

# This Old House

64  
MAGIC  
NUMBERS  
that'll change  
your home  
life

## TURN ON THE charm INDOORS AND OUT

LED  
BULBS:  
WHAT  
TO USE  
WHERE

- > Easy DIY upgrades
- > Cottage-garden secrets
- > Splashy paint and paper looks

Grow  
your best  
hydrangeas  
ever!  
p. 80

APRIL 2014 | THISOLDHOUSE.COM

GET A BETTER  
BACKYARD!

Lazy way to  
a great lawn  
Foolproof veggie beds  
Genius garden gear

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THIS OLD HOUSE APRIL 2014

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APRIL 2014

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PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) MARK LOHMAN; LAURA MOSS; DOREEN WYNJA



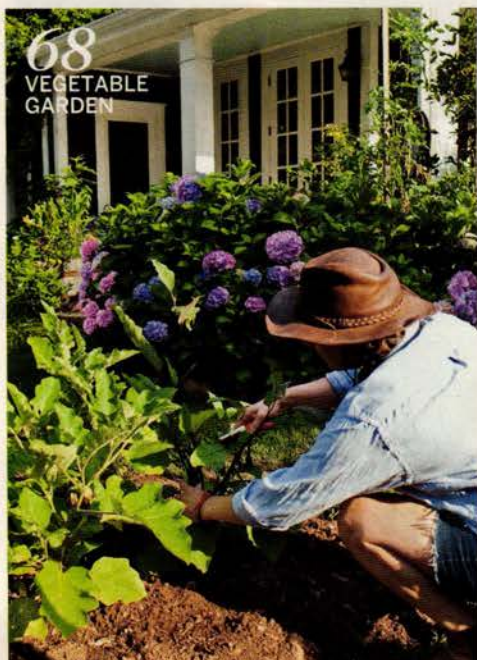
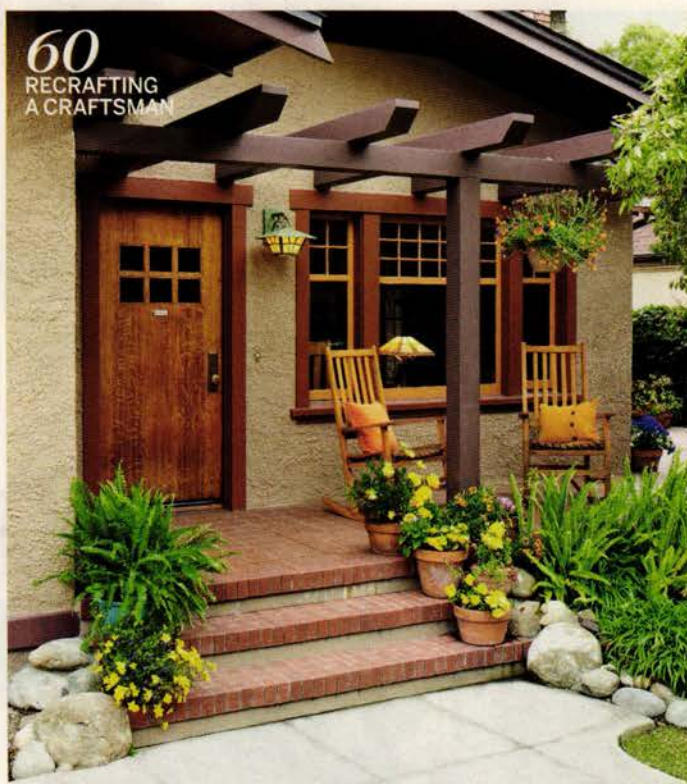
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# Letter

FROM THIS OLD HOUSE

## We've done the math for you

“O kay, pin me down and I'll admit it: I'm more of a word guy than a numbers guy.” I said this to my brother while we were deep into another DIY project. He stared back at me with that look that says, “The things you hear when you don't have a clear shot with the hammer.”

The fact that I had just measured a window for a piece of trim, while he was manning the saw, and called out to him “28 and one little line and one big line past the half-inch mark” didn't give me much of a defense.

No, I am definitely not a numbers person, which is why, I suppose, I'm writing this Letter From This Old House rather than building a house, and in the picture over there I'm not standing among boxes of stocks and bonds and hundred-dollar bills but slouching amid piles of pennies. To be honest, some days it's best for me to recast the old adage “measure twice, cut once” into “measure twice, cut once, repeat as necessary.”

Which complicates both my job and home life, because a house is probably more about numbers than anything else. In its design there is the mystical nature of the golden ratio that when followed keeps a house's parts, relative to the whole, so pleasingly proportioned. In its buying there is the ineluctable calculus of mortgage and taxes and insurance to paycheck. And in its owning there is so much too: the estimating of cubic feet of mulch needed to properly dress the garden beds; the length of vacuum cord plus hose as a fraction of the room size (it's always a fraction, isn't it?); and, perhaps most elemental, the distance in inches of how far from the floor and how far out from the bowl one installs the toilet-paper holder.

Don't laugh—that's an important one. Who wants to be responsible for putting such a fixture in the wrong place, dooming loved ones to a lifetime of bobbing and weaving as they pluck at the free end of the roll?

I did not, when faced with installing one in our new bathroom. Which is why I decided it was time to become more of a numbers person. The result: a story our editors put together called “64 Important Numbers Every Homeowner Should Know,” on page 74. It's one of those pieces that I think make *This Old House* so special, telling you things you didn't even know you needed to know until you knew them. Check it out. I'm sure you'll find it as useful as I did. In fact, I'm willing to bet all my pennies on it.



The editor eyes his stockpile.

## Are you a word person?

As you'll see on page 10 and in the red boxes throughout this month's magazine, our reader-created issue is coming soon. But in addition to our Search for America's Best Remodel, we're also looking for your stories. You know, your renovation triumphs, your DIY missteps, the amazing feeling of accomplishment that first night you and your family slept under your remodel's roof. I know you've got 'em. Wanna share? E-mail me, and maybe this page will feature a Letter From YOUR Old House. I'm at [scott@thisoldhouse.com](mailto:scott@thisoldhouse.com).

*Scott Omelianuk*

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# Reader mail



WHETHER DREAMING UP *the perfect kitchen or gluing up a tabletop*, TOH readers from as far away as South Africa recently shared inspiration, tips, and thanks, as well as an ideal spring reader project.

## More prep space

Loved the kitchen on the cover of January/February 2014 [and Before + After: Kitchen]. We are planning to redo our cottage kitchen. I love, and want, those extra-deep countertops.

—GEORGIA CINQ-MARS, MORRISVILLE, PA.

## Global appeal

Despite living on the most southerly tip of Africa, I love your magazine. We have no old houses of similar calibre over here, but there is nothing wrong with dreaming about one and incorporating elements into my home. Keep up your great magazine!

—ADRI VENTER, JOHANNESBURG

## Tips for edge-gluing

In addition to Norm's methods for gluing up several boards to keep them from cupping [Norm's Tricks of the Trade,

January/February 2014], I alternate the direction of the end grain from piece to piece. Also, I place wax paper on the seams where the clamps are located to simplify glue cleanup.

—DICK EDDY, WENHAM, MASS.

## Getting the most from TOH

TOH has become one of my favorite magazines in the past few years and the only magazine I read cover to cover. I also signed up at [thisoldhouse.com](http://thisoldhouse.com) for one of your free e-newsletters that send special tips on a regular basis. Thank you for all the helpful suggestions!

—JIM BOYER, CORUNNA, IND.

## HOW TO REACH US

E-mail [TOH\\_letters@thisoldhouse.com](mailto:TOH_letters@thisoldhouse.com). Please include your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.

READER  
PROJECT  
OF THE  
MONTH

## Privacy planter

JOE RICHARDS, NORTH CANTON, OHIO

A while back, you provided me with the plans to make a privacy planter as a gift for my wife [below right]. She is already asking for another one. I wish I was the woodworker that my dad was (he built his house with his own hands), but at least your projects give me some great ideas!

[Find the how-to for the planter at [thisoldhouse.com/apr2014](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2014).]



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### TABLET

#### Bonus features

Discover extra content in our digital edition, including more photos from the retro kitchen remodel and the Craftsman house renovation, a video showing how to build a rain barrel, and seasonal questions in Ask This Old House. Download your copy at [thisoldhouse.com/tablet](http://thisoldhouse.com/tablet)



### MOST POPULAR VIDEO

#### How to refinish hardwood floors

In our most-watched how-to, *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva goes over the steps for applying a new finish to old wood. See how he does it at [thisoldhouse.com/apr2014](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2014)



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# Checklist

APRIL 2014

*Easy ways to  
improve your home  
right now*

## 6 FAST FIXES

### ☐ Check washer hoses:

To avoid costly flooding, look for cracks and bulges in washer hoses and replace if there's any sign of wear.

### ☐ Reseed bare patches:

Fill bald spots by raking and sprinkling with garden soil and grass seed. Water regularly to keep seeds moist.



☐ Fix driveway cracks: Winter ice can cause or broaden cracks in concrete driveways. For narrow gaps, apply a masonry crack filler; in wider ones, use patching mortar.

☐ Clean and seal your fireplace: Keep critters from holing up in your chimney by closing up your flue until fall. Then schedule a cleaning and inspection—you can often get lower rates in the off-season.

☐ Replace your AC filter: Before turning on your AC this spring, change the filter so that it runs with maximum efficiency.

☐ Clean your doormat: Dirty mats are less effective at trapping dust and debris. Use a vacuum to clean out caked-in dirt so mats are ready for muddy spring shoes.

### ☒ Prime garden beds

Help set yourself up for a successful planting season by getting garden beds squared away before you dig in. Clear away any debris left over from the winter, as well as any weeds, before spreading 1 to 2 inches of compost over the soil to boost nutrient value. Use a cultivator or garden fork to mix this into the top 3 to 4 inches of soil, then rake the bed smooth before you sow seeds or put in plants.



### ☐ Prep your pressure washer

Before dusting it off for another round of outdoor spring cleaning, make sure it's up to snuff with these steps: **1.** Replace the air filter to keep dirt and debris from getting into the engine. **2.** Change the oil so that it's fresh for the season. **3.** Clean the water inlet screen with dish soap and a small brush to make sure it's not clogged.



### ☐ Recycle better

Celebrate Earth Day on April 22 by revving up your family's recycling practices. Make sure to wash plastic or glass containers before adding them to the bin, and pay attention to products' recycling numbers and colors. Requirements vary by area, so to learn what makes the cut in your city visit [earth911.com](http://earth911.com).

### ☐ Inspect your nest

April is National Home Inspection month—and just because you already own your home, don't think you're off the hook. If you've lived in your home five years or more, call in a pro to make the rounds. Of particular interest: electrical systems, which might be out of date, and unfinished basements and crawl spaces, which can succumb to moisture or pests. Visit [ashi.com](http://ashi.com) to find a certified inspector in your area.

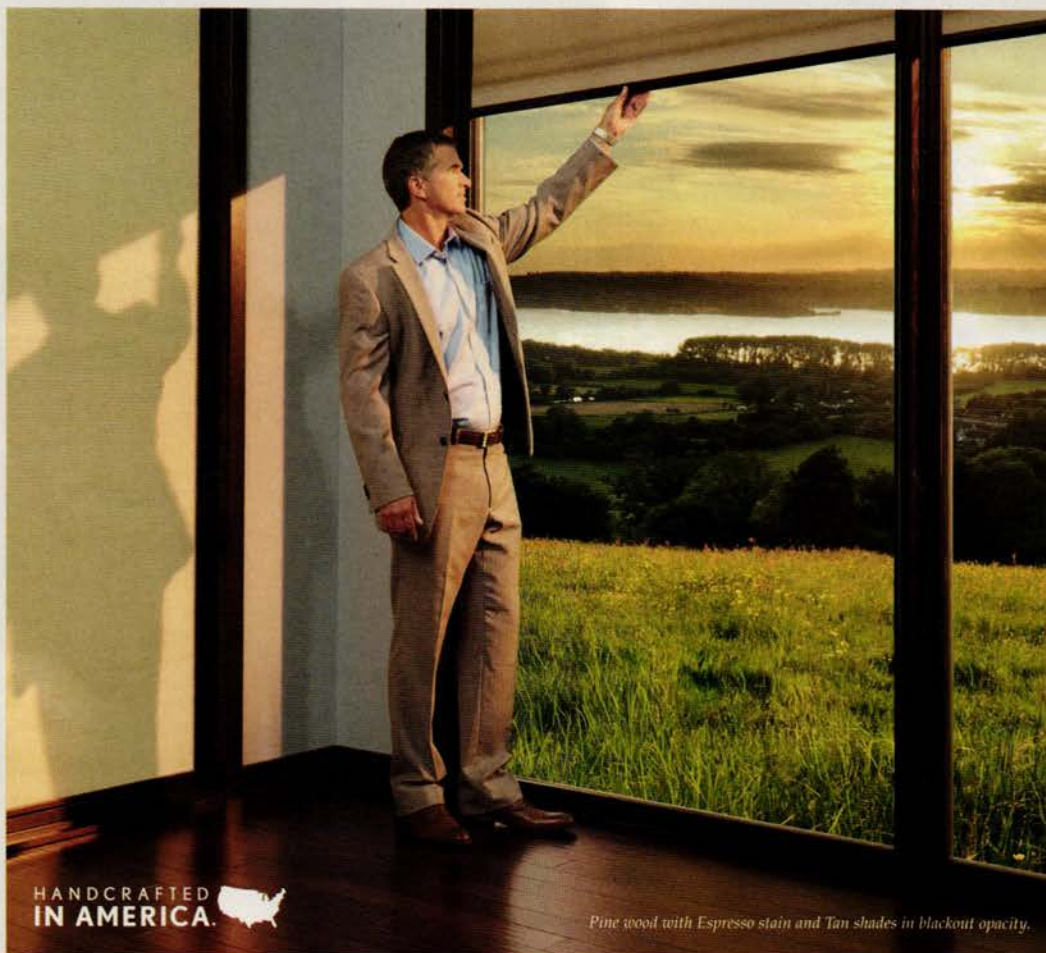




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# home solutions

Edited by Michelle Brunner

INSIDE

10 USES

COOL TOOLS

SPRING UPKEEP

NIFTY IDEA

MORE

## A dresser that stacks up

Even when furniture finds from the attic, the curb, or a neighbor's tag sale are in really rough shape, they often yield drawers that can be repurposed in a one-of-a-kind storage piece. To make the one here, we built plywood boxes sized to each drawer, finished the front edges with iron-on edge banding, and put two strips of nylon tape on the inside bottoms to act as drawer glides. For visual punch, we stacked the boxes in a stepped arrangement, secured them with wood screws, and added turned legs from the home center. A coat of white paint gives the piece a cohesive look, while strategic hits of color (Benjamin Moore's Anderson Blue and Mellow Yellow) brighten it up. Go for a whimsical mix of knobs and pulls, and you've got a mash-up with real appeal.





10  
USES

## Paint cans

Clever ideas for these metal pails, whether you've got an emptied leftover\* or a pristine home-center buy

**1> Mix concrete for small jobs.** The handle makes it easy to pour when patching small holes.

**2> Shade a lamp.** Snip off the handle of a large can with wire cutters; remove the bottom with a can opener. Drill small holes in the metal sides, following any design you like, then paint. Cut a disk out of hardware cloth to fit snugly inside the can; cut a smaller circle, large enough to fit a lamp socket without a harp, out of the disk's center. Fit the disk inside the can. Rest the shade on the socket.

**3> Store pencils or brushes.** Place adhesive-backed



magnets on the bottoms of small paint cans (use a hot-glue gun for extra hold). Attach to an inexpensive magnetized knife strip on the wall.

**4> Make a bag dispenser.** Cut a circular hole in the lid of a large paint can, and file any sharp edges. Stash a roll of garbage bags in the can, pulling the free end through the hole.

**5> Build a wine rack.** Remove the tops and bottoms of quart-size cans with a can opener.

Connect several cans laid side by side using heavy-duty glue or epoxy adhesive. Stack more cans on top of them in an artful way and glue in place. Use clothespins or binder clips to secure them until the glue dries.

**6> Assemble a bird feeder.** Remove the lid and tie sturdy twine around the middle of the can to hang sideways. Glue a 4-inch section of a 3/16-inch wood dowel to the bottom lip of the can to form a perch. Add birdseed and hang.

*\*When cleaning out latex paint cans for reuse, follow municipal guidelines for disposing of paint responsibly.*



**7> Stabilize a tiki torch.** Fill a large paint can with sand or gravel, and stick a garden torch in the middle.

**8> Organize owner's manuals.** Lay a row of large paint cans side by side on a shelf in the garage to store booklets.

**9> Light up a path.** To make decorative luminaries, drill holes in pint-size cans, making a pattern. Place a votive candle in each can.

**10> Fashion a hanging planter.** Drill three drainage holes in the bottom of a large can (handle removed) and three in the sides near the top to thread with sash chain. Add potting soil, then plant petunias or other similar draping plants.

—KATIE ASKEW



### MORE 10 USES

Find more smart uses for leftovers by blipping this page or going to

thisoldhouse.com/  
apr2014



# A stylish laundry room for \$87

White cabinets, pale aqua walls, and horizontal batten detailing give a cave-like space a bright new look



BEFORE

**BEFORE** The cramped closet-size space was overpowered by orangey oak cabinets.

**AFTER** White wainscoting brightens the room while open shelves help give the space breathing room. A DIY holder (shown below) keeps the ironing board off the floor but still within reach.



\$4 coat hooks for a DIY holder



\$30 MDF for wainscoting

## THE PROJECT TALLY

Removed a cabinet door for a more open look.....\$0

Created wainscoting using 3½-inch-wide MDF strips nailed up horizontally.....\$30

Painted the cabinets and bottom portion of the walls with leftover white paint.....\$0

Distressed the cabinets using sandpaper and scrapbooking ink she had on hand, to create a vintage effect.....\$0

Added a pop of color on the upper walls and ceiling with blue-green paint.....\$35

Made a holder using scrap wood and coat hooks to store the family's ironing board.....\$12

Hung a sign above the cabinets made with wood and a stick-on decal.....\$10

**TOTAL.....\$87**

**HARDWORKING LAUNDRY ROOMS** often get the short end of the stick style-wise. That was the case at Jennifer and Michael Mead's house, in Kennewick, Washington, where the tiny utility space felt dim and claustrophobic. To lighten its look, Jennifer first removed the room's swinging door to open it up, then removed the middle door to the bank of cabinets above the machines. Next, she created wainscoting by tacking 3½-inch-wide medium-density fiberboard (MDF) strips to the bottom portion of the wall, orienting it horizontally.

She painted the boards, the lower wall, and the cabinets a creamy white. Distressing the cabinet details and edges with sandpaper and darkening the exposed wood with an ink pad gave them an aged patina. Above the wainscoting, the walls and ceiling got a coat of soft blue-green. A DIY rack stores the ironing board in a convenient, out-of-the-way spot, and the redo gives everyone more breathing room. "It all makes the space feel so much larger," Jennifer says. "Now it actually feels good to be doing laundry." —MEGAN BAKER



**THRIFTY, ARE YOU?**

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## Reel mowers

When you're walking behind the right model, giving the lawn a haircut can be one of life's little pleasures

Thank engineering upgrades for giving the old-fashioned manual mower added traction. Along with fume- and fuel-free exercise, the latest models offer owners of small, tidy lawns sharper cuts and more cutting-height choices. New features also allow mowers to roll more smoothly and handle more nimbly than the clunkers of yesteryear. All this adds up to a healthier lawn and less work. Read on for five ways to compare models before deciding which fancy clipper to let loose in your yard.

Shown: Fiskars StaySharp Max Reel Mower, \$250; [fiskars.com](http://fiskars.com)

BEFORE  
YOU  
BUY...

### CHECK OUT THE BLADES AND REEL

Thicker, heavier steel blades, like those on this 44-pound model, add power and can slice through dense grass, weeds, and small twigs that can jam other mowers. This one's blades can go six-plus years between sharpenings because a minuscule gap prevents them from directly striking the cutting bar, so they experience less wear and tear.

### KICK THE TIRES

Small front wheels make for easier maneuvering and, in this case, help ease height adjustment by the lever in front. Inset wheels allow the blades to extend across the mower, so you can make a close cut along walls and edges.

### MEASURE THE SHAVE

Some types of turfgrass are healthier when kept up to about 4 inches tall. We like the model shown because, unlike some reel mowers, it adjusts to cut grass to that height. The reel raises easily by adjusting the lever to one of nine positions, starting at 1 inch, while keeping the blades in the optimal position for cutting.

### WATCH YOUR SHOES

Clippings typically land on your feet. With this model, the cuttings neatly fly forward.

### TEST THE HANDLE

It should be comfortable and adjustable and allow for a smooth tip up in front when turning a corner. Popping a wheelie won't make mowing pure fun, but when it comes to lawn chores, every little bit helps. —DEBORAH BALDWIN





## Clever garden gear

There's no shortage of well-made tools and gadgets, but every now and then an inventor steps up with an ingenious idea. Witness these four creative problem-solving devices



1 2  
3 4

Velcro closure shuts out spiders!

### 1 WORKHORSE CART

Complete with polyurethane tires that won't go flat, this convertible cart makes light work of hauling bricks and flowerpots, but it can also convert to a dolly that can move appliances weighing up to 300 pounds. Bonus: The cart tips up to store vertically, so it won't take up much shed space. Worx AeroCart, \$160; worx.com

### 2 WATERING CAN

With a watertight compartment to store granular fertilizer, ergonomic handles, a built-in measuring cup and tablespoon, and marks that indicate the fill level for 1 and 2 gallons, this watering can consolidates your load and reduces your trips to the shed. And it's got a spot to stash your gloves, too. The U CAN watering can, \$30; theucanbrand.com

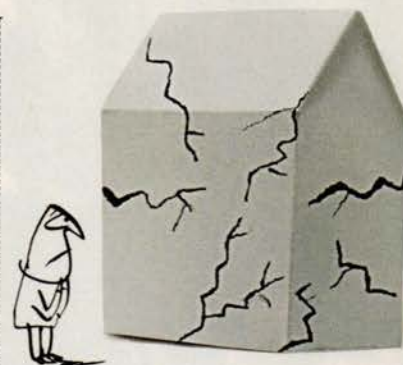
### 3 ANTI-BUG GLOVES

Dark corners of potting sheds and garages are prime places for spiders to lurk, and some species can cause painful—and downright dangerous—bites. The cuffs on these smart gloves seal shut with Velcro strips so that when the gloves are stored, creepy-crawlies can't hide in the recesses. Spandex Gloves, \$19; spidexgloves.com

### 4 HELP FOR HEAVY LIFTING

Designed to carry up to 40 pounds, this practical clip is perfect for sealing and lifting hefty bags of mulch or charcoal. For a controlled, spill-free pour, simply slide the clip to one side, lift the bag by the handle, and tilt the bottom up. Handy Camel Bag Clip, \$15; thehandycamel.com for stores

—ANNE E. STRATTON



## When a crack is cause for worry

April's warmer temps are a welcome sign of spring, but ground thaw can wreak havoc on your home's foundation. In the winter, frozen soil swells, slightly raising your house. When the ground thaws, the structure can come back down at different rates, causing uneven settling. But not all fissures are cause for alarm. Take a tour of your home to suss out areas of concern.

► **INSIDE** If windows and doors are not closing or frequently get stuck, it's an indication that they are out of square, which happens when a house shifts. Also look for cracked tiles and sagging floors.

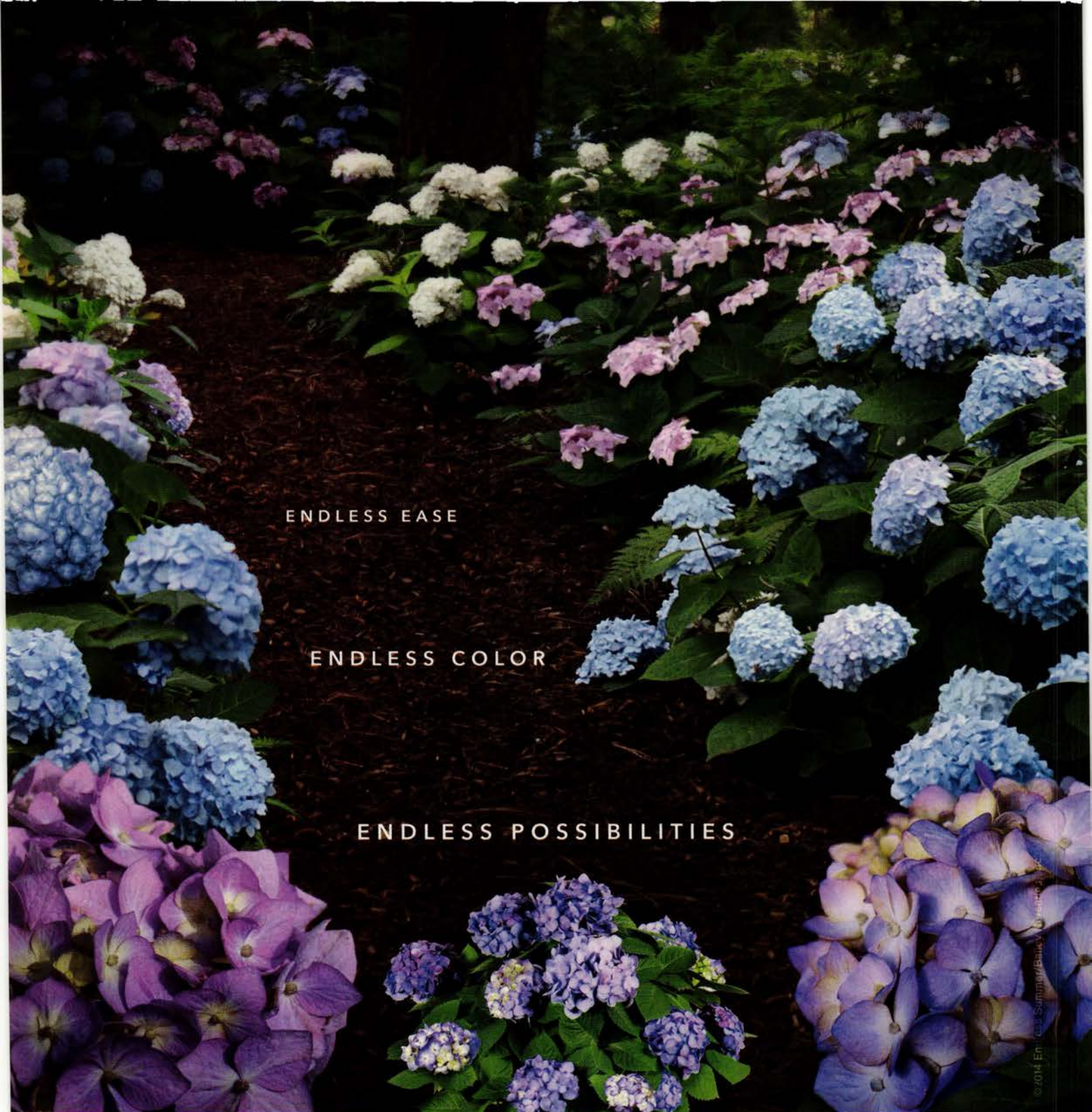
► **OUTSIDE** Check for gaps in the window trim, one of the first places you'll see damage. Look at the roofline; if you see a gap in the frieze board—the outer trim right below the roof—your home may experience wall rotation. Got a brick facade? Stair-step cracks in masonry that are one-quarter inch or wider are a telltale sign of movement.

► **BELOW GRADE** Pressure from soil and water outside can cause basement walls to bow in, leading to a major red flag: a horizontal crack, usually about 4 feet up from the floor.

► **IF YOU SPOT TROUBLE** Call a foundation repair expert or a structural engineering consultant, who will bring data-collection equipment that can detect significant changes. The good news: These evaluations are often free.

—M. BRUNNER





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ENDLESS COLOR

ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

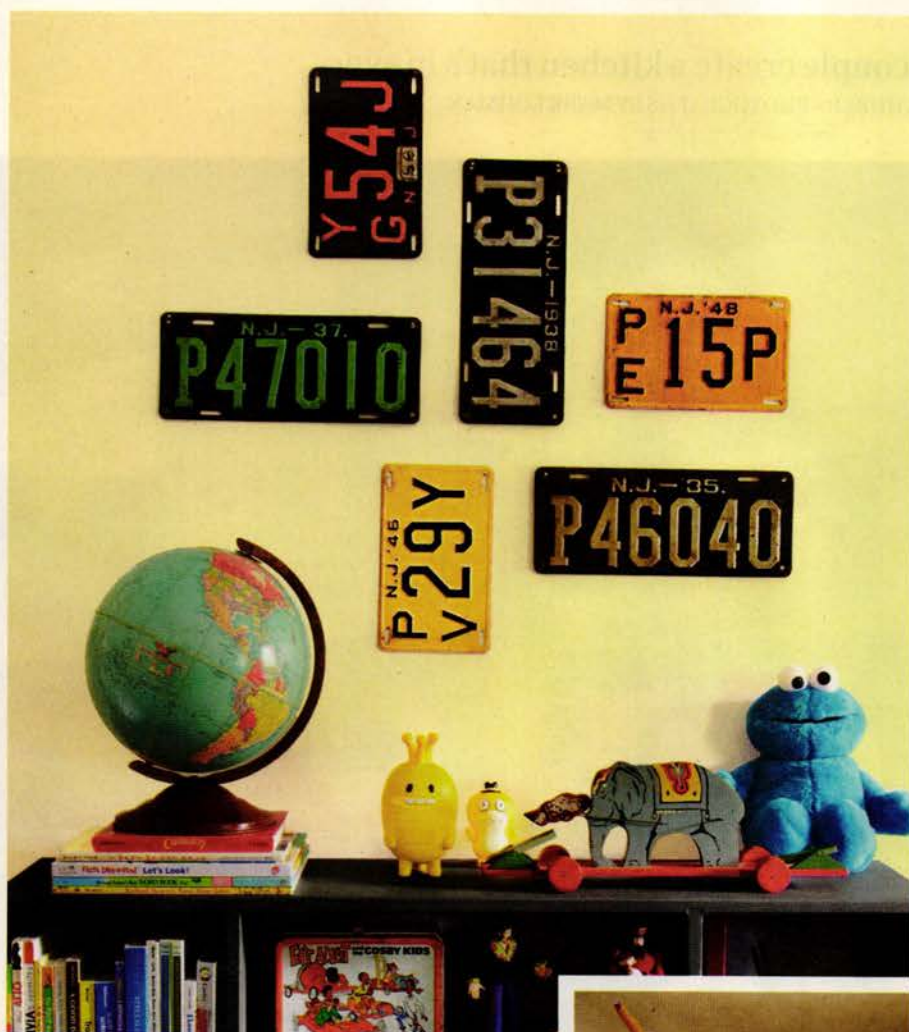
ENDLESS



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## Hang a collection

When it comes to gallery-style groupings, no need to limit yourself to photographs and paintings. Here, we created a unique wall display with vintage license plates, but you can use the same basic approach to hang anything from textiles to dinnerware: Trace a template for each object (top right) onto kraft paper—newspaper also works in a pinch—and cut them out. Arrange the templates on the floor until you find a composition you like; ours is in a windmill pattern. Transfer the arrangement to the wall, gently adhering the templates with painter's tape (bottom right). Make sure you're happy with the spacing and the height of the entire group; the center of the grouping should be at eye level. To hang the items, drive fasteners halfway in, right through the template. Tear off the paper and secure the items. Then stand back and admire. You've elevated your collectibles in a whole new way.

—M. BRUNNER



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# Retro redo

A vintage stove and sink help a couple create a kitchen that's in sync with their 1930s house BY JEANNE HUBER + PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK LOHMAN

➔ **MANY AN OLDER** home loses its charm once you set foot in the kitchen. Details lost in an effort to modernize turn into holy grails for owners down the line. For Sharon Lovejoy and Jeff Prostovich, turning back the clock in the cook space of their 1930s house, in San Luis Obispo, California, started with a couple of lucky shopping finds.

The existing 1980s kitchen had an awkward breakfast nook and bland white cabinets with ceramic-tile counters. In search of a more authentic look, the couple took a trip to a salvage yard that yielded the perfect apron sink. At a nearby antiques store they unearthed a vintage stove. Starting with what Jeff calls “these two big anchors,” and a nearly square open floor space, he worked out a layout to blend traditional style with modern practicalities, tucking dishwasher drawers and a stainless-steel refrigerator into simple, Shaker-style cabinets. The resulting space has earned the couple the best compliment of all. “Some visitors don’t even know the kitchen was remodeled,” says Jeff. “They think it’s the same vintage as the house.”

**BEFORE** A colorful backsplash drew attention away from drab white cabinets and counters.

**AFTER** The redesign evolved around two vintage pieces: a farm sink patented in 1923 and a 1950s-era O’Keefe & Merritt six-burner range. Open shelves turn everyday dishes into an artful display.



BEFORE





After completing the renovation, the kitchen is a bright, airy space with a fresh, modern feel. The new white cabinetry and countertop provide a clean backdrop for the colorful decor and fresh produce.





## • before + after: kitchen

A custom cabinet, with rounded corners to match the apron sink, holds two dishwasher drawers installed at either end. Dishwasher drawers: Fisher & Paykel

In place of a cramped breakfast nook are low shelves and a rocking chair—perfect for perusing recipe books or chatting with the cook.

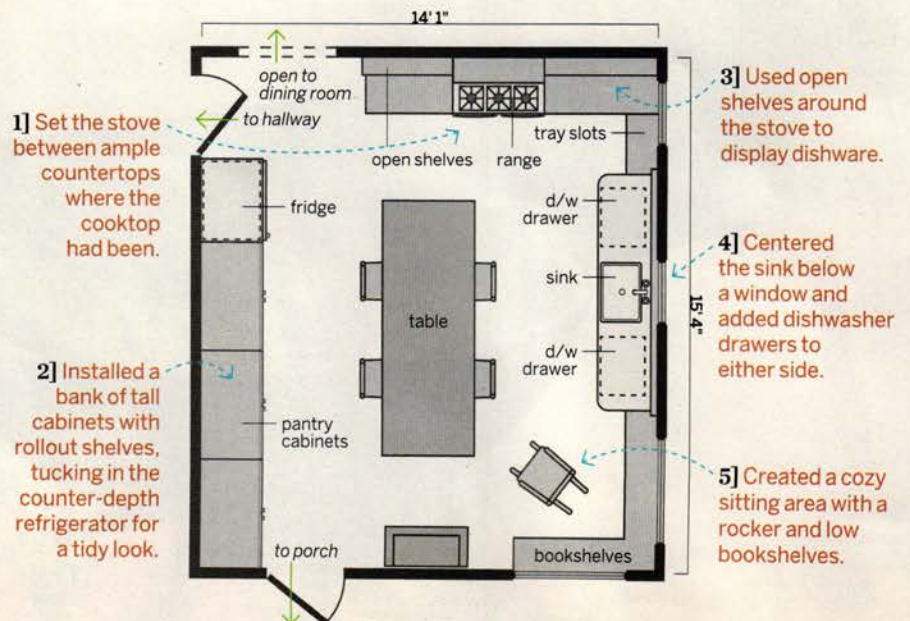
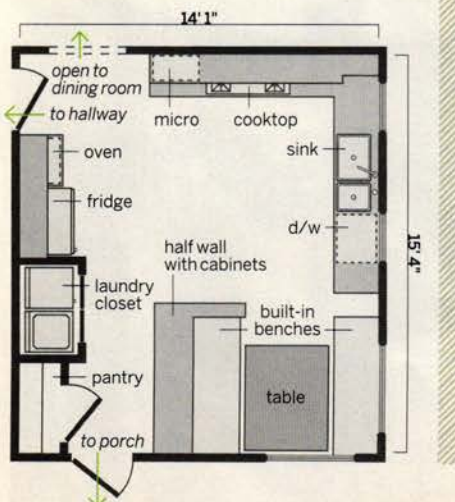


## after

The unimpeded, almost square footprint, with a 6-foot table in the center, feels much more spacious.

## before

The poorly planned space featured a half-wall enclosure around the breakfast nook.





After the renovation, the kitchen is a bright and cheerful space. The new white subway tile backsplash and the fresh green paint on the walls and cabinets give the room a clean, modern look. The new stainless steel appliances and the updated lighting fixtures complete the transformation.





## • before + after: kitchen

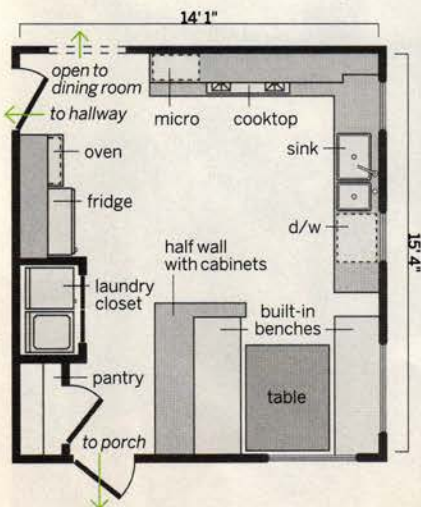
A custom cabinet, with rounded corners to match the apron sink, holds two dishwasher drawers installed at either end. Dishwasher drawers: Fisher & Paykel

In place of a cramped breakfast nook are low shelves and a rocking chair—perfect for perusing recipe books or chatting with the cook.



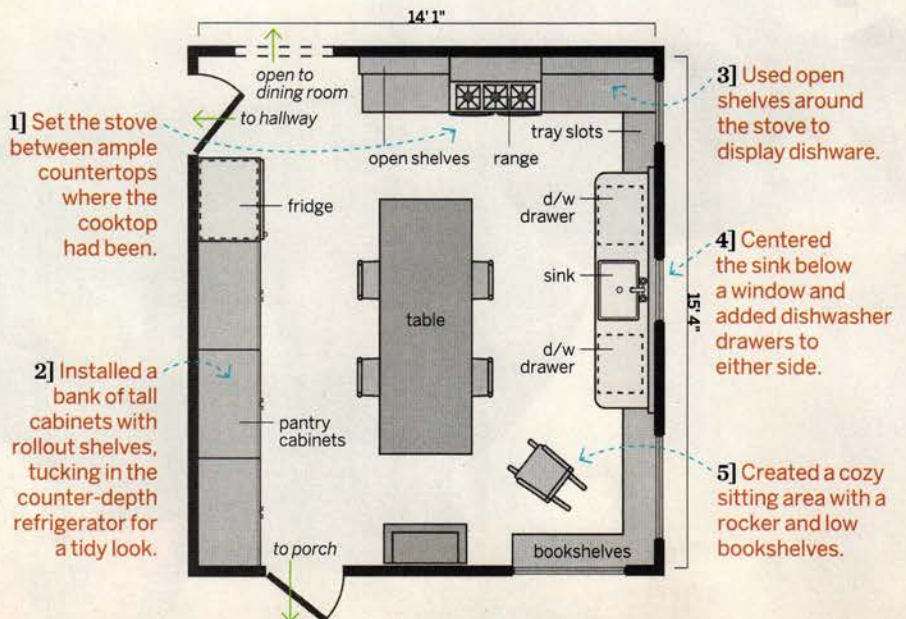
### before

The poorly planned space featured a half-wall enclosure around the breakfast nook.



### after

The unimpeded, almost square footprint, with a 6-foot table in the center, feels much more spacious.





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■ Do not stop taking ELIQUIS without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke. ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.

■ ELIQUIS can cause bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death.

■ You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, NSAIDs, warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, SSRIs or SNRIs, and other blood thinners. Tell your doctor about all medicines, vitamins and supplements you take. While taking ELIQUIS, you may bruise more easily and it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop.

■ Get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding:

- unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as unusual bleeding from the gums; nosebleeds that happen often, or menstrual or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
- bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
- red, pink, or brown urine; red or black stools (looks like tar)
- coughing up or vomiting blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds
- unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain; headaches, feeling dizzy or weak

■ ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.

■ Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you have: kidney or liver problems, any other medical condition, or ever had bleeding problems.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or plan to become pregnant or breastfeed.

■ Do not take ELIQUIS if you currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding or have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. A reaction to ELIQUIS can cause hives, rash, itching, and possibly trouble breathing. Get medical help right away if you have sudden chest pain or chest tightness, have sudden swelling of your face or tongue, have trouble breathing, wheezing, or feeling dizzy or faint.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see additional Important Product Information on the adjacent page.

Individual results may vary.

Visit [ELIQUIS.COM](http://ELIQUIS.COM)  
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# IMPORTANT FACTS

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## What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

**Do not stop taking ELIQUIS without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke.** ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.

**ELIQUIS can cause bleeding** which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death. This is because ELIQUIS is a blood thinner medicine that reduces blood clotting.

**You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding,** such as aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (called NSAIDs), warfarin (COUMADIN<sup>®</sup>), heparin, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), and other medicines to help prevent or treat blood clots.

Tell your doctor if you take any of these medicines. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one listed above.

## While taking ELIQUIS:

- you may bruise more easily
- it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop

## Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding when taking ELIQUIS:

- unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as:
  - unusual bleeding from the gums
  - nosebleeds that happen often
  - menstrual bleeding or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
- bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
- red, pink, or brown urine
- red or black stools (looks like tar)
- cough up blood or blood clots

- vomit blood or your vomit looks like coffee grounds
- unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain
- headaches, feeling dizzy or weak

**ELIQUIS (apixaban) is not for patients with artificial heart valves.**

## What is ELIQUIS?

ELIQUIS is a prescription medicine used to reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation.

It is not known if ELIQUIS is safe and effective in children.

## Who should not take ELIQUIS?

**Do not take ELIQUIS if you:**

- currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding
- have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. Ask your doctor if you are not sure

## What should I tell my doctor before taking ELIQUIS?

**Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you:**

- have kidney or liver problems
- have any other medical condition
- have ever had bleeding problems
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ELIQUIS will harm your unborn baby
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ELIQUIS passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take ELIQUIS or breastfeed. You should not do both

Tell all of your doctors and dentists that you are taking ELIQUIS. They should talk to the doctor who prescribed ELIQUIS for you, before you have any surgery, medical or dental procedure.

**Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.** Some of your other medicines may affect the way ELIQUIS works. Certain medicines may increase your risk of bleeding or stroke when taken with ELIQUIS.

## How should I take ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

**Take ELIQUIS exactly as prescribed by your doctor.** Take ELIQUIS twice every day with or without food, and do not change your dose or stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to. If you miss a dose of ELIQUIS, take it as soon as you remember, and do not take more than one dose at the same time. **Do not run out of ELIQUIS. Refill your prescription before you run out. Stopping ELIQUIS may increase your risk of having a stroke.**

## What are the possible side effects of ELIQUIS?

- See "What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS?"
- ELIQUIS can cause a skin rash or severe allergic reaction. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - chest pain or tightness
  - swelling of your face or tongue
  - trouble breathing or wheezing
  - feeling dizzy or faint

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of ELIQUIS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about ELIQUIS. For more information, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, call 1-855-ELIQUIS (1-855-354-7847), or go to [www.ELIQUIS.com](http://www.ELIQUIS.com).

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# From cold to comfy

Wainscoting, moldings, and a soothing color scheme add character to a bland bedroom

BY JILL CONNORS + PHOTOGRAPHS BY LISA ROMEREIN



BEFORE

**BEFORE** The 1980s bedroom was a plain box with old carpeting, a dinky fireplace surround, and a popcorn ceiling. **AFTER** Millwork details, wood floors, and a stylized arch give the room architectural interest.

Oak floor: Mullican

→ **CALL IT A CASE** of the “builder’s-special blues.” When Larry Burns and his wife bought their 1980s condo, in Southern California, the bedroom was a bare box with a popcorn ceiling, the original wall-to-wall carpeting, and a nondescript fireplace. So they called in interior designer Beth Bynon to give it makeover. The 14-by-24-foot space also had a “bowling alley” footprint, says Bynon, which was interrupted only by an oddly angled corner with two large windows and a ceiling that suddenly rose several feet, just beyond the fireplace.

Out went the carpeting, replaced by white oak flooring, while wainscoting and crown molding went in to wrap the room. Where plain-Jane tiles once formed a lackluster fireplace surround, Bynon used oversize linen-texture porcelain tile, extending it all the way to the ceiling. She filled the awkward window nook with a built-in bench seat and devised a quasi arch to conceal where the ceiling height bumps up. “Now there’s definition between the sleeping and sitting areas,” says the designer, who furnished the space with shades of cream, beige, and soft blue-green. “It is much more aesthetically pleasing and comfortable now,” says Larry. One (more) reason: That telltale popcorn ceiling is neatly hidden under a fresh layer of drywall.



• **before + after:**  
**bedroom**

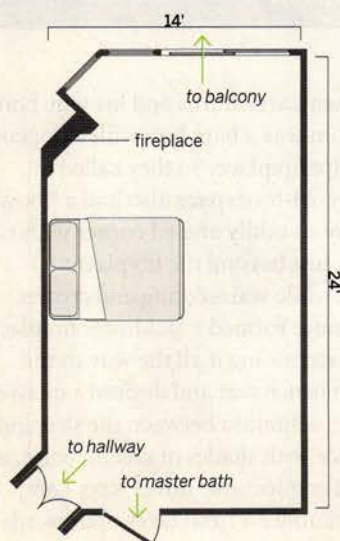
Ceiling-high tile and glass doors give the old gas fireplace more presence.  
A large-scale pendant now lights the sitting area.  
*Pendant: Shades of Light*

Drawers built into the base of the window seat are particularly useful in a master suite where the only closet is located in the bath. *Custom cabinetry: Southwest Contempo. Pull: Pottery Barn*



**before**

The room's long, narrow footprint had a few odd angles.

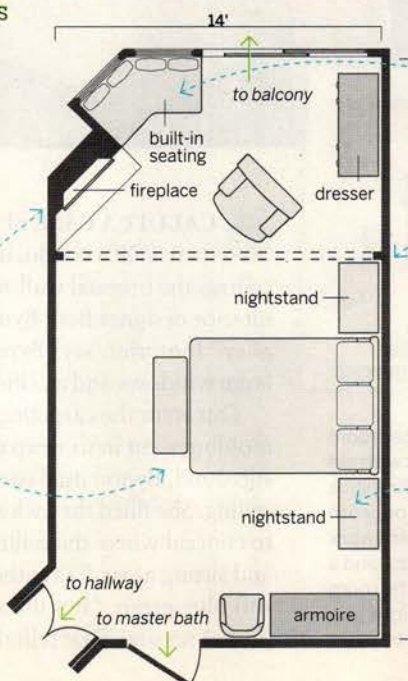


**after**

A clever built-in and other design solutions disguise the space's awkward features.

1] Made the fireplace more of a focal point by adding doors and creating a floor-to-ceiling fireplace surround.

2] Preserved a comfortable flow in the space by positioning the bed and other furniture along the long wall away from the doors.



3] Built in a bench seat to fill an oddly angled corner just beyond the fireplace.

4] Added a quasi-arch detail where the ceiling height suddenly changes, defining a seating area separate from the sleeping area.

5] Used generously sized bedside tables to balance the king-size bed and provide needed storage.





### pro advice

BETH BYNON, DESIGNER,  
OCEANSIDE, CALIF.

"Laying a wood floor with the planks running on a diagonal creates the illusion of more space by visually widening the room. It's also a nice casual touch."



The designer came up with a drywalled quasi arch to conceal a change in ceiling height and to separate the seating and sleeping areas.

The room's pale blue-green walls, creamy white paneling, neutral furnishings, and natural wood floor add up to a soothing, beach-inspired color palette.



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The curved cap, wall-frame, and base moldings of the wainscoting help soften the rectangular space. Creamy white furniture pieces set against it blend in rather than stand out. Lamp: HomeGoods





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# Animal-print wallpaper

No, we're not talking leopard spots. Here, 12 cheeky ways to take a walk on the wild side BY MEGAN BAKER + PHOTOGRAPHS BY YUNHEE KIM

→ **WE KNOW IT'S** a jungle out there, but in the comfort of your own home, life doesn't always need to be so serious. Wall coverings featuring creatures of land, sea, and sky tap into both your sense of style and your sense of fun. Pick some pedigreed pooches to liven up the powder room, or transform a white-box bedroom with a little help from *T. rex* and *Pteranodon*. Create a focal wall in the study with a sophisticated tortoiseshell repeat, or line the walls of a walk-in closet with lovebirds. Why not explore some uncovered territory? We've got a dozen playful options here to put you on the right track.



## 1 > wild kingdom

BREWSTER

**Made of:** Sheet vinyl

**Highlights:** Stars of the savanna stand out on sunny orange. \$68 for a 56-sq.-ft. roll; brewsterwallcovering.com for dealers

## 2 > flying fish

ABNORMALS ANONYMOUS

**Made of:** Uncoated paper

**Highlights:** Bold blowfish come in four colors; inks are VOC-free. \$10 per sq. ft.; abnormalsanonymous.com for retailers



• shopping



3

3> **shell game**

THIBAUT

**Made of:** Coated paper

**Highlights:** Hieroglyph-like turtles offer a subtle take on the animal trend. \$52 for a 30-sq.-ft. roll; thibautdesign.com for dealers



4

4> **cat tales**

SANDERSON STUDIOS

**Made of:** Uncoated paper

**Highlights:** These black cats are adapted from a 1930s textile design. About \$90 for a 34-sq.-ft. roll; decoratorsbest.com



5

5> **for the birds**

AIMEE WILDER

**Made of:** Coated paper

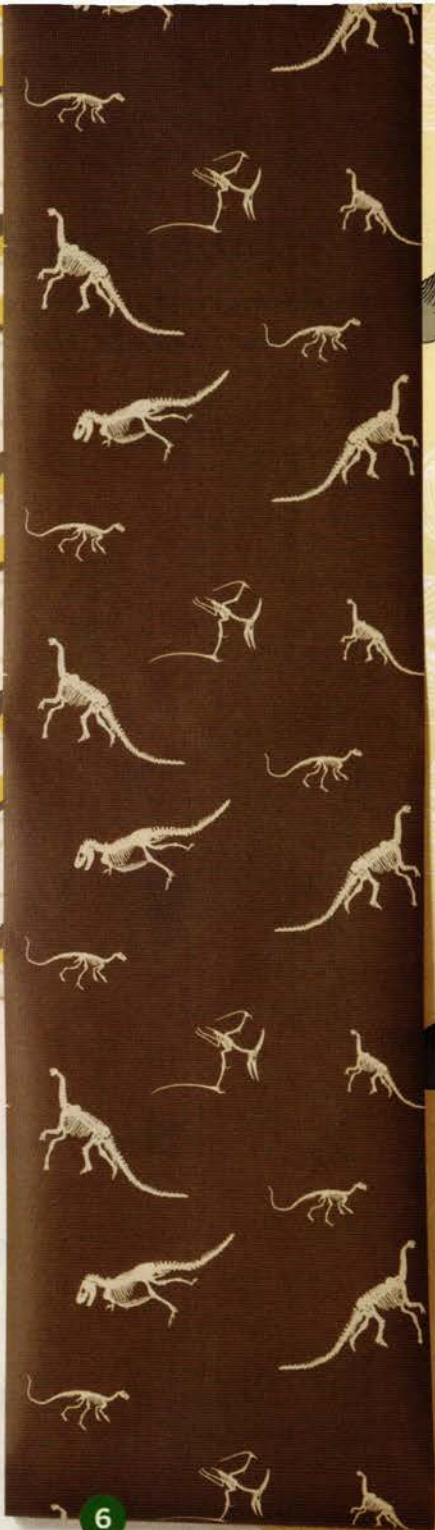
**Highlights:** Pretty lovebirds are silk-screened by hand; excess inks and fibers are all recycled. \$180 for a 30-sq.-ft. roll; aimeewilder.com

6> **prehistoric**

BREWSTER

**Made of:** Sheet vinyl

**Highlights:** This deep brown design suits an office or a kid's room. \$68 for a 56-sq.-ft. roll; brewsterwallcovering.com for dealers



6

7> **soaring style**

HYGGE & WEST

**Made of:** Uncoated paper

**Highlights:** This atmospheric screen print is available in eight colors, including this soft yellow. \$125 for a 67-sq.-ft. roll; hyggeandwest.com



7



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10

11

12

### 8> menagerie

THIBAUT

**Made of:** Coated paper

**Highlights:** Silhouetted animals echo the style of Mexican Otomi fabrics. \$39 for a 30-sq.-ft. roll; [thibautdesign.com](http://thibautdesign.com) for dealers

### 9> best nest

SANDERSON STUDIOS

**Made of:** Uncoated paper

**Highlights:** A faithful reproduction of an 1890s English design. About \$108 for a 34-sq.-ft. roll; [decoratorsbest.com](http://decoratorsbest.com)

### 10> zebra print

YORK

**Made of:** Coated paper

**Highlights:** Show your stripes with exotic animals frolicking on a soft blue background. \$68 for a 60-sq.-ft. roll; [yorkwall.com](http://yorkwall.com) for dealers

### 11> sea life

HYGGE & WEST

**Made of:** Coated paper

**Highlights:** Stylized seahorses escape from the ocean. \$125 for a 67-sq.-ft. roll; [hyggeandwest.com](http://hyggeandwest.com)

### 12> dog show

THIBAUT

**Made of:** Coated paper

**Highlights:** Pencil sketches give the canine pattern a handmade look. \$43 for a 30-sq.-ft. roll; [thibautdesign.com](http://thibautdesign.com) for dealers

### FIND OUT MORE

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# YOU NEVER BACK DOWN FROM A CHALLENGE. AND YOU WOULDN'T START NOW.

## YOU'VE REACHED THE AGE WHERE GIVING UP ISN'T WHO YOU ARE.

So if you're like millions of men who have some degree of erectile dysfunction (ED), talk to your doctor. Ask about VIAGRA (*sildenafil citrate*), and see if America's most prescribed ED treatment is right for you. 20 million men already have.

For more information go to [viagra.com](http://viagra.com) or call 1-888-484-2472 (1-888-4VIAGRA).

## THIS IS THE AGE OF TAKING ACTION. VIAGRA.

VIAGRA is prescription medication to treat erectile dysfunction (ED).

### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION BELOW.

Do not take VIAGRA if you take nitrates, often prescribed for chest pain, as this may cause a sudden, unsafe drop in blood pressure.

Discuss your general health status with your doctor to ensure that you are healthy enough to engage in sexual activity. If you experience chest pain, nausea, or any other discomforts during sex, seek immediate medical help.

In the rare event of an erection lasting more than 4 hours, seek immediate medical help to avoid long-term injury.

If you are older than age 65, or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg) of VIAGRA. If you are taking protease inhibitors, such as for the treatment of HIV, your doctor may recommend a 25-mg dose and may limit you to a maximum single dose of 25 mg of VIAGRA in a 48-hour period. If you have prostate problems or high blood pressure for which you take medicines called alpha blockers, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of VIAGRA.

In rare instances, men taking PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including VIAGRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision or hearing. If you experience sudden decrease or loss of vision or hearing, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including VIAGRA, and call a doctor right away.

VIAGRA should not be used with other ED treatments. VIAGRA should not be used with REVATIO or other products containing sildenafil.

VIAGRA does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less commonly, bluish vision, blurred vision, or sensitivity to light may briefly occur.

Please see Important Facts for VIAGRA on the following page or visit [viagra.com](http://viagra.com) for full prescribing information.

*You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.FDA.gov/medwatch](http://www.FDA.gov/medwatch) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.*

The blue diamond tablet shape is a registered trademark of Pfizer Inc.

 **VIAGRA<sup>®</sup>**  
(*sildenafil citrate*) tablets



## IMPORTANT FACTS



**VIAGRA®**  
(sildenafil citrate) tablets

(vi-AG-rah)

### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT VIAGRA

Never take VIAGRA if you take any medicines with nitrates. This includes nitroglycerin. Your blood pressure could drop quickly. It could fall to an unsafe or life-threatening level.

### ABOUT ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION (ED)

Erectile dysfunction means a man cannot get or keep an erection. Health problems, injury, or side effects of drugs may cause ED. The cause may not be known.

### ABOUT VIAGRA

VIAGRA is used to treat ED in men. When you want to have sex, VIAGRA can help you get and keep an erection when you are sexually excited. You cannot get an erection just by taking the pill. Only your doctor can prescribe VIAGRA.

VIAGRA does not cure ED.

VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or HIV. You will need to use a condom.

VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

### WHO IS VIAGRA FOR?

**Who should take VIAGRA?**

Men who have ED and whose heart is healthy enough for sex.

**Who should NOT take VIAGRA?**

- If you ever take medicines with nitrates:
  - Medicines that treat chest pain (angina), such as nitroglycerin or isosorbide mononitrate or dinitrate
- If you use some street drugs, such as "poppers" (amyl nitrate or nitrite)
- If you are allergic to anything in the VIAGRA tablet

### BEFORE YOU START VIAGRA

**Tell your doctor if you have or ever had:**

- Heart attack, abnormal heartbeats, or stroke
- Heart problems, such as heart failure, chest pain, angina, or aortic valve narrowing
- Low or high blood pressure
- Severe vision loss
- An eye condition called retinitis pigmentosa
- Kidney or liver problems
- Blood problems, such as sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- A deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- Stomach ulcers or any kind of bleeding problems

**Tell your doctor about all your medicines.** Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor if you take or use:

- Medicines called alpha-blockers to treat high blood pressure or prostate problems. Your blood pressure could suddenly get too low. You could get dizzy or faint. Your doctor may start you on a lower dose of VIAGRA.
- Medicines called protease inhibitors for HIV. Your doctor may prescribe a 25 mg dose. Your doctor may limit VIAGRA to 25 mg in a 48-hour period.
- Other methods to cause erections. These include pills, injections, implants, or pumps.
- A medicine called REVATIO. VIAGRA should not be used with REVATIO as REVATIO contains sildenafil, the same medicine found in VIAGRA.

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIAGRA

Side effects are mostly mild to moderate. They usually go away after a few hours. Some of these are more likely to happen with higher doses.

**The most common side effects are:**

- Headache
- Feeling flushed
- Upset stomach

**Less common side effects are:**

- Trouble telling blue and green apart or seeing a blue tinge on things
- Eyes being more sensitive to light
- Blurred vision

**Rarely, a small number of men taking VIAGRA have reported these serious events:**

- Having an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If the erection is not treated right away, long-term loss of potency could occur.
- Sudden decrease or loss of sight in one or both eyes. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. They may be caused by conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. If you have sudden vision changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Sudden decrease or loss of hearing. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. If you have sudden hearing changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Heart attack, stroke, irregular heartbeats, and death. We do not know whether these events are caused by VIAGRA or caused by other factors. Most of these happened in men who already had heart problems.

If you have any of these problems, stop VIAGRA. Call your doctor right away.

### HOW TO TAKE VIAGRA

**Do:**

- Take VIAGRA only the way your doctor tells you. VIAGRA comes in 25 mg, 50 mg, and 100 mg tablets. Your doctor will tell you how much to take.
- If you are over 65 or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg).
- Take VIAGRA about 1 hour before you want to have sex. VIAGRA starts to work in about 30 minutes when you are sexually excited. VIAGRA lasts up to 4 hours.

**Don't:**

- Do not take VIAGRA more than once a day.
- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor tells you. If you think you need more VIAGRA, talk with your doctor.
- Do not start or stop any other medicines before checking with your doctor.

### NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information OR
- Go to [www.viagra.com](http://www.viagra.com) or call (888) 4-VIAGRA (484-2472).



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# Traditional-meets-modern dining space

Playful mid-century pieces lighten up a designer's family-friendly bungalow

BY GILLIAN BARTH + PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN GRANEN

➔ **AN INFUSION OF** modern fixtures and furnishings will banish stuffiness from any traditional space. Consider this family hangout, where a doodle-ready chalkboard—the starting point for the design—is set alongside flat-panel wainscoting with a coffered ceiling overhead. The trestle table reflects the 1904 home's Craftsman aesthetic, while curvy Danish pendant lights and Hans Wegner chairs play off the classic millwork. “We love modern, beautifully designed things, and we also love old buildings,” says homeowner and designer Kim Clements, creative director of Seattle-based J.A.S. Design Build. “It’s all about authenticity and function.” The chairs are comfortable; the lights cast a warm, glare-free glow. And there’s always room for one more at the table. Like to create a similar mix? Read on.

## wishbone chairs

The curved back of this well-priced take on an iconic 1949 design makes it comfortable for lingering around the table. \$159; [overstock.com](http://overstock.com)



## hard-wearing floors

Get the hardwood look the easy way with prefinished engineered oak boards that click into place. \$3.89 per sq. ft.; [lumberliquidators.com](http://lumberliquidators.com)

## pedestal server

A simple white raised ceramic plate turns mealtime staples into a centerpiece. Pedestal plate, \$15; [worldmarket.com](http://worldmarket.com)



PHOTOS: (FLOORING, RUG, CAKE PEDESTAL, CHAIR, CHALKBOARD COMPONENTS) YUNHEE KIM; (PAINT DABS) BRIAN HENN/TIME INC. DIGITAL STUDIO





get this look  
for less

### fun doses of color

Clements chose a fresh palette of greens and blues for the walls and table base. Russian Olive C2-941 and Maine C2-695, \$45 per gallon; c2paint.com



### mid-century lamp

The pendants at left are PH5 lamps, a design produced since 1958. This one, with its similarly tiered shape, is a fraction of the price. \$150; lampsplus.com



### corked bottle

Serve OJ in a glass bottle for a bright morning start. \$7; save-on-crafts.com



### trestle table

The homeowners' custom table is topped with salvaged wood. Paint the base of this one for a similarly bold effect. \$1,200; wayfair.com



### striped rug

The colorful stripes on this indoor-outdoor rug are easy to keep clean. \$200; overstock.com

### DIY

### DIY chalkboard

The homeowners scored their salvaged slate from a school, but it's easy to add a whimsical chalkboard with supplies from the home center. Brush two coats of chalkboard paint directly onto bare drywall or plaster, then frame the panels with flat stock molding. Create a ledge for chalk with cove-shaped molding that has a curved profile you can install facing upward. ■







IMAGE CREDIT:  
Silva Timber Products Ltd



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# Demystifying LEDs

For those with nagging questions, we've got answers

BY JOHN MORELL + PHOTOGRAPHS BY TED MORRISON

➔ **MAYBE YOU'VE ALREADY DONE** the righteous thing and swapped out all your energy-sucking incandescents and not-universally-useful CFLs for long-lasting, mercury-free, energy-saving LED bulbs. More likely, you've dropped in a few here and there, with mixed results. LED bulbs can still be cold, alien-looking things with odd shapes, splayed fins, and dazzling price tags. But they keep getting better—and cheaper. If you haven't already, now is the time to start making the switch, and we're going to explain how and why.

**The first LED bulbs I tried made my living room look like a hospital ward. How do I avoid that stark white light?**

Newer models do a better job of diffusing the tiny directional beams that LEDs generate. But even so, you may want to start with lower-lumen (meaning less bright) bulbs. LED bulbs—which house electronic circuits and light-emitting diodes that act as semiconductors rather than filaments—now come in “color temperatures,” including warm tones that can mimic incandescent bulbs and flatter furnishings, such as varnished wood. Interestingly, cooler ones are often recommended for outdoors because they bring out the green in foliage, says Seattle-based lighting designer Christopher Thompson.





**There's enough small print on the package to blind a lawyer. Can you translate?**

Look for the requisite Lighting Facts label, which posts the Kelvin (K) rating: The closer to the lower end of 2700K, the warmer the light (yes, that does sound backward). Bulbs are also rated for their ability to render color accurately, using what's called the Color Rendering Index (CRI). Incandescents, which do especially well with warmer colors, score 100. You may need to check the manufacturer's website for the CRI rating; despite all that small print, it's not always on the package.

**I'm confused about watts and lumens. Life was so much easier when I could replace one 60-watt bulb with another!**

Lumens are a better way to compare brightness.

Watts measure how much electricity a bulb draws, not light output, which varies, since not all 60-watt incandescents are equally efficient. More important, 60-watt-equivalent LED bulbs may seem brighter, since the light is cooler. So if you're shopping for a 60-watt equivalent, consider trying a 40-watt equivalent instead. Its 450 lumens may be bright enough.

**I love my recessed cans but can't find an LED flood that has a broad, warm light.**

Look for a reflector bulb, such as the BR30 type, with a slight bulge near the face of the bulb. Information on the package should say whether the bulb is a "spot" or a "flood," and may also include the angle of the light beam.

If you want a flood, look for an angle of more than 50 degrees or the acronym WFL, for *wide flood*. (SP stands for *spot*). Alternatives for recessed cans also include LED surface-mount panel fixtures, such as ones made by Pixi Lighting.

**Another problem: The dimmer is no longer able to bring the light way down.**

Traditional dimmers are often unable to operate LED bulbs: They may flicker or fail to respond—a syndrome known as "dead travel." In other words, don't assume a bulb labeled dimmable will jibe with the dimmer you've got. Go to the bulb maker's website to see which dimmers go with which bulbs—or consult the Lutron LED Control Center of Excellence, which runs a toll-free hotline for frustrated consumers: 877-DIM-LED8. Smartphones may turn out

to be the ultimate solution; Philips already makes bulbs whose color and brightness are controlled by an app.

**Can I stick an LED bulb in any fixture?**

Pretty much. Just match up your old bulbs' bases with LED versions, taking care to also compare lumens, or brightness levels (again, a lower-lumen bulb may be more pleasing). Some new bulbs are surprisingly good at mimicking the familiar Edison, and one company, Switch, has introduced the first three-way LED bulb. To soften the beam and make it less direct, manufacturers install multiple LEDs, reflectors, lenses, and diffusers within the bulbs. Some bulbs look a little funny until you turn them on or put them behind a shade or inside a glass globe. But be aware that some LED bulbs cannot

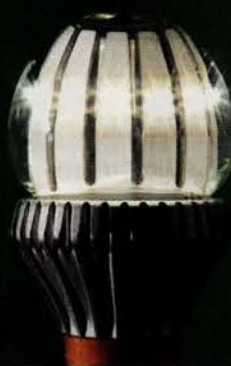
## A POST-EDISON SAMPLER

The selection keeps changing, and prices keep falling. Don't assume a dimmable bulb will work with your dimmer: Check the bulb maker's website



**GE 60-Watt LED, 800 lumens**

Along with its rakish exposed fins, this all-purpose bulb carries a coveted Energy Star label. It sheds even light but can't be dimmed. \$20; samsclub.com



**Switch Lighting 60W A19**

This bulb can go inside an enclosed globe—most LED bulbs can't—which produces an even glow. It's dimmable down to 20 percent. \$35; homedepot.com



**Cree 40W**

Fans love how this well-priced bulb looks and lights like an incandescent. What's more, it works with most standard dimmers. \$9.97; at The Home Depot stores



be used inside enclosed fixtures or capped recessed lights. (Read the fine print.) As Ray Johnston, a staff scientist at 3M, explains, LED bulbs have "heat sinks"—fins or another way out for the heat generated when energy passes through the semiconductors—which help them use much less wattage and emit much less heat than incandescent bulbs do. But on the flip side, LEDs are more sensitive to their surrounding temperature and need a decent amount of airflow to work well. Overheating won't make a bulb explode, but it will shorten its life. As for cold temperatures, unlike CFLs, LEDs do fine outdoors.

#### How about replacements for unusual bulbs?

Look for LED pin bulbs that can replace halogens, small

bulbs for candle-style fixtures, and specialized LED fixtures, such as undercabinet strip lights from companies like Kichler and Häfele and battery-operated lights for drawers and closets from the likes of GE and IKEA. Keep in mind that the aforementioned airflow issue has led to odd bulb shapes, styles, and fin displays. Ask if the store has a no-questions-asked return policy. While you're at it, ask about the bulb's compatibility with your dimmer. And keep your receipts.

#### I tend to holler when someone leaves the lights on. But, it turns out, all that off-and-on wears out CFL bulbs. How about LEDs?

Repeated off-and-on will not harm them or reduce their life expectancy, and energy is energy, so why waste it? But LEDs are energy misers, so no need to obsess about

turning them off every time you step out of the room.

#### Is there a best place to start?

Swap in LEDs in areas where lights are on the longest, like the garage and porch, and any spot where changing the bulb is a pain; one of the great things about LEDs is how long they last, typically 15 years or longer. A \$12 LED bulb that meets EPA's Energy Star requirements and is left on 3 hours a day will pay for itself in roughly two years; in California, in only one year, EPA experts say. To reduce the sticker shock of more-expensive LED bulbs, take advantage of utility and other

rebates, which could reduce the price to \$5—possibly right in the store. For details, enter your ZIP code on the Special Offers and Rebates page at [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

#### Should I be tempted by cheapo bulbs?

Buyer beware. Though prices are falling, remember: The real thing holds a semiconductor, barely uses energy, and boasts a ridiculously long lifetime. Buy Energy Star bulbs and fixtures when you can; they must have a three-year guarantee and meet performance standards, like a minimum CRI rating of 80 and a 25,000-hour lifetime, before EPA lets them into the club.

Now go ahead, and let there be light. ■



**Philips Soft White Br30 65W Dimmable Floodlight**  
This seamless-looking high-lumen flood is ideal for kitchen task work and can be dimmed during dinner. \$20; [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com)



**Great Value Soft White LED A19**  
This bright all-purpose bulb is dimmable and works with enclosed fixtures. \$9.88; [walmart.com](http://walmart.com)



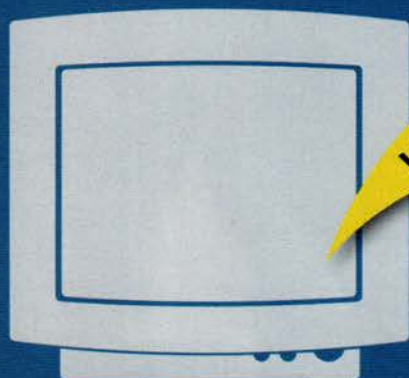
**Feit Electric Dimmable Chandelier Bulb**  
You'll want to dim multiples of this clear-glass, candelabra-base bulb and couple it with candlelight when company comes. \$18; [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)



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# Better turf with less work

Simplify your lawn-care routine for lush results without so much fuss **BY OWEN DELL**



→ AH, SPRING, when longer days and wetter weather bring your yard back to life. All that greening up around you is sure to inspire daydreams of your favorite backyard pursuits—barefoot badminton? croquet with the kids?—and these may lead you to overcompensate for a lagging lawn-care regimen. Don't do it! Running the sprinkler whenever the sun shines, dousing turf with extra fertilizer, or clipping grass super short in hopes of restoring its velvety green can do more harm than good. They'll actually weaken grass, leaving it vulnerable to drought, weeds, and pests.

The good news is that you don't need to shift into overdrive to nurture lush turf. Turn the page for a bare-bones approach that will yield a more resilient and sustainable lawn—and save you time and trouble, too.



## What are weeds trying to tell you?

These opportunistic plants pop up in response to a particular growing condition, one that's good for them but bad for your lawn's health. Use them as a guide to fixing the state of your soil and taking back your turf



### CRABGRASS

#### CONDITION:

Scalped turf

**FIX:** Raise the height of your mower blades.



### COMMON PLANTAIN

#### CONDITION:

Wet or slow-draining soil

**FIX:** Reduce watering and regrade for better drainage. Or replace the area of lawn with a rain garden.



### WHITE CLOVER

#### CONDITION:

Low soil fertility

**FIX:** Run a soil test and apply organic fertilizer as recommended.

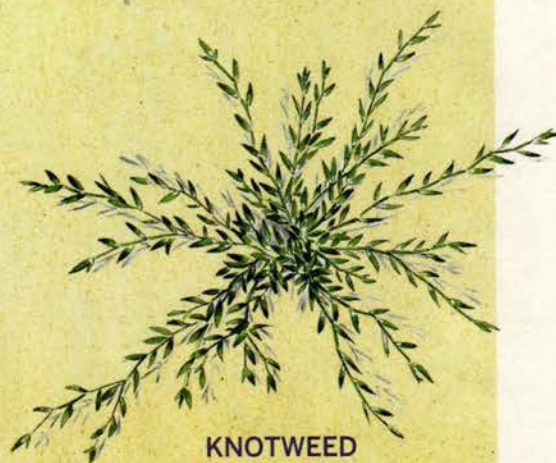


### CREeping CHARLIE

#### CONDITION:

Too much shade

**FIX:** Overseed with shade-tolerant grass varieties.



### KNOTWEED

#### CONDITION:

Compacted or heavy soil

**FIX:** Aerate areas prone to heavy foot traffic yearly.

### Let the grass grow a little bit

It's best to keep turf on the taller side: 3 to 4 inches high for cool-season grasses, such as fine fescues and Kentucky bluegrass, and 1 to 2 inches high for warm-season varieties, including Bermuda grass and centipede grass. Mowing lower than the recommended height, known as scalping, sends grass into shock. The shorter blades can't deliver as much energy to the roots, causing them to atrophy. Without a deep, vigorous root system, turf is

less equipped to handle drought and crowd out competitors. Weed seeds easily take hold in the exposed, sunlit soil of a scalped lawn, and insects and diseases move in while the lawn's defenses are down. While you might think that cutting short buys time between mowings, the opposite is true; scalping a lawn actually speeds up growth because the grass is eager to replace the foliage that's been removed.

On the flip side, you can also do damage by letting grass become so

overgrown that you're cutting off more than one-third of its length at any one time. Taking off that much top growth all at once also shocks the plant. Always set your mower blades at the turf's recommended height, and keep them sharp to ensure clean cuts that heal quickly. (For a sharpening how-to, go to [thisoldhouse.com/apr2014](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2014).)

### Water deeply, less often

Running a sprinkler daily does a lawn no favors. Turf naturally



responds to droughts by developing a deep root system, maximizing its ability to absorb soil moisture, and if dry conditions persist, a deeply rooted lawn merely goes dormant until the next rain. If you overwater, however, roots stay within the top few inches of the soil's surface, making the grass dependent on you for its survival.

To judge whether a lawn actually needs water, simply step on it. If the blades don't bounce back, they're wilting and ready for a drink. Most lawns need about an inch of water per week in summer, less when the weather is cool or rainy. If you're unsure about how long to leave on your sprinklers, place a few empty tuna cans out in the yard and water for 15 minutes, then measure the water's depth in the cans. If it's a quarter-inch deep, for instance, you'll know the lawn needs an hour-long session each week. This test can also reveal deficiencies in an irrigation system's coverage; adjust accordingly to avoid overwatering an entire lawn just to green up a few missed spots. And for extra savings, consider investing in a "smart" controller, which automatically waters based on actual weather conditions.

### Stop overfeeding

Fertilizer is too often seen as a quick fix for straggly turf. But bagged lawn fertilizer is far from a cure-all. It's packed with nitrogen—listed first in numbered formulas such as 4:1:2 or 3:1:2, which describe the ratio of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium—to spur lots of fresh top growth. Tender new leaves are more susceptible to physical damage and more attractive to pests. Even worse, they're produced at the expense of the plant's developing roots. Most turf varieties only need

1 to 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet annually, half applied in spring and the other half in early fall, when the grass is actively growing. Fast-release chemical fertilizers offer quick results, but slow-release options are less likely to burn foliage, and the nutrients break down more gradually, making them easier for plants to absorb.

Spreading fertilizer isn't the only way to green up a lawn, however. Overseeding traditional turf with recently developed "micro-clover" will keep a lawn looking lush year-round, thanks to its ever-green foliage and its ability to deliver atmospheric nitrogen to the roots of neighboring plants. This fine-textured clover (\$30 per pound; hancockseed.com) was specifically bred to blend well with turfgrasses and spread evenly, avoiding a patchy look.

Last, don't waste time bagging grass clippings. Allowing them to remain on the lawn after mowing can supply up to 25 percent of a

lawn's annual nitrogen requirement, which saves you from buying as much store-bought fertilizer.

### Know when to call it quits

Despite its resilient nature, turf sometimes refuses to take off. If your lawn continues to struggle, do a soil test and make an honest assessment of the growing site. Favorable conditions generally include at least 6 hours of sun and well-draining soil. In shady areas, you can gently thin tree canopies to allow more light to filter through, or overseed bare spots with shade-tolerant grass varieties.

In some cases, it may be less work to forgo a lawn altogether. For instance, you might consider replacing a struggling patch with a bed of shade-loving perennials or, in arid climates, swapping turf for a tapestry of sturdy groundcovers.

But where turf does work, a smart care-and-feeding regimen encourages a top-quality lawn—and frees up the leisure time to enjoy it.



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YARD?**

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## Upgrade your grass seed

Researchers have recently developed blends of cool- and warm-season grasses that require even less nitrogen, water, and mowing than traditional turf. Because these slow growers have different needs—and looks—from more common varieties, seeding over existing lawn isn't always recommended. But if you're starting from scratch, here are three mixes worth trying.

### No-Mow Lawn Seed Mix

PRAIRIE NURSERY

This blend features six cultivars of fine fescues that are all native to the Northern Hemisphere and thrive in full sun or partial shade. Mow it monthly—or not at all. Once established, it requires minimal water or fertilizer, and weeds struggle to take hold because of its interlocking root system. From \$6.95 per pound; [prairienursery.com](http://prairienursery.com)

### Ultra Low Maintenance Lawn Seed

PEARL'S PREMIUM

It took the company 10,000 field trials to fine-tune its blends of drought-tolerant grasses native to North America and Europe. Monthly mowing is recommended, as is an annual dose of fertilizer. Three mixes with different sun requirements are offered, including one for deep shade. \$8 per pound; [pearlspremium.com](http://pearlspremium.com)

### Habiturf

LADY BIRD JOHNSON  
WILDFLOWER CENTER

A blend of grasses native to the American Southwest, this mix is well suited to hot, arid climates. It requires occasional mowing and needs watering once or twice a month during the growing season. If you leave clippings on the lawn after mowing, there's no need to ever fertilize. \$40 per pound; [wildflower.org/habiturf](http://wildflower.org/habiturf) ■



# Standing coatrack

Construct a coatrack in the wood of your choice or buy one ready-made and hang up your hat

BY PAUL HOPE + PHOTOGRAPH BY RYANN FORD

→ **THIS TIMELESS** accent piece is more than just a catchall for outer layers. It's a welcome addition to any entryway, providing seasonal storage without the commitment of installing a wall-mount rack. The Arts and Crafts-inspired example here has clean lines that feel at home in a house from any era. If you decide to build one, you'll cut the parts from  $\frac{3}{4}$  stock, which is just under 2 inches thick. Lumberyards offer this dimension in a number of wood species, but to stay true to this piece's period roots, go for oak. If you'd rather buy a coatrack, you'll find basic options built from birch and veneers, and pricier models cut from solid cherry or oak. Whether you opt to build or buy, your new hall tree will make your entryway as organized as it is inviting.



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Shown: Quartet  
4 Hook Coat Rack,  
\$196; [wayfair.com](http://wayfair.com)



## BUILD IT

Use thick oak boards and simple joinery to build a charming stand for coats and hats

**COST** \$100

**TIME** 4 hours

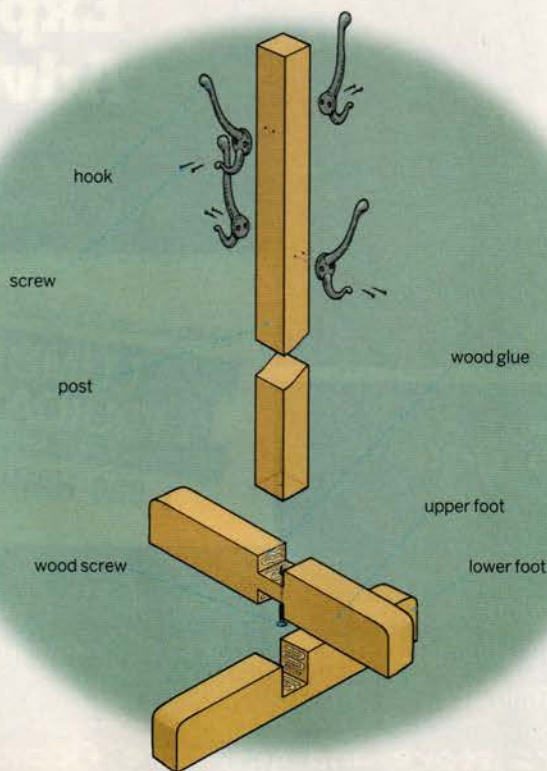
**DIFFICULTY** Easy, but forming a snug lap joint requires precision.

**1] Make the feet.** Use a miter saw to size the parts according to the cut list at [thisoldhouse.com/apr2014](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2014). You'll form the stand by crossing two feet at a half-lap joint. To mark your notch cutout lines, trace the width of the  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch stock across the top edge of each foot, at its center. On the upper foot, use a square to transfer these lines to the opposite edge. To notch

the top of the lower foot, set your miter saw to stop at a depth of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Use the saw to carefully cut along the inside of each line, then make a series of kerfs between the two cuts. Clean up the bottom of the notch with a chisel and a rubber mallet. Use the same method to notch the upper foot, making a 1-inch-deep notch in the bottom and a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-deep notch in the top to accept the post. To round off the top corners of the feet, trace the curve of a 1-quart paint can, cut the lines with a jigsaw, and sand the cuts smooth.

**2] Assemble the rack.** Clamp the post with its base overhanging a workbench. Dry-fit the upper foot and mark the center axis. Using a drill/driver with a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch combination countersink bit, drill through the upper foot and into the end of the post. Pop the foot off, apply wood glue to the faces of the notch, and fasten the foot to the post with a 3-inch wood screw. Apply wood glue to the notch on the lower foot and clamp it in place, crossed with the upper foot, to form the stand.

**3] Finish the rack.** Use 220-grit paper to lightly sand the surface of the rack, and finish it in paint or stain. Install coat hooks on all four sides, staggering the heights to accommodate jackets and hats of different sizes.



## BUY IT

Pricier pieces offer premium hardwood construction and a wider range of finishes

**\$112**

### the basic model

A handsome coat rack built from birch, finished in a rich brown stain. [lowes.com](http://lowes.com)



**\$163**

### the mid-range model

This stately stand is made from oak and oak veneer and comes in three different stains. [theclassyhome.com](http://theclassyhome.com)



**\$200**

### the luxury model

A made-to-order option constructed from your choice of walnut, cherry, or oak. [amanashops.com](http://amanashops.com)





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# Build a rain barrel

Enclose a plastic bin with stock lumber to make a water-wise garden feature

BY JOHN CASEY + PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURA MOSS



**COST** \$150

**TIME** Two days

**DIFFICULTY** Easy. The box is simple to build and the connections are a snap.



**COLLECTING RAINWATER** is a no-brainer for gardening. It's the ugly black barrels we could do without. So here's a plan you can use to build your own rain barrel, one that's both eco-friendly and aesthetically pleasing. It's a simple project, thanks to an off-the-shelf diverter kit that connects to a downspout. The barrel is essentially a sturdy wood shell built around a repurposed plastic garbage bin that serves as the reservoir. Made of rot-resistant lumber, the barrel goes together with easy lap and butt joints and some deck screws. Decorative exterior battens dress it up, and you can customize them and paint the barrel to fit any style of house or garden.

Follow along as *This Old House* contributor Christopher Beidel, owner of Pernt, a handmade-furniture company in Brooklyn, New York, leads you through the simple steps it takes to green up your garden.

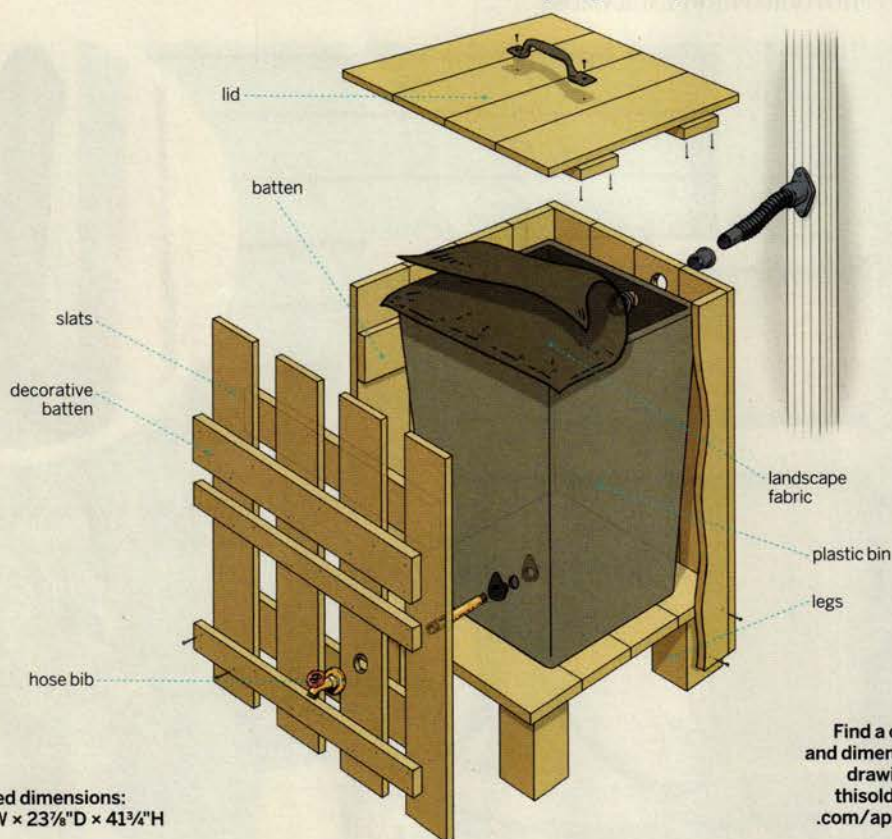
Gutter connection (inset): DIY Rain Barrel Construction and Installation Kit with Downspout Diverter, \$27; [rainbrothers.com](http://rainbrothers.com)



## DAY-TO-DAY TIMELINE

**SATURDAY** Assemble the box (Steps 1–5).

**SUNDAY** Install the bin, attach the diverter, and make the connections (Steps 6–7).



Finished dimensions:  
25½"W × 23⅞"D × 41¾"H

Find a cut list  
and dimensional  
drawings at  
[thisoldhouse.com/apr2014](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2014).

### TOOLS

miter saw  
bar clamps  
drill/driver  
⅜-by-3-inch drill bit  
combination square  
kit-supplied hole saws

### MATERIALS

**1×6** Get 10 treated 8-footers for the slats, lid, and floor.  
**⅝×4** Get three treated 8-footers for the interior battens.  
**1×4** Get one treated 8-footer for the decorative batten.  
**1×3** Get two treated 8-footers for the decorative battens.  
**4×4** Get one treated 6-footer.  
**1¼-, 1½-, 2-inch deck screws**  
**door-pull handle**  
**square plastic trash bin**  
**downspout diverter kit**  
**½-inch stainless-steel pan-head screws** to secure the landscape fabric  
**landscape fabric or window screening**



## 1 MAKE THE SIDES

**A] Cut the slats and battens.** On a miter saw, cut to length the 1×6 vertical slats for the barrel. Also cut the ⅝×4 interior battens.

**B] Assemble the parts.** Lay out four 1×6 slats on your work surface. Place ⅝-inch spacers between the boards, and clamp the assembly together. The interior battens sit 5½ inches from the top and bottom of the slats. The pairs of battens for two sides are inset 1¼ inches on either end to allow space for the battens of the other two sides, which run flush to the edges of the slats. Secure the battens with 1½-inch deck screws. Make the other three sides the same way.



## 2 BUILD THE BOX

**A] Assemble three sides.** Set two bar clamps on your work surface, and place a side with the flush battens between the jaws. Stand the two sides with inset battens into the clamps and tighten the assembly. Use a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch bit in your drill/driver to make pilot holes along the corners—through the face of the slats of the upright sides and into the edges of those on the flat side, as shown. Secure the edges with  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch deck screws.

**B] Add the last side.** Loosen the clamps, and stand the assembly up on your work surface. Set the fourth side in place, as shown. Drill pilot holes, and screw it to its adjoining sides.

**C] Install the floorboards.** Measure the dimensions of the interior, just above the lower battens, to get an accurate length for the floorboards. On your miter saw, cut four  $1\times6$  pieces to length. With the box on its side, place a floorboard against the top edges of the lower battens, and secure it with  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch deck screws, as shown. Install the other three floorboards.



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## 3 MAKE THE BASE

**A] Cut the legs.** On your miter saw, cut  $4\times4$  lumber into the four legs that will support the box. You can make these leg pieces shorter or longer if the surface where you will install your barrel is sloped or irregular.

**B] Install the legs.** Use a piece of  $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch scrap to keep one leg level at the corner, and butt it up against the floor. With a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch bit in your drill/driver, make two pilot holes through the slat and batten of the side and into the top portion of the leg. Drive 2-inch deck screws through those holes and into the legs. Repeat the process on the other face of the leg, then install the other three legs.





#### SEE HOW ITS DONE

To watch a video of this project, blip this page or go to [thisoldhouse.com/apr2014](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2014)

## 4 BUILD THE LID

**A] Cut the boards.** On a miter saw, cut the 1×6 lid slats and 5/4×4 battens to fit. Lay them out on your work surface, with 1/8-inch spacers between the slats. Clamp the assembly together. Place the battens 2 inches from the sides and ends of the slats. Drill pilot holes, and fasten the battens in place with 1 1/2-inch deck screws, two in each slat in an offset pattern.

**B] Install the door-pull handle.** Flip the lid over. Center the handle on the lid. Use your drill/driver and the fasteners that came with the handle to secure it.



## 5 ADD DECORATIVE BATTENS

**A] Lay out your design.** Use your combination square to transfer level lines around the barrel to make sure the ends of the battens meet correctly at the corners.

**B] Cut the boards.** On your miter saw, cut to fit the battens for the decorative bands on the exterior of the barrel. The top band is made of 1×4 boards; the bottom two bands are 1×3. (Of course, you can choose any pattern you like.) Remember that two boards of each batten band are longer than the other two to allow for overlapping butt joints at the corners.

**C] Attach the battens.** Set the barrel on its side on your work surface with 1-inch scrap underneath. Put a bar clamp over the top to hold a batten in place. Use your drill/driver with a 1/8-inch bit to make pilot holes, then secure the batten with 1 1/4-inch deck screws. Repeat the process on the other battens on that side. Rotate the box on the work surface and repeat the process on the next side, and so on, until the bands wrap completely around the barrel.





## 6 CUT THE OPENINGS

**A] Make the inlet.** Put the plastic bin inside the barrel. With a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -by-3-inch bit in your drill/driver, make a hole through the barrel wall and through the bin so that the hole ends up 1 inch below the plastic rim. (Go through the middle of a slat.) Then, with the kit-supplied hole saw in your drill/driver, follow the pilot hole and cut through the barrel. Remove the bin and make a matching hole in it, using a scrap block inside to protect your hand.

**B] Make the outlet.** Put the bin in the barrel. On the opposite side, use the same bit to drill a pilot hole through the barrel wall and the bin about 2 inches above the bottom of the bin. Remove the bin. Put the smaller, kit-supplied hole saw in your drill/driver, and, using the pilot hole as a guide, make matching holes in the barrel and the bin. Insert the threaded rubber grommet into the hole in the bin, as shown.

**C] Install the hose bib.** Since the walls of the bin slope away from the barrel, we attached the hose bib to a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-by-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch brass nipple to bridge the gap. The nipple runs through the barrel and threads into the rubber grommet in the bin to make a water-tight connection.



**TIP** Cover the top of the plastic bin with landscape fabric or window screening to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in the water.



## 7 MAKE THE CONNECTIONS

**A] Cut the downspout.** Measure the finished height of the inlet hole in the barrel. For proper flow, locate a spot on your downspout 1 inch higher than the inlet. Using the kit-supplied hole saw, drill a hole in the downspout. Watch the sharp edges, and wear gloves when you insert the diverter valve. Set the barrel in place.

**B] Connect the flexible hose.** The kit comes with a length of hose. Insert one end of the hose into the diverter valve and the other through the barrel and into the inlet. Now, do a little rain dance. 🌧️

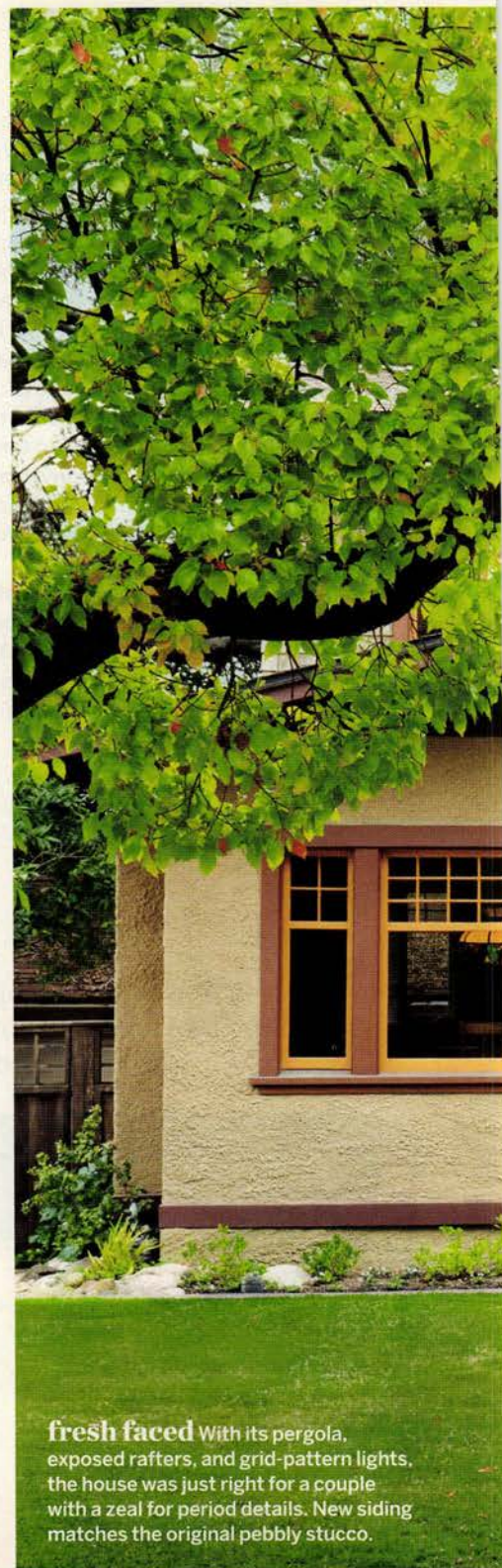


# Recrafting a

# 1915

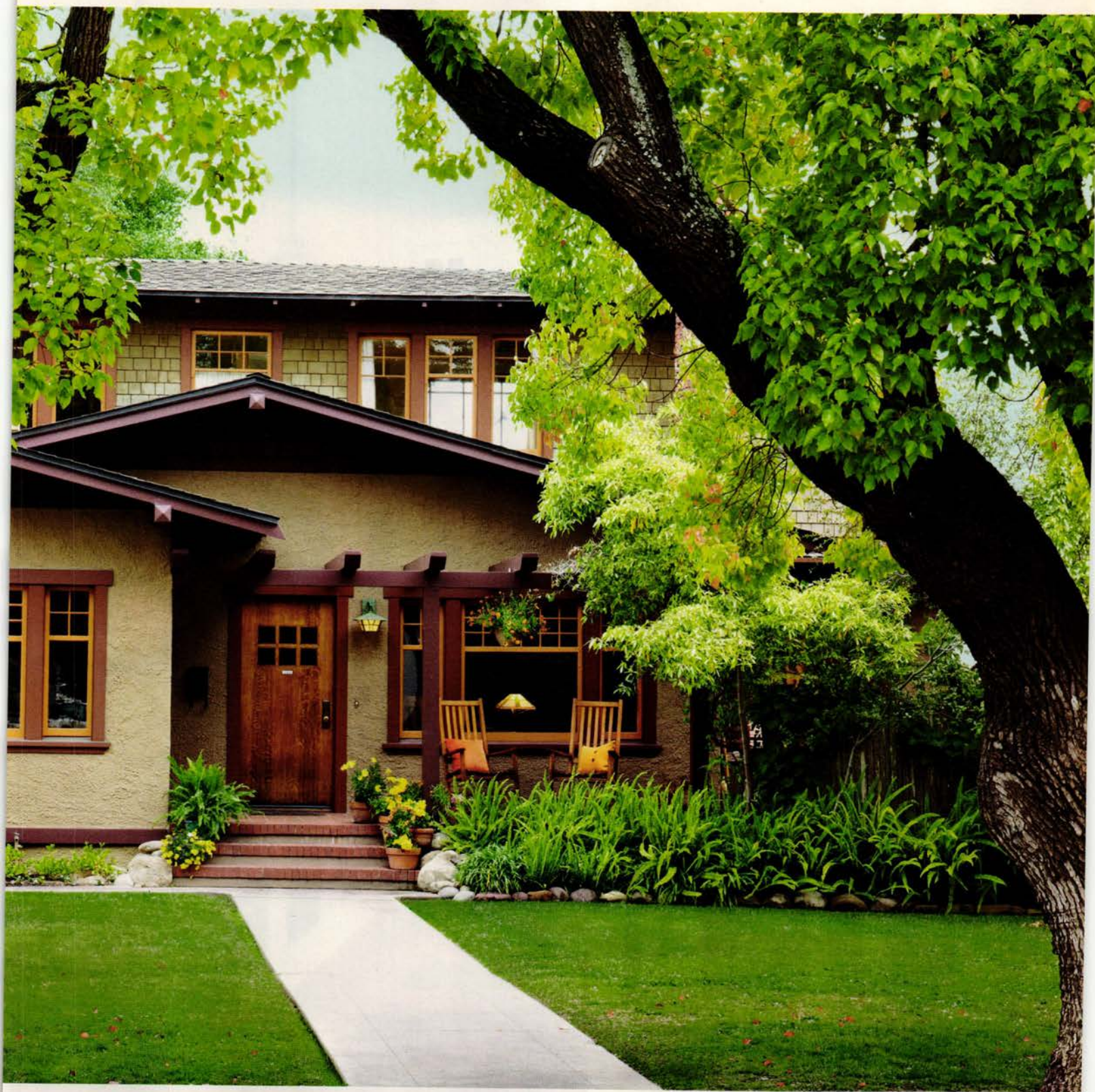
# Craftsman

With the help of its can-do owners, a worn-out house gets back to its original spirited self



**fresh faced** With its pergola, exposed rafters, and grid-pattern lights, the house was just right for a couple with a zeal for period details. New siding matches the original pebbly stucco.





by **Deborah Baldwin**  
photography by **Victoria Pearson**  
produced by **Colette Scanlon**  
styling by **Sunday Hendrickson**



# R

Ripping up floors, yanking out windows, wrestling with vent ducts, sleeping in dust, eating out of a plug-in frying pan—hey, “it makes a house your own,” says Pierre Rademaker, the brawn behind the redo of the house he shares with his wife, Terri, in San Luis Obispo, California. “It means you own it, emotionally.... There’s something primal about creating your own shelter. You can’t really delegate it.”

Easy for him to say. An irrepressible DIYer with a helper-enabler of a spouse, Pierre doesn’t mind crouching over yellowed linoleum adhesive and scraping until his arm practically falls off—or the floor cries uncle. Asked what it was like to strip layers of paint off pitted,



**nimble new cook space** ABOVE: The kitchen island’s glass-front cabinets echo the home’s Craftsman windows. RIGHT: Other period touches—shallow countertops, a wall-mount faucet—mingle with the latest appliances, including a leggy six-burner range and a paneled dishwasher.







**perfect fit** ABOVE: Pierre and Terri Rademaker flank the island prep space, which doubles as a landing spot for items from the wide stand-alone fridge. To ensure smooth traffic flow around the sink, they shaved 5 inches off the countertop depth and recessed the dishwasher 4 inches into the wall.

nearly century-old brick and Douglas fir, the couple wax philosophical. "It was stylish to paint woodwork white in the 1930s," Pierre says graciously. Terri adds, both of them laughing, "Unpainting it is a lot of work!"

The two long ago earned their tool belts. At 15, early achiever Pierre ripped out his parents' kitchen while they were visiting Europe. More recently, he and Terri renovated a ranch house, where they raised their kids.

At that point, most couples would relax. But in time they began craving the ideal empty nest—something compact and a little needy, with history and character, within walking distance of town. They found it one day while driving down a street lined with an architectural walking tour's worth of older homes: a Craftsman-Prairie mix hiding behind a FOR SALE sign. "I yelled 'Stop!'" Terri says. "Literally."

They backed up and took a look. The house was in iffy shape, with newish siding that hadn't worn

well, and it was also overpriced. But the place, with its early version of an open plan, radiated potential. Built in 1915 by William J. Smith, who had a hand in the construction of William Randolph Hearst's San Simeon estate, it had held on to its original low-pitched gables, exposed rafter tails, windows with upper divided lights, and quartersawn-oak front door. In an unusual, charming touch, the second floor stepped back, as if to say, "This cross-gabled house is but a bungalow."

"We made a bid, which was rejected," Terri says, "then a few months later went back. This time they accepted it if we took the house 'as is.'" As in: needing new plumbing, wiring, roof—you know the rest.

Soon enough, they were moved in and up to their elbows in paint-bubbling heat guns, chemical pastes, and infrared blistering devices. "You want something that can handle lead paint safely," Pierre says. "It isn't quick."

The original floor plans were long gone, but





**beneath all that paint** ABOVE: After launching a stripping, sanding, and staining campaign, the homeowners were able to reveal the dining room's original woodwork. They added the leaded-glass doors to the built-ins, matching them to the window.

#### accenting the grain

BELOW: Pumpkin-colored place settings bring out reddish undertones in the new oak sideboard.



Pierre was able to suss them out, partly by studying old building permits. Previous owners had enclosed a screened porch and added a laundry room and bath at the rear and a first-floor bedroom on one side. The one-story additions were vintage 1950s, and the new owners saw no reason to save them. However, they also saw no reason to shrink the existing footprint, deciding instead to rebuild the additions and cap them with a new master suite.

Pierre did all the framing, reworking roof angles and intersections. He leaned a bit on Terri for help with insulation and drywall, then did all the painting, while agreeing to hand off tilework to seasoned pros.

The couple took a similar period-sensitive yet practical approach to the kitchen, a sorry spot that needed new everything, plus a bit more room for two to cook. While a pro made and installed the cabinets, they did all the demolition and design. "We picked up 18 inches by removing most of a chimney that

once served a wood-burning stove," says Pierre, who dragged a six-burner range into the old stove's place, funneling the vent-hood duct up to the roof through the chimney's remains.

The quest for space didn't stop there. To make room for an extended run of cabinets and countertop on the sink wall, the couple took out a room-dividing peninsula. Then they "thinned out" the counter by 5 inches, which meant having to carve a recess in the wall for the dishwasher. "In the 1920s, counters were only 18 to 20 inches deep, which explains the invention of the wall-mount faucet," Pierre notes.

All of that left enough space for a narrow island, which in turn provided a landing spot for loading and unloading a 48-inch-wide fridge on the facing wall.

For Pierre, who runs a graphic-design firm, the kitchen's inch-by-inch redo meant sacrificing weekends and evenings for six long months. "We had very



#### SHOP THIS STYLE

To find furnishings similar to those used in this house,

blipp this page or go to [wayfair.com/thisoldhouse](http://wayfair.com/thisoldhouse)





**at ease** ABOVE: Before adding period-style furnishings and lighting their first set of logs, the owners had to strip paint off the brick mantel and have a crew take apart the chimney and firebox, which had suffered from decades of settling.

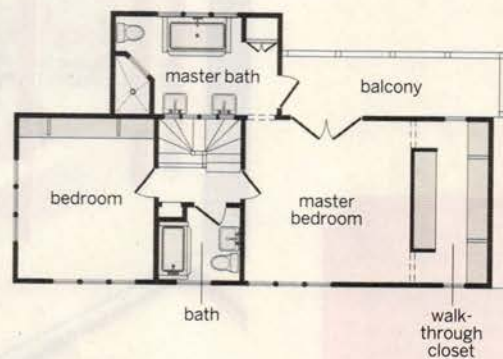
## floor plan

During the whole-house redo, two small first-floor additions, dating to the 1950s, were rebuilt and capped with a new master suite, yielding a total of 1,890 square feet. The homeowners rebuilt the kitchen and baths and reworked the bath and laundry area on the first floor. They also added a balcony, a front patio, and a deck.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



scale  
5'



**room with a view**

**RIGHT:** The compact master suite opens to a balcony overlooking the backyard. A walk-through closet has openings on each side of the bed.



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**light and bright** ABOVE LEFT: The period-inspired master bath is set up for parallel morning rites under a clerestory that channels light into a windowless stairwell. ABOVE RIGHT: Oversize windows on the facing wall deliver not only daylight but also leafy tubside views.

simple meals," Terri says. "We put the old fridge in the dining room, and I had a Crockpot and an electric frying pan." She pauses, thinking back. "We had to wash dishes in the upstairs bathtub. That was the worst, bending over that tub."

After the grout finally settled, "Our first meal was Thanksgiving," Pierre recalls. "The plumber was walking out as the guests were walking in."

The couple's preservation-minded labor was sweetened when the town awarded the house historic status, yielding a roughly two-thirds cut in their property taxes.

By then the two had been breathing construction dust for nearly six years. As they had made their way from wainscot and fireplace restoration to pedestal-sink selection and bedroom-closet configurations, "We slept in every room, including the dining room," Terri says.

With their tax savings, they were able to turn attention to the exterior. They rebuilt an existing back

patio, adding a deck, and built a new patio in front. Pros replaced the roof, and Pierre resingled the second floor. A plasterer gave the first-floor siding a rough-textured "pebble dash" cement finish matched to a scrap of original siding found under a porch.

The artisanal update was done with reverence for the original builder, not to mention a time when building materials were meant to last. "Solid 1-by-12 sheathing under the plaster, beautiful old-growth timber—it blows me away," says Pierre.

No wonder the couple winced when it came time to hang a flat-screen. "We couldn't abide putting it over the fireplace," says Pierre, perhaps recollecting the weeks they'd spent scouring the brick. So they hid it in the former den.


Bit by bit, the little bungalow had become the perfect nest. But forget enshrining a period piece. While the Craftsman idea may date back a century, with its clean lines and compact, open feel, Pierre notes, "it's pretty much what we want today." ■





Fruit-bearing plants—like tomatoes, cucumbers, and the eggplants seen above—do best with 6 to 8 hours of direct sun a day.





# Troubleshooting your Vegetable garden

You planted your favorites, then planned a season's worth of farm-to-table meals around your anticipated bounty. But you wound up with a harvest of bitter lettuce, cracked tomatoes, crooked carrots, and no idea where you went wrong. Don't toss those menus yet. *This Old House* surveyed gardeners around the country about quandaries ranging from no-show seedlings to overgrown zucchinis. Follow our advice on how to overcome them, and you'll be prepared to get this gardening season off to a fresh start—and a delicious finish.

BY JEANNE HUBER  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOEL HOLLAND





Cherry-tomato vines are vigorous ramblers; avoid disease by staking the plants to keep the foliage off the ground.

## TOMATOES

### QUANDARY:

The plants were beautiful. But the tomatoes never showed up.

**CAUSE:** Blame the weather. Many tomato varieties don't set fruit when nights are colder than 55° F or warmer than 70°. Scorching days pose their own set of problems; pollen diminishes when temperatures push above 85° to 90°. And the high humidity that makes so many of us sticky and sluggish plays tricks on pollen, too, making it hard for the wind to scatter it. No pollen, no fruit. Soil chemistry offers another explanation for a skimpy crop. Too much nitrogen fertilizer makes plants produce foliage like crazy—not fruit.

**CURE:** Go light on nitrogen-rich fertilizer (the label should say 4-12-4 or 5-20-5). And hedge your bets about when cold or hot weather will hit by growing some fast-maturing varieties as well as some that develop over a longer period. Your local nursery can help you choose types that thrive in your area.

### QUANDARY:

My beefsteaks were almost ripe—then they cracked or split.

**CAUSE:** Soil conditions that change from bone-dry to drenched can lead to vertical crevices or circular cracks around the stem—signs that the tomato's skin toughened and then couldn't stretch to accommodate new growth.

**CURE:** Keep soil evenly moist, but not soaking, for even growth. Choose crack-resistant varieties, like 'Jet Star' and 'Mountain Spring.' And pick big tomatoes slightly underripe.

### QUANDARY:

There are dark spots on the leaves. Foliage is yellowing and dropping off. Other plants look oily, splotched, and withered.

**CAUSE:** These are symptoms of various fungal diseases—including early and late blight.

**CURE:** Plant tomatoes where you haven't grown any member of the nightshade family (see "How to Avoid Trouble Before It Starts," page 72) for at least three or four years. Space plants so that fresh air can circulate. And look for varieties like 'Iron Lady,' 'Defiant,' 'Mountain Magic,' 'Mountain Merit,' and 'Legend,' all of which resist late blight, one of the most devastating tomato scourges.



## LETTUCE

### QUANDARY:

Talk about bitter!

**CAUSE:** It could just be the lettuce variety, but heat stress or a lack of water can also affect flavor.

**CURE:** Choose varieties—including butterhead types like 'Adriana' and 'Tom Thumb'—that are naturally sweeter than others, at least in their prime. For midsummer harvest, plant lettuce where taller plants will provide shade. Keep the soil moist, and watch the clock: Some research suggests that the glucose content of leaves picked between 7 and 8 A.M. may be double that of those picked in the early afternoon.



### QUANDARY:

All my lettuce plants are a mess of flowers and stalks—no leaves.

**CAUSE:** A change in temperature or total hours of light—whether suddenly or seasonally—triggers a cool-weather crop's internal clock to "bolt," or transition to producing end-of-season flowers and seeds rather than the parts we want to eat.

**CURE:** Once your lettuce bolts, there's no turning back the clock. One of the simplest ways to extend your salad greens season is to avoid planting all your lettuce seeds or seedlings at once. Start new seeds every few weeks so that you can enjoy successive harvests.



Lettuce requires consistently moist, but not waterlogged, soil to thrive.





## BEETS

### QUANDARY:

Something has scooped out holes in my beautiful beets, leaving tooth marks about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch wide.

**CAUSE:** Voles, aka meadow mice

**CURE:** These 8-or-so-inch-long rodents spend most of their time in underground tunnels accessed through holes  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches in diameter. Aboveground, voles like sheltered runways, so remove nearby grass, weeds, and mulch piles to eliminate their hidden habitat. Block voles from garden beds with a 12-inch-high fence made of hardware cloth that has openings of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch or less. Bury the bottom edge 6 to 10 inches deep. Mouse snap traps also work, but you'll need a bunch, set crosswise to runways, with the trigger ends in the travel zone.

If you monitor your garden daily, you're more likely to spot harvest-ready plants at their peak of flavor.

## 6 Smart Seed Strategies

**READ THE LABEL** Start off on the right foot by heeding the advice on the seed packet regarding planting times, soil preferences, seed spacing, thinning, etc.

**STORAGE** You don't need to buy new seeds every year if you keep leftovers alive. (For TOH landscape contractor Roger Cook's tips for storing them, see Ask This Old House, page 86.)

**TESTING** Spare yourself a no-show crop: Several weeks before the usual sowing time, place a few seeds from your leftover pack on a paper towel. Label, moisten, and enclose in plastic so that they won't dry out. If they don't sprout, toss.

**GOT ENOUGH SEEDS?** Choose a crop (beets, for example), decide how long a row you want to plant, and a free online tool from Johnny's Selected Seeds will do the math for you. [johnnyseeds.com/seedcalculator.aspx](http://johnnyseeds.com/seedcalculator.aspx)

**WAIT FOR WARM SOIL** Seeds need more warmth to sprout than they do to grow once established. Optimal temperatures vary from variety to variety, but 60° F is sufficient for many vegetable seeds. You can check the soil's temp the same way you do a roast turkey's: Stick the probe of an instant-read thermometer (meat or garden type is fine) 3 or 4 inches into the soil. Monitor a few times a day for several days.

**GO TO THE TAPE** Crowding your plants invites disease and deformity. But when it comes to tiny seeds, like carrots, spacing according to the packet directions is easier said than done. To avoid the need to thin seedlings (and spare you all that bending over), use seed tape—a thin biodegradable strip studded with properly spaced seeds. Or make your own using inch-wide ribbons of toilet paper and water-soluble glue. Dab a toothpick with glue and use it to grab a seed and "plant" it on the strip (one every 2 inches, for carrots). Bury the tape at the right seed depth, then water and wait for the magic to get started.

## CARROTS

### QUANDARY:

My carrots are ugly—twisted, bent, forked, or hairy.

**CAUSE:** Twisted roots signal overcrowding. Bent ones mean clay, rocks, or other obstructions got in the way. Too much fertilizer can lead to multiple roots. And hairiness means the soil was waterlogged or overfertilized. Microscopic worm-like root-knot nematodes can deform carrots in similar ways.

**CURE:** Plant where you have not grown carrots for three to four years (see "How to Avoid Trouble Before It Starts," page 72), in well-draining soil that is obstruction-free to the depth your carrot variety needs at maturity. Harvest carrots as they grow, so roots don't touch, to avoid overcrowding.

### QUANDARY:

I sowed all my seeds. They never came up.

**CAUSE:** The seeds may have dried out after you planted them. Or you might have planted too deep, so they didn't warm up sufficiently. Or you planted too early, while the soil was still too cold.

**CURE:** Wait to plant this cool-weather crop until the soil is about 60° F. Teeny but rough-coated, carrot seeds take longer to sprout than many other vegetable seeds: Expect to wait up to 10 to 14 days for roots to grow and another week for leaves. Rake the soil, sow the seeds on the surface, and moisten with a fine spray of water. To keep the seeds from drying out, cover your rows with boards—or cardboard if you broadcast seeds over a bed. Lift the cover every day and mist to keep the soil moist. As soon as seeds sprout, uncover. If the weather gets too warm too fast, you can protect tender seedlings by rigging up temporary shade for a few days.





# BROCCOLI, CABBAGE & KALE

## QUANDARY:

The leaves are riddled with tiny holes.

**CAUSE:** Flea beetles. They look like black or bronze pinheads, about 1/10 inch long, and jump if you wave your hand near them.

**CURE:** These pests are a common problem for mustard-family plants (like broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and kale) as well as nightshade-family members (such as potatoes, tomatoes, and eggplant). Tender seedlings are most vulnerable to all sorts of insect infestation, so it's smart to start with transplants, which are hardier. Here's another trick to try: Grow vulnerable plants between hairy-leaf types, such as radishes, which flea beetles don't like. Insect traps also work; you can make one by spreading Tangle-Trap, a sticky organic compound sold at garden centers, onto cardboard and going from plant to plant, flicking the invaders to their doom.

## QUANDARY:

My cabbage heads are splitting.

**CAUSE:** They may have been overwatered (either by you or by Mother Nature) after a dry spell. Or they might just be too mature.

**CURE:** If you don't want to pick all your cabbages at once and you want to leave heads in the garden after they firm up, gently pull up on the stem to break some of the root hairs, limiting how much water the plant can absorb.



## QUANDARY:

I yanked out a wilted bunch of kale and discovered bumpy, swollen roots rather than the normal mass of fine ones.

**CAUSE:** Clubroot, a fungal disease

**CURE:** The fungus that causes clubroot can persist in the soil for a long time, so avoid growing plants from the mustard family in that area for at least seven years.



Frost sweetens the flavor of 'Lacinto' kale (aka Tuscan kale), which was grown in Thomas Jefferson's Monticello garden.



## How to Avoid Trouble Before It Starts

**REJUVENATE YOUR SOIL** You can reduce the risk of soil-borne problems by waiting three or four years before you grow members of the same botanical family in a plot where they were grown before. Parasites, bacteria, and fungal diseases tend to plague all members of a particular family: When you remove their hosts, they die out. Rotating crops is especially important for the nightshade family (such as tomatoes and potatoes), mustard-family crops (including cabbages and kale), and onions (like leeks and garlic). Giving a bed a rest makes sense, too. Plant a cover crop, such as red clover, for a season. When you eventually hoe or dig it into the soil, "it's like a dose of vitamins and nutrients for the garden," says Christine Mann, a gardener in Atlanta. "It keeps the good microbes and the earthworms happy."

**WATERING 101** Water deeply, using drip irrigation or a watering wand with a misting head held close to the soil. Take it slow, and don't get the leaves wet, which can invite disease. Dig down into the soil around the plant with your finger to make sure that it's moist to the touch around the roots, not just on the surface. And top the soil with weed- and pesticide-free mulch (like decomposed leaves, mushroom compost, or whatever's available where you live) to reduce weeds and preserve moisture.

**TAKE FIVE** Colin McCrate, founder of the Seattle Urban Farm Company, a landscaping firm that specializes in home vegetable gardens, tells clients that they'd do better spending 5 minutes a day tending their plots than devoting an entire weekend to them once a month. When weeds are tiny, you can almost brush them away. Vigilance also helps you to spot and act on insect and disease symptoms early. And you're more likely to harvest vegetables in their prime.



# ZUCCHINI

## QUANDARY:

The vines are smothering everything in their path, and the squash look like baseball bats.

**CAUSE:** You were overzealous in your estimate of how many of these robust vines you really needed—and then picked too few at harvest time.

**CURE:** If your garden is tight on space, avoid vigorous ramblers and look for bush varieties of zucchini that grow upright, like 'Fordhook' and 'Astia.' Compact varieties can even be grown in containers. If you go with the old-fashioned vines, control the common urge to plant every seed in the packet: Limit yourself to a couple of plants, then pick the zucchini two or three times a week, when they are between 5 and 6 inches long. Harvesting often encourages the plants to get back to the business of growing flowers, which eventually yields a larger quantity of squash.



Compact bush varieties of zucchini, like 'Tigress' (shown), are good choices for small gardens.



Plant legumes, like peas or beans, after a season of tomatoes to help restore nutrients to the soil.

# PEAS, BEANS & CORN

## QUANDARY:

My dream garden has vanished. Where peas or beans or corn were planted, there are now just holes pecked in the soil or pieces of half-eaten seedlings.

**CAUSE:** The early bird got the seeds.

**CURE:** Scarecrows were invented for this reason. Some modern twists play off the fact that birds are distracted by reflections: Crisscross your beds with string, and place reflective tape, glistening CDs, or shiny tin plates every few feet. Or cover beds with row covers until seedlings are several inches tall. Cindy Harrison, a gardener on Bainbridge Island, Washington, used this camouflage trick: "I planted pea seeds in between purchased pea starts. The birds fell for my ruse and did not find the tiny seed sprouts between the more established starts." Result: "A great crop!"

## QUANDARY:

Seeds sprout and look full of promise. Then, zing! One morning, it looks like someone came through with a razor blade and cut all the young plants down at soil level.

**CAUSE:** Cutworms—fat caterpillars that burrow in the soil or hide under leaves during the day and come out at night to feed—are the culprits.

**CURE:** Cutworms can do severe damage in spring, before they turn into adult moths. Seedlings are especially vulnerable. You can start peas and beans early in pots and transplant them to the bed once the seedlings are hardier. Keep cutworms from encircling tender stems by sticking a twig into the soil alongside each new shoot, or protect them with cardboard collars. ■





# 64

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS EVERY HOMEOWNER SHOULD KNOW

Some spaces just feel good, and you can't put your finger on why. Chances are, it's because everything is where it should be: Handles are easy to reach, drawers open unobstructed, there's light where you need it. The key is knowing the right numbers. Our room-by-room guide takes the guesswork out of where to hang that towel rack or how long a curtain rod to buy. Whether you're starting fresh or just adding a few upgrades, your home is sure to measure up.

By **Nicole Dyer**  
Illustrations by **Arthur Mount**

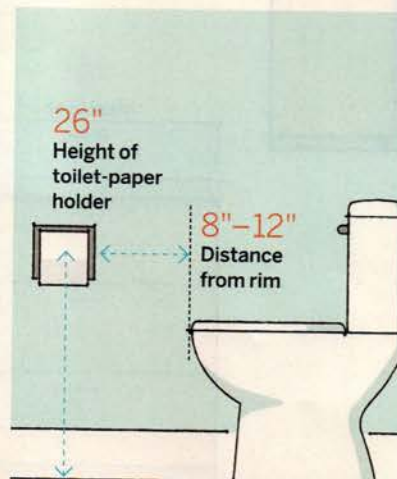
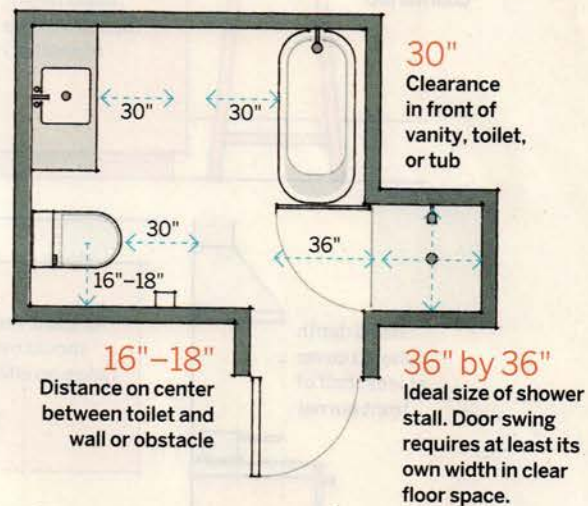
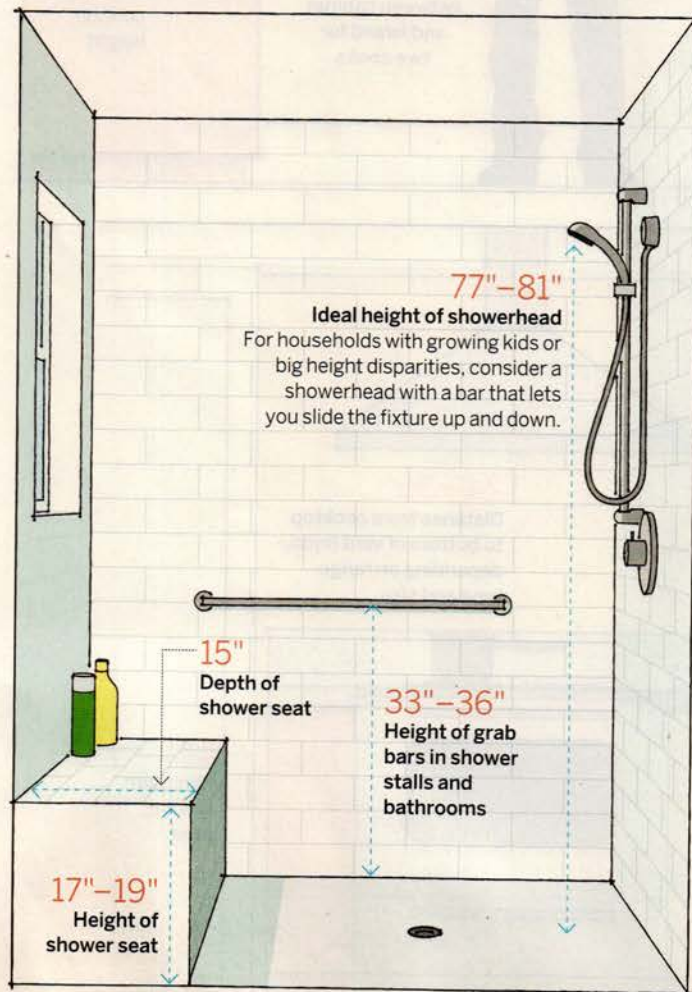
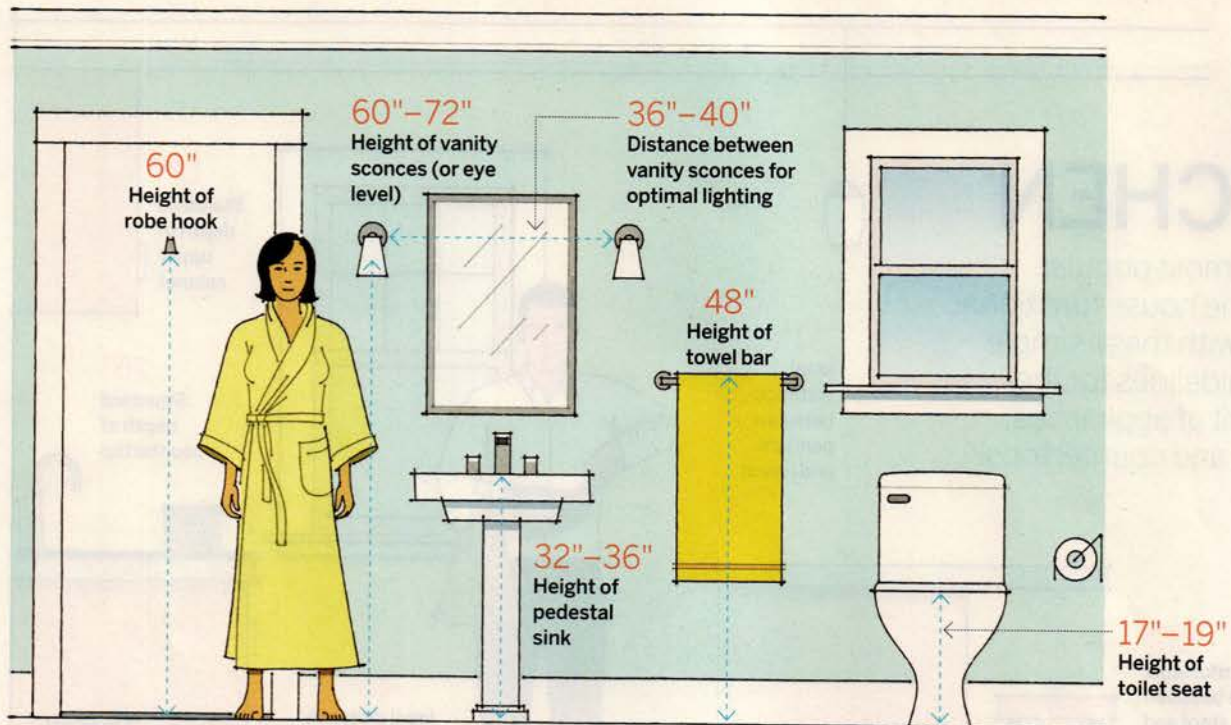
### <THE> BATH

Inch for inch, the bathroom packs in more functionality than any other room in the house. With scant space to hide mistakes, though, even tiny miscalculations can create big problems—not to mention compromise safety. For maximum comfort, convenience, and utility, keep these magic numbers in mind.

#### **A NOTE ON THE NUMBERS:**

The recommended dimensions and clearances are based on national building and design industry guidelines. You can—and should—adapt them to your own size, circumstances, and preferences. Just be sure to comply with local building codes to ensure your safety.



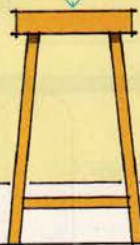




# <THE> KITCHEN

Keep the most popular room in the house functional and safe with these simple design guidelines for the placement of appliances, cabinets, and countertops.

10"  
Comfortable distance between stool and countertop



36"-42"  
Island height (based on type of seating)



30"  
Ideal distance between pendant and island



48"  
Ideal distance between cabinet and island for two cooks



12"  
Standard depth of upper cabinet

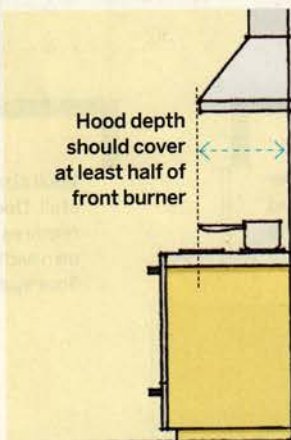


25"  
Standard depth of countertop

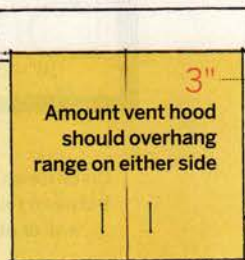


36"  
Standard counter height

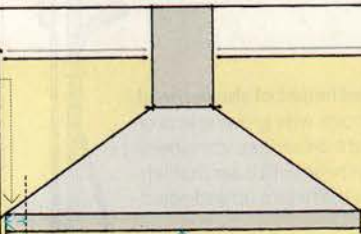
Hood depth should cover at least half of front burner



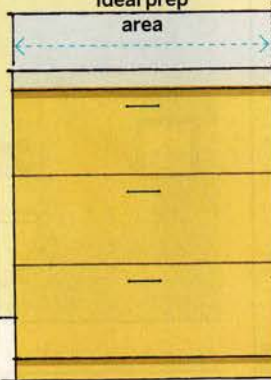
3"  
Amount vent hood should overhang range on either side



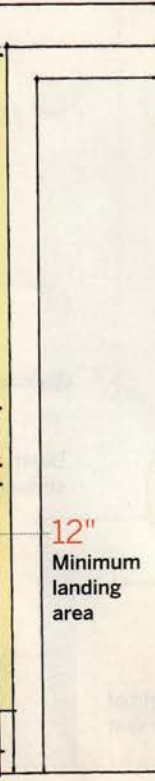
24"-36"  
Distance from cooktop to bottom of vent hood, depending on range type and size



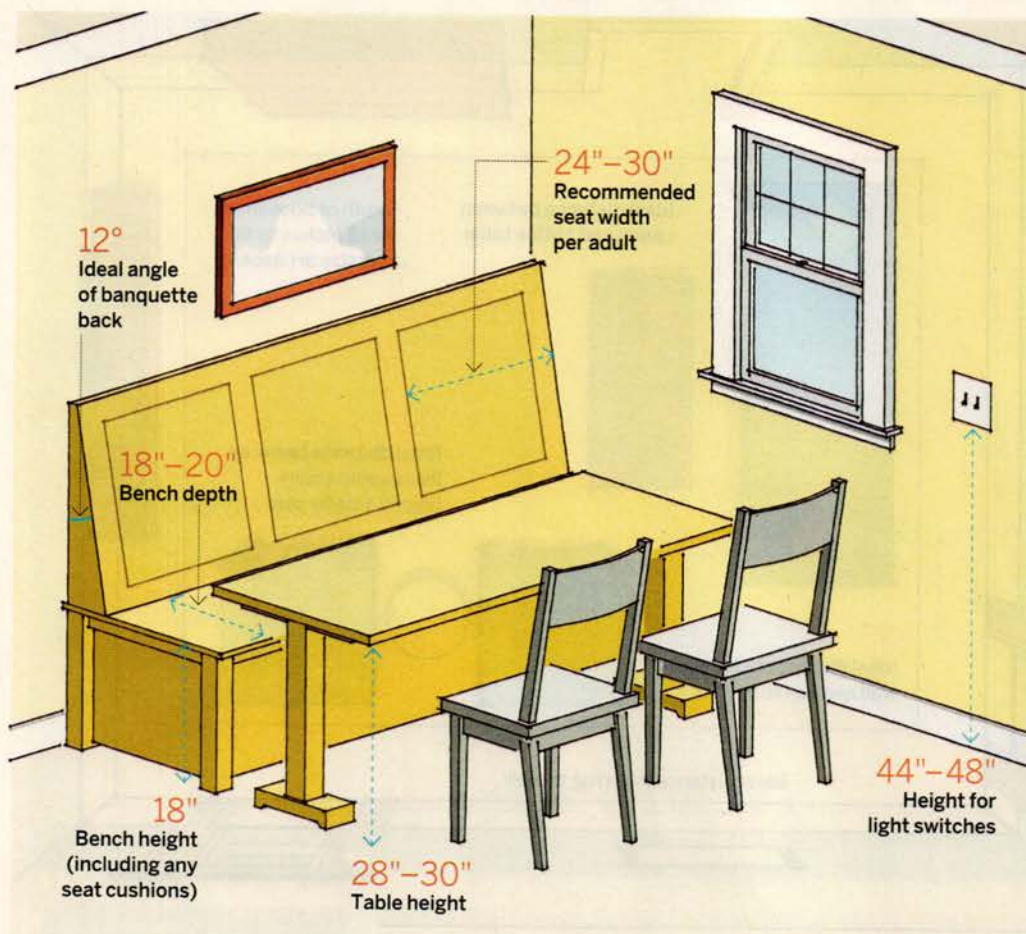
36"  
Ideal prep area



12"  
Minimum landing area



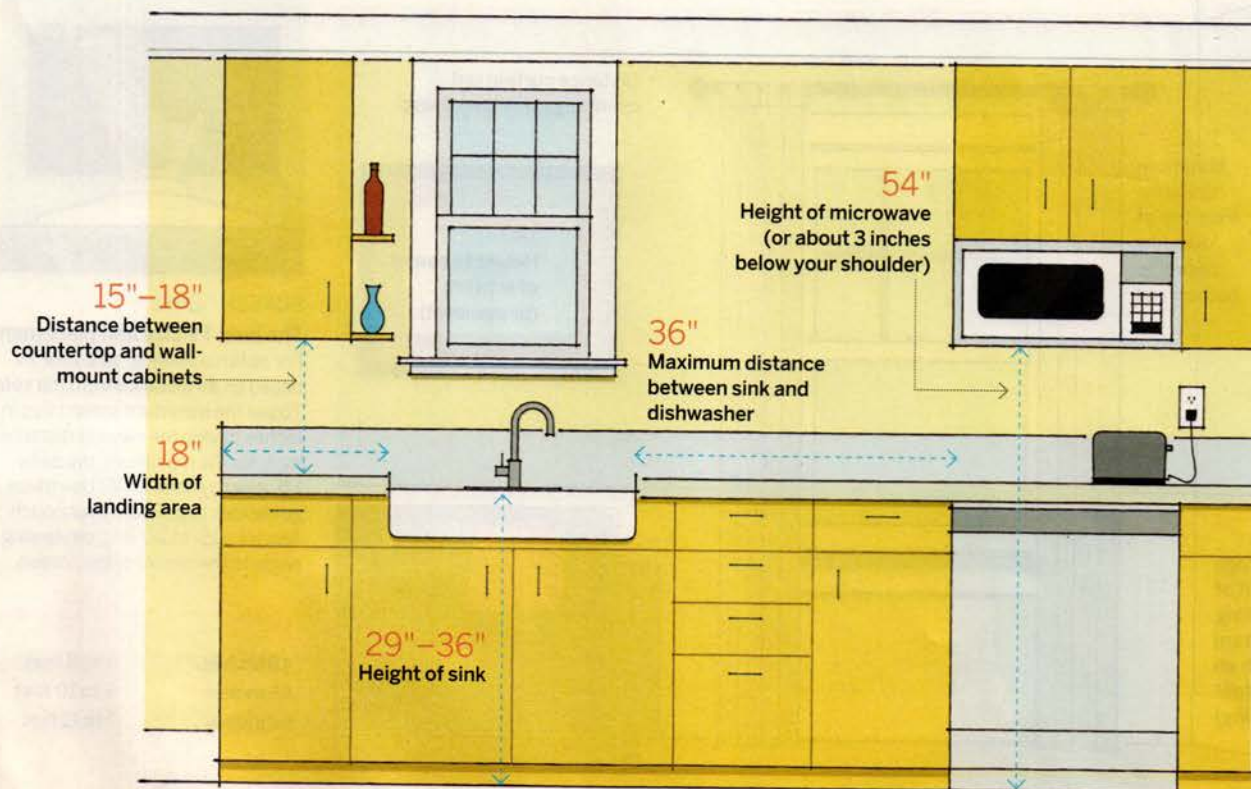




### BREAKFAST BARS AND ISLANDS

**The right amount of overhang**  
Island seating generally comes in three heights: table (30 inches), counter (36 inches), and bar (42 inches). Each one requires a different amount of overhang (also called knee space) for diners to sit comfortably. The higher the seating, the less knee space needed, as per these recommendations from the National Kitchen and Bath Association.

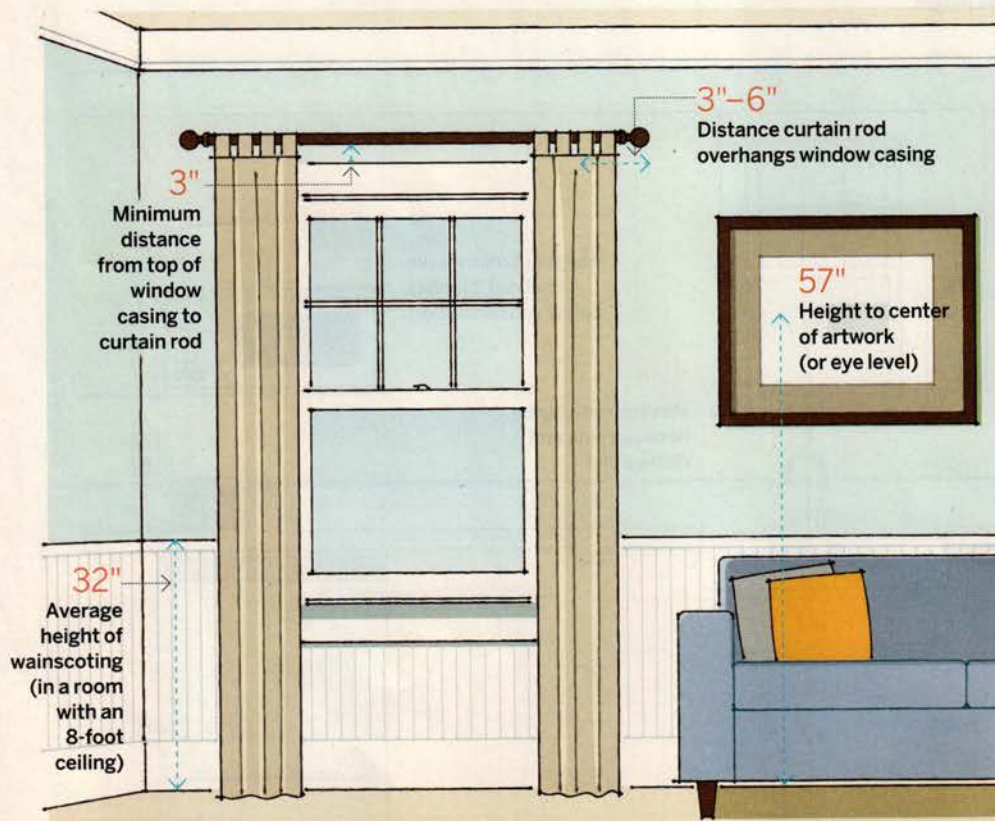
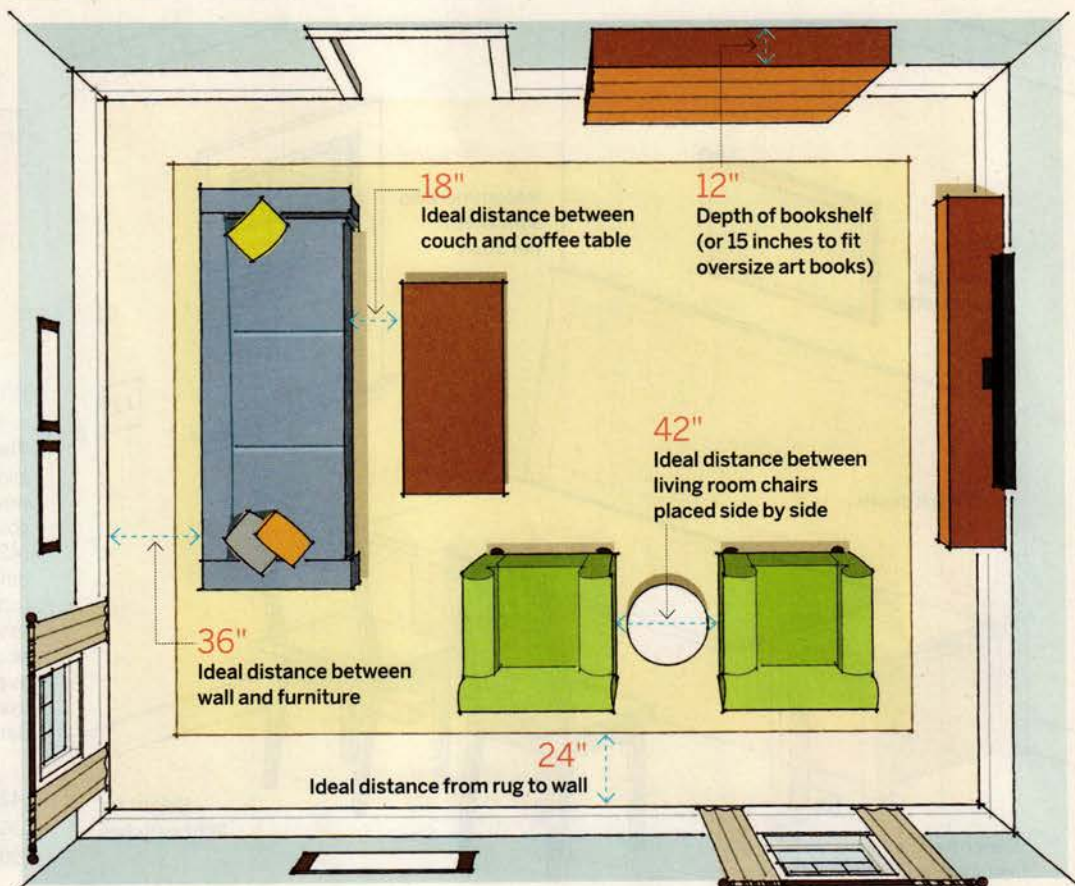
HEIGHT OF ISLAND	OVERHANG
42 inches	12 inches
36 inches	15 inches
30 inches	18 inches





# <THE> LIVING ROOM

Whether your social area is big or small, the secret to a comfortable room for entertaining, TV watching, or just hanging out is judicious spacing.



## SCREEN SENSE

### The best TV size and placement

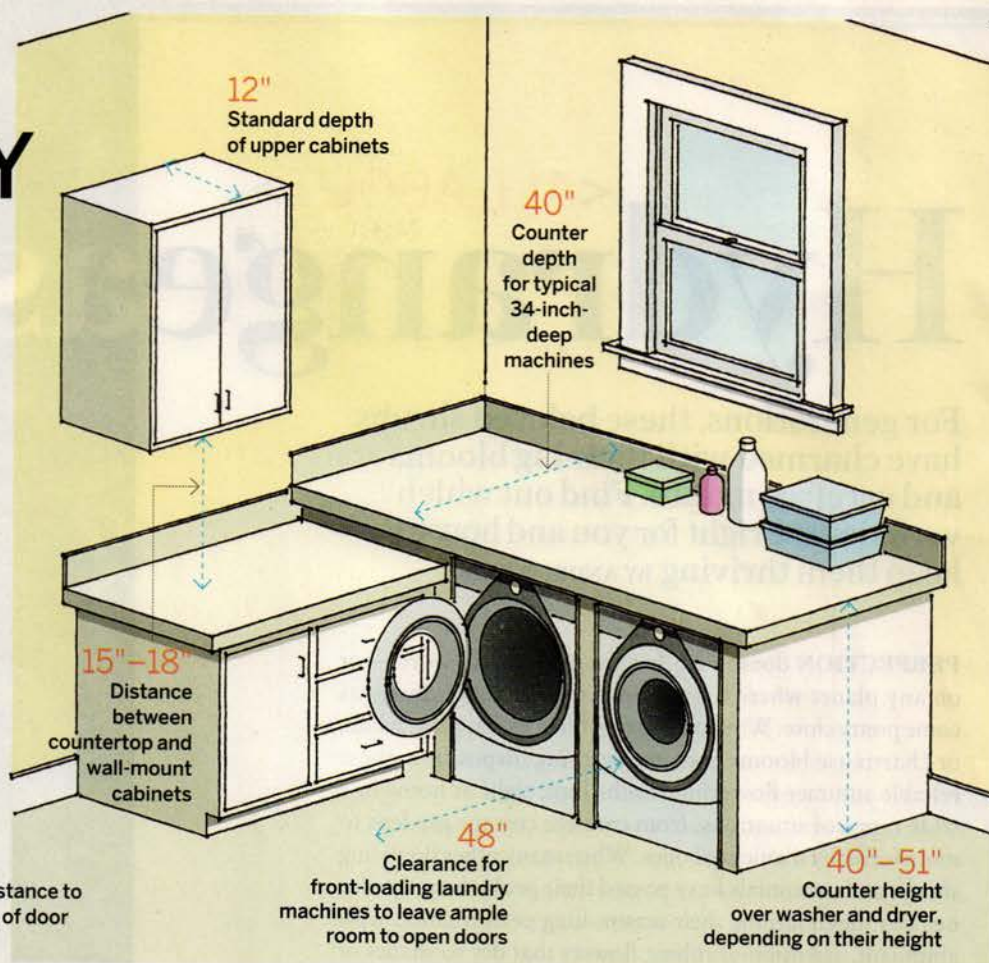
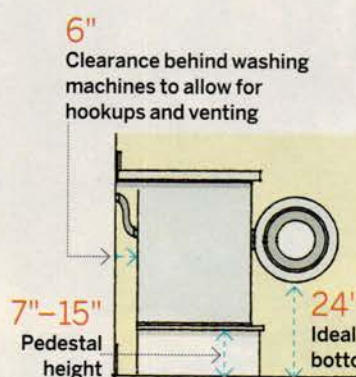
For optimal viewing, size your TV based on its distance from the sofa. To get the minimum screen size in inches, divide the viewing distance by 3; for the maximum, divide by 1.5. Already have a TV? Use these guidelines to position your couch. Aim for a 15- to 20-degree viewing angle to the center of the screen.

SCREEN SIZE	VIEWING DISTANCE FROM SOFA TO TV
40 inches	5 to 8 feet
46 inches	6 to 10 feet
52 inches	7 to 11 feet



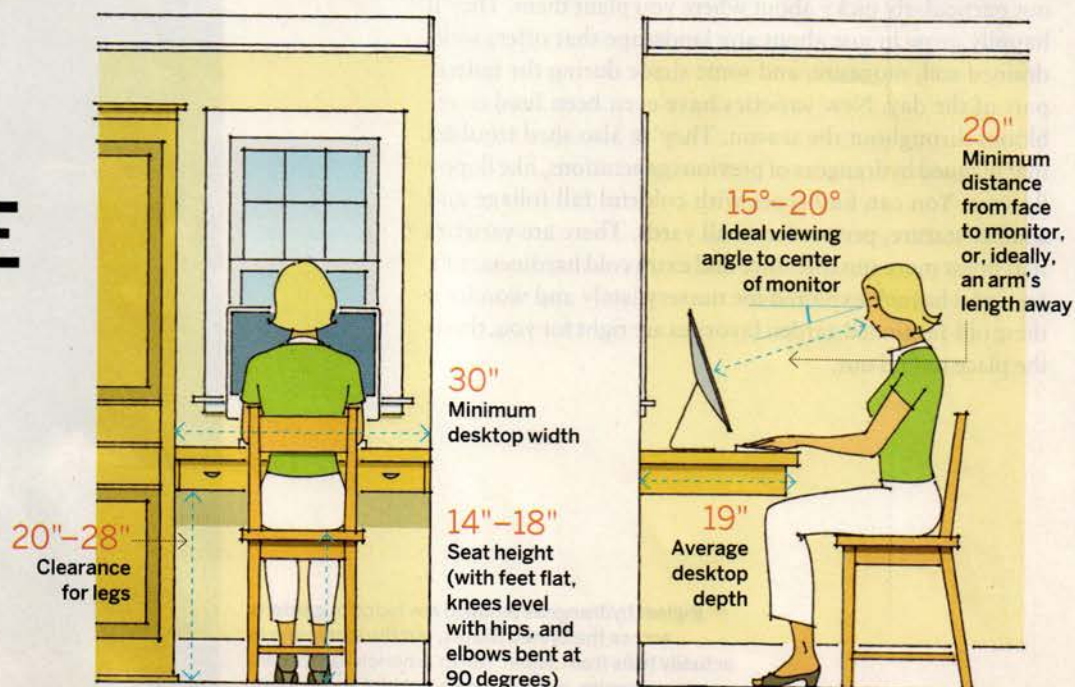
# <THE> LAUNDRY ROOM

Squeezing big machines into small spaces can be a challenge. Follow these key measurements for an efficient work area.



# <THE> HOME OFFICE

To boost productivity, create an ergonomic setup that maximizes both comfort and function.





# <ALL ABOUT> Hydrangeas

For generations, these beloved shrubs have charmed with their big blooms and carefree nature. Find out which varieties are right for you and how to keep them thriving **BY ANDREW KEYS**

**PERFECTION** doesn't really exist in the plant world—or on any planet where living things thrive. But hydrangeas come pretty close. With long-lasting blue, violet, pink, white, or chartreuse blooms and an easygoing disposition, these reliable summer-flowering shrubs look right at home in a wide range of situations, from carefree cottage gardens to more formally manicured ones. When many other flowering shrubs and perennials have passed their peak, these deciduous beauties continue their season-long performance, with abundant, attention-grabbing flowers that dry to shades of linen for autumn and winter interest.

For all their versatility and showmanship, hydrangeas are not particularly picky about where you plant them. They'll happily grow in just about any landscape that offers well-drained soil, moisture, and some shade during the hottest part of the day. New varieties have even been bred to rebloom throughout the season. They've also shed troubles that plagued hydrangeas of previous generations, like floppy flowers. You can find types with colorful fall foliage and smaller stature, perfect for small yards. There are varieties that boast more sun tolerance and extra cold hardiness, too. So if you haven't explored the nursery lately and wonder if these old-fashioned garden favorites are right for you, this is the place to find out.

Bigleaf hydrangeas (shown) are found in gardens across the United States, but the iconic shrub actually hails from Japan. North America has its own native species, however; both oakleaf and smooth hydrangeas grow naturally in our eastern woodlands.





## VITALS

**WHERE DO THEY GROW?** Hydrangeas hold their own in USDA Hardiness Zones 4 to 9. They do well in acidic as well as alkaline soils. Unlike many flowering shrubs, they tolerate both sun and shade.

**WHEN TO BUY?** Like all shrubs, hydrangeas are best planted in spring or fall, when temperatures are mild. Summer planting is never ideal, but with plenty of water and some shade, the plant should power through.



**HOW MUCH CARE?** After planting, maintenance is easy, calling for little more than watering and snipping spent flowers.

**ARE THEY PET-SAFE?** Keep Fido and Fluffy away. All hydrangeas contain traces of cyanogenic glycosides, toxins that, if ingested, cause gastrointestinal upset in cats and dogs.

**WHAT DO THEY COST?** A 1-gallon pot goes for \$20 to \$30, depending on the variety.



# Pick your plant

Here are six common types to know and love. Plant several with different bloom times to prolong the show



## BIGLEAF HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea macrophylla*)

**Selling points:** This group has two bloom shapes, round mopheads and flat lacecaps. Most flower in early summer on buds set the previous year, but everbloomers, like 'Endless Summer' (shown), flower repeatedly into fall.

**Size:** Up to 6 feet tall and up to 8 feet wide

**Zones:** 6 to 9



## SMOOTH HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea arborescens*)

**Selling points:** Cold hardy and forgiving of dry shade, this tough North American native boasts white, sometimes pink, dome-like blooms starting in early summer and lasting into fall. 'Annabelle' is an old-school standby, while 'Incrediball' is less prone to flop.

**Size:** 3 to 5 feet tall and wide

**Zones:** 4 to 9



## PANICLE HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea paniculata*)

**Selling points:** Extra sun-loving, this sizable type is the only hydrangea you can train into a tree form. Most varieties, including 'Little Lime' (shown), boast cream-to-pink conical flowers that last into late summer.

**Size:** 10 to 22 feet tall and up to 8 feet wide

**Zones:** 4 to 8



## OAKLEAF HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea quercifolia*)

**Selling points:** One of the best picks for deep shade, this southeastern native features cone-shaped blooms from mid- to late summer and hefty leaves that turn purple-red in autumn. 'Snow Queen' (shown) is especially bright in fall.

**Size:** 4 to 10 feet tall and up to 8 feet wide

**Zones:** 5 to 9



## CLIMBING HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea anomala* subsp. *petiolaris*)

**Selling points:** Although slow to start, this woody vine does fine in sun or shade and offers a multiseason show that's worth the wait, with white lacecap summer flowers, golden fall foliage, and russet-colored winter stems.

**Size:** Up to 50 feet tall

**Zones:** 4 to 9



## MOUNTAIN HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea serrata*)

**Selling points:** This underused, compact species produces delicate bunches of lacecap blooms from summer to autumn. Depending on soil pH, varieties such as 'Bluebird' (shown) flower blue or pink, and some even boast showy burgundy foliage in fall.

**Size:** 4 feet tall and wide

**Zones:** 6 to 9

## PLANTING GUIDE

Only with proper planting will your hydrangea be a low-care shrub

### > Spot a good site.

Although hydrangeas can handle full sun in colder climes, they typically prefer morning sun and afternoon shade. Select a sheltered area with fertile soil and ample room for the shrub to spread.

> **Prep the hole.** Dig a hole that is the same depth as your hydrangea's nursery pot and two times as wide. Remove the plant from its container, gently loosen any circling roots, and plant at the same depth at which it was growing in its pot—no deeper.

> **Apply mulch.** Spread an organic mulch, such as compost or shredded bark, around the base of the plant to maintain the cool, moist soil conditions in which hydrangea roots thrive. A 2-inch mulch layer is plenty.

> **Water regularly.** After planting, give the shrub a long drink and continue to check the soil for dampness in the weeks ahead. The soil beneath the shrub should feel cool and moist to the touch but not wet; soggy soil leads to root rot.



# Food, water, shelter

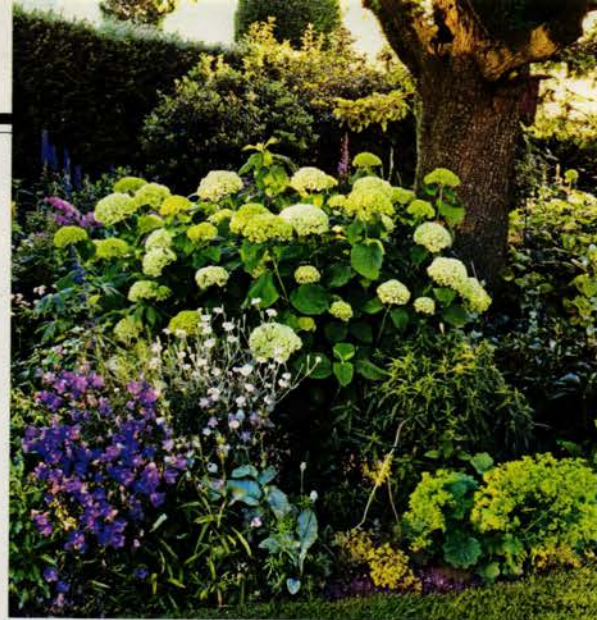
Mature shrubs are easygoing and require minimal attention

## > Go easy on the fertilizer.

Overfeeding can burn roots, and too much nitrogen leads to more foliage than flowers. In early spring, sprinkle just a half cup of slow-release 10-10-10 granular plant food around the shrub's entire root zone, then apply a second dose in midsummer. Hydrangeas also benefit from an annual topdressing of well-rotted manure or compost, which supplies nutrients and improves the soil's moisture retention.

## > Ready your garden hose.

Hydrangeas are heavy drinkers. Those planted in sandy, fast-draining soils or beneath water-hogging shade trees are especially prone to drying out in summer. During the growing season, regularly check the top 6 inches



of soil for moisture and water deeply when it feels dry.

> **Beware of frosts.** Bigleaf varieties can be fickle bloomers because their flower buds sometimes fall victim to late frosts. For winter protection, cover the shrub with evergreen boughs or surround it with an open cylinder of chicken wire filled with straw. Just be sure to promptly remove the covering once the threat of frost has passed. Or, better yet, plant panicle, smooth, or everblooming varieties, which all bud too late in spring to freeze.

Smooth hydrangea 'Annabelle' benefits from the shade of a tree. Lime-hued lady's mantle and violet bellflowers provide a nice contrast to its white blooms.

# CHANGING BLOOM COLOR

Soil pH is the key to blue or pink flowers

Not crazy for that pale blue your hydrangea flaunts each summer? Try deepening it or even changing it to pink. Bloom color for bigleaf and mountain hydrangeas depends in part on soil pH. Most varieties flower blue in very acidic soils (pH 5.5 and lower), purple or a mix of shades in less acidic soils, and pink in more alkaline soils (pH 6.5 and higher). Using soil amendments that tamper with pH can intensify a shrub's hue or change it altogether. Just be prepared to keep reapplying.

## > Why it works

Hydrangeas require aluminum to produce blue flowers. Plants can easily extract metals from acidic soils, but under alkaline conditions, metals become insoluble and flowers bloom pink.

> **What to do** For pink flowers, mix 1 tablespoon of hydrated lime into 1 gallon of water and pour under the shrub. To go from pink to blue, try a soil drench of 1 tablespoon of aluminum sulfate (sold as "soil acidifier") dissolved in 1 gallon of water. Apply either solution monthly in March, April, and May.

## DON'T PRUNE OFF THE BUDS!

An annual trim to remove spent flowers and trigger growth keeps shrubs tidy. But before you snip, know which hydrangea type you have. Pruning time hinges on when shrubs set their buds, and not all types are on the same schedule.



**PRUNE OLD-WOOD BLOOMERS AS FLOWERS FADE.** The flower buds of this group—which include bigleaf, oakleaf, mountain, and climbing varieties—are produced the previous summer. To avoid accidentally cutting off buds, prune these shrubs before buds start to form, snipping fading blooms just above a nearby leaf node.



**PRUNE NEW-WOOD BLOOMERS IN LATE WINTER.** The buds on panicle and smooth hydrangeas form and flower all in one summer, so there's a wider window for pruning. When shrubs are dormant, snip dried flowers just above a leaf node where you'd like two new stems to sprout, or cut back the whole shrub 2 feet from the ground.



# Ways to use them

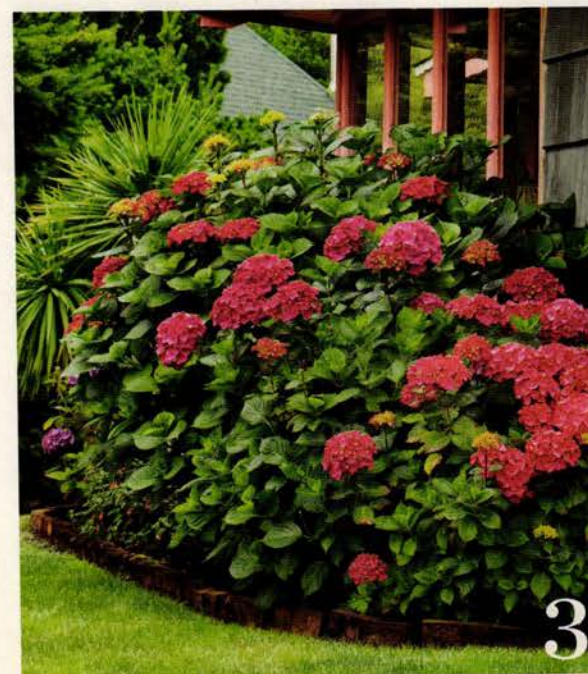
Versatility is one of the hydrangea's greatest attributes. There's a variety for practically every spot in the yard

**1> AS A TREE** Panicle hydrangeas naturally grow as shrubs, but a little pruning can turn them into trees, or standards, making room for more plantings at their feet. *H. paniculata* 'Grandiflora' (shown), commonly called PeeGee, takes on a dramatic tree form. Towering up to 22 feet, it boasts white summer flowers that mature to rose, while newer dwarfs, such as 'Limelight,' top out at 8 feet.

**2> TO CLIMB A STRUCTURE** Any garden structure looks lovelier with a vine scampering up it. Place climbing hydrangea near entryways or seating areas where you'll enjoy its sweetly scented flowers. And give its aerial roots something sturdy to cling to, such as a masonry wall or a large tree trunk. Standout varieties include variegated 'Firefly' and its silvery-leaved cousin, 'Moonlight.'

**3> IN TIGHT SPACES** Thanks to the many recently introduced dwarf varieties, it's easier than ever to make room for hydrangeas. If your yard has only a little space to spare, consider trying the 3-foot-tall-and-wide mophead 'Glowing Embers' (shown), the iconic pink or blue everbloomer 'Mini Penny,' or 'Little Honey,' a white-flowering oakleaf variety with chartreuse foliage.

**4> IN A CONTAINER** Planted in pots, hydrangeas can bring beauty to patios or decks. Compact varieties, such as 'Penny Mac' (shown), work especially well and help ensure a full look. Just be sure your shrub has good drainage and plenty of water; potted plants dry out faster than ones in the ground.





# Fixes for common woes

Although hydrangeas are usually trouble-free, poor growing conditions occasionally result in less than lovely shrubs



**WILTING FOLIAGE** > doesn't always mean drought. If the plant's leaves are wilted and its

feet are wet, you've likely caused root rot by overwatering. Leaves might also wilt in high heat or full sun. In this case, they'll recover overnight. But if it happens daily, a move to a shadier locale is in order.



**YELLOWING LEAVES** > often signal a nutrient deficiency. If only new foliage is affected, the

plant may need more iron. This condition is called chlorosis and often occurs where soils have a high pH. Amending the soil with chelated iron and mixing in some compost will correct the issue. If only older leaves are yellowing, however, try fertilizing. The shrub may need nitrogen.



**CHALKY FOLIAGE** > is a symptom of powdery mildew. It might look like a dusting

of confectioners' sugar, but it's actually a fungal disease. Plants growing in sites with high humidity and poor air circulation are especially vulnerable. Transplanting or pruning back neighboring plants can help tilt conditions in your shrub's favor, as can removing any affected foliage in fall to prevent the disease from wintering over.



**NO BLOOMS** > has several causes.

Pruning at the wrong time of year and mistakenly snipping off buds is a common culprit. But an extra-harsh winter or a planting site with too much shade are also possible causes.



## COMPANION PLANTINGS

All great plant combinations play on similarities and differences. Most of us think of hydrangeas in terms of flower color, but they also offer bold textures with their foliage, and round shapes with their mounding habit and big blooms. As you select neighbors for your shrub, opt for ones that repeat or contrast with some of these features. The following perennials do a little of both; match your shrub with one or more for a no-fail combo.

> **Ferns** Most are fine-textured and vase-shaped, contrasting nicely with the hydrangea's bold, round curves. Two tried-and-true picks are silvery ghost fern or evergreen soft shield fern (shown).

> **Ornamental grasses** Their airy leaves make a stunning counterpoint to the hydrangea's dense, mounding foliage. Consider pairing a hydrangea with Korean feather reed grass, which thrives in part shade and sports pinkish plumes in summer.

> **Hostas** The teardrop leaves of this classic shade dweller echo those of every hydrangea except oakleaf, while their hot and cool hues create contrast. Try pairing a blue-flowering hydrangea, for instance, with a gold-leaved hosta, or a blue-leaved hosta with a shrub that blooms pink. ■

## PROPAGATE TO MULTIPLY YOUR RICHES

If you have one shrub, you can easily get more by using this simple method, called layering. In spring or early fall, select a low, flexible stem almost parallel to the ground. Leave foliage on only the top 12 inches of the branch and strip off the rest. Bury the leafless section several inches deep, leaving the top 12 inches of stem above ground. Use a rock to keep the buried

section from popping up, and stake the portion above-ground so that it stands straight. After a year or so, give the branch a slight tug—if it resists, it's rooted. Snip the stem near the base of the mother plant. Then, to help prevent the rooted branch from going into shock, wait a few weeks before digging it up and transplanting.





# Ask

## THIS OLD HOUSE

INSIDE

LAWN THATCH/GATE SAG/RECESSED LIGHTS  
/CORK MAINTENANCE/FIBERGLASS GUTTERS/MORE

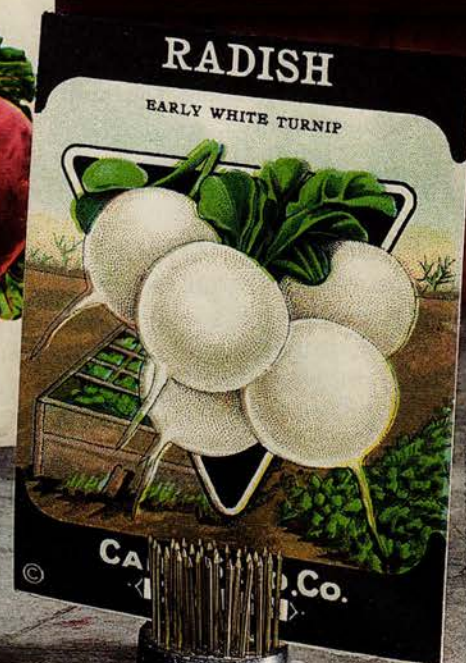
**Q** I have some packets of seeds left over from last year's vegetable garden. Can I plant them this year?

—MIKE HAWKEN, FAIRFIELD, CONN.

**A** That depends. Onion, parsnip, and parsley seeds aren't hardy enough to be stored. But most other seeds, including beets, stay viable for two to four years if kept somewhere dark, cool, and dry. A basement or refrigerator should work, but not a freezer. Seal the packets in a plastic bag and write the date in permanent marker to ensure that you don't plant seeds past their prime.

—ROGER COOK, TOH LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

**67**  
tips, tricks, and  
answers to  
your home-  
improvement  
questions



PHOTOGRAPH  
BY BURCU AVSAR



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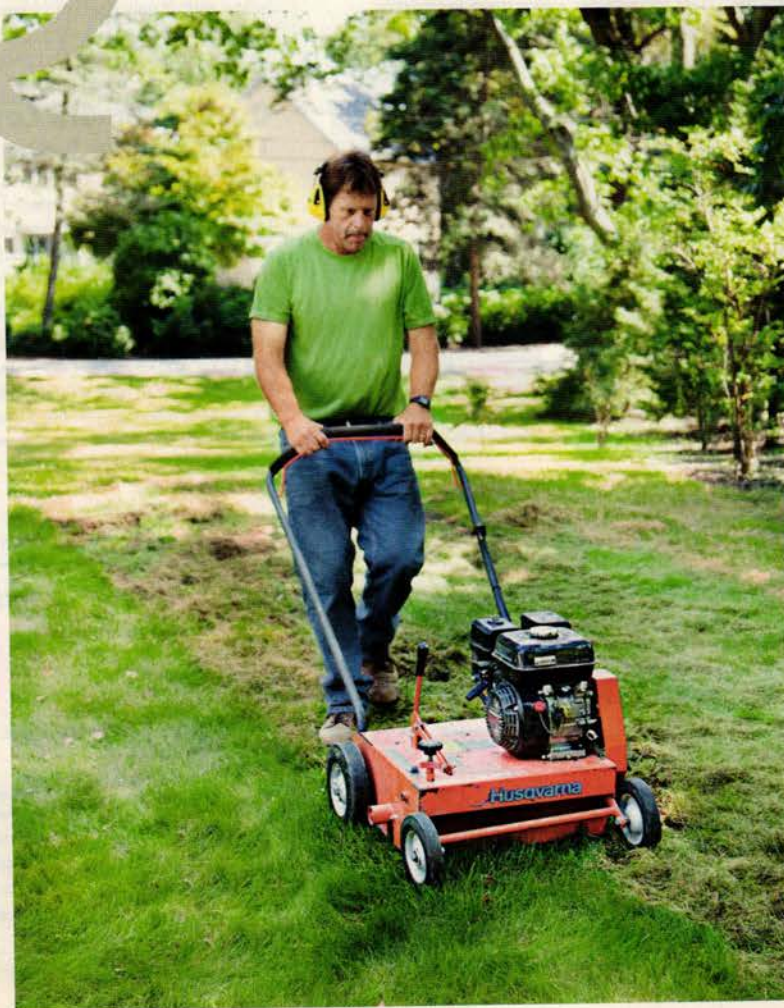
**ROGER COOK**  
Landscape Contractor



**KEVIN O'CONNOR**  
Host

**Our centipede grass has brown spots with a thick layer of dead grass underneath. Fertilizing and raking don't help. What can I do to make my lawn green again?**

—JUSTIN FARNSWORTH, LADSON, S.C.



With each pass of a power rake, Roger Cook churns up the thatch that is preventing water, oxygen, and nutrients from reaching the soil.

**ROGER COOK REPLIES:** Centipede grass is a tough, slow-growing species well suited to your warm, wet climate. But as with many other turfgrasses, it is susceptible to a buildup of excess thatch—a layer of roots and plant debris that accumulates just beneath the grass blades. When thatch gets too thick, it blocks water, oxygen, and nutrients from reaching the soil and encourages roots to grow near the surface, making them more vulnerable to heat and cold, drought, disease, and being scalped by a mower. Adding more fertilizer only thickens the thatch. Luckily, the cure is simple: Rip it out, a process called dethatching.

To see if your turf needs to be dethatched, dig up a small clump, shake off the soil, and measure the thickness of the fibrous layer at the base of the grass. (While you're at it, gather a soil sample and have it tested so that you know its pH, nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorus levels for later.) A thatch layer up to half an inch thick is good—it insulates the soil and retains moisture. But if it's 1 inch or thicker, you need to take action.

Timing is crucial. Where you live, plan to dethatch in early spring, before the heat and dryness of summer. (The same goes for thatch-prone species that thrive in my cooler climate, such as Kentucky bluegrass, creeping red fescue, and creeping bent-



grass. My cue is when the forsythia starts blooming at the end of April.) In areas with winters colder than yours, centipede grass should be dethatched in late May or early June, when it's growing vigorously.

If you have a small lawn, less than 1,000 square feet, all you need is a dethatching rake and a strong back. For larger lawns, rent a gas-powered dethatcher or power rake. Have the blades' spacing set to 2 to 3 inches and adjust their depth to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. Make only parallel passes across your lawn, and be careful to lift the blades when making a turn. Use a leaf rake to clean away the debris that a dethatcher kicks up (it makes great compost). Then water, reseed, and, if the soil test calls for it, apply fertilizer and lime. For spring reseeds, I use fertilizers containing Tupersan, a crabgrass suppressant that still allows turfgrass seeds to germinate.

To prevent thatch from coming back, mow it between 1 and 2 inches high. (Most other grasses should be left longer to spur root growth.) And be stingy with the nitrogen during mid-season feedings: no more than a pound per 1,000 square feet per year. Even better, water occasionally with compost tea, and, in the fall, aerate the soil, then top-dress it with  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of compost. The microorganisms in the compost speed the breakdown of thatch into soil.

Dethatching is a stressful treatment for any lawn; wait a couple of years before doing it again.

**Q Fix a sagging gate**  
Our fence gate sags and won't latch properly. Relocating the latch helped for a while, but it's sagging again. Is there a more permanent solution?

—KEN SWEARINGEN, PLANO, TEXAS



## What is it?

A

Circular-saw guide

B

Ladder support for paint tray

C

Shelf bracket

D

Table-saw push stick

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 94



INCORRECT

The gate above sags because its braces aren't oriented correctly. Note how they are properly placed in the gate at right.



**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** I can see from your photo why your gate is sagging. The diagonal braces should form an arrow pointing toward the latch. Luckily, you can fix it without too much trouble.

Prop up the latch side of the gate about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch higher than where you want it. Pry off the existing braces, and cut two new 2x4 pieces to fit diagonally between the rails. The upper piece should slant downward from the top hinge while the lower piece should slant upward from the bottom hinge, and the two should meet on either side of the middle rail.

The braces must fit snugly between the rails, so be sure to make these cuts precisely. To do that, lay each 2x4 in position over both rails, then use the rails as a guide to mark the cutlines on the back of each brace. Make the cuts on the waste side of the line; you can shave a little more off, if necessary, for a tight fit. To attach each brace, drive two screws through each of the vertical boards it crosses. Make sure all the other fasteners on the gate are tight. Now you can remove the prop. The door should stay where it belongs—and latch easily.

**Q Cork-floor care**  
We just removed the carpet that covered the original cork floors in our 1923 house. Can the cork be restored or would it be better to replace it?

—SUE PALMER, CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

**KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES:** According to Todd Schutte, director of training and technical services at Bona US, a maker of floor-care products, you should be able to get the old cork back in shape. "Refinishing a cork floor isn't all that different from refinishing a hardwood floor," he says.

First, make sure that the floor is at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch thick. "An easy way to check a floor's thickness is to lift up a floor register," he says. Given the age of your house, Schutte suspects that your cork is solid and therefore plenty thick. Some newer cork flooring has a wear-layer veneer that's too thin to be refinished.

If your cork is thick enough, hire a flooring contractor to "screen" or "disc" the surface using a buffer fitted with a sanding screen. Schutte says a drum sander, typically used to refinish hardwood flooring, would be too aggressive. Screening removes



## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

the ground-in dirt and old finish and opens up the cork for a new finish. If the screen gums up with wax, a common coating on cork years ago, the floor should be stripped before continuing. The safest finish for a previously waxed cork floor is a new coat of wax; anything else may not adhere reliably.

As for wax-free cork floors, Schutte says they can be protected in one of two ways. You can apply a penetrating floor oil to even out the color, followed by a coat of hard wax oil. Or you can stain the cork, apply a floor sealer to reduce top-coat penetration, then cover with two coats of a polyurethane, as you would a wood floor. He says a polyurethane stands up well to foot traffic but is difficult to repair if it wears through. Hard wax oil, like wax, is easy to reapply but wears away fairly quickly in high-traffic areas.

Whichever route you choose, Schutte recommends following the contractor's regular maintenance guidelines and setting up a contract with him or her to keep the finish in shape. That'll hold off another refinishing job for as long as possible.

### Q Lawn invader

Each spring, a plant invades my lawn, then dies back. Weed killer doesn't help. How can I find out what it is?

—BRIAN LEWANDOWSKI, LANCASTER, N.Y.

**ROGER COOK REPLIES:** Dig it up, seal it in a plastic bag, and send it to the agriculture or horticulture program of your nearest cooperative extension office. Local offices are listed on the USDA website ([csrees.usda.gov](http://csrees.usda.gov)). Once they identify the weed, you'll have a fighting chance against it.

Continued on page 93

## Our historic district says our replacement gutters must be wood, but we'd like to avoid the maintenance. Any ideas?

—ASHLEY GUIR, WORCESTER, MASS.

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** You may want to consider fiberglass gutters like those chosen by the owners of the latest TOH TV project house, in Arlington, Massachusetts. Made and hung by The Fiberglass Gutter Company ([fiberglassgutter.com](http://fiberglassgutter.com)), they look just like traditional wood, but they'll never rot or need paint. And because the seams are fused in the field, they won't leak, either.

Many historic districts in New England have already approved these gutters as replacements for wood. When your district sees them, maybe you'll also get a green light.

The company ships gutters in 26-foot sections all over the country, so take a look at the steps at right to see if the project is something you'd like to do yourself or hire out.

FROM THE  
TOH TV  
JOB SITE

Installer Peter Robinson makes sure the gutter slopes ¼ inch every 10 feet.

**COST** \$33 per linear foot

**TIME** About 17 linear feet per person per hour

**DIFFICULTY** Moderate. Requires working with goopy resins while perched on a ladder.

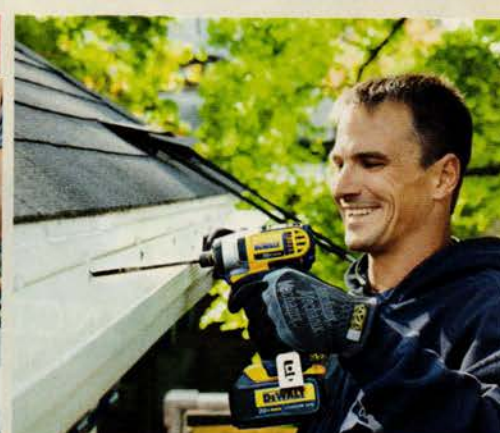




**1] Attach stand-off blocks.** With a 12-inch miter saw, cut  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch slices from the end of a  $\frac{3}{4}$ ×6 piece of cellular PVC trim to use as stand-off blocks. Nail them vertically to the fascia at each rafter location with 18-gauge stainless-steel brads, as shown. Next, snap a chalk line over the blocks where you want the top of the gutter's back edge to go. It should slope toward the downspout location  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch per 10 feet.

**2] Cut sections to length.** Wearing a dust mask, gloves, and eye protection, cut the gutter with the miter saw. For runs that end at a corner, cut the gutter ends square to match the length of the fascia. Sections that meet at a corner need to be mitered. For each outside miter cut, add the spacer-block thickness to the fascia length. For each inside miter cut, subtract the block's thickness.

**3] Mount the gutter.** Sand the trough at each cut with 80-grit paper. Then, with a helper, lift the gutter into position against the spacers and line up its back edge with the chalk line. Drive a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch stainless-steel structural screw through the back edge, through the stand-off block, and into the rafter. Repeat at each stand-off block.



**4] Seal the joints.** To join miters and attach end caps, superglue the pieces together and tape over the joint on the outside of the gutter. Cut two 6-inch-wide strips of fiberglass mat long enough to cover the joint in the trough. Put on an organic-vapor respirator and gloves, and wipe the sanded surfaces with acetone. Brush a mix of polyester resin and gelcoat into the trough and onto the strips until the fibers are saturated. After 30 minutes, snip off any projecting fibers and remove the tape.

**5] Set the outlets.** At each downspout location, use a  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch hole saw to cut through the bottom of the trough. Wearing latex gloves, squeeze a bead of fast-cure marine-grade polyurethane sealant onto the flange of the downspout outlet. Then, holding the outlet as shown, set it into the hole, sealant side down. Wait about an hour for the sealant to set before attaching the downspout.

**6] Fasten the downspout.** Fit the downspout over the outlet and join them with three stainless-steel sheet-metal screws, as shown. Repeat at each downspout joint. Finally, wearing gloves and a respirator, fill the joints on the outside of the gutter with a gelcoat-resin mix thickened with a microballoon filler. Clean the joints with acetone, then apply the putty with a gloved finger. Wipe up any excess with acetone.



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## Q New recessed lights

I recently pulled down the crumbling ceiling in my kitchen, exposing the joists. I'd like to have recessed can lights in the new ceiling, but I'm not sure whether to install them before the drywall goes up or after. Which method will be easier?

—RICHARD BRICKLEY, NORTH OLMDSTED, OHIO

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** It will be far easier and faster to install new-construction recessed fixtures while the ceiling is open, rather than to cut holes in your new ceiling and then install remodel units.

So the obvious next question is: How do you put up the ceiling drywall without burying the lights? Well, you do bury them—each sheet of drywall goes up intact, without any holes—then you go back and cut a hole in each location using the fixture itself to guide each cut. To do this, you need

a cutout tool, which is basically a small one-handed router built for slicing through drywall. (If you don't want to shell out about \$70 for one, you can rent it.) Here's how the job's done.

After the fixtures are installed, but before you put up a drywall sheet that will cover them, measure out from the center of the fixture in two directions—one parallel to the joists and one perpendicular to them—to where the corresponding edges of the sheet will land. That might be out to a wall or to the edge of a drywall sheet that's already installed. Transfer those measurements to the side of the sheet that will face down, and mark where they intersect. Now you'll know where each light is located after the ceiling is in place.

When the sheets are all up, fit a drywall-cutting bit into the cutout tool's chuck, and set the bit  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deeper than the thickness of the drywall. Now plunge the bit into the

mark at the center of the fixture and cut through the drywall in any direction out to the fixture's trim ring. When the bit hits the ring, hop the bit over to the ring's outside edge. Hold the bit against the edge as you cut around it. The result: a perfect circle, exactly where it should be.

Cutting drywall this way is dusty business, so always wear a mask and safety glasses. Hearing protection is also a must. Cutout tools are noisy little buggers.

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Go to: [thisoldhouse.com/asktoh](http://thisoldhouse.com/asktoh)

Or write to: Ask This Old House, This Old House magazine, 135 West 50th Street, New York, NY 10020

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

Frame style: Grandezza



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## PROJECT OF THE WEEK

More saving.  
More doing.

# HOW TO BUILD A RAISED HERB GARDEN PLANTER



Growing fresh herbs indoors can be a tricky task, but an outdoor garden bed requires yard space that not all of us have. So what's an herb lover to do? If you've got a free afternoon and basic carpentry skills, you can build an all-weather raised planter that can live on your porch or patio.

Constructed of pressure-treated deck posts and boards that you can find at your local home center, this compact piece takes up less than 6 square feet, and even has a few handy hooks to hold your gardening tools. Best of all, it will let you enjoy fresh herbs all season long.

You'll find all the tools and supplies necessary for this—and any—home project at The Home Depot nearest you.

For easy how-to instructions and a list of the tools and materials you'll need, go to [thisoldhouse.com/project](http://thisoldhouse.com/project)

## Ask THIS OLD HOUSE



## Norm's tricks of the trade

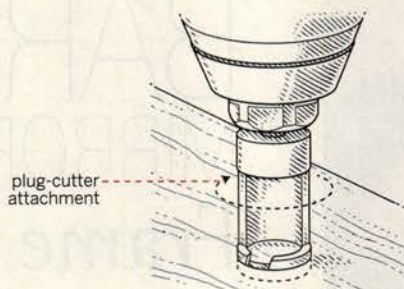
**I can't find face-grain wood plugs to match the wood I'm using on a stair project. What now?**

—TODD LOCKWOOD, MARYSVILLE, WASH.

**A** Why not make your own? You need a drill, a scrap of the same wood you're trying to match, and a plug cutter. These cutters carve plugs from  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, as well as metric sizes, to match the diameter of the counterbore, the cylindrical recess in which the screw sits. Make sure your cutter can be used with a drill—some require a drill press—then follow these steps.

**1] Clamp the scrap** to a workbench and put the bit in the drill. Hold it perpendicular to the wood's face, turn it on, then slowly sink the cutter about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch into the scrap. With the bit spinning, lift it straight out. Repeat in different places on the scrap so that you'll have a selection of colors and grain patterns to match the wood being plugged.

**2] Snap the plug free.** After the cutter has done its job, the bottom of the plug is still attached to the scrap. Insert a flathead screwdriver into the slot next to the plug and gently pry up. It doesn't take much force to crack it loose.



## What is it?



**A** Circular-saw guide  
The Square-Cut works like a rafter square but has an arm that adjusts to the offset between the blade and the shoe. You simply align the arm with the cutline and make the cut. \$12; [kregtool.com](http://kregtool.com) ■



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APRIL 2014

**COVER:** See "All About Hydrangeas" (pp. 80–85).

**CHECKLIST** (p. 12) *Thanks to* Ashley Eldridge, Chimney Safety Inspectors of America; csia.org. Bill Loden, American Society of Home Inspectors; ashi.com. Chris Hall; RepairClinic.com. Susan Littlefield, National Gardening Association; garden.org.

**HOME SOLUTIONS** (pp. 15–21) Budget redo: **Homeowner's blog:** Blissfully Ever After; blissfullyeverafter.net. When a crack is cause for worry: *Thanks to* Randon Gregory, Director of Franchising; ramjack.com.

**BEFORE + AFTER KITCHEN:** Retro redo (pp. 22–26) **Cabinetmaker:** Ellis & Doyle, San Luis Obispo, CA; 805-543-4669; elliscabinets.com. **Sink:** Ohmega Salvage, Berkeley, CA; 510-843-7368; ohmegasalvage.com. **Faucet:** chicagofaucets.com. **Frames in reading nook:** bedbathandbeyond.com.

**BEFORE + AFTER BEDROOM:** From cold to comfy (pp. 31–33) **Designer:** Beth Bynon, Bynon Design, Oceanside, CA; bethbynon.com. **Custom headboard:** Tony's Custom Upholstery, San Marcos, CA; 760-591-9686. **Coverlet:** bedbathandbeyond

.com. **Yellow throw, large yellow patterned pillows, white drum table, and mug:** homegoods.com. **Solid yellow and blue pillows:** crateandbarrel.com. **Jacquard leaf silk pillows and honeycomb crewel pillows:** westelm.com. **Bench:** pier1.com. **Fireplace tile:** St. Germain Colorbody Porcelain in SE-61 Creme; americanolean.com.

**GET THIS LOOK FOR LESS:** Traditional-meets-modern dining space (pp. 42–43) **Designer-builder:** Kim Clements, Creative Director, J.A.S. Design Build, Seattle, WA; jasdesignbuild.com.

**DEMYSTIFYING LEDs** (pp. 45–47) *Thanks to* Terry McGowan, American Lighting Association; americanlightingassoc.com. Alliance for Solid-State Illumination Systems and Technologies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Lighting Research Center; lrc.rpi.edu. Mike Connors; bulbs.com.

**BUILD IT OR BUY IT:** Standing coat rack (pp. 52–53) *Thanks to* Darcy McDonough; wayfair.com. **Basic model:** Wayborn Furniture 4-Hook Coat Stand (9019); lowes.com. **Mid-range model:** Sunny Designs Mission Oak Hat Rack (RTA 2617L); theclassyhome.com. **Luxury model:** Amana Mission Standing Coat Rack (HR-4010); amanashops.com.

**WEEKEND REMODEL:** Build a rain barrel (pp. 55–59) **Designer-builder:** Chris Beidel, Pernt, Brooklyn, NY; perntstudio.com. **Downspout diverter:** DIY Rain Barrel Construction and Installation Kit with Downspout Diverter; rainbrothers.com.

**RECRRAFTING A 1915 CRAFTSMAN** (pp. 60–67) **Paint:** **Exterior:** 6102 Portabello and 7509 Tiki Hut (cement finish); sherwin-williams.com. **Frazer's** 8366 Heartwood and 7786 Contemporary Maple (trim). **Kitchen:** 7743 Cupola Yellow. **Living and dining rooms:** 8192 Graceful Gold (main walls) and 8193 Winter Garden (upper walls). **Master bedroom:** 7751 Beach Grass (main walls) and 7752 Oakbluff (upper walls). **Master bath:** 8181 Maison Blanche; frazer.com. **Exterior:** **Roof shingles:** gaf.com. **Shingle stain:** Sagebrush; cabotstain.com. **Exterior plaster:** Leroy Richards, Morro Bay, CA; pirateplastering.com. **Kitchen:** **Range:** jaderange.com. **Range hood:** koberangehoods.com. **Refrigerator:** liebherappliances.com. **Microwave:** ge.com. **Light fixtures, pulls, and knobs:** rejuvination.com. **Sink:** Shaws; rohlhome.com. **Faucet:** chicagofaucets.com. **Dining room:** **Tableware:** pier1.com. **Master bath:** **Sinks:** stthomascreations.com. **Faucets:** chicagofaucets.com. **Tub:** kohler.com.

**TROUBLESHOOTING YOUR VEGETABLE GARDEN** (pp. 68–73) *Thanks to* Colin McCrate, Seattle Urban Farm Company, Seattle, WA; 206-816-9740; seattleurbanfarmco.com. Johnny's Selected Seeds, Winslow, ME; 877-564-6697; johnnyseeds.com.

**64 IMPORTANT NUMBERS EVERY HOMEOWNER SHOULD KNOW** (pp. 74–79) *Thanks to* Alan W. Zielinski, Better Kitchens Inc., Niles, IL; 847-967-7070.

**ASK THIS OLD HOUSE** (pp. 86–94) Cork-floor care: *Thanks to* Todd Schutte, Director of Training and Technical Services, Bona US, Aurora, CO; bona.com. Question of the Month: *Thanks to* Fiberglass Gutter Company, Pembroke, MA; 781-826-3711; fiberglassgutters.com.

**SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE** (p. 104) *Thanks to* Nathan Freeman, Riverside, CA. ■

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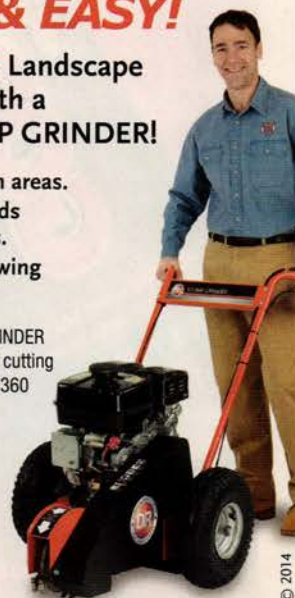
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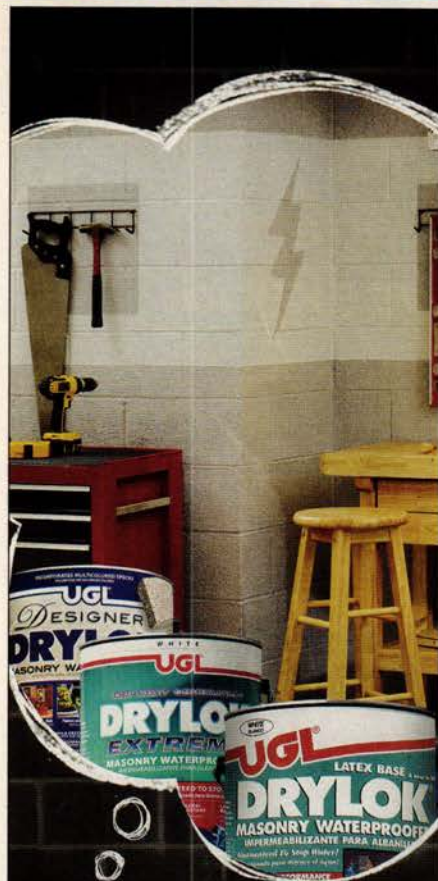
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# SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE

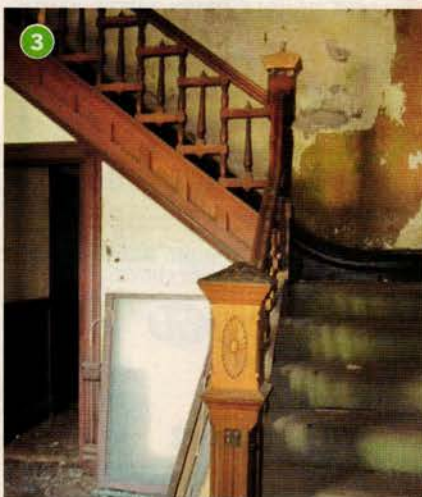
**PRICE** \$0 (must be moved)

**LOCATION** Riverside, California

**CONTACT** Nathan Freeman,  
951-826-5374

**THE HISTORY** In the mid-1880s, dry-goods merchant William Sweatt left rural Iowa to seek his fortune. He headed west, settling in Riverside, where he found success early, serving as the director of a bank and then opening a furniture business. This lavish Queen Anne, which he built with his wife, Nettie, in 1891, was to serve as a testament to just how far he'd come in the few short years since leaving home. Sadly, the good times didn't last; Sweatt's business collapsed in 1894, and he and Nettie divorced in 1897. Left alone in the 4,878-square-foot house, she divided it into apartments before moving to Los Angeles in 1902. Since then, the house has had over a dozen owners. In 2008, the city bought it so that it could be relocated and restored. But the city failed to find the funds to move the house and decided to offer the place to anyone willing to move it within Riverside, which would allow a local college to expand onto the lot.

**WHY SAVE IT?** The elaborate exterior retains many original details, including turned porch posts and a spindlework frieze. The inside is filled with elaborate millwork, wainscoting, and Lincrusta paneling. **WHAT IT NEEDS** In addition to a plot within the city limits—a nearby lot is available for \$119,000—the house needs new systems and roof and wall repairs. It cannot be used as a rental, and the new owner must demolish an exterior apartment. Houses of this size in the area can fetch over a million dollars. Restoring this home to the showpiece it once was is a big job, to be sure, but one that's well worth the effort. —PAUL HOPE




**1]** The five-bedroom, four-bath house has a detailed exterior with decorative clapboard siding, a turret, and patterned brick chimneys. **2]** A front porch wraps around the side of the house and is supported by elaborate turned posts. **3]** The staircase retains its mahogany newel post and balustrade. **4]** A window bay with fluted casings. Many of the home's windows are broken and covered with plywood.



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