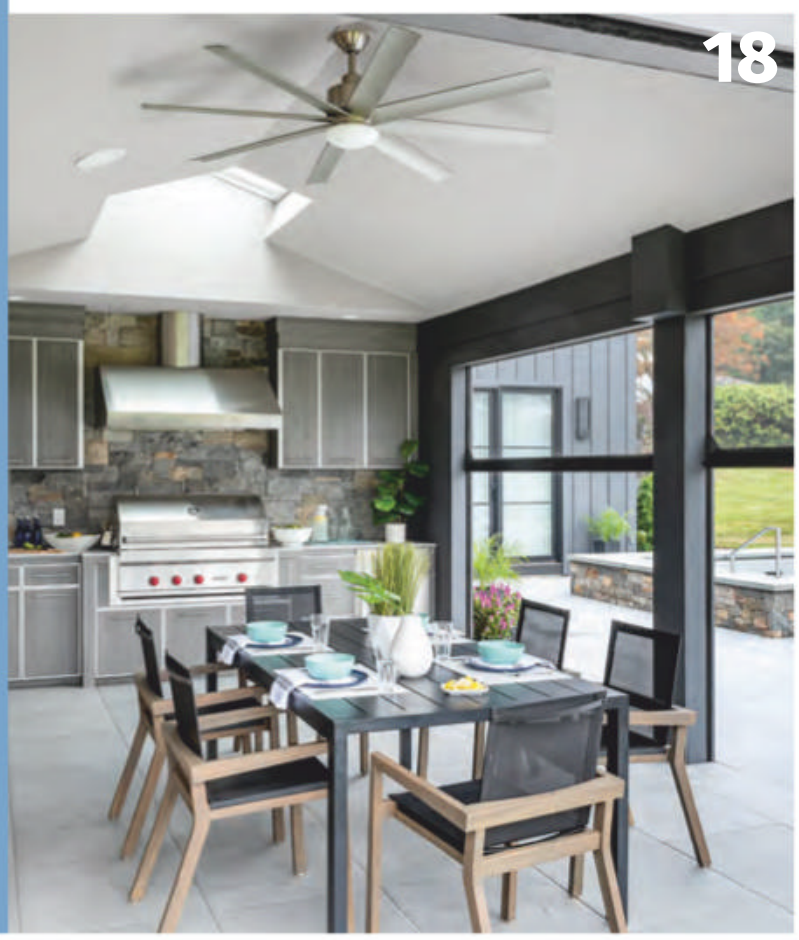
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17. Steps from the house, a 5-foot-deep plunge pool offers a quick way to cool off. Keeping grandchildren in mind, the Effrens modified its depth to 3 feet at one end; an automated cover further ensures safety.

18. With the touch of a button, the outdoor kitchen becomes a screened-in porch for bug-free dining. A thin stone backsplash behind the grill matches the veneer used on the foundation. The cabinets are both weatherproof and wood-like, thanks to PVC boxes and resin panels made in molds cast from real cypress. When they get dirty, says Jerry, "you can just spray them down with a hose."

THIS PAGE

ROOF SHINGLES: **GAF***
SKYLIGHTS: **VELUX***
SIDING: **LP SmartSide***
SHEATHING, TAPE: **ZIP System***
PLUNGE POOL: **Soake Pools**
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SINK, FAUCET: **Kohler**
APPLIANCES: **Sub-Zero/Wolf from Aitoro Appliance**
CEILING FAN: **House of Antique Hardware**
PAVERS: **Landmark Ceramics**

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Easy access

Positioning the garage and entry on the side of the house was intentional. With the street-facing side high on a hill, architect Jim Jamieson determined that the side offered a more practical approach, and preserved the look of a vintage agricultural building from the road.

19. The barn wing projects just enough to shield the entry and the garage. Jamieson specified western red cedar siding on the barn and composite board-and-batten on the rest to downsize the structure visually and support the idea that one may have existed before the other.

20. The contemporary garage doors' easy-care translucent panels and aluminum frames are insulated against heat and cold. A hard-wearing polyaspartic coating protects the floor.

THIS PAGE
FRAMING: **Weyerhaeuser***
ROOF SHINGLES: **GAF***
SIDING (BARN): **Ring's End**
SIDING (COMPOSITE): **LP SmartSide***
GARAGE DOORS: **Ed's Garage Doors**
GARAGE FLOOR: **Laticrete**
SOD: **Sodco**
HVAC: **Trane**
HOT WATER HEATING: **Navien**
EXHAUST PIPING: **IPEX**
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ADHESIVES: **Gorilla Glue**
BALCONY PAVER SUPPORT SYSTEM: **Schluter-Systems**

*through **Ring's End**


A deck located between the gym/office and the bunk room offers a fresh-air escape.

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Building Team

Builder & Developer
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Architect
Jim Jamieson

Landscape Architect
Kevney Moses

Design Team
Sandy Effren
in collaboration with
Karen Berkemeyer Home, Catherine Devine, and
Sally Rypkema

Furniture Staging
Leia T. Ward, LTW Design

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 80

Oval coffee table

Norm Abram and Jeff Sweenor turn seasoned slabs of pine into an eye-catching heirloom

BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTHONY TIEULI



SCOTT ADAMS HAS FOND MEMORIES of his great-uncle Bill's sawmill, a trove of sawn lumber and salvaged house and factory parts that Bill sold and bartered. After he died in 1999, the machinery was sold off and the buildings fell into disrepair, but the property remained in the hands of Scott's mother. So when Scott and his wife, Shayla, teamed up last year with *This Old House* and *TOH* home builder Jeff Sweenor to renovate their house in Westerly, RI, Scott suggested that he and Jeff take a look for anything useful.

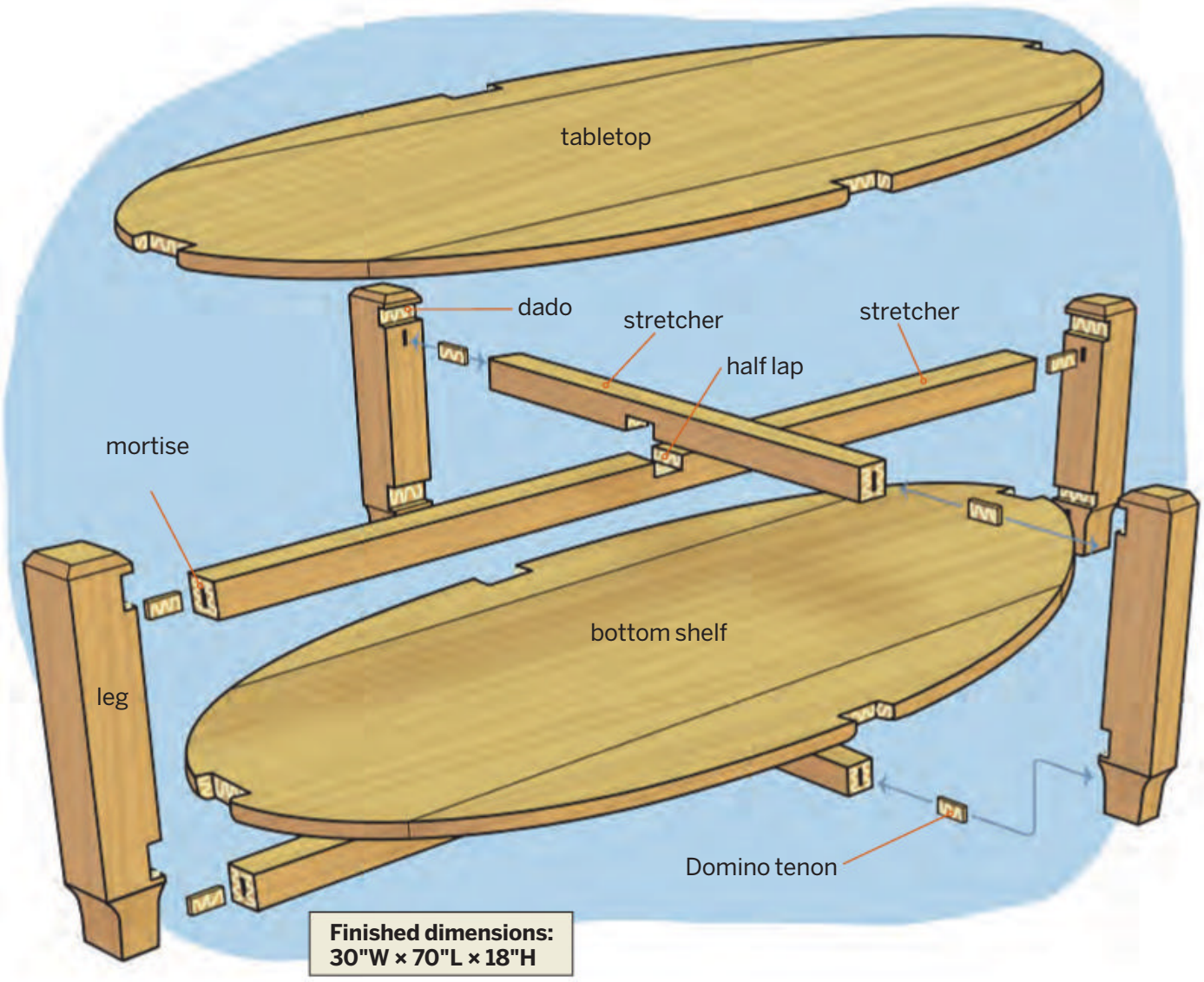
Jeff did indeed find something: thick, wide slabs of white pine. With Scott's blessing, Jeff enlisted Sweenor Builders cabinetmaker Peter Coker to design a coffee table for the new living room, and recruited *TOH* master carpenter Norm Abram to help him turn the old pine into Peter's elegant design. Over the course of several days in Jeff's well-equipped woodshop, that's exactly what they did, using only glue and precise joinery to hold the pieces together—you can watch their progress unfold on the following pages.

Scott says their new heirloom is the go-to spot for school projects and Lego designs, and a key support for sofa-cushion forts and Super Bowl snacks. "It's a wonderful asset."



From rough slabs to sleek table

ABOVE: Norm Abram examines the 18-inch-wide slabs of white pine that he and Jeff Sweenor used to build an elliptical coffee table for the *TOH* TV project house in Westerly, RI (top). The slabs had been air-drying for decades at a defunct sawmill in Connecticut.



Finished dimensions:
30"W × 70"L × 18"H

TOOLS

- ❑ surface planer
- ❑ edge jointer
- ❑ Domino tenon joiner
- ❑ bar clamps
- ❑ jigsaw
- ❑ stationary edge sander
- ❑ plunge router with straight, table-edge, and roundover bits
- ❑ miter saw
- ❑ table saw with dado blade
- ❑ random-orbit sander
- ❑ Japanese saw, chisel
- ❑ wood mallet
- ❑ drill/driver

MATERIALS

- ❑ wood glue
- ❑ Domino tenons
- ❑ ¾-by-2½-inch plywood strips
- ❑ 80-, 120-, 150-, and 180-grit sanding disks; 220-grit sanding sheets
- ❑ 4×8 sheet of ½-inch hardwood plywood
- ❑ deck screws
- ❑ fruitwood stain
- ❑ satin polyurethane

STEP-BY-STEP

Oval coffee table







SEE IT BUILT
Watch Norm and Jeff make this table at **thisoldhouse.com/coffee-table**

1] Assemble the top and shelf Norm and Jeff flattened the slabs' faces and edges with a surface planer and a jointer, then mortised the edges for tenons to align and reinforce the joints. With the tenons in place, they edge-glued each shelf's three pieces—one wide and two narrow—and clamped the assembly together.

2] Draw the ellipse Norm set up a simple, L-shaped jig made of ¾-inch plywood strips, and attached it to a plywood sheet that would serve as the template for making the top and shelf. Using a third strip with two protruding screws and a pencil, he drew the ellipse on the sheet. (To see how, go to Norm's Tricks, p. 67.)

3] Make the template Norm repositioned the jig three times to draw the entire ellipse. Then Jeff cut out the template with a jigsaw, and he and Norm smoothed it with an edge sander. Next, they placed the template on the glued-up top and shelf assemblies, and traced its oval outline onto them, as shown.

ILLUSTRATION: GREGORY NEMEC

STEP-BY-STEP



4] Rough-cut the top and shelf Jeff removed the template and used a jigsaw to cut out the top and the shelf just outside the elliptical line. His crew, meanwhile, mortised the ends of the four 2-by-1¼-inch stretchers with a tenon joiner and assembled them into two cross-shaped pieces by gluing them together at their half laps.



5] Rout the top and shelf With the template back in place, Jeff ran a router with a straight bit and a top bearing counterclockwise around the top and shelf, so that they matched the template perfectly. He also eased their top edges with a ⅛-inch roundover bit, and profiled their lower edges with a 1¾-inch table-edge bit.



6] Notch and sand Norm rough-cut the top and shelf notches with a jigsaw, as shown, using plywood templates as guides. Jeff routed the notches with a straight bit; Norm squared the corners with a Japanese saw and a chisel, then smoothed both sides of the top and shelf with a random-orbit sander and 80- and 120-grit disks.



7] Make the legs Using the same pine stock, Jeff cut and glued together four 3-inch-square legs. Each one has two dadoes to fit the top's and shelf's notches, two mortises to attach the stretchers, and a chamfered top (for looks). He also gave the leg bottoms a graceful three-sided taper with his shop's edge sander, as shown.



8] Fit a leg and the stretchers With the top turned upside down on sawhorses, Norm test-fit all the legs in their notches, then glued and clamped one leg and one arm of the upper stretcher to the side of the top. Then, as four scrap pieces supported the shelf, Norm glued and clamped the leg to the shelf and bottom stretcher arm.



9] Assemble, glue, and clamp Working quickly, Norm and Jeff glued and clamped the remaining legs to the top, the shelf, and their stretchers. After two more sandings with 150- and 180-grit papers, and a final 220-grit hand-sanding, the table was finished with a fruitwood stain and three coats of satin polyurethane.

TIPS



Hand tools still play a role
Even in a shop loaded with high-end power tools, Norm relies on these implements for detail work.

- **Japanese saw** Triple-ground teeth on a thin, flexible blade cut only on the pull, leaving a very narrow kerf. That's a plus when making flush cuts in tight corners (above). Here, Norm presses against the blade so the teeth cut straight into the corner.
- **Chisel** Its razor-sharp blade can reach into tight spots and fine-tune a joint with gentle hand pressure.
- **Mallet** A few taps with this tool gently persuade wood pieces to slide into tight joints.

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ask This Old House



Tom Silva rests on the post-and-rail frame he built to anchor a cable railing system. The two vertical metal pickets mounted between the posts help to maintain proper cable spacing.

WATCH ONLINE
See Tom make the framework for this stair rail at **thisoldhouse.com/cable-railing**

Q

I'm changing the existing railing on an interior stairway and am thinking about using steel cables. I've never worked with them before and could use some help.

—NATHAN WELLS, HARRIMAN, UT

***TOH* GENERAL CONTRACTOR TOM SILVA:** Railing systems made of taut, stainless-steel cables initially became popular as an alternative to traditional deck railings because they don't obstruct the view. But today, these ⅛-inch cables are used in all kinds of applications, interior and exterior, including sloped railings for stairways.

For each cable run, there's a fixed-connection fitting at one end, and an adjustable fitting at the other, which tightens the cable once it's connected. Some fittings are easier to install than others. The Feeney system I like to use (see Pro Tip, opposite page) includes a variety of fittings that grab and lock on to the cable, simplifying installation.

All cable railing systems require a rigid framework of posts and top rails to resist the 200 to 300 pounds of tension that each cable applies. Solid-wood or composite-sleeved 4×4 posts are typically used on decks and other outdoor installations; I'd suggest a similar dimension for indoor uses. Rails and intermediate supports can be made from 2× lumber or similar stock. If such a framework doesn't already exist, build it before installing the cables, and make sure that all posts are firmly anchored to joists or beams with lag screws or through bolts.

MAKAYLA TOWNSEND



Using a stair mock-up in the *AskTOH* studio, Nathan Gilbert demonstrates how to remove the treads' finish using a random-orbit sander.

But before building the framework, you'll need to come up with a plan that specifies the spans between the posts and intermediate supports and the spacing between cable runs. The manufacturers' websites can help with this, and with calculating how many fittings and how much cable you'll need.

Then have your local building inspector check the plan. The top concern for these code officials is the height of the top rail and the vertical spacing between the cables and between them and the framework. In most cases, the top rail has to be about 36 inches above a deck. But the code makes no exceptions for the spacing: There can't be any opening larger than 4 inches. Many manufacturers require their cables to be set 3 inches apart, to prevent them from flexing enough to open a 4-inch gap. For the same reason, they also require the cables to have vertical supports every 36 inches, at least. To meet this requirement, you can buy steel pickets, or drill holes through a 2×.



Tom prepares to insert a cable into one of the fittings embedded every 3 inches in a wood post.

GILBERT: MAKAYLA TOWNSEND

Pro Tip



Cable-rail connectors

These Quick-Connect lag fittings from Feeney (feeneyinc.com) have internal, spring-loaded jaws that grab the cable when you insert it into the fitting and then pull back. If necessary, the jaws can be opened with a Quick-Connect release tool.

When your design is approved, order all your components and construct your post-and-rail framework, if necessary. Install each of the fittings' hanger bolts on the posts, and thread on the lag fittings. Run the cables through the supports, and attach them to the fittings. After the cables are all connected, tighten the center cable first, then the cables on either side of it. Alternate cables as you work toward the bottom and top of the railing until all cables are tight. Resist the temptation to over-tighten them. As long as they aren't visibly sagging and pass the 4-inch test, they'll be fine.

Refinish stair treads

I want to remove the carpet from my stairway, stain the pine steps, and paint the risers. Should I remove each board to refinish or try to do this while they are in place?

—TERRY COLLINS, CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO

***TOH* CARPENTER NATHAN GILBERT:**

There's no need to remove the treads. You just need a few good tools: a random-orbit sander, an oscillating detail sander or a pull scraper with a carbide blade, and a wet/dry vac to collect the sawdust.

Pull off the old carpeting; use a flat pry bar to lever off the old tack strips—be careful of the strips' many protruding nails—and throw them away with the carpeting.

Any stair finish in a house built before 1979 should be tested for lead. If the test is positive, follow the paint-stripping method detailed in "How to safely strip paint" on the next page. For lead-free finishes, start sanding at the top of the stairs with the random-orbit sander and 80-grit paper. In corners or around balusters where the round sanding disk can't reach, use the scraper or detail sander. Vacuum up the dust as you go. After the first round of sanding, go back and hide any cracks or nail holes with wood filler. When the filler is dry, re-sand everything with 120-grit paper and sweep up the sawdust.

Pine can get blotchy when stained, so first brush on a wood conditioner, such as Minwax Pre-Stain (minwax.com). Coat all the treads, starting at the top. You can apply the stain

DIY SMARTS



To prevent water from getting behind the siding, Heath Eastman applies a bead of silicone sealant to the back of an exterior outlet box.

Installing an outdoor receptacle

Last year, after we purchased our first home, we went outside to hang some Christmas lights and discovered there were no outlets. How do we go about installing one?

—DEX MISICHKO, SOLON, OH

MASTER ELECTRICIAN HEATH EASTMAN: A licensed electrician can add an outdoor receptacle to power holiday lights and other electrical devices, but so can a DIYer familiar with electrical work. Just be sure to shut off power to the circuit you're working on, and then confirm that it's off with a plug-in tester (see Pro Tip, right).

You can easily extend wiring from an existing junction box or outlet in a basement or first floor, but make sure you're tapping into a 20-amp "general use" circuit rather than one dedicated to a furnace, dryer, or other major appliance.

Carefully measure and check for wires and pipes in the wall, then use a 1-inch hole saw to drill from the outside through the siding and sheathing. (If going into a basement, also drill a ¾-inch hole through the mud sill. A bit extension will help you get all the way through.) From the inside, feed 12/2 nonmetallic (NM) cable though the hole, making sure it extends at least 10 inches beyond the siding. If working in the basement, secure the cable with staples every 4½ feet and within 12 inches of the new outlet box. Strip the cable's wires and connect them with wire nuts to the matching wires in the junction box, then screw the cover back on the box.

Going back outside, strip the wires, feed them through a connector in the back of the outlet box—by code, it must have a weatherproof cover—and tighten the connector nut. To plug the hole in the siding, wrap Gardner Bender duct-seal compound around the connector, and run a bead of silicone sealant along the top and side edges of the box. (Leave the bottom edge unsealed so water can escape.) Press the box against the siding and screw it to the sheathing. Connect the wires to the receptacle—it must be a GFCI that's weather resistant (WR) and tamper resistant (TR)—and wrap the terminals in electrical tape. Turn the power back on. Now you'll be able to light up your house for the holidays.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE HOME DEPOT

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

Pro Tip



Plug-in voltage tester

The Klein Tools RT110 Receptacle Tester ($5; homedepot.com) not only shows you whether a circuit is safe to work on; it will also indicate whether it's wired and grounded correctly.

within 15 minutes, but don't wait longer than 2 hours. Rub the stain on evenly with a clean rag, and when it's completely dry, apply three coats of water-based polyurethane. Sand between coats with 220-grit paper, and wipe up the sanding dust each time with a damp rag.

Now you can paint the risers. Prep them by laying a strip of painter's tape along the back of each tread and under each nosing. Then cut out a tread-size piece of cardboard to protect each tread from paint drips.

How to safely strip paint

Our 1914 house still has all its original oak trim, which the previous owner painted. I want to restore the trim to its original varnished look. Is there a safe, efficient chemical stripper out there?

—CHRISTINE LUTZ, OAK PARK, IL

***TOH* PAINTER MAURO HENRIQUE:** The oak trim used in houses of that vintage is truly beautiful, and will definitely be worth all the work of stripping and refinishing it. But before you start this project, two concerns have to be addressed: Does the paint you're removing contain lead, and is the paint stripper safe to use?

Since your house was built before the 1978 ban on lead paint, you'll be wise to test a paint sample with an instant lead-paint test kit such as LeadCheck (3m.com). If you get a positive result, you might want to hire a contractor to do the work. But you can do the work yourself, without risking exposure to lead, with the approach I'll describe below.

For the stripper, your safest choice would be an odorless, water-based product that doesn't contain caustics such as sodium hydroxide or toxins like N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP). I've had good results with Smart Strip Advanced Paint Remover (see Pro Tip, p. 64).

Prep the work area by taping a heavy-duty plastic sheet to the base of the walls and doors; it should extend

EASTMAN: MAKAYLA TOWNSEND

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LEFT: Mauro Henrique shows off the Douglas fir trim that he uncovered beneath layers of paint on an episode of *AskTOH.* ABOVE: To avoid damaging the wood, Mauro removes softened paint with a plastic scraper. Gloves, safety glasses, a mask, and a long-sleeve shirt protect skin and eyes from the chemicals in the stripper.

Pro Tip



Safe stripper

Smart Strip (dumond chemicals.com) is an odorless, nonflammable, water-based paint remover. One gallon covers 40 to 50 square feet.

from the wall by at least 6 feet. Then put on a P-100 dust mask, safety goggles (if you don't wear glasses), and work gloves. Starting at a high point and working down, apply a thick layer of stripper to the trim with a disposable chip brush. Every few minutes, stop and cover the stripper with Dumond laminated paper (sold separately), which slows evaporation so that the stripper's chemicals remain active for longer. Overlap the paper's ends by ¾ inch, then smooth each piece to eliminate bubbles.

Wait at least 3 hours before peeling back a corner of the paper and checking on progress. (Thicker finishes may take up to 24 hours to soften.) When most of the paint sticks to the paper, pull it off with one hand while scraping the remaining finish off the wood with a plastic putty knife in your other hand. Dump the

HENRIQUE: COLLEEN McQUAID (2)



paper and paint residue into a trash bag. Now clean the oak with an abrasive pad dampened in warm water.

Because your trim was varnished before it was painted, there's a good chance that the paint didn't seep into the oak's pores, so the stripper should be able to remove most of the paint. However, the original varnish probably won't survive the stripping process. To prep the surface for its new clear finish, sand the trim with a succession of 120-, 150-, 180-, and 220-grit papers. Go over the trim with a vacuum, then with a tack cloth to get rid of the dust.

You can now finish the stripped wood with a dewaxed shellac such as SealCoat (rustoleum.com), followed by two coats of a water-based varnish, in either satin or semigloss. Or consult with an expert in historic finishes. He or she can experiment with different combinations of dyes and topcoats to come up with the exact look you're after. After all that work, this is your chance to make sure the oak is just how you want it.

New face for an old hearth

Our house has a 1950s fireplace with a quarry-tile hearth that's in excellent condition. We'd like to put in a more modern-looking hearth, but I'm afraid the old tile will be difficult to remove. Please help!

—CHARLES MACAULAY, CAZENOVIA, NY

***TOH* MASON MARK McCULLOUGH:** Quarry tile may look tough, but it's not difficult to remove. You can do it yourself with a mason chisel and a 3-pound sledge. (Do not strike this chisel with a regular hammer; its head could chip and send a shard of metal flying.)



What is it?

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 66

- A Drill-bit sizer
- B Marking gauge
- C Drilling debris catcher
- D Stud finder

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But before you start hammering on the tile, go to the basement and inspect the underside of the subhearth, the small concrete slab that supports the hearth. If you find wood formwork from the time it was originally poured, take it down. That has to be done because embers could drop down through an opening in the subhearth and start a fire in that formwork. Once the underside of the subhearth is exposed, check the slab for cracks. If any are ⅛ inch or larger, the slab should be replaced before you continue.

Start by protecting the finished floor with a 2- to 3-inch-wide strip of painter's tape applied around the perimeter of the hearth. Cover adjacent floor areas with drop cloths. Take a close look at the mortar between the hearth and the floor of the firebox. If it's intact, put on safety glasses, hearing protection, and gloves, then chisel out that mortar along the edge of one tile to create a relief spot for the first tile to be removed.

Now set the chisel vertically on this tile next to the open joint and give it a sharp whack to chip part of the tile away. Keep chipping and clearing out the tile fragments until it's completely removed. When you've exposed the mortar under the tile, hold the chisel at a low angle against an adjacent tile, and drive the chisel's tip under the tile's edge, as shown below. That should be enough to lever the tile up and off the subhearth. Remove all remaining tiles using this technique.

With the old tiles gone, chisel off whatever mortar remains on the concrete subhearth, then vacuum up the dust and other debris. Now check the soundness of your subhearth by tapping it with the sledge. If it sounds and looks solid, then it's ready for tile. Small cracks or crumbly areas can be filled with patching mortar. Larger cracks indicate that you'll need to pour a new subhearth, as mentioned earlier. It's fine for the subhearth to have a rough surface—that will improve the adhesion of the thinset for the new tile. Whatever tile you choose, it should match the thickness of the original ones.

The rest of this project is a straightforward tiling job. Spread an even layer of thinset mortar with a notched trowel; lay the tile out from a line centered on the firebox opening; use a straightedge to make sure all the edges of the new tiles line up, and wait at least 24 hours for the thinset to cure before grouting the joints.

What is it?

C Drilling debris catcher

Rotate its clear dial to the bit diameter you're using—from 5⁄32 to 15⁄32 inch—then hold the device against the surface being drilled. The 1-inch-thick catcher captures debris, and also keeps the bit square to the surface. $24; garrettwade.com





Mark McCullough (inset) says that the hard old quarry tile on this hearth is no match for a mason chisel and a 3-pound hand sledge. Once the first tile is removed, he holds the chisel at a low angle and drives it underneath the remaining tiles to lever them out.

WATCH ONLINE
See Mark install a new fireplace hearth at **thisoldhouse.com/hearth-replacement**

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Norm's TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Is there a simple technique for drawing an ellipse? I'd love to use that shape on future projects.

—CLAY ALLEN, LUBBOCK, TX

***TOH* MASTER CARPENTER NORM ABRAM:** An ellipse is a special type of oval often seen in the archways of classically inspired homes from the Federal period. To draw this curve properly takes a bit of preparation, but once you understand the basic principles, you can draw an ellipse of any size. Here's the method I used for the coffee table featured on page 56.

To start, draw a line on a template (or stock) equal to the finished length of the project (1). Draw another line equal to the width of your project perpendicular to, and through the midpoint of, the first line (2). Fasten ¾-inch-thick strips of plywood along each line, as shown (3). You'll now have an L-shaped jig a few inches shorter than half of each dimension. Label the long leg "L" and the short leg "W."

Take a plywood strip several inches longer than the jig's strips and drill a hole for a pencil at the center of one end (4). Measure from the center of that hole to a point on the strip equal to half the ellipse's length (5). Sink a screw partway through at that point and mark it with a "W." Then measure from the pencil hole to a point equal to half the ellipse's width (6). Sink another screw and mark it with an "L." Fit the pencil in its hole so its point is on the same side of the strip as the screw tips.

To draw the ellipse, place the L screw against the jig's inside corner, and the W screw against the W leg. Hold the screws against both legs as you rotate the marking strip; the pencil will draw a perfect quarter section of an ellipse.

For the next section, reposition the jig so its inside edges align with the width and length lines for that section; rotate the long strip as before. If you're making an arch, you'll be done. If you want a full ellipse, reposition the jig, and draw the quarter section two more times.

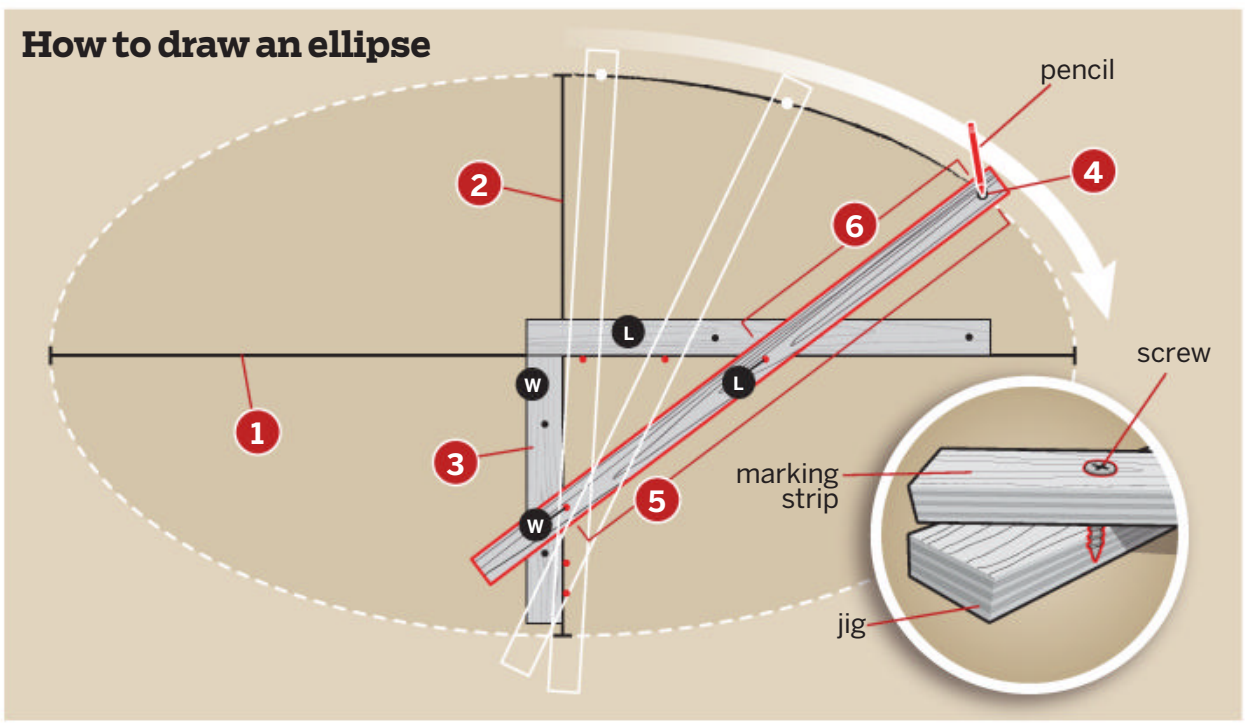


ILLUSTRATION BY PETER SUCHESKI



before + after

Light touch

One family's goal in renovating their formerly dark, closed-off galley-style kitchen? Open up and let the sun shine in

BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ADAM KANE MACCHIA

Tudors have a dark reputation—literally. Their low-light interiors are typically rich with exposed timbers, stained glass, and burnished-oak millwork. How to create a kitchen that's a pleasant partner to those elements, while fully functional for today? That was the challenge put to Studio Dearborn designer Sarah Robertson by the longtime owners of this 1929 Tudor Revival in Larchmont, New York. "They wanted a kitchen that brought in the home's period details, but in a way that felt cleaner, not heavy and traditional," she says.

To pull off an airy revamp, they bumped out the sink wall of the existing kitchen by about 7 feet and relocated a powder room, more than doubling the footprint. This allowed Robertson to configure the layout just the way she likes: an island with a prep sink and seating in the center; the main sink under new, wider windows with the range perpendicular to it; and the refrigerator just a few steps away. With space to spare, she added a table with four chairs at the other end. New oak flooring meshes with the rest of the house; more oak wraps the island and trims out the range hood. While researching online, Robertson came across original arch-top doors from a Tudor estate in England and asked her cabinetmaker to re-create them, then match the home's existing casings. Sleek brass pulls and faucets update the classic period finish and punctuate flat-panel cabinets painted a warm white and topped with veined quartzite. Some 21st-century touches update the space, including a hidden charging station and mid-century tile and light fixtures. Call it Tudor—with a twist.



The curves of the crown molding echo the arch-top doorways.

BEFORE The bland galley kitchen felt cramped; charcoal floors, black counters, and minimal daylight made it dark.

AFTER Expanding the footprint and adding new, larger windows opened up a space now washed in warm whites. Touches of oak and brass echo the Tudor Revival style and add rich contrast, but in a way that feels clean and fresh. *Pendants: Design Within Reach. Faucets: Brizo*



BEFORE



Open appeal

The expanded kitchen now holds a generous-size island with room for a couple of stools, as well as a table that seats four away from the meal-prep action. A trio of new windows over the sink channel natural light into the space, as does a windowed door off the range wall that leads to the pantry. *Windows: Lepage Millwork*

Energy boost

A drawer with built-in charging ports keeps cords out of sight. Below it, a file drawer organizes household records, says Robertson, creating "a mini office right within reach." White macauba quartzite with teal veining tops the quartersawn oak island, offering marble-like beauty with the durability of granite.





Back-saving storage

"With low drawers placed directly across from the dishwasher, you can unload straight into them—ideal for heavy dishes," Robertson says. Wood pegs fit into pegboard-style drawer bottoms for flexible storage that safely cradles nested dishes in place.

Drinks station

A hutch-like built-in to the left of the refrigerator holds bar supplies and a wine fridge. The white backsplash tile has a subtle mid-century geometric pattern; running it up the backs of the glass-front cabinets creates continuity and helps tie the whole space together. *Tile: Ann Sacks. Wine fridge: Uline. Brass cabinet pulls: Schoolhouse*



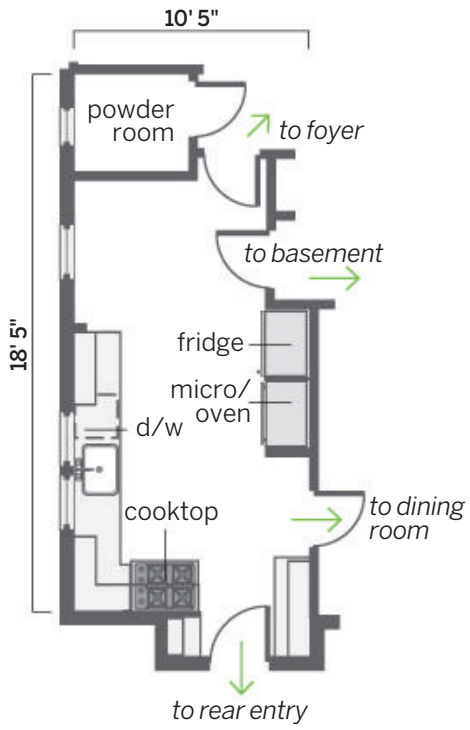


Grand entrance

As you enter off the center hall, arch-top double doors open up to offer a sight line all the way through the kitchen to the windowed pantry door.

BEFORE

At 140 square feet, the lackluster cook space felt closed off and gloomy, with little natural light

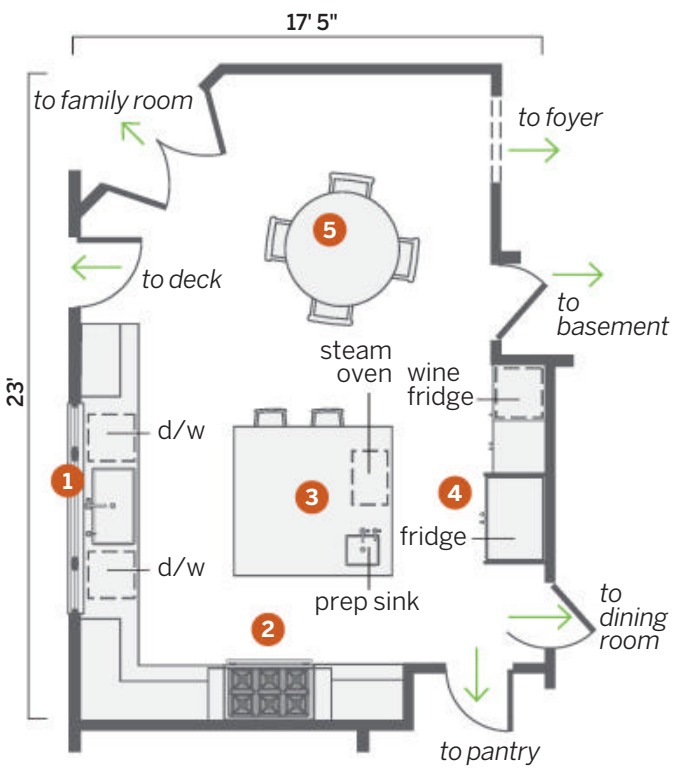


AFTER

Moving the sink wall out by 7 feet and annexing a powder room area opened up the now 320-square-foot kitchen, allowing for an island and a table for four

1. Bumped out the sink wall and added larger windows over the sink; put in a French door to a new deck and relocated the powder room.

2. Kept the cooktop location on the wall perpendicular to the sink, upgrading it to a pro-style range.



3. Added an island with a prep sink, steam oven, and seating.

4. Placed the refrigerator steps from the range and prep sink, with a built-in bar alongside it.

5. Carved out an eating area by moving the powder room; got rid of the door to the foyer, adding a cased opening; and reversed the swing of the basement door.

FLOOR PLANS: IAN WORPOLE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 80



Queen for a New Day

This Old House takes on a timeworn but beautifully crafted Queen Anne, adding on, opening up, and piecing back together the details that make it special **BY DEBRA JUDGE SILBER**

When Michael Campopiano took his son to see the house he'd just bought, 9-year-old Giulian took one look at the ramshackle building and turned to his dad. "You can't show this to Mommy," he advised. "She will never live here."

Giulian's worry was understandable. While the Queen Anne in the beachside Pier Neighborhood of Narragansett, Rhode Island, was an old-house lover's delight with its stained-glass windows, embellished bargeboards, and medley of shingle styles, it was also in pitiful disrepair. Paint flaked from its sides; the front porch was rotted and sagging. Inside, linoleum curled up from the floors and lath showed through cracks in the plaster.

It was, in other words, a perfect project to launch *This Old House*'s 42nd television season.

"It's a classic," says *TOH* home builder Jeff Sweenor, referring to the Victorian-era exterior embellishments. Located in Narragansett's historic district, the 1,700-square-foot Daniel A. Caswell house, as it's known, was built between 1887 and 1890, as Narragansett was developing into a fashionable seaside resort. Michael and his wife, Kassiane, live in nearby Cranston, where both grew up spending summers on Narragansett's beaches, and have long dreamed of living there.

Over the winter, Jeff and his team worked up a renovation plan with Michael and Kassiane (who, despite their son's dire prediction, was immediately on board) and began work in March. Almost immediately, the Covid-19 pandemic brought work to a standstill. It was May before Jeff's crew, clad in protective gear and following new work-site guidelines, could get back on the job. They caught up quickly, gutting the interior, shoring up

TOP: The new garage-and-master-suite addition mirrors the gabled form of the original Victorian-era house. When finished, the addition will display identical exterior details.

ABOVE RIGHT: Owners Kassiane and Michael Campopiano outside their just-purchased house last winter. Though Michael is an experienced renovator, this is the couple's first time rehabilitating a historical structure.



HOME: COURTESY SWEENOR BUILDERS; HOMEOWNERS: JOHN TOMLIN





the framing, and inserting steel beams and posts to open up the first floor. An existing sunporch was annexed to expand the living area, and an old brick chimney was removed, though the exterior portion will be rebuilt for historical accuracy. On the second floor, they rearranged walls to modify the three existing bedrooms and one bath, and eliminated a cramped attic to give each bedroom a vaulted ceiling. This freed up space to add lofts to two of the bedrooms as overflow sleeping space for extended family and guests.

Exterior walls stayed in place. "The basic structure was in remarkably good condition for its age," says Jeff. "It was built well." Still, the decrepit porch had to be torn down and rebuilt with new footings and piers. New electrical, plumbing, and a state-of-the-art heat-pump HVAC system will add 21st-century comfort.

What sold the Campopianos on the house, in addition to its elaborate exterior, was its potential for expansion. Their plan: a two-bay garage addition with an upstairs master suite, and a one-and-a-half-story connector that holds a half bath, a laundry, and a mudroom downstairs with a hallway above. Now framed and sheathed, the addition will replicate the home's style—including its expansive repertoire of trim—while adding about 800 square feet of living space. In back, the garage will have a kitchen, a powder room, and a cabana to serve the patio, pizza oven, and plunge pool planned for the backyard. "We wanted space outside because that's where we'll do most of our entertaining," Kassiane says.

ABOVE LEFT: *TOH* plumbing and heating expert Richard Trethewey, general contractor Tom Silva, and host Kevin O'Connor caught up with home builder Jeff Sweenor to check out the progress his crew has made on the job site since coronavirus restrictions were eased.

ABOVE RIGHT: The first floor of the house now holds two large open spaces thanks to a support structure created with five steel beams supported by steel posts. A former sunporch was annexed to the main living area. Sagging floors were shored up with new lumber.

But out front, the home's distinctive shingle and trim patterns will take center stage. Jeff and his crew spent much of the summer scraping, sanding, repainting, and in some cases rebuilding the home's exterior details—all while following mandated procedures for handling existing lead paint. The impressive array includes sawtooth, butted, and fishscale shingles; turned porch posts, rosettes, and medallions; and clapboards arranged in a "rising sun" pattern inside the front gable.

"A steel substructure we can disguise as beams enabled us to open up the first floor, turning six rooms into two."



—JEFF SWEENOR, *TOH* home builder

"We were able to salvage probably ninety percent of it," Jeff says. Stained-glass windows are being restored in the Sweenor Builders woodshop, with windows for the addition custom-made to match the original double-hungs.

None of this comes cheap, as the new owners have learned. "It's significantly more expensive to redo a historical house," Michael admits. But that's okay, he's quick to add. "It brings a value that can't be measured, because you're saving a piece of history."

CREW: JOHN TOMLIN; INTERIOR: COURTESY SWEENOR BUILDERS

Just Right



Not too big, not too small, a 1920 Cape Cod–style cottage proves a perfect fit for a design-minded homeowner with the vision to tailor it to her needs

By **Deborah Baldwin** • Photography by **John Gruen**
Produced by **Nicole Esposito-Polly** • Styled by **Anna Molvik**





It's not a big-deal house, and renovating it was no big deal either—most homeowners would be happy to post a few "afters" on Instagram and enjoy the applause. But Joan Osofsky, who bought the place the minute she first saw it, then poured her heart and three years into making it her own, is quick to share credit for what turns out to be a deceptively simple-looking whole-house transformation.

Joan tips her hat to her carpenter-contractor, a jack-of-all-trades who goes with the flow. And to the interior stylist who weighed in on which furnishings and paint colors to use, and where. Then there was the kitchen pro, who ventured suggestions on layout, and the cabinet experts at the local lumberyard. Plus the landscape designer and the landscape doer who turned the less-than-a-half-acre lot into layered vignettes. And let's not overlook Joan herself, coauthor of two lifestyle books and owner of three home-goods shops and an online store (hammertown.com), and a homeowner with five whole-house remodels under her belt.

LEFT: **A sitting area off the front entry blends soft colors, vintage artwork, and cozy upholstery. A dark dresser corrals extra paperwork and sets off the pale floor, which was lightened to add to the house's sense of airiness.** *Sofa, chairs, and quilt: Hammertown Barn*

ABOVE: **The homeowner turned an existing alcove and its simple walnut-slab work surface into a hardworking home office from which to enjoy views of the side yard.**

Which brings us to another member of the team on this project, Dana Simpson, Hammertown Barn marketing director and Joan's daughter.

That's a pretty big brain trust—make that brain, eye, and gut—for a vinyl-sided 1,173-square-foot Cape in small-town Lakeville, Connecticut, with two bedrooms and one and a half baths. But no matter how small a project is, "collaborating is important," Joan points out.

It was her idea to excise the wall downstairs. Carpenter-contractor Robert Williams took the kitchen from there, gutting the space, shoring up a "gully" in the floor, replacing the load-bearing wall with a beam, and cutting a large opening in a second wall, allowing the kitchen to annex extra space to recess the fridge. "I'm not a typical DIYer," says Joan, suggesting she may not know exactly what demolition involves. "I respect professionals. You want to go to a knee doctor who does knee surgeries all the time. Experience means something."

After years of managing related chores at an antiques-



ABOVE: The kitchen was opened up and rebuilt with 12-inch-wide pine floorboards and an island with backless barstools that tuck under the counter. Pendants were made using vintage parts. A faintly darker shade of off-white sets off the island.

RIGHT: The dining area, now in a sunny spot off the kitchen, and adjacent to the seating area, showcases homeowner Joan Osofsky's signature blend of old and new.





filled farmhouse on 65 acres nearby, she had been ready to move on, downsizing and deacquisitioning along the way. She moved first to a rental, which she renovated (the landlord happily gave consent). Then up came the Lakeville house, presenting a more permanent landing for an edited selection of her favorite things.

As a serial home improver who was trained as a teacher and drawn to interior design while still in college, Joan has an innate sense of potential. "I could walk in and see it stripped down," she says of the house. "I could see it was on a nice block, the bones were good."

Previous owners had kept up the place, deeding a solid roof, decent wiring and plumbing, forced-air heating and cooling, even a gas fireplace. The 1920 Cape Cod—a cottage, really—was a little faded and dated, with middling exterior doors, a single dormer over the front door, a half-bath bumpout in back, and a cubicle of a side addition just big enough for the slab desk and bookshelves that came with it.

Like the kitchen, the full and half baths needed work. But Joan, who has two grown kids, wasn't bothered by the cottage dimensions and single guest room. "There's definitely a trend toward smaller living," she says. "If I had money to build a spec house I would know what to do." For one thing, "you don't need a lot of big rooms." Gazing around, she says, "I hardly go into the living room"—which is hardly far away, one might add. "I

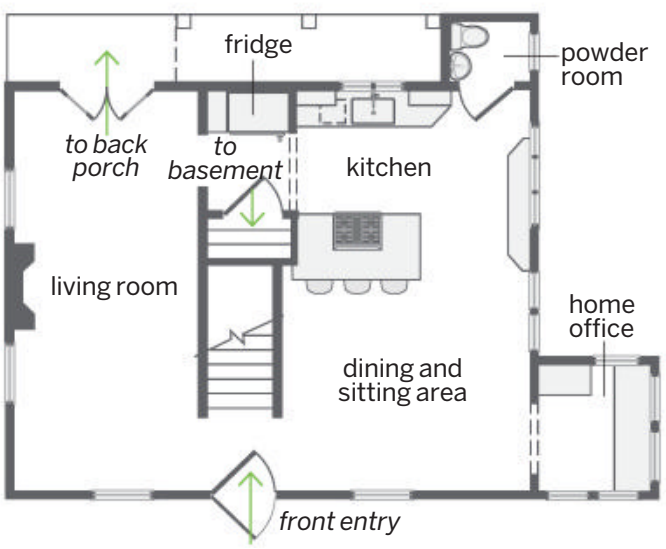
TOP: Painting the fireplace brick and adding French doors to a new patio brightened the living room. The trunk is a garage-sale find that traveled with Joan from her two previous homes.

LEFT: The compact, 1920 Cape Cod–style house came with a dormer and a small home-office addition on the side. Late-summer hydrangeas and a low, dry-laid stone wall add depth and character to the front yard.

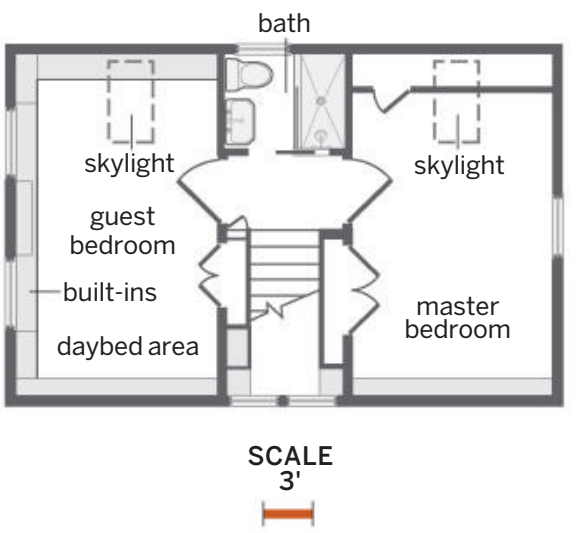
Floor plans

The 1,173-square-foot 1920 Cape retained its footprint while losing one wall and most of another to create a larger, open kitchen. The one full bath, upstairs, was gutted and rebuilt, with a walk-in shower replacing the tub. The rear door was relocated to extend the kitchen and make way for French doors opening to a back porch and patio.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



FLOOR PLANS: IAN WORPOLE

don't entertain there so much. People go where the kitchen is; what can I say?"

Among the helping hands was kitchen designer Camilla Mathlein, who sketched out a floor plan. After some back and forth among team members, the rear entrance moved to the living room, allowing the fridge to colonize former entry space. A family-kitchen-style island, with a built-in range and downdraft vent, sprang up where the supporting wall once stood, providing seating on one side and a sight line from the cooking zone to a relaxed sitting area in the former dining room. Joan consulted the local lumberyard on cabinets, which Williams gamely shimmed into submission—the walls weren't plumb and the floor wasn't level, no surprise.

Joan and her stylist collaborator, Wanda Furman, then pored over kitchen paint samples and test swaths, ultimately opting for a sophisticated trio of off-whites.

A neutral backdrop travels throughout. "I knew when I moved in that I wanted it to be light and open, but

ABOVE: Exposed beams allow for a vaulted ceiling in the master bedroom, which is brightened by a skylight already in place.

RIGHT: A short hallway separates the two upstairs bedrooms, their doors charmingly angled to follow the sloping roofline. The one full bath is to the right in this view, opposite a staircase flanked by closets and capped by the front dormer.











also warm," Joan says. New and existing floorboards got the same treatment, aided by a pro armed with a sander and a stain called Driftwood. The result is a contemporary feel and a deft uniting of board widths and grains that makes the discrete spaces flow.

Joan was happy to see the former orangy-brown finish go the way of wide lapels. "The floor is a big design statement!" she says. "Lightening the floor color was a game changer because it opened it up."

Williams, who's never seen a built-in he didn't like, added open-shelf cabinets in the kitchen, and shelving, as well as a daybed with drawers, in the second bedroom, feeding sketches to Joan as work progressed.

Dana took charge of the lighting, a mix of cool new lamps and ceiling fixtures made from salvaged parts. Joan and Furman added a few upholstered pieces, gleaned from her stores' inventory, which leans toward timeless style and made-in-America quality. They also slipped in a few vintage items, like an umbrella stand for the front door and a heavyset chest of drawers for table linens. You won't find anything smacking of farmhouse-quaint or country-folk; that's not her thing.

Clutter control, like the mild-mannered paint scheme, keeps the focus on Joan's antiques, colorful kantha quilts, and framed artwork, some by contemporary artists, a lot picked up at flea markets. One benefit of the small open plan: She can take much of it in while standing at the island, unpacking groceries.

The fireplace is a draw in the winter, its new bluestone hearth balanced by a delicate mantel-scape of candlesticks and a collection of framed line drawings scooped up by Dana at an antiques show. When the weather's good, Joan lingers on the back patio, a flat expanse of pea gravel with salvaged-granite edging.

Joan says she still sees things she'd like to tinker with, but for the moment she is content to enjoy the fruits of what turned out to be a relaxed collaboration among close, longtime colleagues.

People ask her all the time about how she works her magic. Joan tells them, "I'm just into connecting with things that I care about. It's all about developing your eye, looking at the things that resonate with you—and respecting the space."

TOP LEFT: **The shared bath lost a tub and gained a partially enclosed shower lined with period-style subway tile and a marble mosaic floor, chosen by homeowner Joan Osofsky (shown, top right).** *Toilet: Kohler. Tile: ProSource Wholesale*

LEFT: **A new daybed with storage drawers underneath and built-in shelves line the guest bedroom to catch overflow from the clutter-free first floor.** *Bed linens and chair: Hammertown Barn. Paint: Farrow & Ball's Charleston Gray*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 80

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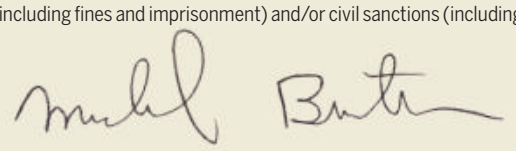
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DIRECTORY NOV/DEC 2020

COVER: *See the listing for "Light Touch."*

TOOLKIT *(pp. 7–12)* Block plane > ***Thanks to*** Thomas Lie-Nielsen, founder and CEO, Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, Inc., Warren, ME; lie-nielsen.com. Energy myths > ***Thanks to*** James Graham, sales engineer, Runtal North America; runtalnorthamerica.com.

BEFORE + AFTER: ATTIC Room at the top *(pp. 29–31)* **General contractor source:** sweeten.com. Bath > **Console sink:** americanstandard-us.com. **Toilet, shower fittings, hardware:** us.kohler.com. **Tile:** westchestertile.com. **Magnifying mirror:** simplehuman.com. **Lighting:** ideas4lighting.com. Master bedroom > **Sconces:** rejuvenation.com. **Ceiling fixture:** wayfair.com.

FARMHOUSE FUSION *(pp. 39–55)* **Builder:** Jerry Effren, Greyrock Homes; greyrockhomes.com. **Architect:** Jim Jamieson, Jamieson Architects; jamiesonarchitects.com. **Interior design:** Sandy Effren, greyrockhomes.com, with Catherine Devine and Tessa Pimontel, revisedhome.com, and Sally Rypkema, Juniper Design and Goods, juniperdesignandgoods@gmail.com. **Kitchen and bath design:** karenberkemeyerhome.com. **Lighting supply:** chloewinstonlighting.com. **Furniture staging:** Leia T. Ward; ltwdesign.com. **Landscape architect:** Kevney Moses, Norwalk, CT; 571-344-4811. **Primary building-materials supply:** ringsend.com. Throughout > **Lumber products:** weyerhaeuser.com. **Sheathing and tape:** zipsystem.com. **Insulation:** rockwool.com. **Door hardware:** emtek.com. **Air exchangers, bath ventilation:** Panasonic; na.panasonic.com. **Tile grout and sealer:** laticrete.com. Exterior > **Generator:** us.kohler.com. Kitchen, butler's pantry, and beverage bar > **Vent hood:** Betlan Corporation; betlan.com. **Beverage bar cabinet lighting:** hafele.com. Pool bath > **Vanity top:** silestoneusa.com. Master suite > **Bedroom furnishings:** Stowed; stowedhome.com. **Wallpaper:** innovationsusa.com. **Bath vanity countertops:** caesarstoneus.com. **Pulls:** hafele.com. Laundry/mudroom > **Wallpaper:** stylelibrary.com/zoffany. Garage > **Wall system:** hafele.com.

LIGHT TOUCH *(pp. 68–71)* **Kitchen designer:** Sarah Robertson, Studio Dearborn, Mamaroneck, NY; studiodearborn.com. **Architect:** Howard Albert; 914-479-7371. **Contractor:** Danny Cores, Elite Construction; 914-602-3576. **Decorative Finishes:** Katharine Dufault, State of the Art Home; stateofthearthome.com. **Sinks:** Kohler; us.kohler.com. **Island stools:** ABC Carpet & Home; abchome.com. **Table pendant lamp:** Hudson Valley Lighting; hudsonvalleylighting.com. **Paint:** Light Pewter (walls) and White Opulence (cabinets); benjaminmoore.com. **Range and steam oven:** Wolf; subzero-wolf.com. **Fridge:** Sub-Zero; subzero-wolf.com. **Custom range hood:** studiodearborn.com. **Vent hood liner:** Best; bestrangehoods.com. **Dishwashers:** Bosch; bosch-home.com. **Door hardware:** charlestonhardware.com. **Table:** Withers & Grain; withersandgrain.com. **Chairs:** restorationhardware.com. **Pantry doors:** Rockwood Doors & Millwork; rockwooddoor.com. **Rug:** vintage.

QUEEN FOR A NEW DAY *(pp. 72–73)* **General contractor:** Jeff Sweenor, Sweenor Builders, Wakefield, RI; sweenorbuilders.com. **Framing:** Lamco Engineered Lumber; coastalforestproducts.com. **Weather-resistant barrier:** vaproshield.com. **New windows:** marvin.com. **Adhesives:** Gorilla Glue; gorillatough.com. **Electrical panel, switches, and meters:** Schneider Electric; se.com/us. **Sheathing:** AdvanTech; huberwood.com. **Exterior trim:** Tru-Pine; claymark.co.nz.

JUST RIGHT *(pp. 74–79)* **Contractor and carpentry:** Robert Williams Carpentry, Bryson City, NC; 845-489-7288. **Interior design:** Dana Simpson, Dana Simpson Design, and Wanda Furman; Hammertown Barn; hammertown.com. **Kitchen design:** CKM Space, Millerton, NY; 518-592-1229. **Landscape design:** Christine Krause Design Studio; christinekrausedesign.com. **Hardscape (front and back yards):** Fitch Landscaping, Salisbury, CT; 860-983-3934. **Exterior doors:** marvin.com. **Floor stain:** Driftwood by Bona; us.bona-com. Sitting area > **Sofa, chairs, and quilt:** hammertown.com. **Table lamps:** johnderian.com (black shade) and dbohome.com. **Artwork (on right):** Suzanne C. Ouellette; souellette.com. **Paint:** Skimming Stone (walls and trim); farrow-ball.com. Kitchen > **Cabinets:** Young Furniture Manufacturing, Bow, NH; 603-224-8830. **Countertops:** Caesarstone; caesarstoneus.com. **Stools:** dbohome.com. **Sink:** blanco.com. **Faucet:** Grohe; grohe.us. **Refrigerator, range, and dishwasher:** kitchenaid.com. **Paint:** Stony Ground (cabinets), Drop Cloth (island), and Skimming Stone, custom-mixed to be lighter (walls); farrow-ball.com. Master bedroom > **Dresser:** montageantiques.com. **Chair:** hunterbee.com. **Bedding:** hammertown.com. **Paint:** Charleston Gray (walls); farrow-ball.com. Bath > **Showerhead:** waterworks.com. **Paint:** Skimming Stone (walls and trim); farrow-ball.com.

SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE *(p. 88)* ***Thanks to*** Mike Bedenbaugh, president, and Amy Fluette, office manager, Preservation South Carolina; preservesc.org. The 1772 Foundation; 1772foundation.org. Pelham Lyles, director, and Eddie Killian, genealogy research manager, Fairfield County Museum, Winnsboro, SC; fairfieldsc.com.

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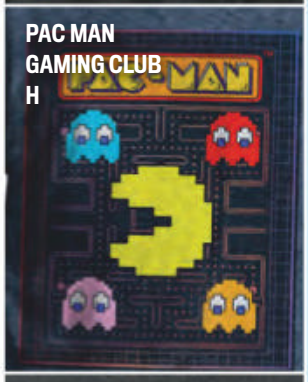
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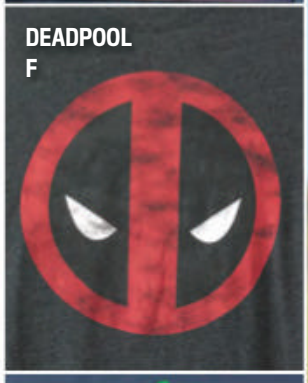
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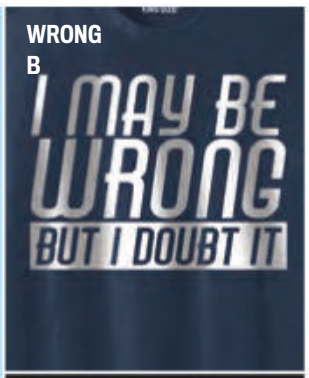
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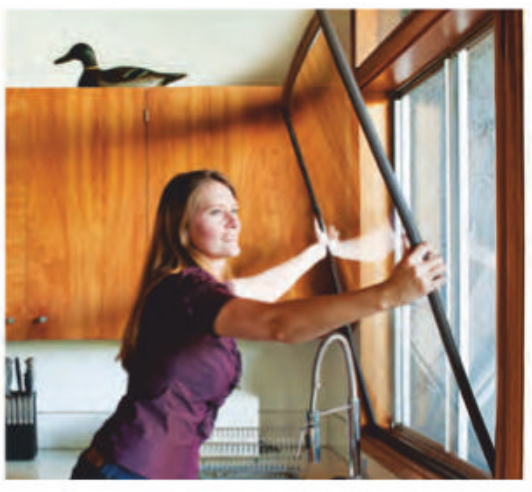
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THE HISTORY Said to have been built by a successful local tailor, this circa-1825 Federal-style house had four more owners before becoming home to Sailing Wolfe, a wealthy planter and merchant, and his wife, Sarah, after their home was destroyed by Union forces in 1865. Among the Wolfes' 13 children was Belle, who would become mother to noted statesman and financier Bernard Baruch. During the 1900s, the Wolfe House changed hands several times. It was purchased by Preservation South Carolina in February, after standing vacant for five decades.

WHY SAVE IT The house retains elegant Federal-style woodwork inside and out, including hand-carved moldings, mantels, fanlights, wainscoting, heart-pine floors, and turned columns supporting a two-tier front porch. It sits on an acre on the main commercial street in the downtown historic district. About 65 miles south of Charlotte and 35 miles north of Columbia, the town has revitalization on its agenda, with some building rehabilitation plans already under way.

WHAT IT NEEDS The roof has been replaced and most of the foundation stabilized, but the house requires new systems, a new kitchen and bathrooms, plus carpentry repairs. Zoned for residential or commercial use, it could become a bed-and-breakfast or other live/work space, with state and federal tax credits available. It's no small job, but the right one for a can-do owner who sees its potential. —SUZANNE ZENKEL









1. The facade of the 3,072-square-foot house is distinguished by original dentil moldings and symmetrical double-hung windows. With four upstairs rooms plus an extra room on the first floor, the one-bathroom home could easily be configured as three bedrooms with two more baths. The collapsed chimney needs rebuilding.

2. The formal sitting room's moldings, doors, wainscoting, mantel, hearth, and 6-inch-wide heart-pine floors are all original.

3. Peeled-back wallpaper in the dining room reveals the walls' original wood sheathing. A door leads to the entry hall and the two-story rear addition that likely dates to the 1840s and gave the house its four-over-four configuration.

4. The second-floor porch entry's fanlight and sidelights illuminate the interior's white-washed wood sheathing. The staircase unifies the two high-ceilinged floors, with a handrail that flows uninterrupted above the newel posts.

COURTESY PRESERVESC (4)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 80



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