

This Old House

**KITCHEN +
BATH SPECIAL**

Our favorite
low-cost
upgrades

47 *feel-good makeovers*

*Color
splash
the bath!*
p. 86

- > **CHEERFUL COLORS**
- > **CHARMING DETAILS**
- > **BEST NEW PRODUCTS**

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**Buyer's
guide to
pro-style
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**The
ultimate
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**CLEAN
SWEEP!
BEST WAYS
TO BUST
HOUSEHOLD DUST**
p. 24

Advertisement

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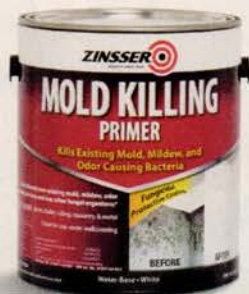
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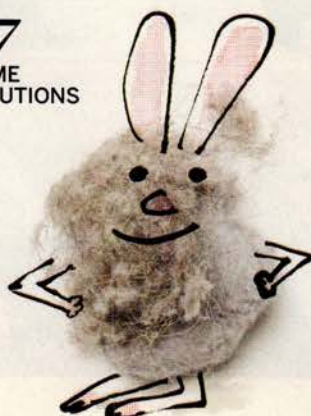


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Reader mail



TOH READERS *are perpetual students. The mail we've seen tells us you love to learn the history of your homes and appreciate the little details—and apparently this curiosity starts very young! Plus, a reader project that raised the curb appeal of a simple ranch.*

Wish books and home

On my fourth read through the March 2014 issue, I really looked at the home in Photoshop Redo [find it at thisoldhouse.com/may2014]. I recognized it as a Sears model called the Glen Falls. We are very partial to Sears catalog homes because we live in an original Sears Alhambra, built by my great-grandparents.

Thanks for putting out such a quality publication and contributing to the preservation of historical America.

—LYNDY (AND KENNY) IRELAND, PHILIP, S.D.

New life for old skeletons

[Re Ask This Old House, March 2014:]

Quite an interesting article on how to make a working skeleton key. While some houses with old locks may have used the same key in all doors, as you suggest, the house I just sold, built in 1919, had a different key for every

interior door. The keys still existed, too.

—ANN TRIMMER, BY E-MAIL

TOH Junior

My husband and I are amazed with our first-grader's reading ability. He took *This Old House* into the bathroom with him the other day. Through the door, I answered his questions about what budgets are, where you buy wainscoting, how you hang wallpaper. It's so exciting to watch the world open up to him, and if he wants to read this magazine, I'll help with the hard words. Of course, now he thinks he can build a house—I think I'll leave that lesson to my husband!

—MAURA KASCHUBE, NEW MILFORD, CONN.

HOW TO REACH US

E-mail 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

Spiffed-up ranch

MARJO VAN PATTEN, KETTERING, OHIO

Inspired by a Photoshop Redo you did [above right], I dressed up the front of my plain 1951 ranch with a similar pergola [right]. Mine is roof-mounted, since the front door and windows directly about the soffit. Thanks for the idea!

[Find this Redo at thisoldhouse.com/may2014.]





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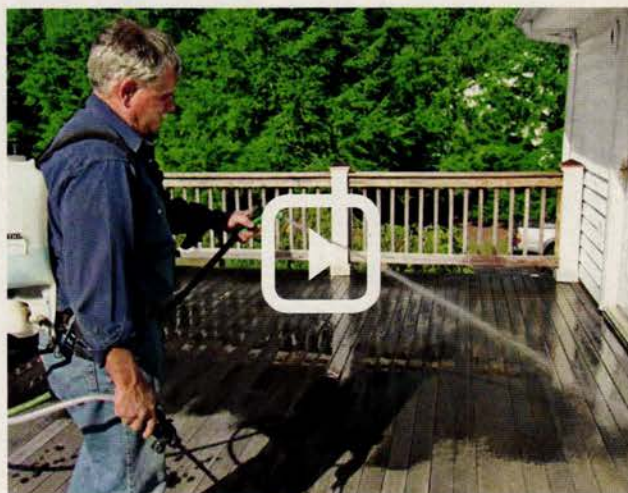
Bonus features

Find extras in our digital edition, including luxury items from the kitchen-and-bath product roundup, a video of building a compost bench, more from the Save This Old House farmhouse, and details from the Mediterranean Revival house. PLUS: the 12 scariest DIY shortcuts ever seen! Download your copy at thisoldhouse.com/tablet

HOW-TO VIDEO

How to clean and restain a deck

Breathe new life into your weather-beaten boards with these pro tips from *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva. See how he does it at thisoldhouse.com/may2014



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Mother knows best

“W hy don’t you—”
 “Mom...”
 “I’m just saying you should—”
 “Mother...”
 “It’s just that—”
 “MA!”

You’ve probably already guessed, but that was a recent exchange between my mom and me. A fairly typical exchange, especially when I’m doing something DIYish around the house and she’s poking around where it’s not really necessary for her to poke.

It’s her way of offering advice. Whether I want it or not. And it usually comes at that crucial stage where I’ve dropped and stooped to pick up the tiny little screw for the third or fourth time and am on a ladder struggling overhead, with a too-tired arm, to get that screw started in its hole. In other words, the frustration is high, the tolerance for suggestion is low, and the desire to be an orphan is strong.

Which isn’t to say that I’ve always wanted to be a ward of the state. In fact, through the years I’ve learned many useful lessons, particularly around home improvement, from my mother. The biggest lesson, I think, was a certain work ethic. That was absorbed from watching her, a single mother of three boys, forced to leave homemaking to become a paperhanger, using the only skill she had that she knew she could support us with. And I know that because of it, she had lots of her own up-and-down the ladder and too-tired arms. She got that attitude, I think, from her mother, my grandmother Olive, whom I’ve mentioned to you before, particularly her propensity to climb to the roof and clean out gutters well into her late 80s.

Of course, any regular reader of *This Old House* certainly knows there is no shortage of women who do the hard work at home. And that same reader knows I’m not the only member of the *TOH* family who has learned a thing or two from dear old Mom. Which is why, this being the May issue, and May being the calendric home to Mother’s Day, it seemed only natural to let some readers share with us what they learned from their own moms.

You’ll find the best of that advice in “DIY Lessons From Mom,” on page 76, and a few of their more nostalgic photos at right. Maybe these readers’ stories will spur memories of lessons well learned at the apron str—I mean, tool belt—of your own dear mother. If so, we’d love to hear them. Like us on Facebook and post your favorite DIY advice from Mom on our wall. We’ll showcase our favorite entries online in celebration of Mother’s Day.

Scott Omelianuk
 SCOTT OMELIANUK, EDITOR
 scott@thisoldhouse.com



LEFT: The editor and his mom, Judy, get rolling at his place, around 1999. BELOW: Little men at work—Scott and his brother Tim (in red) get started early, circa 1970.



RIGHT: *TOH* reader Dennis Prisant and his handy mom, Bernice, in 1958. BELOW: Michael Ritenour and his mother, Yvonne, an early upcycler, back in 1967. Find their stories on page 76.



Checklist

MAY 2014

*Easy ways to
improve your home
right now*

6 FAST FIXES

☐ Move houseplants outside:

After the last frost, and once nighttime temps reach 50 degrees F, it's safe to start gradually acclimating plants to the outdoors over a period of a few weeks.



☐ Refresh old paintbrushes:

Clean off dried paint by soaking brushes in hot white vinegar, then washing them in warm, soapy water.

☐ Shield wood floors from

sun: Prevent uneven floor fading by repositioning furniture and area rugs.

☐ Summer-proof your

grass: Giving your lawn a deep watering once a week encourages strong root growth that will help grass withstand summer droughts.

☐ Touch up exterior paint:

Before heat and humidity set in, refresh peeling or scuffed paint on your trim or front door.

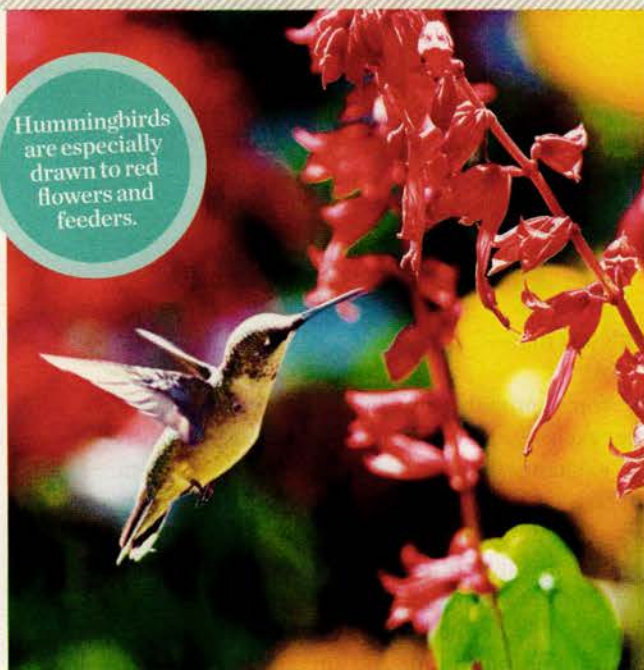
☐ Check your fridge's seal:

Grime can interfere with a tight seal, so make sure to clean the gasket regularly with a damp sponge. Test the seal by closing the fridge on a dollar bill, then trying to pull it out. If the bill slides out easily, it may be time to order a replacement seal from the manufacturer.

☒ Attract hummingbirds

Many of these pretty pollinators migrate north for spring breeding. To bring them to your yard, plant nectar-rich tubular blooms, like the salvia pictured at right, and set out hummingbird feeders. A moving water source, like a mister or bubbler, also helps lure hummers; place one near trees and shrubs, where they are likely to seek shelter.

Hummingbirds are especially drawn to red flowers and feeders.



☐ Clean your screens

It's time for some fresh air! Breathe easier by busting screen grime before you throw open the windows. To wash, remove the screens and scrub using dish soap and a sponge or a soft-bristled brush, then rinse. If you can't remove the screens, try a bottled outdoor cleaner that attaches to your hose to spray them clean from afar.



☐ Wash and protect outdoor furniture

Mold and mildew thrive in wet spring weather, so give wood play sets and furniture a

clean start by washing them thoroughly with dish detergent and a soft-bristle brush. If you want to keep the wood from graying, wait until it's dry, then sand lightly and apply a tinted sealer that has a UV protectant.

☐ Give a Mother's Day garden

Rather than a short-lived bouquet, offer Mom a whole season's bounty. Peppers, tomatoes, pumpkins, and cucumbers are all heat lovers best planted in warm

spring weather, so hit your local nursery for seedlings that are ready to be put directly in the ground. Before the end of summer, she'll have a garden full of edible gifts to share.





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home solutions

Edited by Michelle Brunner

INSIDE

10 USES

PAINT MAKEOVER

EMERGENCY GEAR

HEALTHY HOME

MORE

Make sure the brackets measure at least two-thirds of the depth of the crate. →

Wine-crate storage

It's not often we tell our readers to hit the liquor store, but the crates used to make these wood shelves are freebies from the wine shop. It's a thrifty way to bring some stylish storage into your cook space. They're also a cinch to assemble. Just call local wine sellers to see if and when they put crates on the curb for customers. You may need to remove staples and sand rough edges. We used a light-to-medium stain (Minwax in Gunstock) on the wood to ensure that the vintner's imprint could still be seen. Then we attached them to the wall with iron brackets (\$6 each; at home centers) for a storage solution worth raising a glass to.

10
USES

Wood lattice

Those crisscrossed panels can do more than skirt a porch or hold up vines. Let them step out from their supporting role with these clever uses

1> Edge a flower bed.

Cut pressure-treated lattice panels into 8-inch-wide strips. Frame ends with lattice cap, or C-rail (a channeled edging for lattice). Coat with exterior paint. Attach stakes and install.

2> Paint a pattern.

Use lattice as a stencil for spraying on allover squares or diamonds.

3> Trim furniture.

Add detail to a plain table by attaching triangles of lattice in the corners. Place two lengths of 1x1 in each corner to act as braces behind the lattice, and fasten. Nail the lattice onto the corner braces. Paint as desired.



4> Use as wainscoting.

Cut panels where the lattice intersects to a typical wainscot height (about 36 inches). Set lattice on top of base molding and attach to the walls with nails and panel adhesive. Cap with rabbeted molding.

5> Store garden tools.

Screw a rectangular piece of lattice onto two 2x4s and attach to the back of a shed door. Use zip ties as loops for hanging rakes, shovels, and other garden gear.

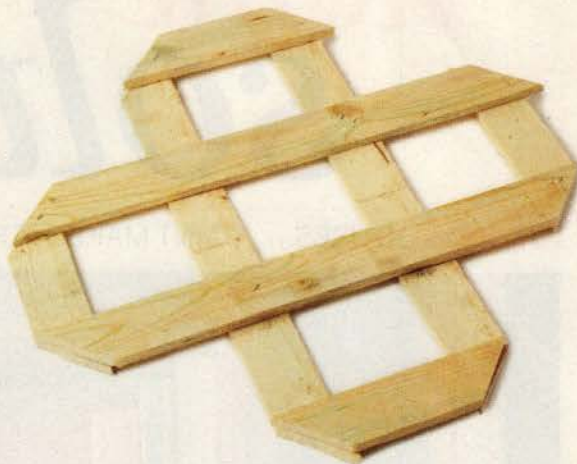


6> Get building materials off the ground.

Make a right angle from two 2x4s and join them with a triangular piece of lattice to form a bracket. Screw brackets into the wall, spaced a few feet apart. Slide pipes and molding through the openings.

7> Fashion a pot rack.

Frame a piece of sturdy lattice with 2x4s. Screw eye hooks into ceiling joists and into the wood frame. Connect the eye hooks with chain. Attach S-hooks to the lattice to hang light pots.



8> Make a memento board.

Cut a piece of plywood to size and cover it with batting and fabric. Secure with a staple gun. Tack a piece of lattice on top with brad nails. Tuck paint swatches and the like into the openings.

9> Create a decorative inlay.

Layer painted lattice over a glass or mirrored panel in a cabinet door.

10> Make a trivet.

Cover a square of lattice with heat-resistant paint and use it to protect your countertop from hot pots and pans.

—KATELIN HILL



MORE 10 USES

To find more smart uses for leftovers, blip this page or go to thisoldhouse.com/may2014



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Power-outage essentials

Stormy weather accounts for more than 60 percent of electrical outages. Your best defense against the dark: handy gadgets that will help you and your family get through the night without leaving you feeling so...powerless. Here, find expert picks for what you should have on hand in case the lights go out. —MEGAN BAKER



ALL-WEATHER RADIO: This trusty device bests your smartphone when it comes to delivering info on emergency conditions. Thanks to three different power sources—battery, solar, and hand crank—you'll never be wanting for news updates. \$40; etoncorp.com



CELL-PHONE CHARGER: Without working outlets, your battery is bound to drain—not good if you need to make an emergency call. Consider a charger that juices up via a manual crank (\$70; etoncorp.com) or a battery-powered one that can hold its full charge for up to a year (\$60; hammacher.com).



CAN OPENER AND LIGHTER: If you're relying on nonperishables for food, a manual can opener is a necessity (\$14; oxo.com). Keep a lighter on hand, too, in case you need to light your gas stove or fire up the grill for cooking (\$20; zippo.com).



WATERPROOF LANTERN: Flashlights are fine for walking around the house, but they might not produce enough light to sufficiently illuminate a room. Choose a durable lantern like this one, which is made to brave camping conditions. \$90; zippo.com



Is that garage-sale find worth your time?

Great deals on secondhand furniture are plentiful at yard sales. But don't wedge that wingback into your car just yet. Make sure you're getting a piece worth restoring with these tips from Amanda Brown, author of the new guide *Spruce: A Step-by-Step Guide to Upholstery and Design*.

ASSESS THE BONES: High-quality pieces are often masked beneath a layer of ratty, torn fabric. Carved wood, down cushions, and coil springs are good signs that you've found a gem in the rough. Be leery of a wobbly frame (repairs can get costly), and steer clear of pieces that were stored outdoors—they could have mold or termite damage.

DO THE MATH: Before you buy, measure the piece to make sure it will fit in the spot you have in mind. Call around to get a rough quote for reupholstering, too. Depending on where you live, you can spend \$350 to \$700 to restore a large chair and around \$1,000 for a sofa—not including the cost of fabric.

KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT: If you hire a pro, make sure the price includes the installation of new padding and the labor for retying coil springs. If you're tempted to tackle the project yourself, Brown recommends a pneumatic stapler and a hand upholstery tool kit (\$169; DIYupholsterysupply.com). No sewing savvy? No worries. "There's actually very little sewing involved—you'll mostly just smooth and staple fabric," she says. Which makes the prospect of restoring that wingback a lot less daunting. —PAUL HOPE



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PROJECT OF THE WEEK

HOW TO BUILD A GARDEN TOOLS SHED

All the rust-resistant coating in the world won't save your garden tools if you leave them outside all the time. To create a clean, dry, and accessible place for your pruners and shovels, build a handsome wood lean-to shed that can rest against the house near the patio or garden.

You can make one in a weekend out of off-the-shelf lumber, or buy a panelized kit that screws together in under an hour. Once the quaint cabinet is in place, just remember to rinse off your tools and clean them occasionally with WD-40 before tucking them away. That'll keep rust at bay for years to come.

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

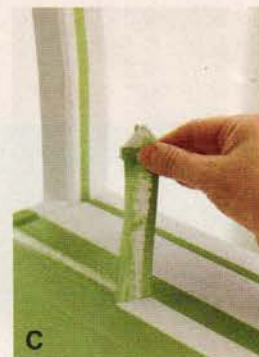


For easy how-to instructions and a list of the tools and materials you'll need, go to thisoldhouse.com/project

home solutions | paint makeover



THE STEPS



A chair of a different stripe

A nondescript piece of furniture can boast one-of-a-kind style, thanks to strategically painted stripes. For design inspiration, simply look around the room: The decorative bands can match your walls or pick up a complementary color. On this chair, a shade of sage green (Benjamin Moore's Spring Valley) echoes the palette of the striped tablecloth. Get the lined look with these easy steps.

A. Draw your design on the chair with a watercolor pencil; its soft tip won't dent the wood. Then tape off the lines with painter's tape that resists bleeding.

B. Paint stripes with a large artist's brush or a small foam brush, smoothing your strokes as you go along.

C. Gently pull off the tape before the paint is completely dry.

You've just customized a chair and added color and pattern for less than the cost of a cushion.



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Anatomy of a dust bunny

Ever wonder where those small-and-furries come from? Believe it or not, environmental scientists have been trying to pick apart this mystery for years. Turns out the average dust sample can contain anything from insect fecal matter and fungal spores to lawn chemicals and heavy metals—and most of it walks right in through the front door. It's enough to induce a sneezing fit in even the hardest of humans. Read on for all the dusty details, plus tips on how to keep the bunnies at bay. —DEBORAH BALDWIN

SPORES AND GERMS

Allergy- and asthma-aggravating mold spores thrive in dusty places that are also warm and humid. It's unclear how long cold and flu germs survive, but dead bacteria throw off endotoxins, another lung irritant.

ALPHABET SOUP

More than 100 toxins have been found in household dust: PAHs (car exhaust, tobacco, barbecue grills); PBDEs (fire retardants); phthalates (plasticizers); and phased-out but still extant PCBs, DDT, and 2,4-D (herbicide).

NATURAL AND INDUSTRIAL POISONS

They'll never entirely go away: We mean things like arsenic, a by-product of burning coal (and of volcanoes), and lead, an enduring legacy of leaded gas and paint. Toxins that linger in soil and dirt linger in dust, too.

HEAVY METALS

They're undeniably useful in manufacturing but potentially dangerous when inhaled—we're talking cadmium, copper, nickel, and lead. Toxic metals are found in higher concentrations in dust than in garden soil, according to the EPA. Mercury used in some light switches and thermostats may be to blame.

DANDER, LINT, AND HAIR

Skin flakes, hair and pet fur, animal dander, carpet and fabric fibers, pollen, and even greasy food bits are united with all the other dust ingredients by static electricity and propelled—under the bed and elsewhere, of course—by air currents.

INSECT REMAINS

Moth wings, cockroach legs, and rodent, pet, and dust-mite feces are all part of the world around us—maybe just 2 feet away. Ask anyone allergic to the castoffs from mites, which thrive in humid rooms and unaired beds.

keep it clean

The dust particles swirling in a ray of sun fall down to and rise up from the floor, where dust and grit concentrate in carpets and crevices. To avoid dragging in nasties and kicking them up, try these preventative measures.

► SHED SHOES AND USE DOORMATS

About 60 percent of dust particles travel indoors on shoes. Lay down a runway: a mat outside to scrape off dirt, one inside to grab grit and moisture, and a hard (moppable) floor. Or just take off your shoes at the door.

► VACUUM—A LOT

Choose a vacuum cleaner with a high-efficiency particulate air, or HEPA, filter to capture and contain dust that would otherwise be launched back into the room—and your lungs. Don't forget mattresses and furniture. Vacuum at least weekly or more often, depending on where you live.

► DUST LAST, NOT FIRST

After vacuuming, dust with a damp microfiber cloth or a disposable fabric duster. Bothered by germs and dried footprints? Try a handheld or stand-up steamer to sanitize floors.



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Built-in storage for \$197

A blank wall is transformed with secondhand bookshelves



BEFORE

BEFORE The knotty pine bookcases were a Craigslist find, but their style didn't jibe with the homeowners' vision for the room. **AFTER** Extending the height and width of the units lends a custom look; painting the exposed back wall dark blue makes the white stand out and the shelves look deeper.

NOT ALL OLDER HOMES are full of charming details. At Hilary and Dan Delgadillo's 1950s Cape Cod, in Somerset, New Jersey, the ho-hum living room lacked architectural character. So Hilary decided to add her own by flanking the window with built-in bookcases. After months of scouring Craigslist for used furniture to incorporate into the design, she found the perfect fit: two solid-pine units with open shelves as well as closed cabinets. Dentil molding, a scalloped valance, and a particleboard back dated the pieces, so she removed them before sanding the units and painting them white. Dan used plywood to build three-sided boxes to extend the height of both shelf units, patching in pieces for the face frame and a false wall that extends the units' width. Wrapping the top and bottom with crown and base molding make them look built-in. Finally, Hilary painted the wall behind the shelves a nautical blue—befitting a Cape. "I love that we have display space that gives the house character," she says. "Plus, the shelves look like they've been here forever." —MEGAN BAKER

THE PROJECT TALLY

Snagged a pair of solid-pine bookcases online\$100

Modernized the pieces by removing the dentil molding, scalloped valance, and back panel\$0

Extended the height and width of the units with plywood.....\$20

Wrapped the top and base of the units with molding for a built-in look\$30

Sanded, primed, and painted the assembly white.....\$30

Added color to the wall behind the shelves with navy-blue "oops" paint from the hardware store, and installed new acrylic knobs.....\$17

TOTAL.....\$197



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From musty to must-see

A beach cottage's rundown cook space becomes a year-round haven

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN + PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIEULI

➔ **MANAGE A RENOVATION** long distance? Sounds scary. But not if you are Rick and Chris Schwartz, of White Plains, New York. In one mad eight-week dash, they snapped up an unheated 19th-century beach cottage, found a general contractor through their Realtor, pored over pictures of period kitchens on the Internet, collaborated with a cabinetmaker on design and layout, and chose the tile, fixtures, and appliances. Because the house is on Martha's Vineyard, off the Massachusetts coast, the couple knew they'd be doing a lot of shipping. Still, they were surprised to learn they could save time and money by transporting the GC and his crew—as well as cabinets and countertops—all the way from Chicago. The well-knit team had worked on other houses on the island and was willing to get the job done quickly. Working off-season with a few local subcontractors, they gutted and jacked up the sinking space and put in new everything, including appliances and light fixtures nabbed during sales. Says Rick: "Our goal was to blend new work seamlessly into our 1870s cottage. We not only succeeded but did it all by cell phone!"



BEFORE

BEFORE The space needed more light and less knotty pine.

AFTER The gut redo made way for a more open layout, updated plumbing and wiring, a first-time heating-and-cooling system, and period details throughout.

• before + after: kitchen

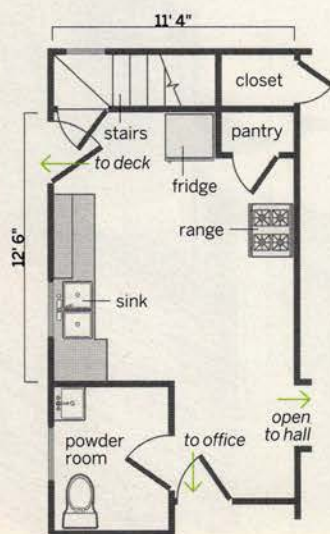
Cabinets are flush with the standard-depth fridge and built-in microwave for a seamless look.
Appliances: GE. Light fixtures: Hudson Valley Lighting

Chris and Rick Schwartz chose cabinets in an afternoon; finding the right color for them took four months. Paint (cabinets): Benjamin Moore's Stratton Blue



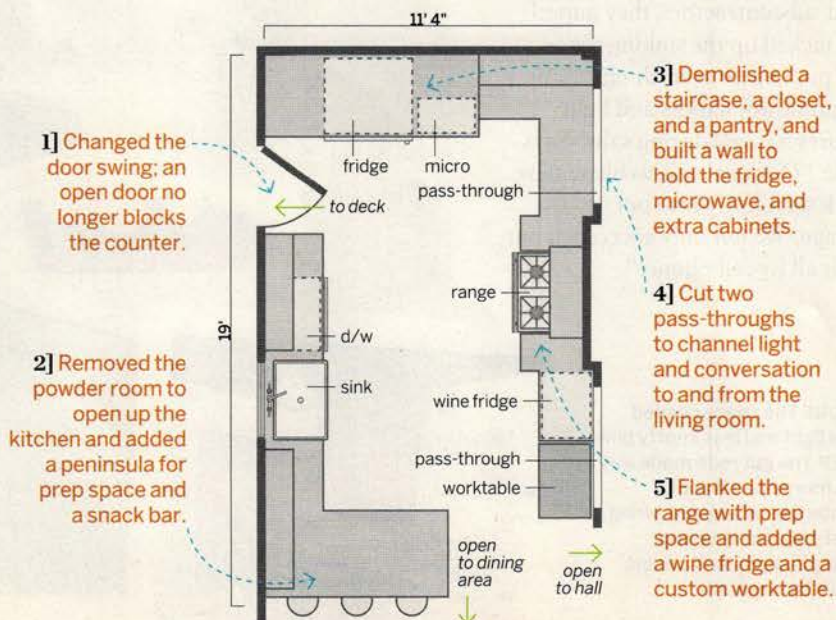
before

The 142-square-foot space was disjointed and dysfunctional.



after

Stairs, a closet, a pantry, and a powder room came out, allowing the fridge wall and a peninsula with seating to go in.





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• **before + after:**
kitchen

Cabinetmaker Steve Janik aligned the horizontal muntins with the shelves to neaten the look of glass-front units. Knobs and pulls: Berenson



homeowner tip CHRIS SCHWARTZ, WHITE PLAINS, N.Y.
“We saved almost \$8,000 by negotiating deals on appliances and light fixtures during the winter sales, then put off delivery for six months.”



A 2-inch-thick slab of walnut butcher block tops a custom worktable with turned legs and a drawer for utensils. The floor is a blend of new and original pine boards. Custom cabinets and worktable: Romar Cabinet and Top Company

The homeowners splurged on marble countertops while opting for standard subway tile. A herringbone-pattern inset framed with pencil tile adds a custom touch.
Tile: American Olean.
Whale: The Copperworks of Martha's Vineyard



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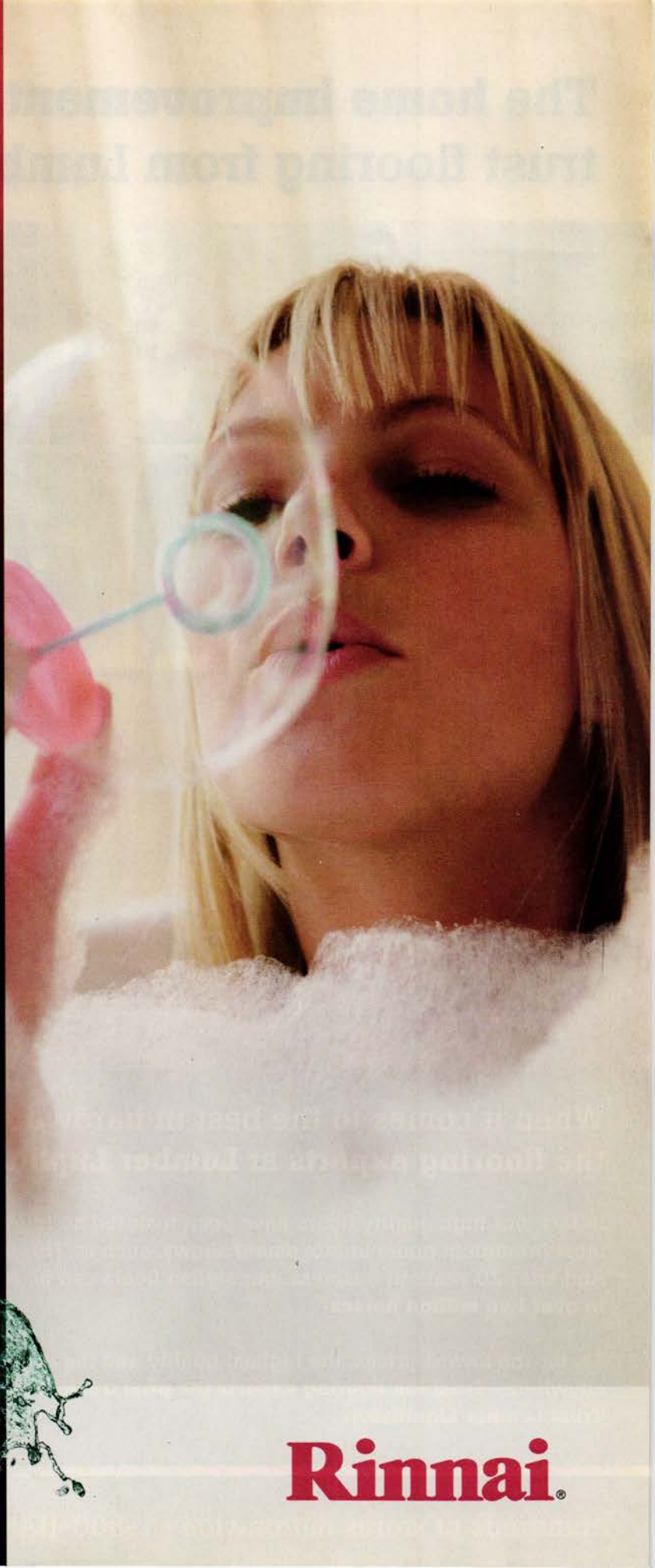
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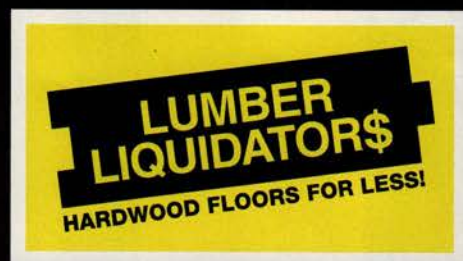
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Fresh start

A layout overhaul and classic fixtures deliver a dreamy master bath

BY ANN E. STRATTON + PHOTOGRAPHS BY WENDELL T. WEBBER

➔ **THE EIGHTIES LOOK** hasn't exactly stood the test of time. And yet, until recently, the master bath in Patty Monteleone's 1986 Neocolonial, in Warwick, New York, was still sporting all the old fads. With its mottled brown tiles, mirrored walls, sloped ceiling, and patterned wallpaper, "the place was like the set of a bad sitcom," recalls Jeff DeGraw, her architect and longtime friend. Not that the rest of the house was any better. "It was all so ugly," says Patty, who was quick to agree to a whole-house renovation when she and her husband, Joe, got engaged.

Topping the couple's wish list was a more functional master suite. While they pored over lighting catalogs and paint swatches, DeGraw devised a layout with better flow, expanding the bathroom and making room for spacious his-and-hers closets just outside it. Then he added timeless details, including wainscoted walls, a uniform 8-foot ceiling trimmed with crown molding, oak flooring, and Patty's favorite feature, a claw-foot soaking tub. The couple couldn't be happier. Says Patty, "It feels like a luxurious hotel suite, a little escape inside our house."

BEFORE The mirror over the old drop-in tub reflects a clear view of the bath's dingy wallpaper, outdated fixtures, and overall tight quarters. **AFTER** Crisp white trim and serene blue walls further brighten the spacious new layout. Paint (walls): Farrow & Ball's Oval Room Blue



• **before + after:**
bath

The couple had solid-wood doors made for the medicine cabinets, then decided they looked too heavy. Installing frosted glass panels was the perfect fix. Knobs and sconces: Restoration Hardware

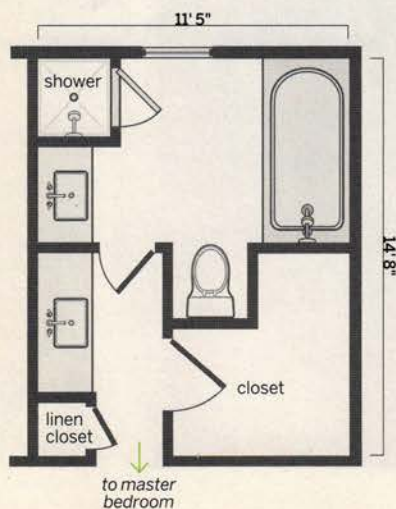


The double vanity, topped with Carrara marble, offers 9 feet of deck space and cabinet storage. Cabinetry: Wells Woodworking. Faucets: Restoration Hardware

after

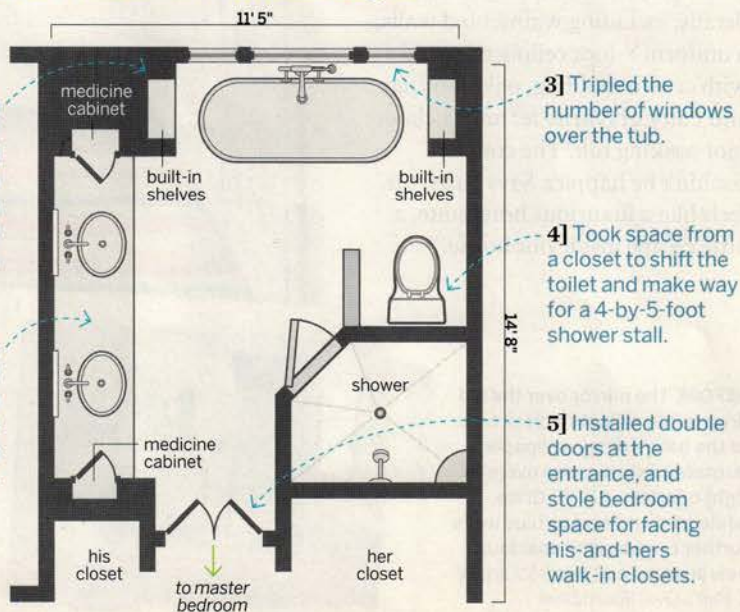
Reconfiguring the closets and moving the doorway cleared floor space for a more comfortable layout. New windows flood the room with natural light.

before
A second vanity outside the main bath and a big L-shaped closet chopped up the space.



1] Removed a cramped shower stall and framed out a cozy tub alcove with built-in shelves at either end.

2] Relocated the doorway and traded two vanities for one with ample storage.



3] Tripled the number of windows over the tub.

4] Took space from a closet to shift the toilet and make way for a 4-by-5-foot shower stall.

5] Installed double doors at the entrance, and stole bedroom space for facing his-and-hers walk-in closets.

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• **before + after:**
bath

The double-ended claw-foot tub is cast from a durable blend of resins and volcanic limestone, a lightweight alternative to traditional cast iron. *Tub: Victoria + Albert. Tub filler: California Faucet*



Built-in open shelves at either end of the tub make use of dead space behind the wall and offer a convenient spot for stashing towels and bath accessories.



homeowner tip PATTY MONTELEONE, WARWICK, N.Y.

"Since the bath remodel made the master bedroom smaller, we were careful to enlarge the closets, so the room doesn't need as much furniture."



Covering the shower walls with oversize 4-by-12-inch subway tiles creates a clean look and reduces the amount of grout to scrub. *Tile: Daltile*



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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 for full prescribing information.

^{*}Data taken from the *Massachusetts Male Aging Study*. Of 1,290 respondents, 52% stated that they had some degree of ED.

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IMPORTANT FACTS



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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.
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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:

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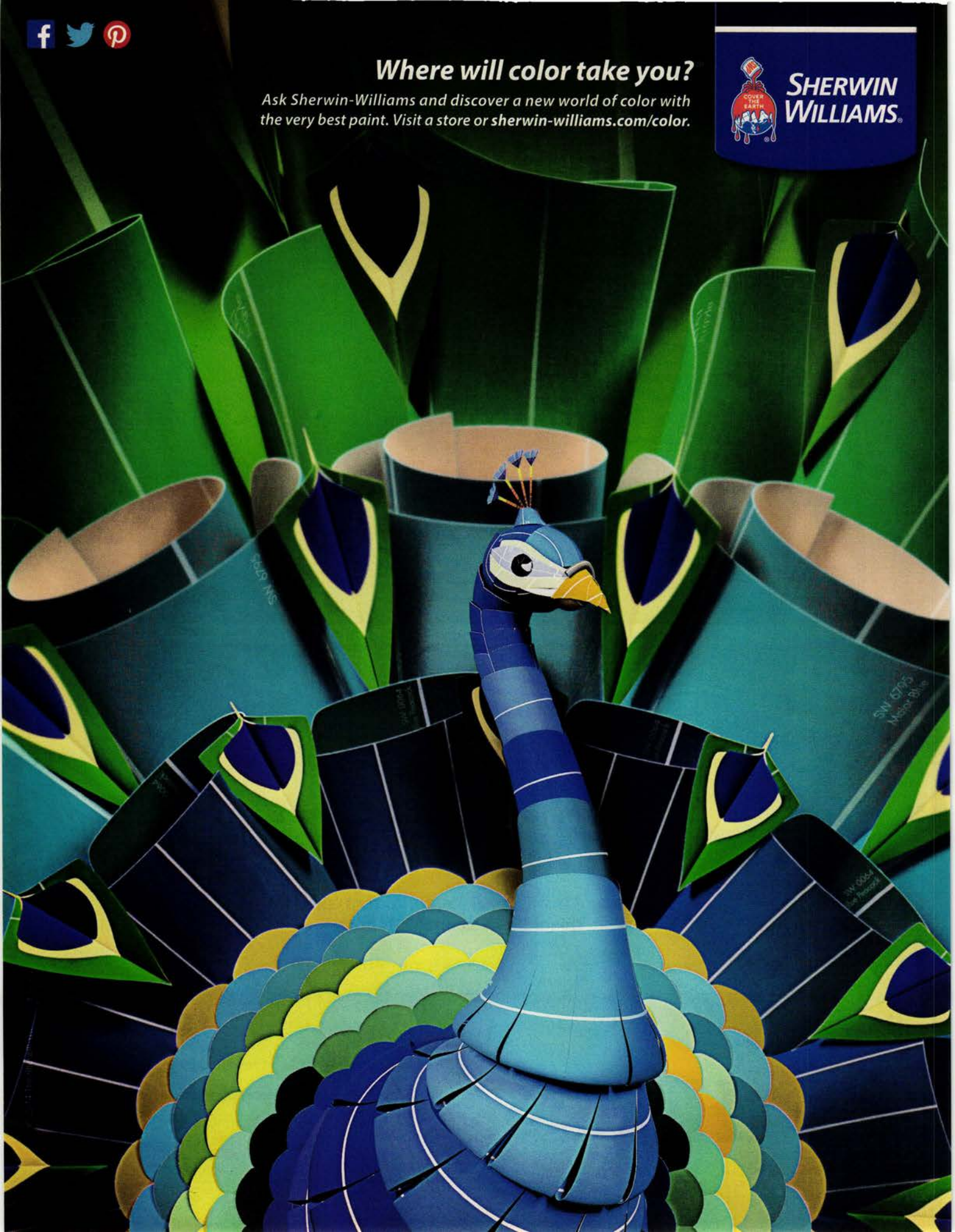


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Checkered charm

Add warmth and whimsy to a plain white space with the help of painter's tape and a half-dozen pale shades

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN + PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN GUTMAKER

➔ **CONFRONTED BY** a cottage kitchen where nothing lined up, San Francisco-based decorative painter Paul d'Orleans decided to play off its funky lines with a checkerboard in six muted shades. After putting down a base coat of robin's-egg blue, he mapped out a pattern of 16-inch squares, allowing them to bump up against cabinets, windows, and countertops. "The eye is very forgiving," he says. "As long as the horizontals are the same throughout, you have leeway to widen or narrow a square—where it meets a corner, say—by a half inch or so." Or more like 10 millimeters. "I always use metric tape," he says. "Making fractions out of inches will drive you crazy."

Armed with a pencil and a 4-foot level and using the countertops as a starting point, d'Orleans marked out and taped off the squares, then filled two-thirds of them in a random patchwork of related colors. He worked in sections, using 8-inch mini rollers and taking care to work on the right side of the tape. "Measuring took about four hours and painting maybe six," says this pro, who likes to spread out the work over a few days. "Just be sure to choose colors of the same intensity." The result: six-part harmony. ■



WE LOVE PAINT IDEAS

Enter your creative paint project in our America's Best Remodel Contest for a chance to win cash prizes. Blipp this page or go to thisoldhouse.com/yourTOH

Problem-solvers and cool finds

Inventive new products offer easy ways to upgrade the kitchen and bath. Here are 23 that caught our eye

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN

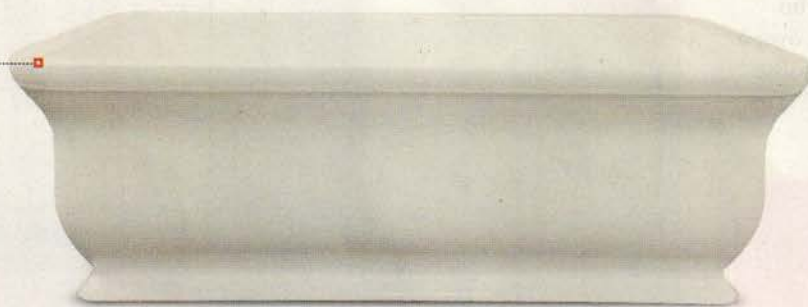


farmhouse modern

Pro-style 18-gauge stainless steel gives this bowed apron-front sink a sharp look. It's a pot-accommodating 9 inches deep and comes with a single or double basin. From \$934; moen.com for stores

faux cast iron

Solid, through-color acrylic, matte or polished, gives the shapely 71-inch Canova tub more heft than hollow-core acrylic tubs, with less risk of permanent scratches. From \$5,503; catalanousa.com for stores

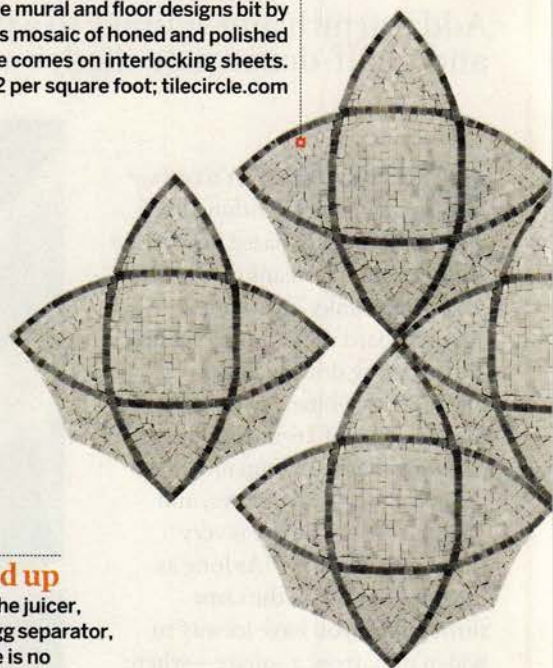


NOTE: We've included manufacturers' suggested retail prices. As new products become more available, prices will come down, so check around for the best deal.



preassembled petals

The Romans had to piece together their elaborate mural and floor designs bit by bit; this mosaic of honed and polished marble comes on interlocking sheets. \$42 per square foot; tilecircle.com



bottled up

Finding the juicer, grater, egg separator, and more is no problem when they're right between the funnel and the measuring cup. And it's fun to keep the eye-catching All-in-One Kitchen Tool Set where you can see it. \$40; momastore.org



matte finish

Give open shelves something to showcase and yourself a hardworking enameled-iron pot. The classic Dutch oven now comes in three matte colors: this Mineral Blue, Cotton, and Sisal. From \$120; lecreuset.com



warm up the cook space

Rich purple hues are everywhere this year and now even on cabinets, with shades like Brazilian Orchid (left) and African Lotus. From \$150; plainfancycabinets.com for stores



affordable accent

Peeking out from under the matte-black shade of the Chicago pendant is a fashionable lining of unlacquered brass. Matching brass clips complete the elegant-industrial look. From \$200; rejuvenation.com



wake up the backsplash

Handmade cement tile gets a fresh twist: The Oceana collection offers 21 graphic patterns in blue, white, and gray. \$16.50 per square foot; originalmissiontile.com



slate pull-down

The matte gray finish on the Pasadena pull-down faucet and soap dispenser is not only on trend, it resists fingerprints and water spots, too. \$188; homedepot.com



get a jump on dinner

Preheat the Profile wall oven via cell phone and get a text when the roast is done. Its convection fan sits above the racks, so pans won't block fast, even cooking. From \$2,999; ge.com for stores



EASY FIX

no more mold

"Tile" a new shower without breaking a sweat or dealing with grout. A set of Subway Tile Walls, in mold-resistant polymer, includes three 36-by-72-inch glue-in-place panels. From \$1,037; swanstone.com for stores

• kitchen + bath special



EASY
FIX

declutter

Sweep those gizmos and their chargers into a drawer equipped with this code-compliant device, which has USB ports and is wired through the back of an existing drawer and cabinet. \$169; dockingdrawer.com



snappy ceramics

The uptempo Manhattan collection includes 24 patterns designed to jazz up a backsplash. \$12.50 per square foot; imagnetile.com



stands up nicely

Polished-chrome legs and an angular design give the Wyatt console sink a forward spin, and its glass shelf keeps towels handy. \$1,320; dxv.com for stores



period update

The sleek Vivian Alta faucet has a graceful arc and comfy cross-handles. And it saves water, too, with a 1½-gallon-per-minute flow. From \$470; totousa.com for stores



highly flexible

With two separate units below—one with four settings so that it can chill or freeze—French doors up top, plus an ice-and-water dispenser, Samsung's Chef Collection 4-Door Refrigerator aims to accommodate it all. \$6,399; samsung.com for stores

EASY
FIX



get organized

Pans and raised-handle lids are easy to grab yet out of sight with this slide-out. The rack, which can handle 100 pounds, comes with heavy-duty hooks and an easy-install mounting bracket; you provide the empty cabinet. \$199; glideware.com

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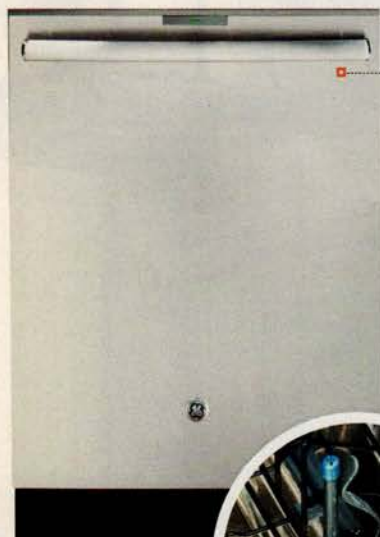
To find the showroom nearest you
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• kitchen + bath special



stovetop espresso

These days you can press, pour over, cold-filter, and even steam your coffee, but the handsome, low-tech Bialetti Moka Express, launched in 1933, works just fine. Now in four cheery colors. \$40; bialetti.com



nozzles for bottles

With 16 jets built right into prongs on the top rack, this Profile dishwasher finally gets to the bottom of vases, travel mugs, and water bottles. Another 86 jets scour the rest. \$1,299; ge.com



textured look, tile function

Reclamation porcelain tiles come with molded-concrete mottling (shown) or convincing wood grain, in squares or lengths, in four weathered shades. From \$6.80 per square foot; crossvilleinc.com for stores



lush light

Subtle color variations add dimension to this glass Stella mini chandelier, providing a touch of glam over the tub. \$398; crystorama.com



EASY
FIX

store more

This shelf unit cleverly shares the hinges on a door and closes with the help of a magnet. Use it as an extra medicine cabinet or a bonus pantry on the way to the basement. From \$130; cabidor.com



EASY
FIX



guiding light

Soft, blue-tinted lights along the hinge of the Nightlight toilet seat point the way without jarring the eyes. At dawn, a timer switches them off. From \$75; kohler.com

TABLET
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For five more smart finds for kitchen and bath, go to thisoldhouse.com/tablet

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Perfect fit for a family

The 1870s Italianate had lots of character but no breathing room for a couple with young kids—until the TOH TV project team arrived

BY JILL CONNORS + PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIEULI

➔ **SIX YEARS AGO**, Heather and Malcolm Faulds were condo dwellers in Cambridge when they fell for a 2,100-square-foot Italianate in the Boston suburb of Arlington, now the subject of the current *This Old House* TV season. “We loved the character of the house,” says Malcolm, including its decorative roof brackets, double-height entry foyer, quartersawn oak floors, and original interior trim. “But we had a pretty long list of what needed to change, right from the start,” says Heather. In sum: Open up the first floor, create a new kitchen where the family could gather, and retain the period details.

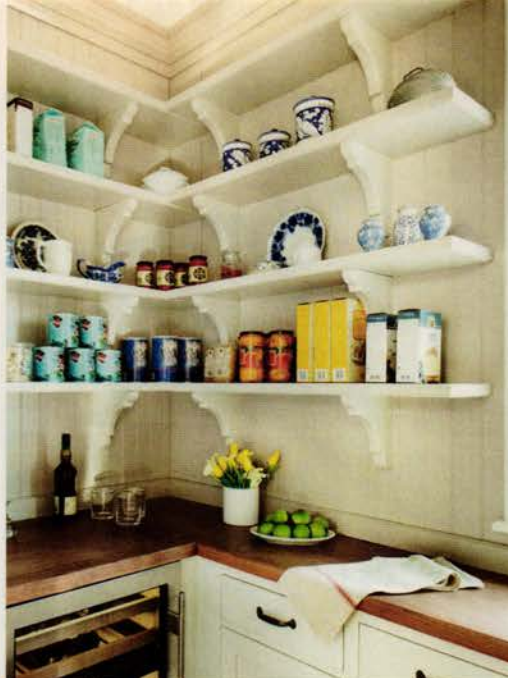
Enter architect David Whitney, who created a big open kitchen, sent the home office upstairs, and fit in a mudroom, a powder room, and a coat closet near the front entry, within the existing footprint. The plan called for adding just 200 square feet—to create a second-floor master suite over the kitchen.

For *TOH* general contractor Tom Silva, the biggest challenges were below grade, where the leaky, crumbling rubble-stone foundation had to be fixed. Only then could the delightful discoveries begin, such as the original plaster crown molding uncovered in the living and dining rooms. “Those original elements really make the house feel like it still has its old character,” says Tom.

With the place brought up to its full potential, living in a dream home is now an everyday reality for Heather and Malcolm and their two children, ages 7 and 5. And that to-do list they made when they bought the house? Done.



OPEN CONCEPT The window-lined eat-in kitchen was carved out of a home office at the back of the house, a cramped central kitchen, and a dividing wall with a defunct chimney. Prefinished chestnut floors and a teak island top warm up the white cabinets; in-floor radiant heat adds real warmth underfoot. With its microwave, sink, dishwasher, and seating, the island is meal-prep and snack-time central.



STYLISH STORAGE A butler's pantry, just off the kitchen, occupies space that had been an awkward full bath. Bracketed shelves on the beadboard walls put items on display.

THESE PAGES
ARCHITECT: David Whitney
INTERIOR DESIGNER:
Christine Tuttle
KITCHEN DESIGN:
Kitchen Dimensions
KITCHEN FLOOR:
Lumber Liquidators
KITCHEN WINDOWS:
Jeld-Wen

KITCHEN CABINETS:
Wood-Mode
PANTRY CABINETS:
Brookhaven
APPLIANCES:
Sub-Zero/Wolf
SINK AND FAUCET: Kohler
GARBAGE DISPOSER:
InSinkerator,
The Home Depot



PERIOD PIECES With its drop ceiling removed, the dining room sports newly exposed and repaired plaster crown molding and a window bay, now minus a hulking radiator. Tom filled in missing floorboards with matching quartersawn oak planks. He also made the passageway between the dining room and kitchen wider and higher, enhancing the open layout.



WORK ZONE The cooking area is defined by black soapstone countertops. A cooktop with a patinated-copper vent hood sits along one wall; a baking center with undercounter ovens occupies the perpendicular wall. Flat- and glass-panel cabinets climb to the ceiling for ample storage. Subway tile and an apron-front sink complete the vintage feel.

ORIGINAL CHARM, MODERN COMFORT

The living room, just off the entry foyer, retains its existing windows and some original details, including newly exposed and restored crown molding. Tom used the original 8-inch baseboard as a template for the base molding throughout the house. The entire home got an energy-efficient makeover, with insulation added in the walls and attic and new ductwork for a high-efficiency gas boiler installed in the basement.



DON'T MISS A MINUTE

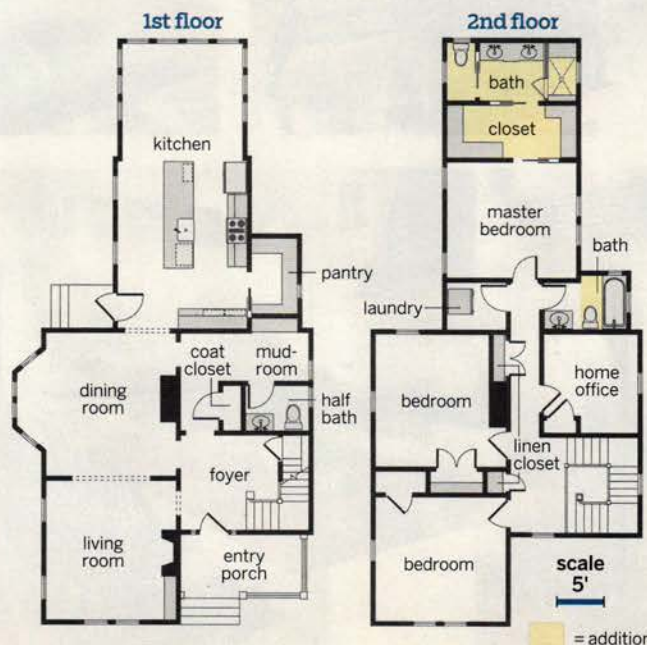
Catch all the TV episodes about the Arlington Italianate project at thisoldhouse.com/watchtv



RENEWED ITALIANATE

The bold red exterior—painted Benjamin Moore's Raspberry Truffle—is authentic to the period of the house. Tom added a new, architecturally appropriate front-porch railing where one was lacking. He also replicated the original corbels under the eaves of the upstairs rear addition. The lower level was sheathed in white-painted pine beadboard to suggest a room that had been converted from a sunroom or porch.

floor plans While the footprint did not change, the first floor was opened up to accommodate the new kitchen, pantry, powder room, and mudroom areas. On the second floor, the smallest of the four bedrooms is now an office. Only 200 square feet was added upstairs—to build a master bath and closet and to make a larger kids' bath.





CLEAN AND SERENE The master bath was created by expanding the second floor with additional square footage over the kitchen. Steam shower fittings and in-floor radiant heat add spa-like amenities. Limestone tiles cover the walls and floor, with a pebble stone surface in the shower. The double vanity is topped with white solid surfacing.

SUITE RETREAT The master bedroom was configured from an existing bedroom but enlarged to allow for a large closet and a dedicated bath, defined by pocket doors. Neutral colors with off-white walls and white trim keep the suite light and bright. The quartersawn oak floors are original.



OLD WOOD To give the family's new basement media room a sense of enclosure—and to create a decorative element in the adjacent play space—Tom built a sliding barn door from original floorboards that he salvaged from the attic. "I just oiled the wood and left some nails and imperfections," he says. Prefinished laminate flooring, painted rubble stone, and new drywall help give the basement an entirely fresh look, feel, and function.

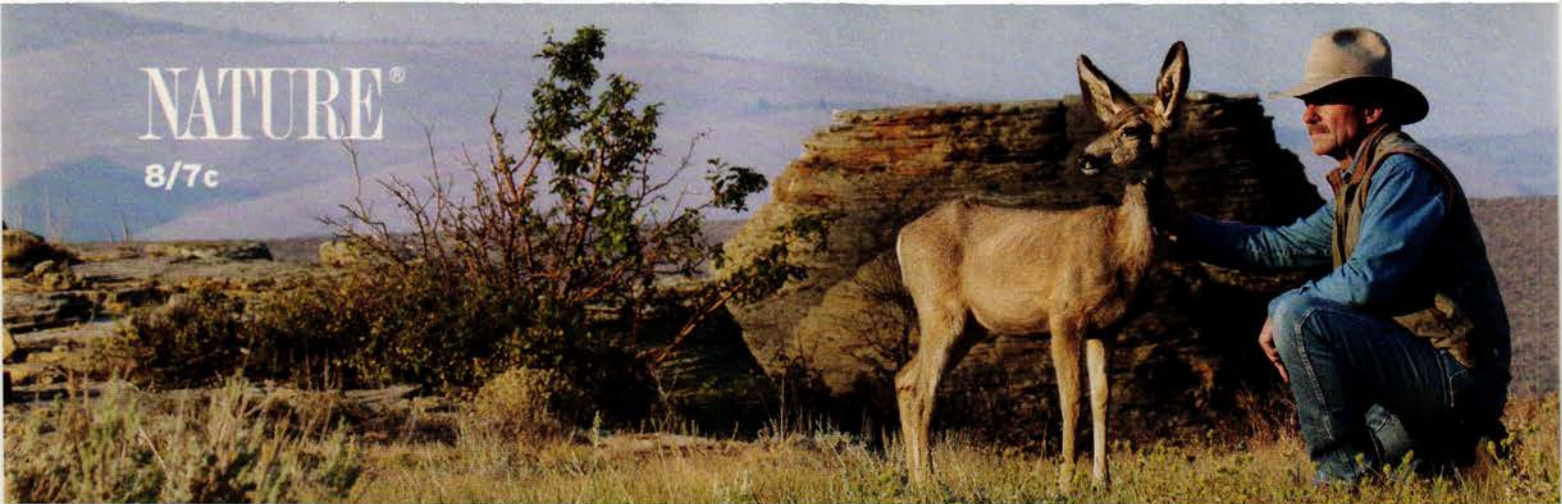


NEW TECH A trimmed-out wall niche provides easy access to AV equipment needed to run the large projection TV in the family's new basement movie room. The screen hangs opposite the sofa. 🏠

THESE PAGES
ARCHITECTURAL
COLOR CONSULTANT:
Bonnie Krims
BATH FIXTURES: **Kohler**
PEX RADIANT AND
PLUMBING SYSTEM:
Uponor
BARN DOOR HARDWARE:
Real Carriage
INTERIOR DOOR
HARDWARE: **Emtek**
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Folding serving tray

Build a custom tray in red oak or buy one ready-made and leave more time for making breakfast BY PAUL HOPE + PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDELL T. WEBBER

→ **HINT: THERE'S NO** need to wait for a special occasion to serve a certain someone breakfast in bed. First, you'll need a good tray—one with legs that will keep it steady on a sea of bedding and then fold up so that the tray can be slipped inside a cabinet or drawer.

If you want to go all out on the presentation, you can build a tray, like the slatted one here. The frame is formed from inexpensive oak scants— $\frac{1}{2}$ -by-2-inch pieces stocked near the hardwood moldings in home centers. Look for the $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch oak slats in the same area. Staining gives the oak a refined look, though you'll want to treat the surface with a food-safe finish, such as mineral oil or shellac, to protect it from spills. Once you've christened your new tray, you may want to break it out every Sunday morning as a matter of routine. We're just saying.



MAKE IT YOURSELF

Find a full cut list and lists of the tools and

materials needed to build this tray at thisoldhouse.com/may2014



Shown: B. Smith With Style Acacia Bed Tray, \$30; bedbathandbeyond.com

BUILD IT

Use slim oak material to build a custom serving tray for less than you'd spend on a fancy breakfast

COST \$21 for oak lumber

TIME 3 hours

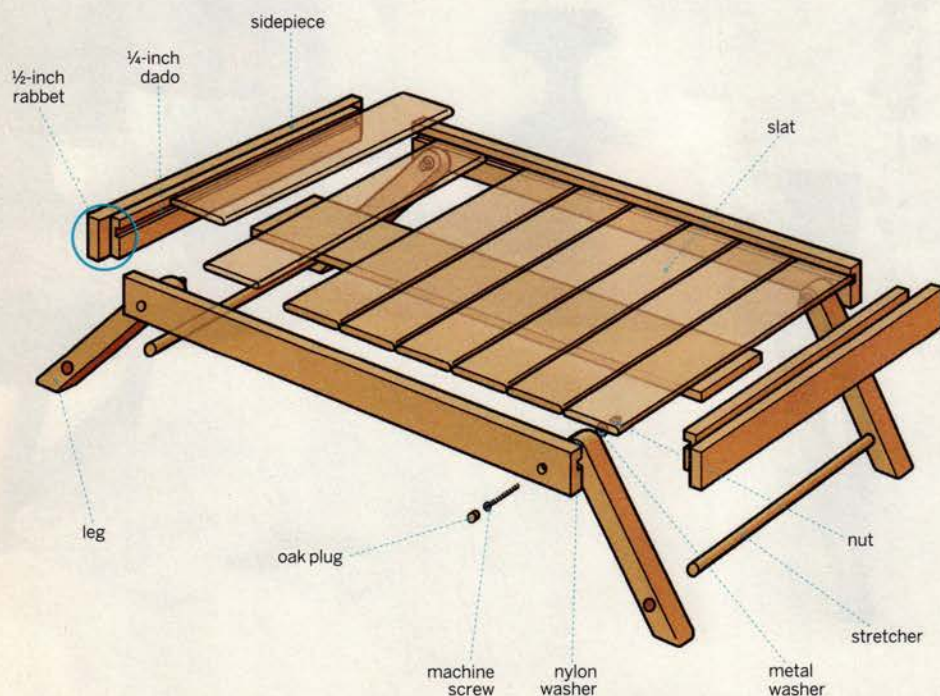
DIFFICULTY Easy. Cutting grooves requires a steady hand, but assembly is simple.

the thinner front and back pieces together. Wedge the pairs tightly between lumber scraps of the same thickness, and screw the scraps to the table to hold the frame pieces in place. Use a straightedge and a router with a ¼-inch straight bit to cut a square groove, or dado, along the inside of each frame piece, ¼ inch from the top.

3] Install the slats. Use 60-grit paper and a sanding block to ease the long edges of each slat. Install the slats, fit the end pieces to the assembly, then glue and tack the corners with a brad nailer and 1-inch brads. Glue a supporting slat along the midline, underneath.

4] Install the legs. Round the tops of the legs with 60-grit sandpaper. Drill a ¼-inch hole 1 inch from the bottom of each leg. Use dowels and glue to join the legs. With a ½-inch spade bit, bore holes ¼ inch deep into the frame's outer face, 1½ inches in from the corners. Drill through the center of each hole with a ⅛-inch bit; make matching holes ½ inch from the top of each leg. Attach the legs with nylon washers and machine screws. Cap the holes with oak plugs.

5] Stain and finish. Sand the tray lightly with 220-grit paper, tack it clean, then apply stain. Once dry, seal the wood with a food-safe finish.



BUY IT

Expect to pay a premium for solid hardwood construction

\$18

the basic model

This slim pine tray won't break the bank and folds to just 1½ inches thick for easy storage. amazon.com



\$51

the mid-range model

Made by hand from sustainable acacia, this option is set apart by its handsome striped grain. wayfair.com

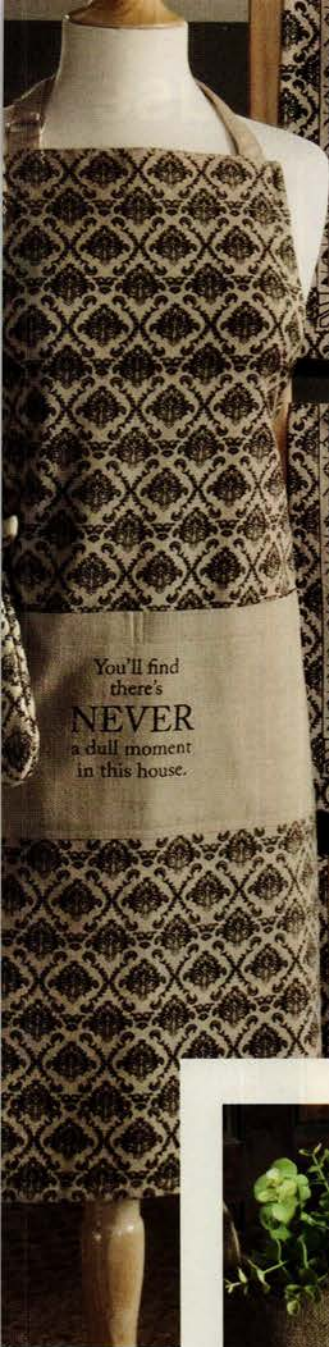


\$99

the luxury model

Carved from solid elm, this piece has a rosewood matte-lacquer finish that's applied by hand. orientalfurniture.com





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a dull moment
in this house.

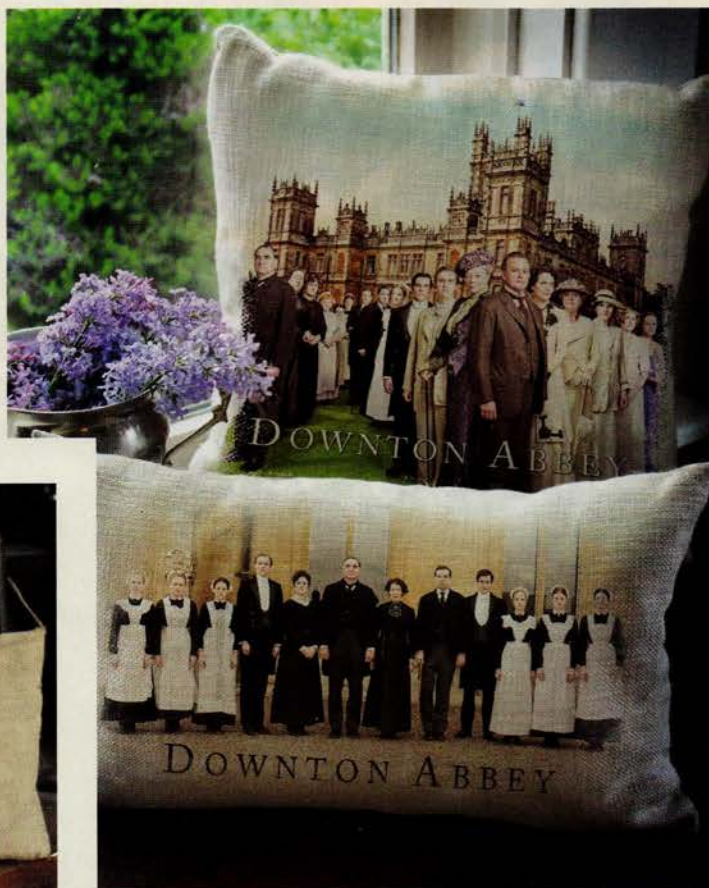
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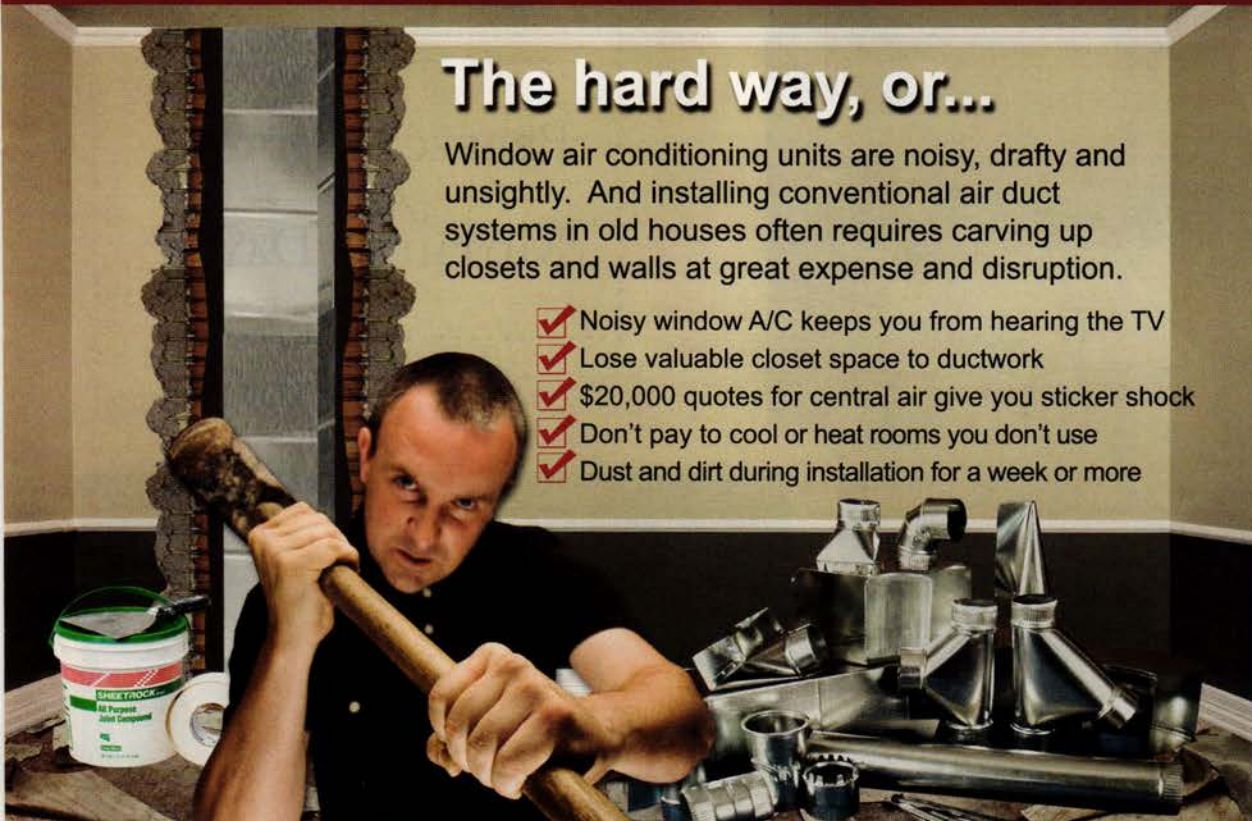
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Heating and Cooling Your Old House

The hard way, or...

Window air conditioning units are noisy, drafty and unsightly. And installing conventional air duct systems in old houses often requires carving up closets and walls at great expense and disruption.

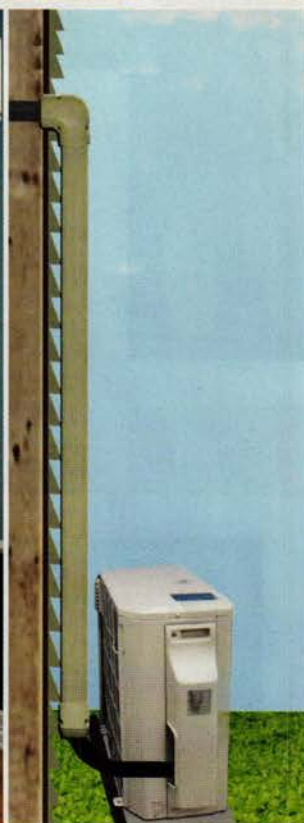
- ✓ Noisy window A/C keeps you from hearing the TV
- ✓ Lose valuable closet space to ductwork
- ✓ \$20,000 quotes for central air give you sticker shock
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*Savings may vary based on model selected, hours of operation and geographical location. Example given based on 26-SEER system versus 13-SEER system.

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Halcyon

Build a compost bench

Use clear cedar boards to assemble a comfortable and productive focal point for your yard BY JOHN CASEY + PHOTOGRAPHS BY KOLIN SMITH

COST \$350

TIME 8 hours over two days

DIFFICULTY Easy. It has lots of pieces, but cuts and assembly are simple.

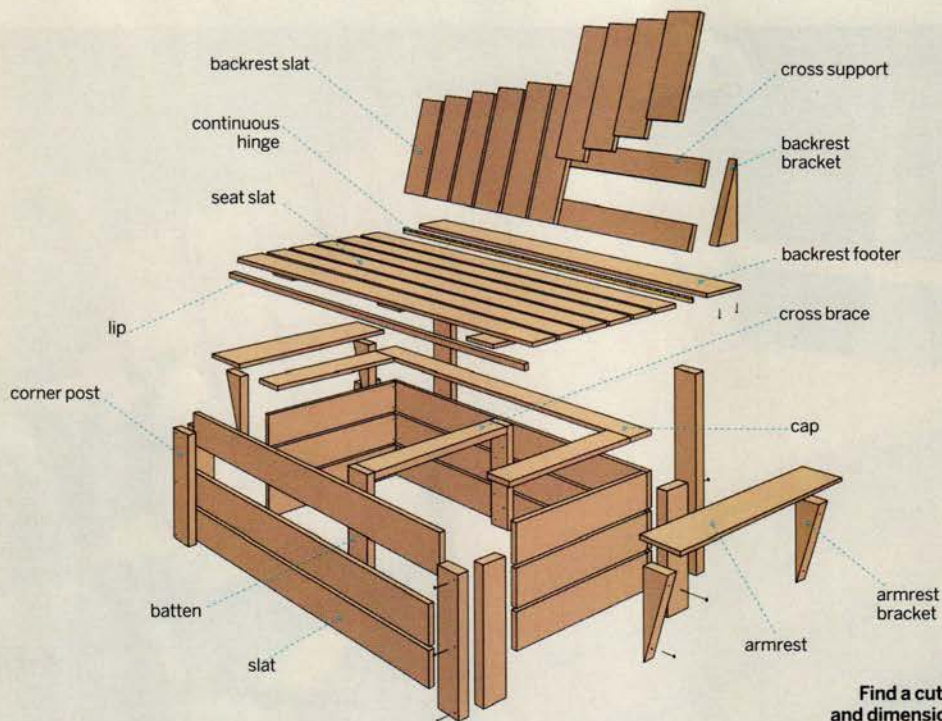


➔ **WE LOVE A GOOD GARDEN BENCH.** A better garden bench is one that doubles as a compost bin. Inspired by benches at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, in Brooklyn, New York, this one is open-bottomed so that the compost has ground contact. It's made of rot-resistant cedar boards spaced wide to promote good air circulation. The seat opens for easy turning of the compost, and the back and arms make it a perfect perch for a break from gardening. Follow along as *This Old House* contributor Christopher Beidel, owner of Pernt, a handmade-furniture company in Brooklyn, shows you how to make this piece—as practical as it is pretty.

Turning compost regularly and keeping it free of meat and dairy scraps are critical to preventing odors.

**DAY-TO-DAY
TIMELINE**

SATURDAY Build the base and seat (Steps 1–4).
SUNDAY Make and install the backrest and arms (Steps 5–7).



Finished dimensions
71"W × 29½"D × 32½"H

Find a cut list
and dimensional
drawings at
thisoldhouse.com/may2014.

TOOLS

miter saw
clamp
circular saw
bar clamp
drill/driver
combination countersink
bit
⅛-inch drill bit

MATERIALS

1×4 clear cedar Get eleven 8-footers for the seat and supports.

2×4 clear cedar Get five 8-footers for the corner posts.

1×6 clear cedar Get eleven 8-footers for the slats.

1×1 clear cedar Get one 8-footer for the seat lip.

1¼- and 2½-inch deck screws

48-inch continuous brass hinge



1 CUT THE PARTS

A] Make the right-angle cuts. On your miter saw, make the straight cuts for all the parts, according to the cut list.

B] Make the angled cuts. The four blanks for the angled brackets are sized so that when you cut them diagonally you get two pieces from each blank. Clamp one corner of a blank to your work surface, and draw a diagonal line corner to corner. Set the circular-saw blade to a depth of 1½ inches. Make the crosscut, as shown, to create two angled pieces. Repeat the process on the other three blanks.



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2 BUILD THE BASE PANELS

A] Make the corner posts. Clamp two 2×4 pieces for a front corner post together edge-to-face in an L-shape, as shown. Use a combination countersink bit in your drill/driver to make three pilot holes through the face and into the edge. Secure the pieces with 2½-inch deck screws. Make the other front corner post. For the rear corner posts, butt the edge of a short 2×4 into the face of the long piece for the backrest.

B] Assemble the front panel. Lay the front corner posts on your work surface with the edge-to-face seam facing out, and place three base slats between them. Use a hunk of 1× scrap to set the top slat ¾ inch down from the post tops, leaving room for the cap piece in Step 4B. Then use ¾-inch spacers to set the distance between the slats. Countersink two pilot holes through the slats and into the posts, at least ½ inch from the ends of the slats. Secure the slats with 1¼-inch deck screws.

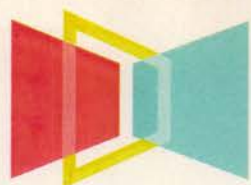
C] Attach the batten. Set a batten across the center of the slats. Countersink three pilot holes in a triangular pattern, through the batten into each slat. Secure the batten to the slat with 1¼-inch deck screws. Build the back panel the same way, including the ¾-inch space for the cap.



3 ASSEMBLE THE BASE

A] Attach the side slats. Start with the back panel on the table. Clamp a side slat against a post, aligning it with the abutting slat, as shown. (Remember to maintain the ¾-inch setback from the post top.) Countersink three pilot holes through the short slat into the post, and secure it with three 1¼-inch deck screws in a triangular pattern. Repeat the process on the other five side slats, using spacers between boards.

B] Add the front panel. Set the front panel on top of the side slats. Again, countersink pilot holes through the slats into the posts, and secure the pieces with 1¼-inch deck screws.



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4 BUILD THE SEAT

A] Assemble the seat slats. Lay the seat slats with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch spacers between them, and clamp them together. Arrange the three battens, one in the center of the seat, the other two 12 inches to either side, and all three set back $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the seat's front edge. Countersink pilot holes through the battens and into the slats and drive $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch deck screws into place.

B] Attach the cross brace. Clamp the 2×4 cross brace between the tops of the center battens. Countersink pilot holes through the face of the top slat into the end grain of the cross brace at both ends. Then secure the piece with 2½-inch deck screws. Set the base upright, and position the three cap pieces along the back edge and the two sides. Countersink these and secure them with $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch deck screws.

TIP Cedar is rot resistant, but you can keep your bench looking its best longer by finishing it with transparent weather-proofing sealer.

SHARE YOUR DIY PROJECT

Blipp this page or go to thisoldhouse.com/yourTOH to upload pictures of your handiwork for a chance to appear in our reader-created issue.

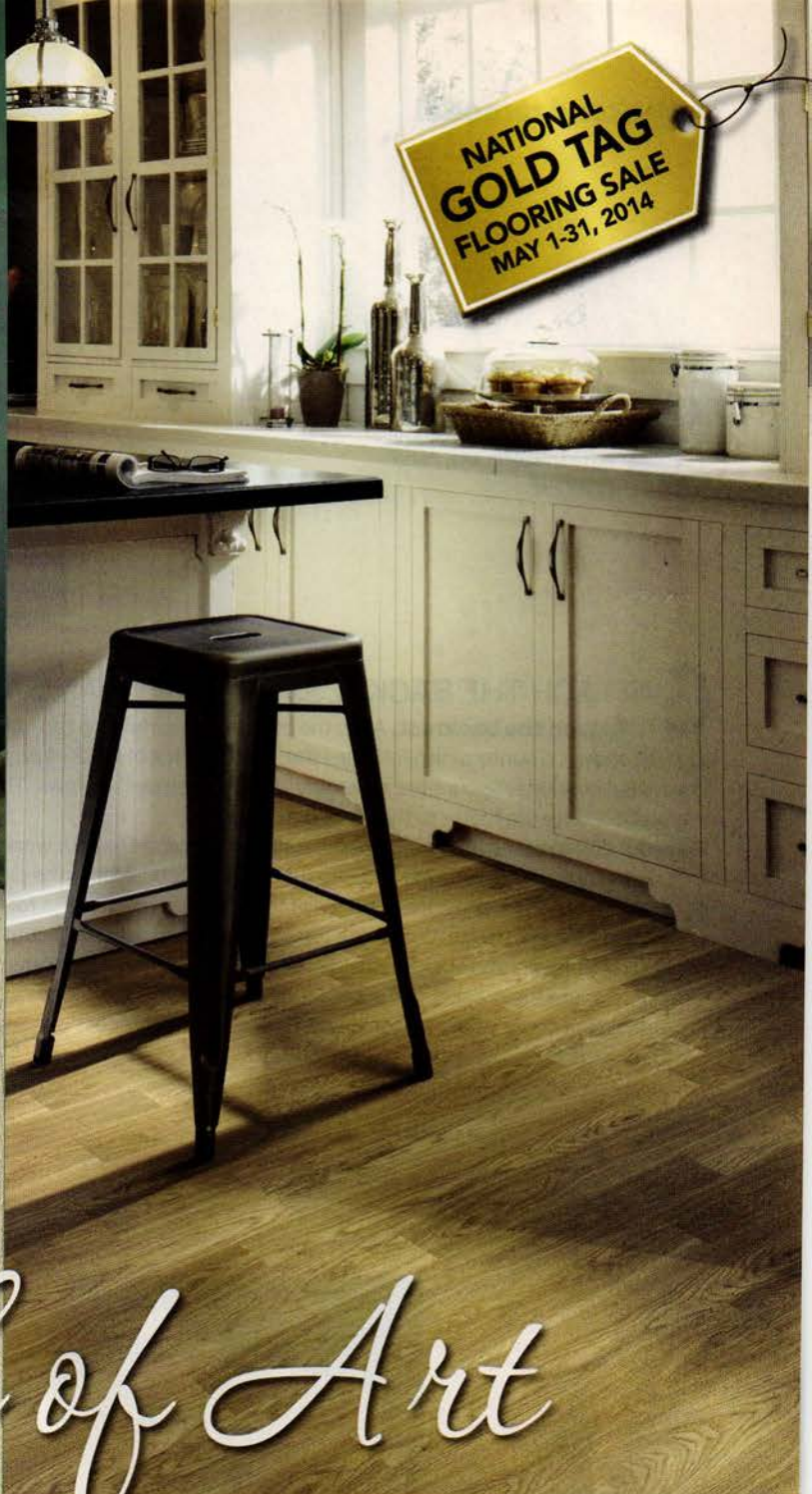
5 BUILD THE BACKREST

A] Attach the backrest brackets. Clamp the 1×6 footer for the backrest on edge to your work surface. Set three backrest brackets in place along the footer, as shown. Countersink two pilot holes through the underside face of the footer and into the end grain of each of the brackets. Then secure them with two 2½-inch deck screws apiece.

B] Attach the cross supports. Place the two horizontal cross supports on the cut edges of the backrest brackets, top and bottom. Countersink pilot holes through the supports into the brackets, as shown. Secure with $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch deck screws.

C] Install the slats. Set the slats for the backrest on the horizontal supports. Use spacers to set the pieces $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the ends. Countersink pilot holes from the back of the assembly into the slats, and secure them with $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch deck screws.





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A



B

6 ATTACH THE BACKREST ASSEMBLY AND ARMS

A] Attach the backrest. Align the backrest assembly on top of the rear cap and post tops, as shown. Countersink pilot holes through the back of the 2x4 posts into the back of the angled brackets. Secure the assembly with 2½-inch deck screws. Then use 1¼-inch deck screws to secure the footer to the cap from behind.

B] Make the armrests. Clamp an armrest board on edge to your work surface. Countersink pilot holes through the armrest and into the brackets, and secure the pieces with two screws per bracket: one 2½ inches, the other 1¼ inches. Repeat the process for the other armrest.

C] Attach the armrests. Clamp the top of the armrest assembly about 6 inches above the seat. Use the combo countersink bit to drill two pilot holes, bottoming it out at the top location. Secure the bracket to the corner post with a 2½-inch screw at the top location and a 1¼-inch deck screw at the bottom location. Repeat the process on the other bracket. Install the other armrest.



C



A



B

7 ATTACH THE SEAT

A] Secure the hinge. Set the bench seat faceup on a 1x spacer that runs its full length. Set the open hinge against the seat's back edge, with the barrel facing forward, and mark the holes with a pencil. Remove the hinge and use a ½-inch bit to make pilot holes along the edge. Then use a screwdriver to secure the hinge to the seat with the included screws. Now set the seat in a raised position with the hinge leaf against the edge of the backrest footer. Make pilot holes and attach the hinge leaf.

B] Install the seat lip. Open the seat and center the 1x1 lip into the gap in front of the seat battens. Countersink eight pilot holes through the edge of the cleat into the seat slat. Secure the cleat with 1¼-inch deck screws. Set the bench in place and shovel in some yard waste to get the composting started. ■



Photography: Anthony Tieuli



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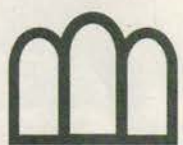
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HIDDEN BEAUTY

An unlivable wreck regains
its sunny glory in the
hands of zealous owners with
a vision of its past



by Deborah Baldwin • photographs by Deborah Whitlaw Llewellyn
produced by Colette Scanlon • styling by Brian Carter



OPPOSITE: The 1920s
Mediterranean Revival
was eyed as a teardown.
THIS PAGE: Sandblasted,
painted, and sprung from
its jungle, the house now
qualifies as a keeper.





“I
T WAS PITCH BLACK IN THERE.”

Aimee Spencer says, recalling the first time she tried to poke her head into her family's new home. Operative word: *tried*. “The vegetation was way too close.” And once she'd thrashed through it, she saw that “the draperies and shades had dry-rotted off their rods and rollers,” she says. “There were layers of pet hair.” It was hard to see the flooring for the fleas; one of the absentee owners had given a crowd of feral cats the run of the place, suggesting that he was not quite sold on the idea of making a sale.

“That house is not a good idea,” the Realtor said, speaking from a safe distance.

Luckily, Aimee and her equally game husband, Michael, had eyes only for what hadn't been ruined: 9-foot-4-inch ceilings trimmed with crown molding, arched French doors with dainty locksets and glass

ABOVE: Homeowners Aimee and Michael Spencer, here with daughter Ava Grace, 4, did much of the work themselves.
RIGHT: Home-center cabinets and salvaged subway tile take a backseat to a floor of honed marble tile, custom cut to create a stunning three-tone pattern with nearly invisible grout lines.





knobs, and generous rooms in a compact, free-flowing plan. The three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath house had lost its bearings since springing up in central Florida about 90 years ago, but it had retained so many windows, you could almost feel the cross-ventilation—assuming you could get them open. “The house had good bones and was begging to be rescued,” says Aimee, in the anthropomorphizing manner of old-house champions. “It was on nearly three city lots in a desirable ZIP code, so most people saw a teardown.”

Michael had been scouting for a place near his new job when he spotted this one, sitting back from the road in Orwin Manor, a 1920s subdivision straddling the border of Orlando and Winter Park. A rhythmic array of windows punctuated the facade, some small, some arched, some doubling as French doors, many still framed by thin lines of black paint. While the exterior

During massive replastering, a ribbon of brick, seen at right, was left exposed. The chandelier over the marble-topped island was a \$100 vintage-store find.



was dingy, the front entrance had held on to its ornate archway and original screen and entry doors, sconce, and quarry-tile stoop. Red-clay roof tiles, iron balconies, an arched porte cochere on one side and a sun-flooded “Florida room” on the other: The stucco-on-concrete-block confection was a triumph of Mediterranean Revival style with hints of Italian Renaissance—and, truly, they don’t make them like that anymore.

While the house had escaped various remodeling crazes unscathed, the wiring was scary, the baths lacked hot water, and the front door no longer had a knob. Filthy carpets covered the heart-pine flooring upstairs, and the oak floorboards downstairs couldn’t be saved. Miscellaneous car parts and lawn equipment—former owners had been in the yard-care business—filled the garage and rusted in the underbrush.

“Our Realtor thought we could do much better. She practically cried during closing,” Aimee recalls.

By then the couple had bid good-bye to their former house, packed up their young daughter, and moved into a short-term rental. That meant they had keys to a new house but only five months to turn it into a home.

The two plunged in, filling three 20-yard dumpsters with abandoned furniture, shattered plaster, and mind-boggling mounds of debris. As the old bones



LEFT: The new butler’s pantry has beveled-mirror cabinet fronts to match those surrounding the range and an arched opening replicated from existing ones. ABOVE: Three sets of restored French doors flood the high-ceilinged dining room and its new oak flooring with light.



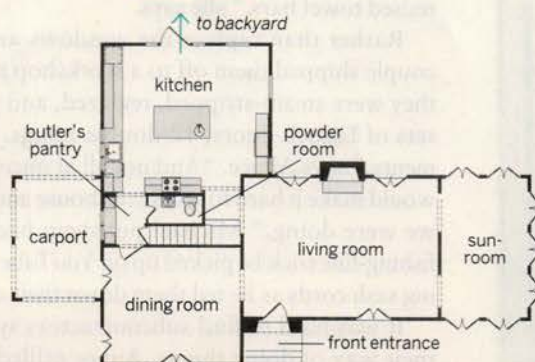
BELOW: Like the rest of the house, the living room was designed to maximize cross-ventilation, with doors opening in the back as well as the front.



FLOOR PLANS

The redo increased the square footage slightly, to 2,896 square feet; reworked the kitchen area to eliminate a chimney, absorb a small porch, and open up the space; and relocated the powder room. Upstairs, one bath was enlarged and became part of the master suite, and a sleeping porch became a year-round office.

FIRST FLOOR



scale
10'

SECOND FLOOR





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LEFT: The sunroom, aka the Florida room, has its original crank-open windows and a painted concrete floor.



emerged, the couple liked what they saw. The only area that needed major work was around the kitchen. The two baths upstairs would have to be gutted, but not a big deal, says Aimee, a cheerful woman with a lilting voice. "Michael is a project manager at Sea World—moving a toilet, to him, does not involve a lot of emotion."

The couple shared the job of general contractor. Aimee balanced savings and splurges while scouring for salvageable materials, remaking the basement and closet light fixtures with shades found on eBay and installing them in the kitchen. When workers threw chimney bricks into the dumpster, she climbed inside to retrieve them. "As long as I was in there, I thought I'd bang off the mortar," she says. "That's how I broke my thumb." The bricks now line a walkway. Subway tiles pried from bathroom walls became the kitchen backsplash. "I even reused towel bars," she says.

Rather than replace the windows and doors, the couple shipped them off to a workshop nearby, where they were steam-stripped, reglazed, and primed: "Ten sets of French doors, 12 double-hungs, and 30 casements," says Aimee. "And not all at once, because that would make it hard to secure the house and still see what we were doing." Michael put them back in, using a fishing-line trick he picked up on YouTube to avoid fraying sash cords as he fed them down their channels.

It was hard to find subcontractors sympathetic to their way of doing things. Aimee grilled four roofers



LEFT: The master bedroom kept its original Juliet balcony. **BELOW:** The master bath has a new layout and period-inspired finishes, including a vintage medicine cabinet and a freestanding cast-iron tub.



before one agreed to work with the tricky half-barrel tiles. She nearly came to blows with a tile setter who could not wrap his mind around the rectified edges and patterns found in century-old subway stations. Then there was having to persuade the plumber and carpenter to lay pipes in open channels that could be hidden by three-piece crown molding in the kitchen.

More complicated was laying a tricolor kitchen floor in a pattern that evokes old-world artistry. This meant honing batches of marble tile that had too much shine and persuading a tile cutter to turn 12-inch squares into smaller rhomboids and squares, then rectifying any eased edges and reassembling the pieces on netting.

To speed things along, Aimee volunteered to trim excess netting from the back of each assembly, a project temporarily suspended after a subfloor caved under the weight of a tile-laden pallet, trapping one of her feet. Michael came running with a power saw just as a cement mixer overloaded the feeble wiring and the lights went out.

As a seasoned homeowner and self-taught designer, Aimee paid attention to details, springing for an enameled range hood with steel trim rather than one of painted wood, for example, because “wood is hard to keep clean over a cooktop, and all-metal would have been too industrial.” She customized home-center cabinets with mirror insets “to reflect the afternoon sun; it helps make the space seem larger and keeps it from being too white.”

They hired help to install heating and cooling, winterize a sleeping porch, insulate and replaster walls, sandblast the stucco, and tear out those ragged trees. Remarkably, the whole project got done in just five months and landed an award from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

Today the house is an updated version of its original proud self. When the family gathers in the kitchen or the Florida-meets-Mediterranean sunroom, it’s hard to believe this is the same place that almost made their Real-

tor cry. “I fell in love with it when I saw the original listing,” says Aimee. And all that work was worth it. “We’ll never move again—even if we wanted to, nothing else would suit us as well.” ■



SHOP THIS STYLE

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DIY LESSONS FROM MOM

FORGET ALL THAT "FATHER KNOWS BEST" STUFF. SOME OF OUR MOST RESOURCEFUL READERS' FAVORITE DO-IT-YOURSELF ADVICE—TO SAY NOTHING OF HOME-IMPROVEMENT INSPIRATION—CAME FROM THEIR MOTHERS

Illustrations by **Christopher Silas Neal**



> WHAT I LEARNED

Quit horsing around, and you can accomplish great things!

Don Dallman, 75, Nokesville, Virginia

"We had three boys in the family, and my mother would always say, 'One boy is half a man; two boys are no men at all.' That's because one boy could do half a man's work, but two of us would just aggravate each other and not get anything done. We did finish some projects, though. Once, Mom helped install new flooring at our church and brought all the old boards home. It was beautiful tongue-and-groove bird's-eye maple. She had us clean out each joint before nailing down the boards and refinishing them. Another time she and I found cabinets that were being discarded, and we rebuilt our entire kitchen. Back then, if we didn't do it ourselves, it didn't get done."



After tearing out the old ceiling, Sherie Dunn's mom, Gail Garza, hangs fresh drywall.

> WHAT I LEARNED

Being the helper pays off.

Sherie Dunn, 28, Marine City, Michigan

"My family moved 18 times, all in the same town, by the time I was 20 years old. The moves were all because Mom ran out of home improvements and became bored. She learned everything she knew from her dad. Since I was the youngest, I was always her assistant—the official holder of the other end of the board and the tape measure; sander and stainer of trim moldings; painter of inconspicuous areas. I never realized how much I'd learned until my husband and I redid our own house. Just from watching her, I know the right way to do things."

> WHAT I LEARNED

Label what you take apart.

Megan Judd, 30, Seymour, Indiana

"My dad worked long hours, so my mom took on many of the fix-it jobs around the house. Her favorite expression was 'Figure it out,' which took on new meaning when she decided to rejuvenate our staircases. After removing three floors' worth of spindles to give them a fresh coat of stain and polyurethane, we realized they had to be put back in a specific order. Whoops! It took us years to get them all back in their proper spots."

> WHAT I LEARNED

You can do cool projects with castoffs.

Michael Ritenour, 59, Farmington, Michigan

"My mother didn't fix things, but she was an expert at repurposing finds for interior design projects. This was in the 1960s, well before the word *upcycling* was coined. She had the idea to panel our family room with old barn boards, so my grandpa, dad, and I salvaged dozens of them from an abandoned barn. Mom and I washed them, selected the best ones, cut them to size with a circular saw, and fastened them to the walls. She did hundreds of such projects; our house was by far the most interesting in our suburban Detroit neighborhood."

...And our picks of your moms' best tips

"To remove worn vinyl or linoleum, run an old iron over the tiles. The heat melts the adhesive, so you can use a scraper to lift up the flooring."

—Mary Josko

"When painting molding, prop it up on soup cans turned sideways. That way you can roll the molding toward you rather than having to step down the line with each brushstroke."

—Susan Heyborne

"Stuff clumps of urine-soaked cat litter down mole burrows to clear your grassy areas of 'lawn acne.'"

—Dave Eatwell

"Make a list before you start any project. Write down everything, including the tiny details, and check off each item as you go. Then you always see that you are making progress and won't lose momentum."

—Candy Clawson Spence



> WHAT I LEARNED

Never leave a project unfinished; you can sleep later.

Jodi Gould, 37, Portsmouth, Connecticut



"My mom was a single parent who worked full-time, so it wasn't uncommon for her to work on home-improvement projects in the evenings. I recall one time being woken up well after midnight by the bang from her nail gun, which she was using to frame out a raised floor for the bedroom she was building in the basement. I went down and yelled, 'Mom, what are you doing?' Her response: 'I gotta get it done!' She must have been up until 4 A.M. To this day, I can't stand to see a project half done. It makes me itch."

> WHAT I LEARNED

Be confident—and do your homework.

Scott Harrigan, 44, East Brunswick, New Jersey

"When I was a teenager, my mom decided she wanted to spruce up the kitchen and enlisted me to help. Initially, the plan was to just repaint the cabinets, but the next thing I knew, Mom was gutting the place. She learned to do everything through trial and error and by watching videos borrowed from the local library. Flash-forward 20 years to when my wife and I bought a fixer-

Scott Harrigan's mom, Darleen, shows her DIY grit with a floor sander.

upper. I immediately thought of Mom's kitchen project and said to myself, 'I can do this!' Along the way I sometimes wondered, 'What the hell am I doing?' But the belief in myself that my mom instilled in me always pushed me through."

> WHAT I LEARNED

A job well done will stand the test of time.

Fred Moench, 57, Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey

"One summer, when I was 12, my mother devised a foolproof project to keep my brother and me out of trouble: re-siding the family's two-car garage with cedar shingles. We protested, 'But Mom, we don't know how!' Her answer to that was to teach us everything we needed to know for the job: how to tear off the old shingles, lay out the new ones, and create a straightedge using a 1x2 mounted to furring strips. She had learned it all from her father. She kept us motivated with the promise of \$50 each for a job well done and daily pep talks starting at 8 A.M. I recently drove past the old house, and the shingles still look good. Mom taught us well."

> WHAT I LEARNED

Electricity and water don't mix.

James Duncan, 67, Pea Ridge, Arkansas

"My mom was born in 1920 and raised on a farm. Her older brother knew electrical work and carpentry, and he passed some of that knowledge on to her. It came in handy when, as a teenager, I had to go under the house to work on a plumbing project. The soil was saturated, but I crawled under the house, dragging an old-style extension cord that had a receptacle box at the end. The cord was frayed and touched something wet, and I got quite a shock. I was scared to death! I crawled out, and my mom showed me how to take the box apart, cut the bad wires, create a brand-new connection, and wrap the ends with electrical tape. Years later, I became a licensed electrician."

> WHAT I LEARNED

Let the hammer do the work.

Melanie Shaffer, 40, Washington, D.C.

"Standing 5 foot 4 with a head of shoulder-length blonde hair, my mom didn't look like your average carpenter, but indeed that was her profession. When I was young, she taught me the proper way to wield all sorts of tools. My favorite was her hammer, which she dubbed Clyde. If I showed

"The best DIY tip I got from my mom was to tackle projects while your spouse is away. End of discussion!"

—Erika Schnabel Wertz

"To keep from gumming up a paint can, punch holes around the rim with a flathead screwdriver. Any paint that gets into the indentations drains back into the paint can."

—Karen Anderson

"She taught me how to paint a room without having to tape everything off: First, paint the trim. Then, keep a wet edge when rolling the wall and use a small angled brush to get a clean line against the trim. It takes a bit of practice but saves a ton of time."

—Kyle Westfall

"Mom's best tip? However long you think a project will take, expect it to take twice as long."

—Lisa Cameron



Melanie Shaffer's mom, Susan Gilbert, plans her next project. (That's Clyde on the concrete.)

hesitation in my swing, Mom would demonstrate with exaggerated gusto to prove to me there was nothing to be afraid of. 'Let the hammer do the work!' she'd say. Recently, when my husband was out of town, I got fed up with the sloppy DIY job my home's previous owner had done on some drywall. So I grabbed my sledgehammer and, just like Mom had taught me, took a few big swings. That wall didn't stand a chance."

> WHAT I LEARNED

If it's broke, fix it. If you don't know how, ask.

Dennis Prisant, 67, Deerfield Beach, Florida

↓ "My mother handled all the repairs for the 12-unit apartment building I grew up in. The job was intended for my father, a cabinet-maker, in exchange for a break on the rent. But he had little time to be a superintendent, so Mom assumed the role. She fixed leaky faucets, faulty wiring, everything; she'd just ask Dad how to do it or figure it out herself. One day I looked inside the two jewelry-type boxes she kept on her dresser. One held small plumbing parts: gaskets, knobs, drain plugs, screws. The other was filled with electrical wire, fuses, and outlet adapters. I never did find out where she kept her jewelry." ■





25

CREATIVE KITCHEN UPGRADES

You don't need a soup-to-nuts remodel to spice up your kitchen. With the right ingredients—clever seating, statement lighting, color in unexpected places—you can get an updated look for not a lot of dough

BY MICHELLE BRUNNER

PUT A TWIST ON TRADITION

- 1 **Vibrant pedestal** Give an eye-catching new look to a table by painting its base a bold hue, like this zesty orange. It's an easy and inexpensive way to add a hit of color to an otherwise neutral cook space. Similar to shown: Rust-Oleum protective enamel spray in Gloss Burnt Orange, \$4; at home centers
- 2 **Reflective backsplash** Go for the gleam with a fresh take on classic subway tile. The metallic sheen on these mini rectangles picks up the shine of the stainless-steel appliances and chrome fixtures while softening the transition between black counters and white cabinets. Ann Sacks Stoneware Elements tile in New Mercury, \$35 per square foot; annsacks.com for retailers
- 3 **Semi-flush mounts** Add character along with illumination by swapping recessed cans for fixtures that hug the ceiling. Semi-flush mounts like these simple transparent cones make an elegant statement without calling too much attention to themselves. Similar to shown: Defiance fixture with shade, \$144; schoolhouseelectric.com





DRAW ATTENTION WITH DETAILS

4 Deco-style cornice Bridge the gap between ceiling and upper cabinets with a handsome molding treatment. This built-up cornice is easy to DIY using paintable clear pine or poplar 1×6 boards. Primed pine board, \$1.50 per foot; lowes.com

5 Bold backsplash Get major bang for your buck by using high-impact finishes sparingly. Here, multihued ceramic tiles cover just a portion of one wall between upper and lower cabinets, but their cheery palette packs a monster visual punch. Clayhaus ceramic tiles, \$37 per square foot; modwalls.com

6 Bright book nook Turn a simple storage niche into a design feature by painting the back a contrasting shade. The splash of fresh citrus color echoes the tiles and livens up the gray island. Similar to shown: Behr's Premium Plus Ultra Interior Semi-Gloss Enamel in Orange Burst, \$35 per gallon; homedepot.com

↑
Try drawer pulls that double as labels. \$5 each; houseofantique hardware.com

MAKE IT OPEN AND ELEGANT

7 Floating shelves Opt for inexpensive open storage to turn everyday items into functional art. The white shelves "disappear" against the white wall, making the space feel larger, and they're a bargain compared with the cost of upper cabinets. Similar to shown: Tampa 36-inch white floating shelf, \$44; overstock.com

8 Painted pantry Put a pop of color in an unexpected place, such as the chartreuse-green in this storage alcove. Similar to shown: Benjamin Moore's Aura Interior Semi-Gloss in Flower Power, \$68 per gallon; at paint stores

9 Tailored slipcovers Skip the fancy upholstery and choose fitted slipcovers for your kitchen chairs. Practical and easy to launder, they're an affordable solution in a potentially messy, high-traffic area. Similar to shown: Cotton twill slipcover, \$55; customcoverings.com





CREATE A RETRO VIBE

- 10 Patchwork accent wall** Impart a vintage look for an old-fashioned price by covering one wall with inexpensive ceramic squares in multiple colors. Similar to shown: Semigloss tiles, \$3 per square foot; daltile.com
- 11 Old-school stools** Trade in the usual counter-height seating for diner-style barstools. They're a durable, family-friendly choice that wipes clean easily. Similar to shown: Retro diner barstool, \$78; barstoolsandchairs.com
- 12 Painted floor** Disguise less-than-perfect wood planks with a coat of enamel in a vibrant color, like this cobalt blue. You'll avoid the cost of refinishing or replacing worn boards and enliven the look of your kitchen at the same time. Similar to shown: Sherwin-Williams's Porch and Floor Enamel in Pulsating Blue, \$57 per gallon; at paint stores

ADD A FRENCH COUNTRY FEEL

- 13 Range "mantel"** Evoké an old farmhouse hearth and add an architectural element by using curved brackets to support a 2x6 shelf above a stove that has a downdraft vent. Similar to shown: Ornamental Mouldings unfinished wood corbel, \$25; homedepot.com
- 14 Utensil rack** Free up drawer space and add efficiency to your kitchen routines with an above-the-stove rail that puts cooking utensils right where you need them. Similar to shown: Fintrop nickel-plated rail, \$10; ikea.com
- 15 Worn plank floor** Get a rustic hardwood look for less with No. 2 Common boards (sometimes referred to as "utility grade")—they have just the right amount of knots to add character. Face-nail them down, and give them an aged patina with a stain such as Minwax Weathered Oak, \$27 per gallon; homedepot.com



Check out eBay for an old church pew to use as a bench seat, starting at \$50.

PUMP UP THE PERSONALITY

16_ Wall art Warm up your cooking space with art inspired by the contents of your pantry. Get this look by framing vintage produce-label posters, \$15 each; vintagegraph.com

17_ Repurposed table Rethink the concept of the traditional kitchen island. A rustic wood-top workbench or desk makes a great prep surface that's long on character. Search eBay or Craigslist for pieces similar to the one shown here, for as little as \$55.

18_ Multilight pendant Make a statement with a single dramatic light fixture. This multilight number casts ample light on a kitchen workstation, so you lose the need for individual task lights while gaining a stunning focal point. Similar to shown: Europa 8-bulb bronze multilight pendant, \$191; lampsplus.com; wire cage shade, \$15; shadesoflight.com



CRAFT A FARMHOUSE LOOK

19_ Soapstone sink Save on a big-ticket item like a soapstone sink by haunting stoneyards for discounted remnants or buying a slab from a dealer. Cut and assemble the sink yourself using a jigsaw, epoxy, and free DIY assembly instructions online. 30-by-84-inch slab, \$520; soapstones.com

20_ Glass-front hutch Turn a store-bought hutch into a handsome built-in by finishing the top with expensive-looking crown molding and staining it to match. Similar to shown: Ronan Hutch in Tobacco Brown, \$400; pier1.com

21_ Patterned floor Give a plain wood floor oodles of rustic charm with a simple design of stained or painted diamonds. For the former, you'll need to sand down to bare wood and use two contrasting stain colors. To learn how to tape off and paint a checkerboard, watch the video at thisoldhouse.com/may2014.

BANQUETTES ON A BUDGET

22 Repurposed storage cubes

Fasten inexpensive wood cubbies together with screws, and frame the front with 1x2s. Add a coat of paint and a cushion. Birch plywood cube, \$59; gothiccabinetcraft.com

23 Furniture pieces Pull up a pair of backless benches with shapely supports, or hit up the home center for turned wood legs and build a bench with plywood and skirting. 18-inch wood scrolled leg, \$9.50; lowes.com

24 Simple platform Build a basic banquette from a frame of 2x4s clad with paint-grade 3/4-inch plywood. Layer a 1x2 over a 1x4 to create the stepped-up trim.

25 Upholstered back Create a kitchen conversation piece by repurposing a fabric-covered headboard with nailhead trim. Or custom-build one of your own; to find the how-to, go to thisoldhouse.com/may2014. ■



19

BUDGET-FRIENDLY BATH IDEAS

In the confines of this grooming zone, a small investment can make a big splash. These fresh takes on wainscoting, tile, flooring, and more make it easy to trade up to one-of-a-kind style

BY MICHELLE BRUNNER

GO FOR AN ECLECTIC MIX

- 1 Salvaged shutters** Forgo pricey shades and dress up a window with painted shutters instead. Louvered-on-top designs like the ones here offer privacy without blocking light, and the adjustable slats let you direct the sun's rays. Check out etsy.com for salvaged shutters, starting at about \$25 each.
- 2 Subway wall** Create an accent wall with tile in a warm neutral color, like this soothing gray. Taking the tile all the way up to the ceiling will make the room appear taller. Similar to shown: U.S. Ceramic Tile in Tender Gray Matte, \$27 for a box of 80 tiles; homedepot.com
- 3 Mixed-material floor** Add some variety underfoot by combining textures—in this case, wood planks and pebble tile—for an unexpected twist that brings the great outdoors inside. Similar to shown: Polished wine pebble tile, \$12 per square foot; stratastones.net



4

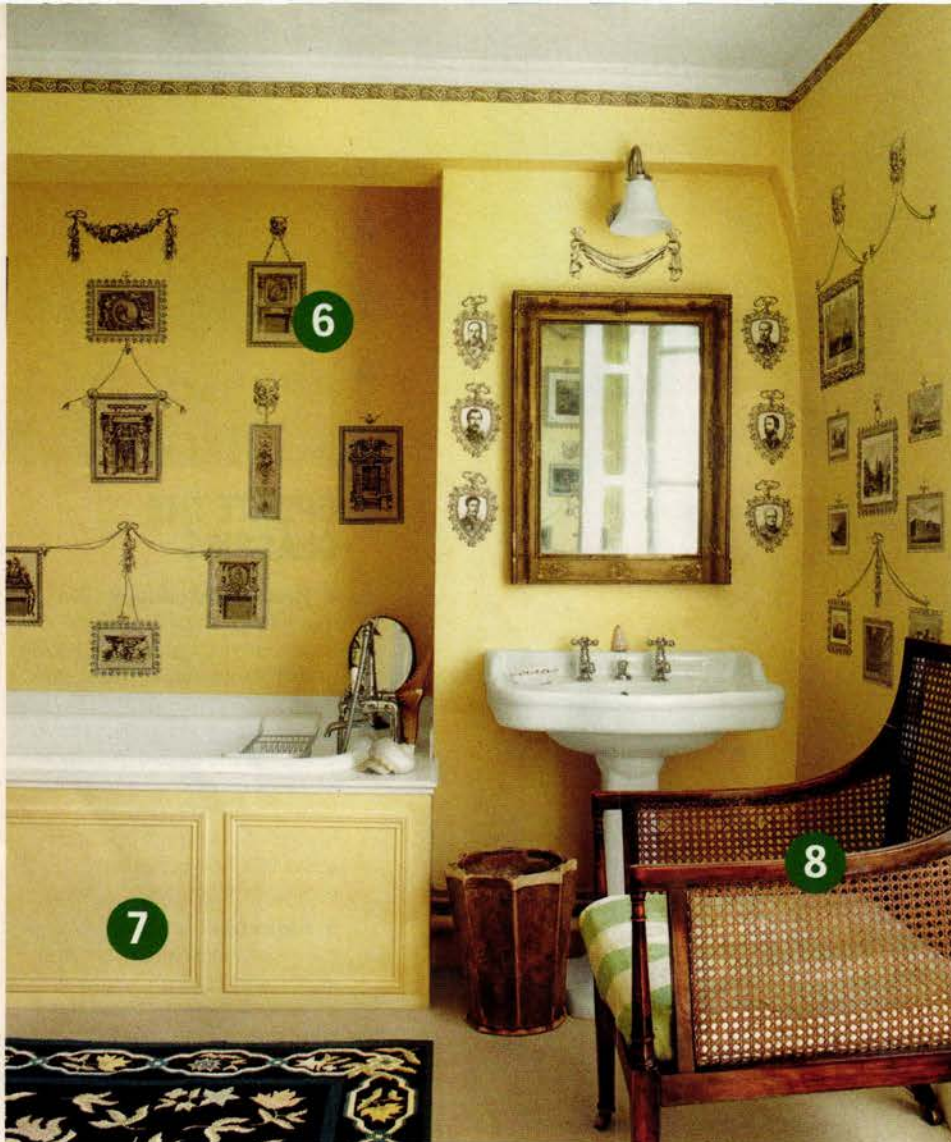
Give a wall-to-wall mirror some focus by hanging an oval mirror over it, ← above the sink.

UPDATE THE CLASSICS

4. Beadboard canopy Give the ceiling a lift by covering it in beadboard and extending it down the walls a bit for a canopy effect. Paint it a tranquil shade of sky blue to evoke the porch ceilings of yore. Similar to shown: 5½-inch-by-8-foot PVC beadboard panel, \$13; lowes.com. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Aura Bath & Spa paint in Sea Isle, \$68 per gallon; benjaminmoore.com

5. Sinkstand Add a curvy console towel rail and gleaming chrome legs to a wall-mount basin—or even swap out a pedestal base—for a style and storage boost. Similar to shown: American Standard Console Leg Set in chrome, \$330; homedepot.com

5



EMBRACE PERIOD DETAIL

6_Distinctive decals Dress up painted walls with inexpensive peel-and-stick designs. The fancy Federal-style swag and portrait motifs here are an unexpected twist in a bath and a lot easier to apply than wallpaper. Similar to shown: Old Frames Wall Stickers, \$18 for a pack of four; wallpops.com

7_Paneled tub surround Give a drop-in tub vintage elegance by wrapping it in a stylish base. Build a frame of 2x4s and clad it with birch-veneer plywood. Craft wall frames from molding and attach with panel adhesive. Use ½-inch cement board for the deck; cover and trim out with tile. Paint the base to blend in with the walls. Similar to shown: Sherwin-Williams's Harmony Paint in Butter Up, \$49 per gallon; sherwin-williams.com

8_Handsome seating Introduce a piece of upholstered furniture to ratchet up a bath's style. The slim profile of this British Colonial-inspired armchair doesn't hog space, and the casters make it easy to move around. Similar to shown: Kingston Isle armchair (set of two), \$319; wayfair.com

INTRODUCE CLEVER FEATURES

9_Concealed curtain rod Install a track on the ceiling to keep shower-curtain hardware out of sight. Bonus: Hanging the curtain from ceiling height makes the room look and feel loftier. To save on the cost of a custom curtain, fashion one from burlap or a canvas drop cloth. Similar to shown: Ceiling-mount track, \$28; curtain-tracks.com

10_Window ledge Carve out extra shelf space in a tight tub-and-shower area by adding a ledge to an existing windowsill. Be sure to use a material that can withstand exposure to water, such as cellular PVC. PVC board trim, \$31 for a 12-foot section; lowes.com

11_Wood wall Warm up the room by covering one wall in tongue-and-groove wood paneling painted a rich matte espresso brown. Similar to shown: EverTrue 8-foot Knotty Pine V-Groove paneling, \$16; lowes.com. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Aura Bath & Spa Matte Finish Paint in Rural Earth, \$68 per gallon; benjaminmoore.com





ADD UNEXPECTED COLOR

12_ Drum-style pendant Inject some serious drama overhead with a fire-engine-red fabric shade. Similar to shown: Adesso Harvest 1 Light Drum Shade, \$60; wayfair.com

13_ Shaker peg rail Turn towels into decorative accents with a row of Shaker-style pegs and you'll never be wanting for color—or a handy place to hang your robe. Similar to shown: Shaker peg rails from 22 inches up to 70 inches, starting at \$30; theperiodhouse.com

14_ Red-hot linoleum Take a walk on the wild side with a vibrant floor. Sheet linoleum is a great choice for high-traffic areas, like baths, and can stand up to spills and splashes. Similar to shown: Forbo Marmoleum in Bleeckerstreet, \$6 for a 12-by-36-inch panel; greenbuildingsupply.com

15_ Stenciled stripe Tie your claw-foot into the room's color palette in one bold stroke by painting a high-contrast stripe inspired by a Plimsoll line around the exterior. Paint: Sherwin-Williams's All Surface Enamel Oil Base in Fireworks, \$23 per quart; sherwin-williams.com

WALLET-FRIENDLY WAINSCOTING

16_ Colorful tile-grout combo Make a statement with subway tile installed halfway up the wall: Match the shade of the grout to the painted wall above. Similar to shown: Laticrete Twilight Blue Epoxy Powder Grout, \$16 for a 2¼-pound carton; lowes.com

17_ Whitewashed barn wood Refine the rustic look by whitewashing salvaged planks; it's an easy and affordable way to add character to walls. Similar to shown: Planks, starting at \$6 per square foot; old-barn-wood.com

18_ Corrugated metal Add a surprise element by wrapping the lower half of the wall in metal roofing. It's inexpensive, rustproof, and practically indestructible. Galvanized roofing, \$12 for an 8-foot-long panel; homedepot.com

19_ Distressed tin tiles Use painted metal ceiling tiles to create a wall treatment that's full of old-fashioned charm. Similar to shown: Genesis 2-by-2-foot Antique White Ceiling Tile, \$2.50 per square foot; homedepot.com



<ALL ABOUT>

Pro-Style Ranges

You don't need to be an Iron Chef to fall for the allure of a pro-style cooker. TOH explains how to pick the right one for your space, cooking style, and budget **BY JOSH GASKOF**

FEW THINGS DEFINE an upscale kitchen like one of these brawny beauties. With heavy cast-iron grates, beefy knobs and handles, and high-Btu burners, the pro-style range has become the modern-day hearth: a dramatic focal point in the home's main gathering place. Of course, one of these serious stoves can boost your cooking prowess, too—not to mention your home's resale value.

Industrial-style appliances started gaining ground in the 1980s, when homeowners began hankering for restaurant ranges to get more burners, more power, and more pro features, like built-in griddles and grills. But at up to 36 inches from front to back, these behemoths didn't fit neatly into your average cook space. They also lacked broilers and became dangerously hot.

Enter the “pro-style” solution. Scaled to fit standard-depth counters, these models won't burn down the house, thanks to beefed-up insulation. But their biggest burners still blast out 18,000 to 25,000 Btus—versus a basic range's 12,000 Btus—for searing and sautéing, while their smallest burners deliver a gentle simmer, prized for soups, sauces, and melting butter.

Of course, a pro-style range is no small investment. We'll walk you through all the options and considerations, so you'll know just what to look for when you're ready for this serious kitchen upgrade.

THE POWER BURNER

A hallmark of pro-style ranges is at least one high-heat burner that can blast out 18,000 to 25,000 Btus (British thermal units), a measure of energy. Different manufacturers use different designs to deliver the heat in an even pattern. This burner relies on two stacked brass disks ringed with gas jets to put out a full spectrum of heat, from low to high.



VITALS

WHAT SIZE?

Most pro-style ranges come in standard widths of 30, 36, 48, and 60 inches. Larger widths mean more burners or other cooktop options, such as griddles and grills, and more oven space, too. The ovens in a 36-inch unit can handle catering trays; 48- and 60-inch models can fit two ovens.

HOW MUCH DO THEY COST?

You can pay anywhere from \$3,500 to \$20,000 for a pro-style range, depending on the size, features, and model.

WHAT IF IT BREAKS?

Expect to get at least 20 years out of your investment, but features like electronic burner ignitions can be extremely costly to replace when they fail, and finding companies to service some lesser-known brands can be difficult.

GAS OR ELECTRIC?

While pro-style burners are always gas, they can be paired with a gas or an electric oven (the latter option is known as "dual fuel"). Electric ovens offer more cooking modes and more even heat but can add as much as \$2,000 to the cost. Some cooks prefer gas ovens for their moister heat. Most pro-style gas ovens don't self-clean, and those that do cost at least \$1,000 more.

With its stainless-steel body and top-quality details, a pro-style range looks at home in almost any style of kitchen. Shown: Wolf 36-inch range, \$6,930; subzero-wolf.com

ILLUSTRATION: JOHN MAGNELL



Exposed legs are part of the restaurant look. Shown: 48-inch dual-fuel range, \$11,999; dacor.com

Before you buy

High-power ranges come with some special considerations. Here are the basics to keep in mind



Assess your ventilation.

Pro-style power produces pro-style humidity, odor, carbon monoxide, and, if a recipe goes wrong, smoke. So a vent hood that exhausts outside is a must. The more Btus the range puts out, the more air—measured in cubic feet per minute, or cfm—the blower needs to be able to move. (Find a calculator for sizing a hood to your range and particular installation at thisoldhouse.com/may2014.) If possible, buy a hood from the same manufacturer and line as the range to ensure a good match.



Check your supply line. A

pro-style range can be ordered for either natural gas or propane. Manufacturers' recommendations for gas-line size vary, from ½ inch to ¾ inch; always check the specifications. Dual-fuel requires a 240-volt electrical line.



Measure it. A typical entry

doorway is 36 inches wide, so if you opt for a bigger range, hatch a plan to get it into the house before the delivery truck pulls up. Weight can be an issue too. Some oversize ranges with cast-iron components weigh more than

900 pounds. Floor joists may need reinforcement to safely withstand the heavy load.



Be prepared for the heat.

The cook space gets pretty toasty when you're blasting up to six power burners, plus a griddle or grill, sometimes all at once. Proper ventilation helps, of course, but you'll also want to buy heavy-bottomed pans that are several inches larger than the burners so that the heat isn't just bypassing them. Keep in mind, too, that the heavy cast-iron grates that are standard on most of these ranges radiate more heat than traditional steel grates and can take an hour or so to cool off completely. Handle them with caution during cleanup.



Test it. Look for a retailer

that has the floor models connected to live gas so that you can give them a test drive—and not just by turning them on. Boil water, fry an egg, or try melting a bar of chocolate and keeping it glossy instead of having it turn grainy. Some showrooms also host chef demos on pro techniques, such as sautéing asparagus on a griddle or making a roast in a steam oven.

BURNER BASICS

The facts behind the flames

HIGH BTUS The signature feature of any pro-style range is one or more burners capable of super-high heat for searing, sautéing, and fast boiling. But don't get too hung up on the number of Btus. For most home chefs, 18,000 Btus is plenty hot. Remember, too, that a bigger number doesn't necessarily translate to better performance; it all depends on the quality of the burner and controls.

LOW SIMMER Equally important is a burner that can handle delicate tasks, like simmering an untended pot of chili all afternoon without bringing it to a boil—or a burn. Different manufacturers use different technologies to achieve a steady, even heat, typically putting out 350 to 850 Btus. So be sure to test the simmer before you buy.

CLOSED BURNERS The vast majority of ranges offer sealed burners, which means the entire range top allows no place for spills or grease to drip down into the stove. As a result, jets are positioned so that the gas flows out to the side, then up, slightly reducing efficiency but making cleanup a relatively painless task.



OPEN BURNERS In this setup (like the BlueStar burner, above), gas jets shoot straight up from a burner that's suspended over an opening, drawing in lots of oxygen to fuel the flames. Pots and pans heat fast and evenly, but spills collect in a drip pan beneath the burner that must be removed for cleaning.

Six eye-catching picks

From small to supersized, colorful to traditional, these pro-style ranges will make any kitchen shine

1> RED HOT This splashy all-gas Bertazzoni range dresses up rugged stainless steel with fire-engine-red enamel. Its 30-inch frame has four sealed burners and a gas convection oven. Also available in six other color options. \$3,999; us.bertazzoni.com

2> SMART AND STYLISH This sturdy 30-inch dual-fuel GE Monogram range comes with four sealed burners; reversible cast-iron grates can be flipped to fit a wok pan. A handy center grate provides a continuous surface for parking hot pots. \$5,499; monogram.com

3> SUPER SLEEK Two pairs of sealed burners sandwich an electric griddle on this 36-inch gas model from Thermador. The star-shaped burners are designed for faster boiling time; two have simmer settings that hold temperatures as low as 100 degrees F. \$6,899; thermador.com

4> TRIMMED OUT This dual-fuel white-enamel and stainless-steel beauty from Ilve comes in a retro 40-inch size. Remove the grates on two of its six open burners for a griddle insert. Comes in six other colors and with the added option of bronze, brass, or chrome trim. \$8,249; ilveappliances.com

5> CHEF FAVORITE This 48-inch BlueStar range has two gas ovens (one a convection) and eight open burners, including two that hit a searing 25,000 Btus. Char-broiler and griddle inserts are interchangeable; swap in as needed. Comes in 750 colors and finishes. \$9,980; bluestarcooking.com

6> MEGA MODEL Cooking for an army? This 60-inch Capital self-cleaning gas range gets the job done with six open burners and dual convection ovens. Lift the cover to expose a 24-inch griddle or grill. \$14,529; capital-cooking.com



Know your range

Which setup you choose depends on the size of your kitchen, cooking ambitions, and budget. Tour a typical 48-inch to take a closer look at some standard features and interesting options

GRILL OPTION

Taking the space of two burners, this slotted grate sits over an open flame.

Demands a robust ventilation hood, set on maximum power, to handle the smoke. Burners, heat diffusers, and drip pan are usually dishwasher safe for cleanup.

CONTINUOUS GRATES

Interlocking pieces of cast iron let pots slide easily between burners.

SIMMER BURNER

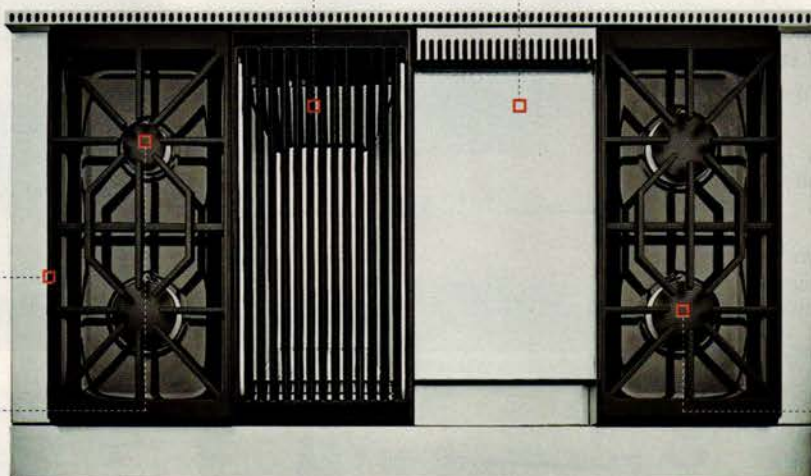
Puts out a steady, gentle flame (generally from 250 to 850 Btus) for low-heat tasks, like melting butter.

GRIDDLE OPTION

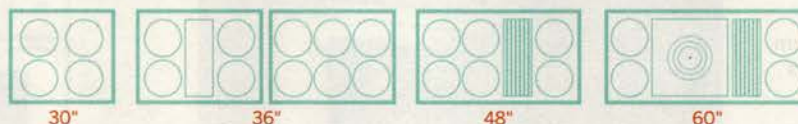
A flat stainless-steel surface—sometimes with a super-tough nonstick coating—ideal for everything from scrambling eggs to cooking shrimp *plancha*-style. A dishwasher-safe drip pan collects grease. Takes the place of two burners, so is available only on 36-inch or larger ranges. Can sometimes be ordered double-wide.

BOILER BURNER

High-heat element that can put out from 18,000 to 25,000 Btus. Ideal for searing, sautéing, and boiling.



CHOOSE YOUR SETUP At 36 inches, you have the option of extra burners or a griddle or grill. Go bigger and get both, a double griddle, or even the French top (shown on opposite page).

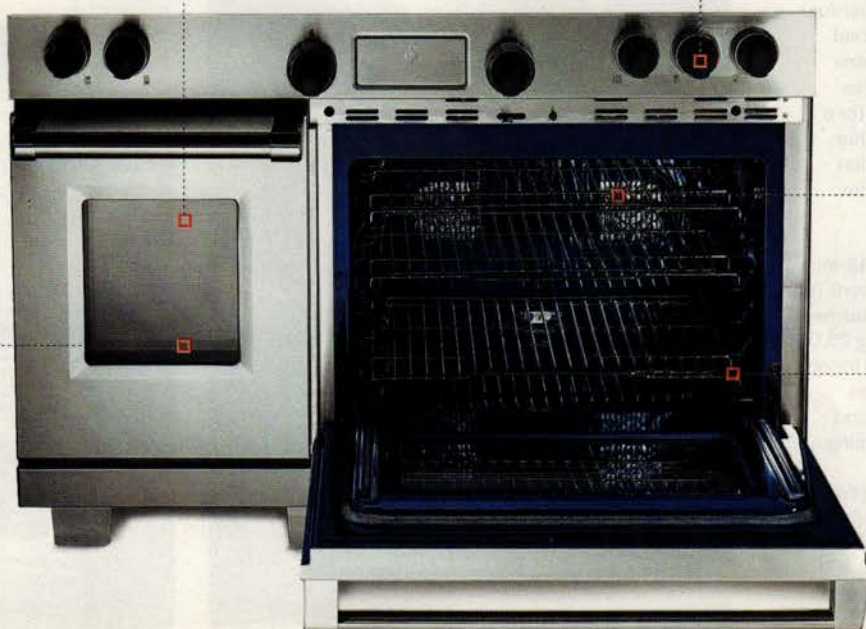


INFRARED BROILER

A rectangular heating element at the top of the oven radiates energy waves through the entire cavity, heating food faster and more evenly than a conventional broiler does, with no pre-heating. Available only in gas models.

STEAM OPTION

In some dual-fuel ranges with two ovens, one can be powered by steam or have a "steam assist," either instead of or in addition to the electric coil. This produces moist heat ideal for roasting lean meats. Requires a water line.



KNOBS

Hefty dials, a signature feature of these ranges, should turn smoothly and afford pinpoint control of the burners.

CONVECTION

One or more fans circulate heat within the oven cavity for even cooking. Standard in at least one oven.

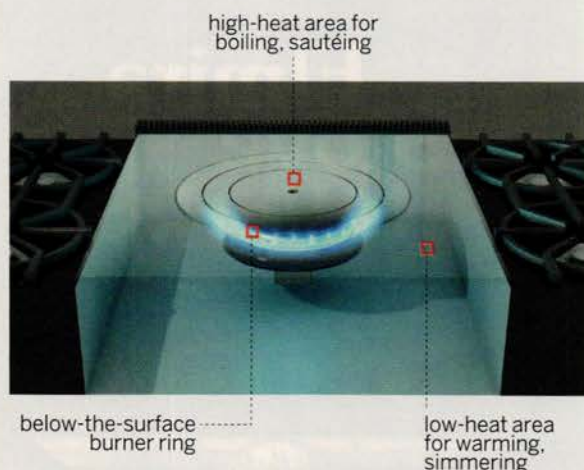
GLIDE RACKS

Ball-bearing tracks, standard on most high-end ranges, let stainless-steel oven racks slide out smoothly—even when holding a 25-pound turkey. Not all racks are created equal, of course, so test them.

THE FRENCH-TOP OPTION

Why pro chefs love this versatile burner

The French top replaces four burners with a cast-iron plate ideal for cooking with multiple pots at different temperatures at the same time. Beneath the plate is a circular high-Btu burner that radiates heat outward from the center, so you can, say, boil water in the middle and simmer a sauce toward the edge. As such, it suits the fast-paced cooking of a restaurant kitchen. But because the flame is concealed, it can be hard to know when the metal is hot. And the plate may discolor quickly with use—not a problem where the range isn't on display.



MOPPING UP THE MESS

How to clean your showpiece

These stainless-steel beauties may sparkle in the showroom, but keeping them that way at home takes a little TLC. First, and most important, remove spills and grime pronto to avoid buildup. Wipe down cast-iron grates with soapy water; soak them if needed. Avoid abrasives, bleach, and the dishwasher to preserve the grates' enamel coating, which protects the cast iron against rust. Towel dry for the same reason. If you do nick the coating, rub vegetable oil onto the exposed metal.

Use a specialty stainless-steel cleaner and a soft cloth, wiping in the direction of the grain, on appropriate metal surfaces.

No self-cleaning oven? Put a pan of water inside and set the temperature on high heat for about an hour to loosen built-up gunk; wipe out the interior with a damp cloth or sponge and mild detergent, as needed.

Beyond industrial chic

These high-performance ranges trade the restaurant look for vintage charm, with many of the features found in pro-style models



ANTIQUE LOOK

Victorian-era style meets modern utility in the Elmira 1865-ST. Copper trim and a textured black finish dress up a cooktop with four gas and two electric burners. In a stealthy twist, the top cabinet conceals digital controls for the single electric oven (the three doors are really one). \$8,220; elmirastoveworks.com



BRITISH BEAUTY

A contemporary update on the old coal-fired cast-iron cooker, this handsome import is forged of solid steel with a high-gloss enamel finish. It has five gas burners and three separate oven compartments, including a top broiler. In five finishes. \$5,899; aga-ranges.com



BRASS-TRIMMED

This stately range, hand assembled in France, comes with four high-heat burners ringing one larger burner in the center (shown) or a classic French top. One gas oven and one electric come standard. Trim choices include brass, chrome, and nickel, as well as stainless steel. In 24 porcelain-enamel colors. \$7,800; frenchranges.com

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

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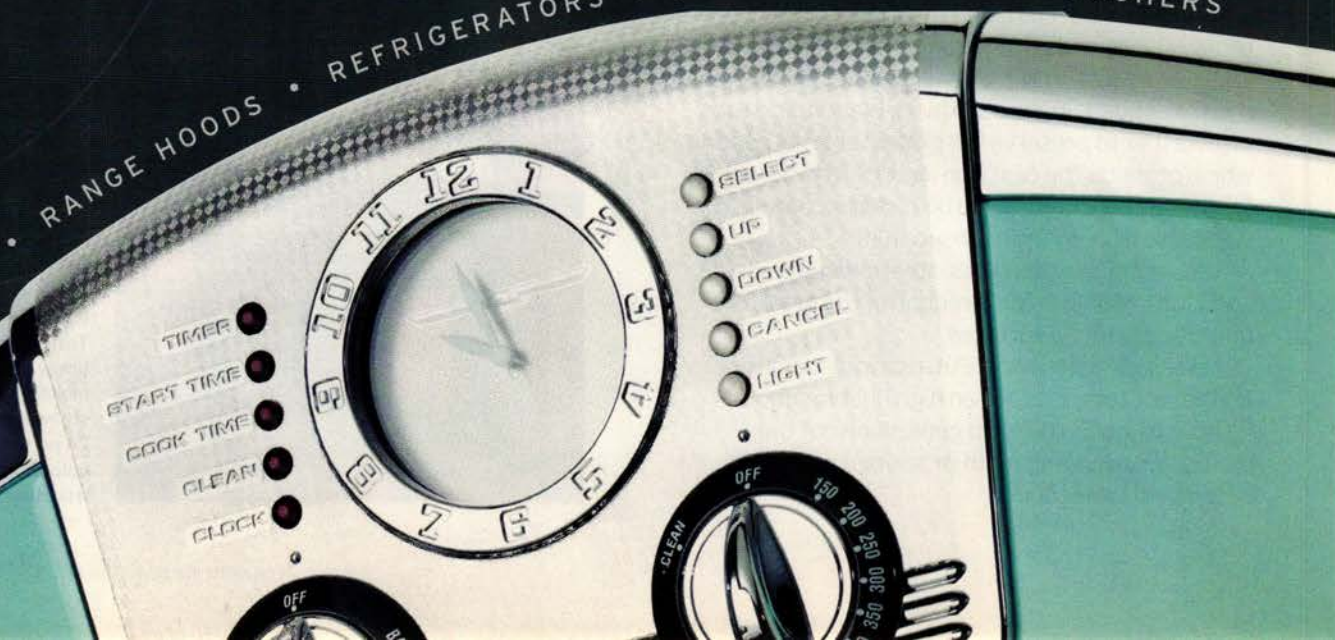
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65

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

Q I'd like to plant a vegetable garden in an area with very rocky soil. Is it a hopeless dream?

—NOEL MACFADYEN, MONROE, CONN.

A Not at all. One option is to sift out the rocks with a soil screener, like the one at left. But I think you'll find it easier to build a raised bed out of 6×6 cedar timbers and fill it with good compost-rich soil. A bed 4 feet by 12 feet by 10 inches deep, located in a spot with full sun, will provide you with enough real estate for veggies all summer.

—ROGER COOK,
TOH LANDSCAPING CONTRACTOR

Get instructions for building a raised bed at thisoldhouse.com/may2014

PHOTOGRAPH
BY VICTOR SCHRAGER

*Our cast
of veteran
experts*



TOM SILVA
General Contractor



NORM ABRAM
Master Carpenter



RICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and Heating
Expert



ROGER COOK
Landscape Contractor



KEVIN O'CONNOR
Host

Our 40-year-old cedar-shingle siding is in excellent shape, except where it meets the roof. How do I replace the rotting shingles?

—HARVEY LeSUEUR, PLYMOUTH, MASS.



When prying damaged shingles off a wall, Tom Silva starts at the top and works his way down.

TOM SILVA REPLIES: There must be water splashing onto that section of siding, so ask a roofer to assess how to redirect it and fix the root problem. As for replacing those shingles, that will be easy. Pry off the rotten ones in the top course first, then any in the course below, and so on, until you hit rot-free shingles. Next, check the condition of the sheathing underneath. If there's a punky spot, cut out the sheathing well beyond it to make sure the fungi causing the rot haven't gotten a toehold.

Now go out and buy enough shingles of the same length and species as the originals to cover the exposed area. If you're going to paint or stain them, buy factory-primed shingles or take the time to stain or prime them, front and back. This step helps extend a shingle's life and finish.

With the rotted wood gone and the sheathing solid, staple builder's felt over the exposed area, taking care to overlap the existing felt or house wrap by at least 6 inches. Then, starting at the bottommost course where shingles are missing, place a new shingle next to an old one, line up its bottom edge—the butt edge—with its neighbor's, making sure the side joints are staggered with those of the course below by at least 1½ inches. Red-cedar shingles, like the ones at left, are very stable and don't need much of any gap between them, but with white cedar, leave a ¼-inch gap.

PHOTOS: ANTHONY TEULI; ANDREW MCCAUL ("WHAT IS IT?")

Fasten each shingle with two nails, each inset about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the edge and 1 inch above the butt line of the course above. If you tack a straightedge to the wall, even with the butt edge of the course you're working on, you can rest each shingle on it to set the correct overlap as you go. Follow the same procedure as you work your way up.

For the top courses, you have to cut down each shingle to fit against the soffit. Try this trick: Flip the shingle and hold its butt edge against the soffit, use a utility knife and rafter square to score it where it crosses the course's butt line, and snap off the top. If the last course is particularly narrow, you'll be cutting through a thicker part of shingle, so you may need to score both sides to get a clean snap. When the last course is installed, hide the nails with a fascia board: 1x4 or 1x6 trim set tight against the underside of the soffit.

Q Slip-resistant tile
The ceramic tiles in our entry turn as slippery as ice when they get wet. Is there a way to rough them up so that they aren't so dangerous? I can't use a mat; it would interfere with the door.

—JENNY BAGLEY, BUFFALO, N.Y.

MARK FERRANTE REPLIES: A lot of people have this problem with tiled kitchen and bathroom floors. My advice is to treat the floors with Slip Guard for ceramic tile (slipguard systems.com). It's applied in a DIY-friendly three-step process that forms a permanent bond with the tile. You can walk on it immediately, and it

Tile contractor Mark Ferrante of Ferrante Tile has worked on This Old House TV projects for 30 years.



What is it?

A
Clamp for sharpening mower blades

B
Sawhorse vise

C
Joist hook

D
Rebar straightener

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 102



If this chimney's shoulder bricks had been sloped, water would not have soaked in and frozen, causing this spalling.

never needs recoating; just keep it clean, and your tiles will have a static coefficient of friction of 0.69, which is a fancy way of saying they will exceed the standards for slip resistance set by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Slip Guard won't alter the tiles' color, but it leaves a matte sheen. The company also makes anti-slip products for stone, porcelain, and quarry-tile floors.

Q Crumbling bricks
In many places around the exterior of our 1960 house, the bricks are crumbling away. And as soon as we replace them, others fall apart. What's going on and what can be done about it?

—LEO AND BARB PETRONE, BETHEL PARK, PA.

KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES: I took your question to Chip Clark, vice president of engineering services at The Brick Industry Association, and showed him all the pictures you sent. His diagnosis is fairly straightforward: The affected bricks are being saturated with water, which is expanding in freezing weather and causing the brick faces to spall, or break off. Once a brick spalls, the softer interior is exposed, making it

even more vulnerable to water infiltration and disintegration. The damaged bricks will have to be replaced, using better materials and bricklaying practices.

For instance, Clark notes that the chimney shoulders (above) are laid like stairsteps, giving water an opportunity to soak in. They need to be rebuilt so that each shoulder has an outer layer of bricks that slopes at least 15 degrees and is flashed to allow water to flow away from the house.

This kind of work is best done by an experienced mason, Clark says, and he recommends using the following materials: new, grade SW bricks, without cores (holes), to withstand the severe weather where you live; and latex-modified mortar, which has more flexibility and a tighter bond than standard cement mortar mixes.

After the new bricks are in place and the mortar is dry, brush or spray a water repellent over all the brickwork. Clark recommends using products made of siloxane or a 50-50 mix of silane and siloxane, such as Okon (rustoleum.com). These coatings aren't permanent—the product should be reapplied every seven to 10 years—and may add a slight sheen, but they'll help keep your brickwork dry and in good shape.

Q Hot water, bad smell
My hot water smells like rotten eggs, and the water heater is only a couple of years old. Is there any way to get rid of the horrible odor?

—SUE PALMER, CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES: Fortunately, there is. And it's a pretty simple fix, too. The smell comes from anaerobic bacteria living inside your warm, cozy water heater, happily munching on the sulfates and hydrogen ions in the water and burping out hydrogen sulfide gas, the stuff that causes the rotten-egg smell. The sulfates and the bacteria, though otherwise harmless, are regularly found in untreated well water, not municipal systems. The hydrogen ions come from the water heater's magnesium or aluminum anode rod, which stops the inside of your heater from rusting away.

One way this issue can crop up without warning is if you leave your tank on while away on vacation, giving the bacteria a chance to take over.

The easiest way to make the smell go away is to sterilize the inside of the tank and replace the anode rod. In most cases, a replacement rod made of a zinc-tin-aluminum alloy is your best bet for snuffing out the smell because zinc and tin have greater antimicrobial properties than pure aluminum or magnesium.

First, shut off the tank's water supply and its electricity or gas supply. Open a hot-water faucet at a sink to relieve pressure in the tank, and use the bibb on the tank to drain a couple of gallons of water. But leave the tank nearly full—a heavy tank will hold still as you torque the rod.

Now find the rod's hex nut on the top of the heater. It may be hidden under a cap or

the tank's lid. Anode rods are notoriously difficult to crack loose, so round up a helper, a 1½-inch socket and the longest socket-wrench handle you can find, and a 3-foot length of steel pipe. While the helper holds the tank, crank the nut counterclockwise. If it refuses to budge, slip the pipe over the wrench handle for leverage. Do not bang on the nut or the wrench; you might damage the tank's enamel lining. When the nut comes loose, lift it and the attached rod out of the tank. To kill the bacteria and any lingering odor, pour in a few pints of 3-percent-solution hydrogen peroxide.

Wrap the threads on the new rod five or six times with plumber's tape; thread it into the hole, nice and tight; and replace the cap or lid. Reconnect the power or fuel supply—and relight the pilot, if necessary—and crank up the tank temperature to 145 degrees for 6 to 8 hours to deliver the



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final knockout punch to those smelly bacteria. Finally, open the water-supply valve for the tank, turn the temperature back down to 135 degrees, and fill up a bathtub to purge the tank of any peroxide odor.

If, after all that, the rotten-egg smell comes back, consider investing in a water-treatment system to kill the bacteria before they reach the tank.

Q Uneven yard
I'd like to level my backyard. How do I "read" the topography so that I know how far out of level it is?

—SAL VAGLICA, MILLER PLACE, N.Y.

ROGER COOK REPLIES: There are some very simple ways to check grade using low-cost tools. The least expensive is a line level, which consists of a small spirit level hooked

onto mason's line. You can get both items for less than \$10 at any hardware store. Here's how to proceed:

1. Drive a stake into the ground at each end of the area you want to check.
2. Tie the line to one stake and pull it as tight as possible around the other stake.
3. Hook the line level onto the midpoint, and raise or lower one end of the mason's line until the level's bubble is centered. Having an assistant help you with this step will be a real time-saver. Tie off the loose end of the line on the stake at this point.

Differences in slope will be obvious, but if you want to quantify them, just measure from the line to the ground. You can repeat this process in various locations to get an overall sense of grade change. Measuring down from a level mason's line is essentially the same slope-checking principle that builders use with more

sophisticated tools, though not as precise.

For \$30 and a big step up in accuracy, you can buy a water level, which is an easier method to use if you're working alone. The home-center version consists of 25 feet of clear, flexible plastic tubing and an electronic sensor. You fill the tube with water, connect one end to the sensor, and it determines when the water level at both ends of the tube is the same. Then it's just a matter of measuring down from that point to the ground. You can easily move the free end of the tube around a small site and drive stakes in various locations to record differences in grade.

If you want to check a grade the way the pros do, rent an optical or a laser level. These tools are more accurate and better suited to finding a lot of different points quickly. In concept, though, they do pretty much the same thing as simpler tools.



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Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

Q Crown for a saggy ceiling

I'd like to put crown molding in our master bedroom, but the ceiling has a fairly noticeable dip along one wall. Is there a way to camouflage the unevenness?

—MARK PARSELY, ROCKPORT, IND.

NORM ABRAM REPLIES: You can't really camouflage sag with crown. But you might be able to draw the eye away from it, if the sag isn't too great.

To determine how much the ceiling sags, hold a scrap of the crown in place at one corner and mark its bottom edge. Do the same in the opposite corner, and snap a line between the marks. Measure up from the line to find the sag's lowest point, then subtract that number from the distance between the line and the ceiling at the corners to get the amount of sag. If it's less than an inch, a standard 4½-inch crown can probably be coaxed into position with some careful twisting and planing. But a sag of an inch or more means the ceiling should be leveled first.

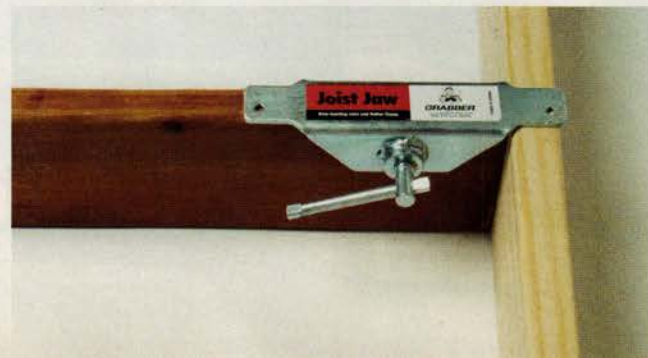
For a ceiling with minimal sag, I'd snap a line of white chalk half the amount of the sag down from the previous line to define where the bottom of the molding should land. It doesn't have to be level. Then I'd scribe and plane the top to fit the sag, and plane the top bevel until the crown fits tight to the ceiling at the low spot—but I wouldn't go any deeper than halfway into the flat area at the top of the crown. To keep the crown's bottom edge on the baseline at the high spots, I push the top of the crown slightly toward the wall and plane the lower bevel on the back until the bottom edge sits tight to the wall. This makes mitering and coping very challenging; I highly recommend that you turn the job over to a good trim carpenter.

If a ceiling needs to be leveled, the best approach is to replace it. After it's ripped out, sister 2xs to the sides of the exposed joists so that they're level and even with the low spot. Then, to help stiffen the joists, screw 1x3 strapping every 16 inches perpendicular to the bottom of the 2xs. I'd also install extra strapping

What is it?

D Joist hook

The Joist Jaw clamps on the ends of joists and rafters, allowing you to set them in place, perfectly aligned, without a helper. \$60 a pair; grabberman.com



at the walls parallel to the joists to make nailing the crown easier. Finally, screw the drywall to the strapping. With the new ceiling in place, the crown will be a cinch to install.

Q Annoying concrete doorstep

Last winter, the concrete outside our entry lifted up so high that it blocked the screen door. The pad has since settled back down, but what can we do to stop this from happening again? —TRAVIS K. WEAVER, EAST LIVERPOOL, OHIO

TOM SILVA REPLIES: Blame the record cold for your inconvenience. The water in the soil under the concrete froze for so long that it created an ice lens thick enough to heave up the concrete. That's probably been happening to the rest of the walkway during really cold spells without your noticing, but this year's prolonged cold created a lens big enough to reach your doorway.

To prevent this from happening again, you'll have to improve the drainage under the pad so that there won't be ice to heave it up. You do that by removing at least part of the pad closest to the door and replacing the soil underneath with crushed stone. First, cut the concrete at a point beyond the arc

of the door's swing. Then, using a sledgehammer or an electric jackhammer, break up the concrete and move it out of the way.

Now dig down about 9 to 10 inches. Cover this hole with landscape fabric to keep the soil out of the stone. Dump 4 inches of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch crushed stone onto the fabric and tamp it level. On the sides, install 2x6s held in place with 1x3 stakes. Next to the foundation and the existing pavement, place expansion strips; they'll allow the pad to move independently of the house and the rest of the walkway. Cover the stone with about 2 inches of fresh concrete, lay galvanized reinforcing mesh on it, and immediately fill the form to the top with more concrete, then smooth it out. After the concrete sets, remove the 2xs and your problem should be solved.

Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

Go to: 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.

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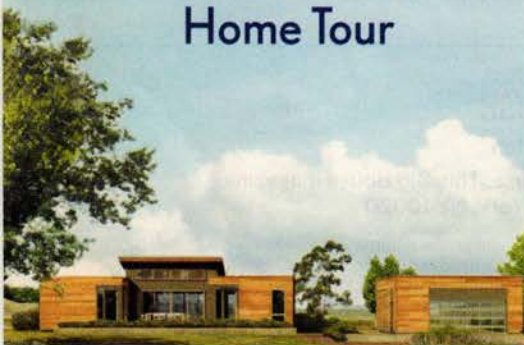
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Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

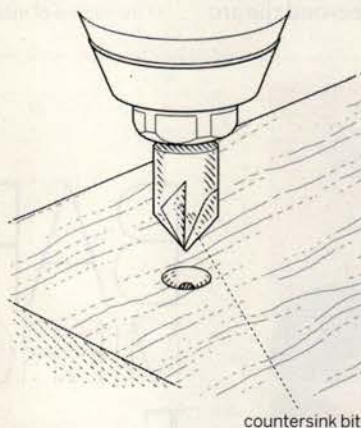


Norm's tricks of the trade

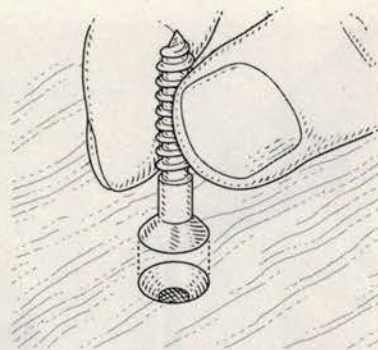
I have some wood shelf brackets held in place with recessed screws. I'd like to add more screws for increased support, but how do I recess the heads?

—EILEEN LERCH, TULLAHOMA, TENN.

A To recess any screwhead, you make a cone-shaped recess called a countersink. The traditional way to do this is with a dedicated bit, which allows you to make countersinks of different diameters. Here's how.



countersink bit



1] Drill a pilot hole for the screw.

Then, with the countersink bit centered in the hole and perpendicular to the surface, run the drill at high speed without applying much pressure. That's how you get a clean countersink with no tear-out.

2] To get the screwhead perfectly flush,

drill shallower than needed and place the screwhead over the hole to see how much farther you need to go. Drill a little deeper and check again. By sneaking up on the correct depth, there's less risk of going too deep. ■



GOT ANSWERS?

If you have a trick that would impress Norm—or any of the guys—share it with us for a chance to appear in October's reader-created issue. To post ideas, blip this page or go to thisoldhouse.com/yourTOH

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Ask This Old House Renovates a Townhouse Kitchen

In an upcoming episode, **Ask This Old House** will completely renovate a suburban townhouse kitchen, giving our readers and viewers a handy "101" guide to remodeling their own kitchens.



Before: With mismatched appliances and a lack of workspace, this dark, cramped kitchen was sorely in need of an update.



After: Smart design choices—adding a peninsula to increase the storage and counter space (*B. Jorgsen & Co. Victoria Ivory cabinetry by Cabinets To Go*), adding a lively backsplash, giving the room a fresh coat of neutral paint—not only make the room appear larger and brighter, but create a more functional space.



Stainless steel appliances, a high-arc chrome faucet (*Kipton one-handed faucet by Moen*) and new nickel-finish hardware modernize the space.

To see an expanded photo gallery of this project, go to thisoldhouse.com/ASK-kitchen, and tune in this May to watch the renovation unfold on PBS television, or visit thisoldhouse.com/watchATOH

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Event Spotlight

Design & Construction Week, Las Vegas

For the first time, the International Builders' Show (IBS) and the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS) were combined into Design & Construction Week, with over 1,700 exhibits and 75,000 attendees from across the globe. TOH master carpenter Norm Abram was on hand at this year's show, greeting fans, signing autographs, and answering home improvement questions.



Norm takes the stage for a Q&A at **CertainTeed**

Fans at the **AZEK** booth eagerly await their turn to meet Norm



Norm takes pics with fans at **Lumber Liquidators**

Norm stops to chat with Mark and Theresa of the home improvement radio show **MyFixItUpLife**



Directory

MAY 2014

COVER: See the listing for "Before + After Bath."

HOME SOLUTIONS (pp. 17–26) Anatomy of a dust bunny: *Thanks to* Lance Wallace, environmental scientist (retired); epa.gov. Karen Hall; dyson.com. Corey Schmidt; pg.com. Budget Redo: **Homeowner's blog:** My So-Called Home; mysocalledhome.com.

BEFORE + AFTER KITCHEN: From musty to must-see (pp. 29–32) **Kitchen design and cabinets:** Romar Cabinet and Top Company; romarcabinet.com. **General contractor:** Dave Knecht Homes, Hinsdale, IL; 630-537-1023. **Carpentry:** Village Carpentry & Builders, Westmont, IL; 630-241-7278. **Floor refinishing and painting:** D Painters, Vineyard Haven, MA; 508-560-2630. **Tilework:** Gebauer Tile & Stone, Westmont, IL; gebauertileandstone.com. **Paint:** HC-142 Stratton Blue (cabinets); benjaminmoore.com. **Knobs and pulls:** berensonhardware.com. **Range, microwave, fridge, and dishwasher:** ge.com. **Downdraft range vent:** bestrangehoods.com. **Light fixtures:** hudsonvalleylighting.com. **Sink:** Shaws; rohlhome.com. **Faucet:** kohler.com. **Tile:** americanolean.com. **Copper whale:** the-copperworks.com. **Dish towel and tea cups:** ikea.com. **Glass creamer:** williams-sonoma.com. **Glass cake stand:** crateandbarrel.com. **Yellow dishware:** Antique.

BEFORE + AFTER BATH: Fresh start (pp. 35–38) **Architect:** Jeff DeGraw, DeGraw & DeHaan Architects, Middletown, NY; 845-343-8510; degrawanddehaan.com. **Cabinetry:** Wells Woodworking, Bloomingburg, NY; 845-733-8029. **Paint:** No. 85 Oval Room Blue; farrow-ball.com. **Tub:** vandabaths.com. **Tub filler:** calfaucets.com. **Showerhead:** rohlhome.com. **Handshower:** kohler.com. **Towels, stool, and tub caddy:** bedbathandbeyond.com. **Rug and manzanita branch:** pier1.com.

PAINT IDEAS: Checkered charm (p. 43) **Decorative painter:** Paul d'Orleans; thevintagent.com.

TOH TV: Perfect fit for a family (pp. 50–53) **Architect:** David Whitney, AIA, Arlington, MA; davidwhitney.com. **Interior designer:** Christine Tuttle Design, Dedham, MA; christinetuttle.com. **Architectural color consultant:** Bonnie Krims, Bonnie Krims Color Studio, Concord, MA; bonniekrims.com. **Landscape architect:** Cricket Beauregard Lewis, CBL Landscape Design, Arlington, MA; 781-643-2242; cricketbeauregard.com. **Tile contractor:** ferrantetile.com. **Kitchen:** **Kitchen designer:** Kitchen Dimensions, Saratoga Springs, NY; 518-583-0081; kitchen-dimensions.com. **Windsor chairs and bar stools:** drdimes.com. **Chestnut floor:** lumberliquidators.com. **Paint:** No. 2013 Matchstick (walls); farrow-ball.com. **Kitchen island top:** The Grothouse Lumber Company;

610-767-6515; glumber.com. **Custom copper hood:** Riverside Sheet Metal, Medford, MA; 781-396-0070; riversidesheetmetal.net. **Dining room:** **Wall covering:** Glazed Abaca Grasscloth in Copper; philippeffries.com. **Installer:** Warren Reeb Painting & Wallpaper, Dedham, MA; 781-254-2227. **Custom rug:** meridameridian.com. **Master bath:** **Tile:** Roma Tile; 617-926-5800; romatile.com. **Vanity top:** Corian in Designer White; dupont.com. **Fixtures:** kohler.com. **Shower door:** bannerglassshelmar.com. **Master bedroom:** **Paint:** No. 2008 Dimity (walls); farrow-ball.com. **Media room:** **Pillows:** christinetuttle.com.

BUILD IT OR BUY IT: Folding serving tray (pp. 55–56) **Basic model:** Home Basics Pine Bed Tray; amazon.com. **Mid-range model:** Woodard and Charles Acacia Bed Tray; wayfair.com. **Luxury model:** Rosewood Tea Tray; orientalfurniture.com.

WEEKEND REMODEL: Build a compost bench (pp. 59–66) **Designer-builder:** Christopher Beidel, Pernt, Brooklyn, NY; perntstudio.com.

HIDDEN BEAUTY (pp. 68–75) **Window and door repairs:** CCS Restoration, Sanford, FL; ccsrestoration.com. **Paint:** PM-5 Cliffside Gray (kitchen and butler's pantry), 666 At Sea (dining room), and 2119-60 Silver Lining (master bathroom); benjaminmoore.com. **Kitchen:** **Cabinets:** homedepot.com. **Knobs and pulls:** atlashomewares.com (island), rejuvenation.com (upper cabinets), and schaubandcompany.com (base cabinets). **Dishwasher, wall ovens, and cooktop:** kitchenaid.com. **Main sink:** rohlhome.com. **Island sink:** batesandbates.com. **Faucet:** kallista.com. **Butler's pantry:** **Pulls:** restorationhardware.com. **Knobs:** restoration.com. **Master bath:** **Tub and sink:** kohler.com. **Sink faucet:** newportbrass.com. **Tub faucet:** rohlhome.com. **Cabinet boxes:** ikea.com. **Cabinet doors:** barkerdoor.com.

ALL ABOUT PRO-STYLE RANGES (pp. 90–95) *Thanks to* Conal Roney, Kieffer's Appliances, Lansdale, PA; 215-699-3522. Scott Brown, The Appliance Guru, New London, NH; 603-290-5515; applianceguru.com. Dave Marsillio Jr., Marsillio's TV and Appliance, Fairfield, CT; 203-366-7541. Tony Aitoro, Aitoro Appliance, Norwalk, CT; 203-847-2471.

ASK THIS OLD HOUSE (pp. 97–104) Slip-resistant tile: *Thanks to* Mark Ferrante, Ferrante Tile, Woburn, MA; 781-396-6327; ferrantetile.com. Crumbling bricks: *Thanks to* Chip Clark, The Brick Industry Association, Reston, VA; 703-620-0010; gobrick.org. ■

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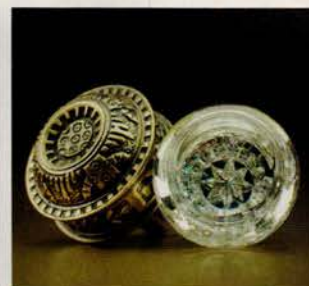
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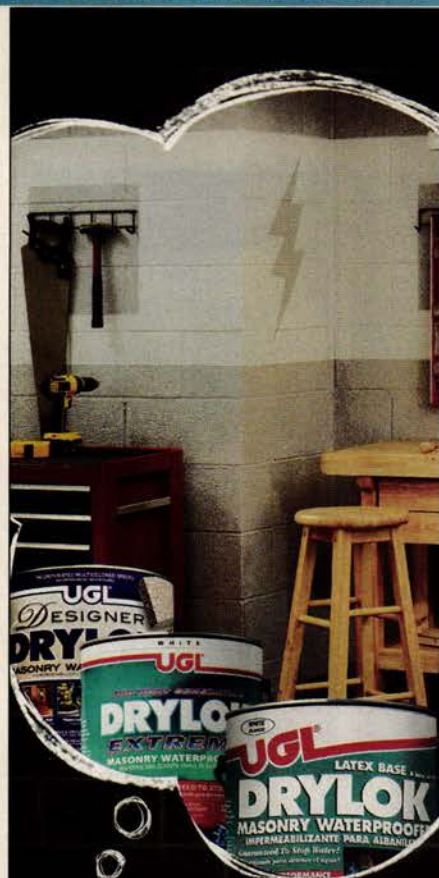
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ITEM 65020
69052/69111
Item 65020 shown

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125 PSI VERTICAL
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CENTRALPNEUMATIC®

Item 67847 LOT NO. 67847
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STEEL FLOOR JACK**

Weights 74 lbs.

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LOT NO. 68048
69227/62116

Item 68048 shown

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**1500 PSI
PRESSURE
WASHER**

LOT NO. 68333/69488

\$79.99 REG. PRICE \$129.99

Item 68333 shown

69351703

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE \$45

GENERAL MACHINERY

**8", 5 SPEED
BENCH MOUNT
DRILL PRESS**

LOT NO. 44506/60238/38119

\$54.99 REG. PRICE \$99.99

Item 60238 shown

99726697

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE \$130

US GENERAL TOOLS

**FIVE DRAWER
TOOL CART**

WINNER • Best Mechanic's Tool Cart

Truckin' Magazine

LOT NO. 95272
69397
61427

\$169.99 REG. PRICE \$299.99

Item 95272 shown

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE \$120

**10' SLIDING
COMPOUND
MITER SAW**

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

LOT NO. 98199
61307

\$119.99 REG. PRICE \$199.99

Item 98199 shown

70913434

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**29 PIECE TITANIUM
NITRIDE COATED
DRILL BIT SET**

drillmaster

LOT NO. 5889/61637
Item 5889 shown

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE 50%

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER

drillmaster

LOT NO. 95578
69645/60625

\$9.99 REG. PRICE \$19.99

Item 60625 shown

76751460

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SUPER COUPON!

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**4000 PEAK/
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70 dB Noise Level

LOT NO. 68528/69676/69729

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Item 68528 shown

70582805

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE 50%

**9' x 6 FT. 2 PIECE STEEL
LOADING RAMPS**

HaulMaster

1000 lb. Capacity

LOT NO. 44649
69591/69646

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Item 44649 shown

19363620

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE \$70

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LOT NO. 97586
69703/61689

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Item 61689 shown

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**36 LED SOLAR
SECURITY LIGHT**

Includes 3.2V, 600 mAh Li-Ion battery pack.

LOT NO. 69644
69890/60498/98085

\$19.99 REG. PRICE \$29.99

Item 69644 shown

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRAL MACHINERY

2 HP INDUSTRIAL 5 MICRON DUST COLLECTOR

• 70 Gallon Capacity

Item 97869 shown

LOT NO. 97869/61790

REG. PRICE \$249.99

SAVE \$90

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

10 AMP, 3-IN-1, 1-1/8" VARIABLE SPEED SDS ROTARY HAMMER

Item 69274 shown

LOT NO. 69274 97743/61882

REG. PRICE \$199.99

SAVE \$130

\$69.99

23259380

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRAL MACHINERY

4" x 36" BELT/6" DISC SANDER

LOT NO. 97181/93981

Item 97181 shown

REG. PRICE \$99.99

SAVE \$42

\$57.99

09358757

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRAL MACHINERY

3-1/2 CUBIC FT. CEMENT MIXER

LOT NO. 67536

REG. PRICE \$379.99

SAVE \$200

\$179.99

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SUPER COUPON!

WINDSOR DESIGN

EIGHT DRAWER WOOD TOOL CHEST

LOT NO. 94538

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SAVE \$40

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

MULTIFUNCTION POWER TOOL

8 Functions: Sanding, Remove Grout, Cut Metal, Cut Flooring, Cut Plastic, Plunge Cut, Scrape Concrete, Scrape Flooring

Item 68861 shown

LOT NO. 68861 68303 60428

REG. PRICE \$49.99

SAVE 70%

\$14.99

22812838

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SUPER COUPON!

HAULMASTER

MOVER'S DOLLY

• 1000 lb. Capacity

Item 93888 shown

LOT NO. 93888/60497 61899

REG. PRICE \$14.99

SAVE 46%

\$7.99

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SUPER COUPON!

HaulMaster

500 LB. CAPACITY ALUMINUM CARGO CARRIER

Item 92655 shown

LOT NO. 92655 69688/60771

REG. PRICE \$129.99

SAVE \$60

\$69.99

70308885

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SUPER COUPON!

THUNDERBOLT solar

45 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT

Item 60609 shown

LOT NO. 60609/60751

REG. PRICE \$259.99

SAVE \$115

\$144.99

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRAL MACHINERY

350 LB. CAPACITY FOLDING SAW HORSE

Item 69446 shown

LOT NO. 69446 46762/60710/61979

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SAVE 37%

\$9.99

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SUPER COUPON!

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2.4" COLOR LCD DIGITAL INSPECTION CAMERA

Item 67979 shown

LOT NO. 67979/61839

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SAVE \$60

\$69.99

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EVEREAD WELDING

MIG-FLUX WELDING CART

Welder and accessories sold separately

Item 69340 shown

LOT NO. 69340/60790 90305/61316

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SAVE 45%

\$32.99

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SUPER COUPON!

PITTSBURGH

9 PIECE FULLY POLISHED COMBINATION WRENCH SETS

Item 42304 shown

LOT NO. 42304/69043

REG. PRICE \$14.99

SAVE 60%

\$5.99

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

ELECTRIC CHAIN SAW SHARPENER

4-1/4" grinding wheel included

Item 68221 shown

LOT NO. 68221/61613/93213

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SAVE 40%

\$29.99

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

1.5 HP, 7" BRIDGE TILE SAW

Item 98265 shown

LOT NO. 98265

REG. PRICE \$229.99

SAVE \$70

\$159.99

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRAL MACHINERY

2.5 HP 12" PLANER

LOT NO. 95082

REG. PRICE \$299.99

SAVE \$80

\$219.99

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SUPER COUPON!

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7 FT. 4" x 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE WEATHER RESISTANT TARP

Item 877 shown

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SAVE 66%

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SUPER COUPON!

HaulMaster

1000 LB. CAPACITY SWING-BACK TRAILER JACK

Item 41005 shown

LOT NO. 41005/69780

REG. PRICE \$39.99

SAVE 50%

\$19.99

11698661

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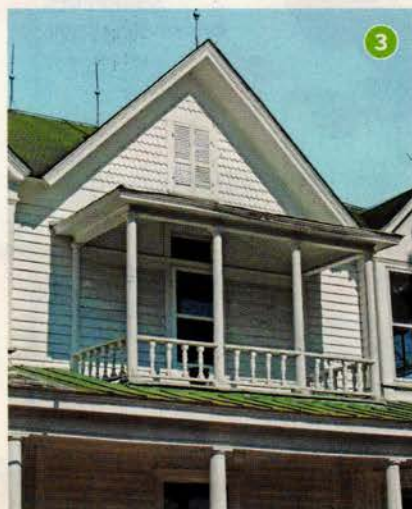
LOCATION Grimesland, North Carolina

CONTACT Claudia Deviney,
252-482-7455

THE HISTORY After a fire destroyed the longtime home of tobacco baron Joseph John Laughinghouse in 1903, he and his wife, Eliza, decided to sell their 1,000-acre plantation. The land, which had been in Joseph's family for more than 100 years, contained some of the finest tobacco-growing soil around. Brothers Clarence and William Faucette, tobaccoists by trade, bought the parcel for \$20,000 and had so much success farming it that William was able to buy out Clarence's share and pay off the bank in only seven years. Around 1910, William built this grand farmhouse on the site of the original house, and he lived there with his wife and daughter, both named Louise. The house stayed in the family until 2011, when the owner of an adjacent property bought the estate for the land. He is now offering the house to anyone willing to move it.

WHY SAVE IT? The wood clapboard house retains late-Victorian details, including multiple window bays, two patterned brick chimneys, and a 1,086-square-foot porch. Eight mantels and fluted casings around each of the 27 windows are among the elaborate features inside.

WHAT IT NEEDS Aside from lacking a permanent plot, the house is in reasonable shape. The kitchen and baths are in working order but should be updated, along with the systems, after the house is moved. Grimesland, 12 miles from Greenville, is a town of fewer than 500 people. Nearby lots start around \$20,000—or, for \$1.5 million, you can buy an 88-acre parcel down the road and farm an estate all your own. —PAUL HOPE



1] The 4,363-square-foot house has six bedrooms and two-and-a-half bathrooms. It retains original exterior details, such as Doric columns and the center gable's fish-scale shingles. **2]** The staircase has an elaborate balustrade and sunburst-patterned stair scrolls. **3]** A balcony is tucked under the center gable. **4]** French doors fitted with transoms draw light into the dining room.



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AN OLD HOUSE?**

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