

« THE FALL COLOR ISSUE »

This Old House

**Brighten
your home!**

Our favorite
paint hues begin
on p.27

50 Color Makeovers Under \$100

24 revved-up
rooms

13 furniture
redos

7 curb-appeal
ideas

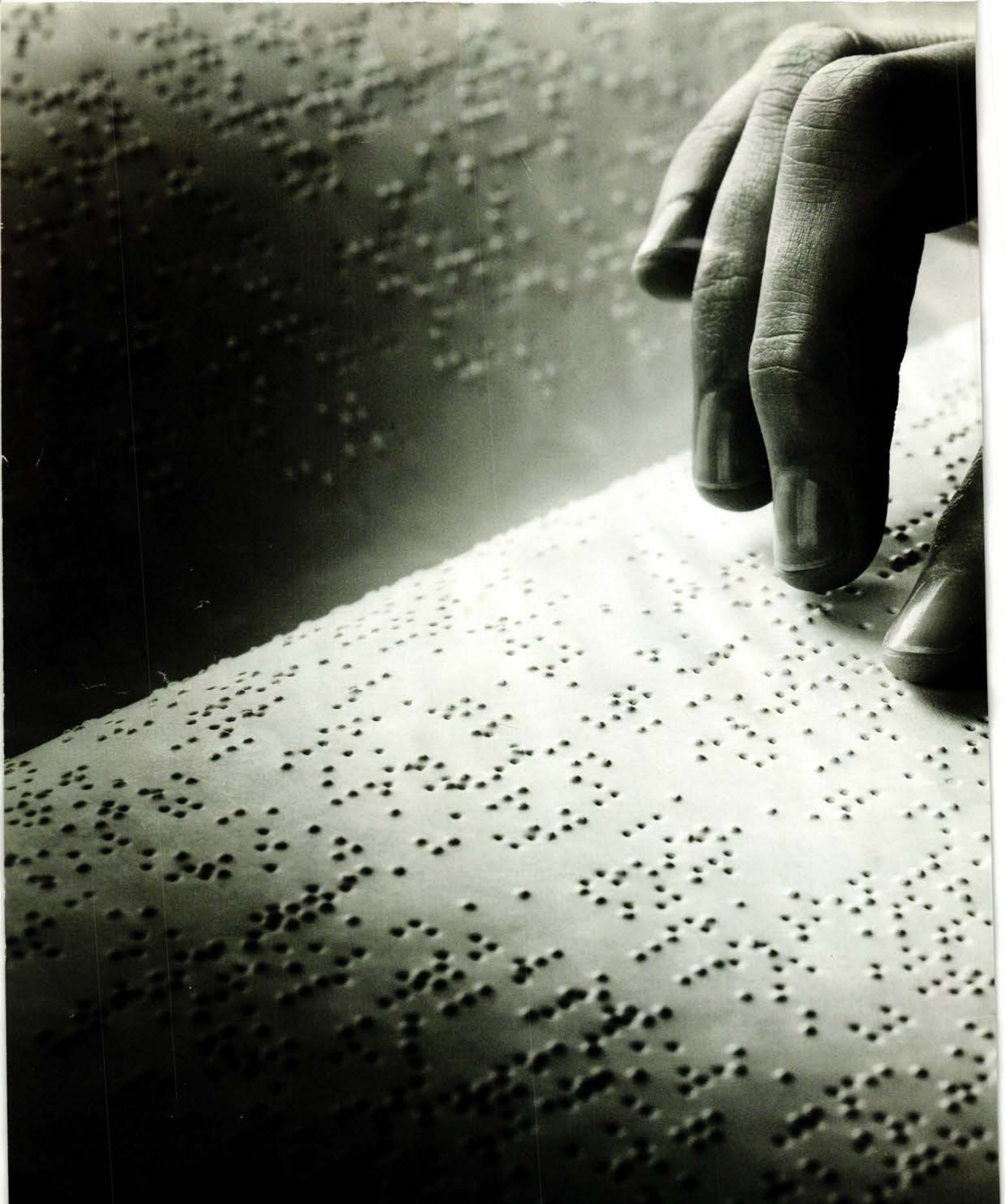
6 fantastic
floors

QUICK DIY:
Make a
\$35 cabinet
look like a
million

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**TRICKS TO
MAKE PAINT
CLEANUP
EASIER**

p.20



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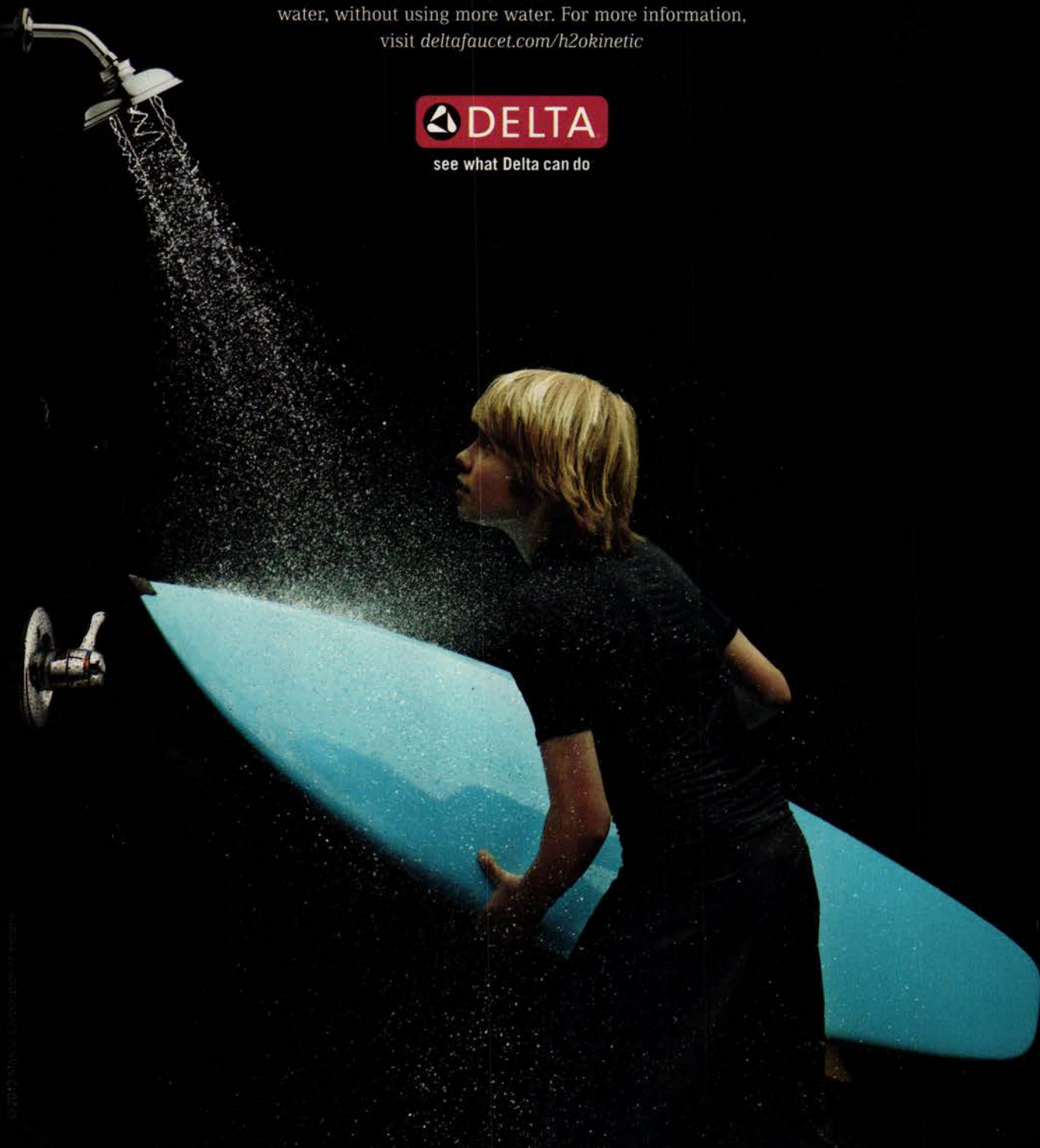
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COLOR!
50 BOOSTS
UNDER \$100

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Cover Photograph by
DEBORAH WHITLAW LLEWELLYN
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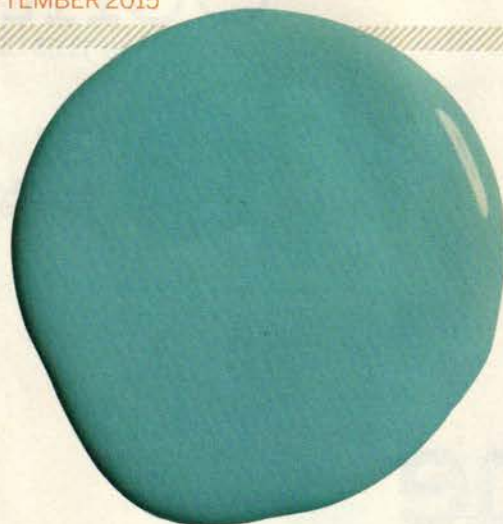
THIS OLD HOUSE SEPTEMBER 2015



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SEPTEMBER 2015



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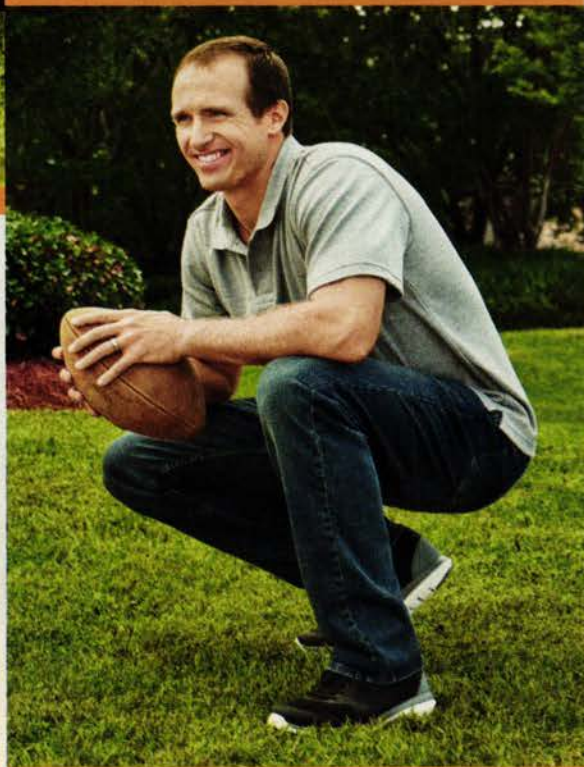


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Birds of a feather

“I’m calling for your expertise...”

I was about to go to bed and had let the answering machine pick up, but grabbed the phone when I sensed the urgency in my father-in-law’s voice.

“Hi, Poppy, what’s going on?”

“How do I get a bird out of the house?”

It was a problem he hadn’t faced before, having not too long ago bought a country place after a lifetime of city dwelling. I suggested he open the sliding doors, turn the outside lights on, the inside lights off, and hope the little feathered visitor—now swooping about the room in a panic—would move toward the great egress.

I gave him a 50-50 chance of survival.

I was less sure about the bird. “Let me know how it works,” I said before shuffling off to bed, flicking my own outside light off as I went.

I had to flip my light’s switch because I never figured out how to program its digital brain, which adjusts its on/off cycle based on sunrise and sunset at my latitude. It’s smarter than I am.

Which shouldn’t surprise you if you’ve read Letter From This Old House before. I tend to be, uh, incomplete when it comes to making it work around the house. Somehow I manage to overlook the little things when they give me a hassle. Electrical hookups? Obviously not my strong suit. That faulty crank on my kitchen casement window? I can always go out on the deck to push the window closed. The doorknob to the basement entry I broke trying to fix? For now the dead bolt secures things just fine.

Painting, on the other hand, I get. I’m good at it. Chalk it up to a youth spent as an art student. On the *other* other hand, the color bit of painting is harder, and I’m not nearly as good at it as this issue of *TOH*, which was put together by deputy editor Kathryn Keller and our team of savvy editors, writers, and art directors. By my count they compiled hundreds of colorful inspirations between these covers. Something for everyone. In fact, if you can’t find some inspiration for your next project, well, I’m not sure you’re alive.

Speaking of which, both the bird and my father-in-law survived their ordeal that night. I know because when I woke up the next morning and came downstairs to the beeping answering machine, I heard this message: “I am no longer calling for your expertise,” my father-in-law said. “But if you have a number for animal control, let me know. Leaving the door open was great at getting the bird out. Also great at letting a raccoon in. Bye.”

SCOTT OMELIANUK

SCOTT OMELIANUK, EDITOR
scott@thisoldhouse.com



The editor, in search of color inspiration.

Got your own tale of woe?

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Reader mail



OUR SECOND ANNUAL *All-American issue* generated lots of buzz. Readers praised the special features, from boomer nostalgia to longtime U.S. companies to an urban comeback—though a few missed their favorite, the Q + A. And lots of you told us of a different reason for a blue porch ceiling.

All-American issue

I have been a subscriber to *This Old House* for many years and always enjoy the decorating, painting, remodeling, and other articles, but I have to say that the July 2015 issue is a standout. I truly enjoyed all the diverse articles you packed into this one. "Out of the Attic" was wonderful and brought back many memories. Thank you so much for such a great magazine.

—BILLIE SHERBOCKER, NEW CUMBERLAND, PA.

Homegrown visionaries

In reading the July 2015 issue I was intrigued by the Ask This Old House section about the oldest U.S. companies that make products for the home. Great to see how individuals can change the world we live and work in. I also enjoyed the story about the Cincinnati revival of a downtown area. Never underestimate the ability of visionaries to bring back vitality to a dead area. Well done, TOH!

—GLENDA SMITH, DEKALB, ILL.

We want our "Ask"

The July 2015 Ask This Old House was disappointing. Instead of the usual questions and answers that help many people learn many things house-related, we were given a list of companies. Perhaps next time you could put it in the form of a feature article instead of replacing a great regular column.

—TRACY WINDT, BY E-MAIL

Gripping gifts

I loved your article on 10 uses for C-clamps [Home Solutions, July 2015]. I never know what to get my dad for a gift. I am going to buy him a variety of C-clamps and give them to him with a photocopy of your article. It's never too early to start my Christmas shopping!

—FRANCINE MENKO, KULPMONT, PA.

Porch ceilings

You missed one great point of having your porch ceiling painted blue [Home Solutions, July 2015]: It's said to deter bugs. Our antebellum home has a wonderful rain porch. We painted the ceiling with Atmospheric, a blue by Sherwin-Williams, 10 years ago, and it still looks great. Why? Spiders and wasps don't build on the ceiling. I was a little skeptical too, but it really works! Thank you for a great publication.

—KATHERINE L. BROWN, CAMDEN, S.C.

EDITORS' NOTE: *While anecdotes may seem to support this paint idea, there's no empirical evidence for its effectiveness. The folklore is fun, though, so go with what pleases you. (Scares off haints, too!) Missed the July issue? Get the tablet edition at thisoldhouse.com/allaccess.*

Correction:

→ In "Carefree Cottage" (August 2015), the stylist credited should have been Sunday Hendrickson. Our apologies for the error.

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- ✓ Plastic
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Checklist

SEPTEMBER 2015

*Easy ways to
improve your home
right now*

6 FAST FIXES

☐ **Clean the vent hood:** Wipe down the interior and exterior with a nonabrasive household degreaser. Prewash the filter before running it through the dishwasher on the top rack.



☐ **Get deals on lawn equipment:** Take note of outdoor gear that may need to be replaced, since yard tools and mowers will be on sale by Labor Day weekend.

☐ **Refresh window boxes:** Give them a pick-me-up with cold-hardy plantings, such as ornamental kale, that will provide color well into fall.

☐ **Service smoke alarms:** Clear dust from the smoke-sensing chamber using a vacuum's soft brush or compressed air, then test after reinstalling.

☐ **Wash away pollen:** Hosing off outdoor surfaces will help keep allergens from traveling indoors. Toss cushions in the washer or, if they're too delicate, use dish soap and water to hand-wash.

☐ **Drain the water heater:** Turn equipment off, then force out sediment using a pump and a garden hose until the water runs clear.

☒ Gear up garages

In honor of National Clean Out Your Garage Day, on September 12, give your car some room to breathe by donating or tossing items that haven't been used in a year or more; you should be able to walk around your vehicle without touching it. Organize what's left by category, with an eye toward vertical storage. Pegboards and hooks can hold heavy items, such as hoses, and shallow shelving can stow the smaller stuff.



TOH TIP

☐ Replace rotted wood siding

Once summer's humidity yields to drier days, fix any decaying clapboards. Remove the old boards with hand tools—vibrations from power tools can damage surrounding wood—and use one as a template to size replacements. Install new boards with 2¼- or 2½-inch stainless-steel siding nails with ring shanks, which prevent the nails from popping out.



☐ Fertilize your lawn

Hot summer months can force your turf into dormancy, but September, with its cooler weather, is the right time to revive growth with nitrogen-rich fertilizer; look for a 20-8-8 formula. Follow up in six to eight weeks with a phosphorus-rich 13-25-12 fertilizer to stimulate root growth before winter.

☐ Revitalize exterior lights

Shorter days and longer nights are within view, so now's a good time to give exterior lights a little love. First, spray any rusted areas with WD-40, then scrub with a heavy-



duty scouring pad. Tape off the glass and give the frame a fresh coat of rust-inhibiting spray paint. If you prefer an unpainted look, protect it with a UV-resistant clear coat.



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home solutions

Edited by Michelle Brunner

INSIDE

10 USES

LANDSCAPING

EASY PROJECT

PAINTING SHORTCUTS

MORE



Blue paint unifies the mantel and the upholstery. We used Olympic's Blue Tang.

Salvaged-mantel headboard

With its clean lines, a simple Federal-style mantel is a serious flea-market score—whether or not you have a firebox to surround. It finds new life here as an elegant headboard. The first step in its rehab: Strip the peeling paint. We used an eco-friendly gel stripper and hit the bare wood with an orbital sander before priming and painting. For the opening, we made an upholstered piece by tacking 1×4s around the perimeter of a piece of plywood. Two-inch-thick foam rests in the center. We covered it with a layer of batting, followed by fabric. Brass nailhead trim lends a finishing touch. Deck screws attach it to the mantel. Gives curling up in front of the fireplace a whole new meaning.

Nate Berkus's Jatte pattern, \$19 per yard; Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores. Genuine nail strips, \$12; rockler.com



BEFORE

10
USES

Canvas drop cloths

These paint-prep helpers can do more than save your floor from spatter. Read on for new ways to use them

1 > Make a tablecloth.

Dress up a table on the cheap by using a new cotton drop cloth cut to fit. Finish the edges with no-sew hemming tape, and stencil on a design.



1

2 > Collect leaves.

Spread out a drop cloth on the grass to catch leaves while raking. When you're done, fold it in half to easily funnel the leaves into a big bag.

3 > Stay safe during demo. During the demolition phase of a reno, throw a drop cloth over mirrors, tile, or any material you plan to smash that could send

dust or hazardous shards into the air.

4 > Prevent floor scratches. Slip a drop cloth under furniture or appliances when moving them around the house to protect floors from unsightly nicks and scratches.

5 > Make a movie screen.

Let a large clean drop cloth stand in for a sheet or blackout fabric when projecting a movie outdoors. Staple the ends of the cloth to 2x4s planted in buckets of sand or gravel.



4

6 > Pet-proof car seats.

Keep a canvas drop cloth in the trunk of the car and use it to save seats from pet hair or muddy paws when traveling with furry friends.

7 > Cover firewood.

No tarp? Use a drop cloth to protect firewood from the elements. Just hit the canvas with waterproofing spray before putting it outside.

8 > Line a wicker catchall.

For a washable basket liner, cut two pieces of canvas drop cloth to



10

size and lay in a basket crisscrossed so that the fabric hangs over the edges by about 2 inches.

9 > Transport shrubs.

When uprooting a large shrub to move it to a new location, wrap the base with a canvas drop cloth to keep it intact before replanting.

place by cutting a piece of drop cloth slightly smaller than the rug. Run thin wavy lines of silicone caulk across it to add traction. Let dry and place it caulk-side down on the floor, under the rug.

—KATELIN HILL

10 > Make a nonslip rug pad.

Keep an area rug in

MORE 10 USES

To find more smart uses for leftovers, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015



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File-cabinet makeovers

Boxy and utilitarian, this home-office staple isn't exactly winning any style awards. Get inspired to give yours a new look with three projects by bloggers who transformed theirs with a few bucks and a dose of creativity. —K.H.

> Wood-grain look

Give a plain cabinet a fun faux-bois update: Remove the hardware and lightly sand the piece. Coat with a metal-primer-and-paint combo. Use a metallic-paint pen to draw a wood-grain design freehand before reattaching the hardware.

Shown: Rust-Oleum Painter's Touch 2x Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Coral, \$3.98; homedepot.com. Sharpie Paint Marker in Silver, \$8.89 for a two-pack; staples.com



frenchknotstudios.wordpress.com

> Chalkboard finish

Turn the surface of your cabinet into an oversize memo board. Prime first, then apply white paint around the edges of the cabinet and drawers. When dry, mask off the border with painter's tape. Brush or roll on several coats of chalkboard paint. Remove the tape and reinstall the hardware.

Shown: Rust-Oleum Chalkboard Paint, \$10; homedepot.com



designimprovised.com

> Decoupaged maps

For a well-traveled look, paint the cabinet, then brush a light coat of Mod Podge directly onto the drawer fronts. Carefully apply a map section, smoothing out air bubbles with a plastic scraper. Seal with peel-and-stick laminate sheets, if desired.

Shown: Regional map, \$6.99; barnesandnoble.com. Rust-Oleum Painter's Touch 2x Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Seaside, \$3.87; homedepot.com



quarddecor.com



Gunk-free gutters

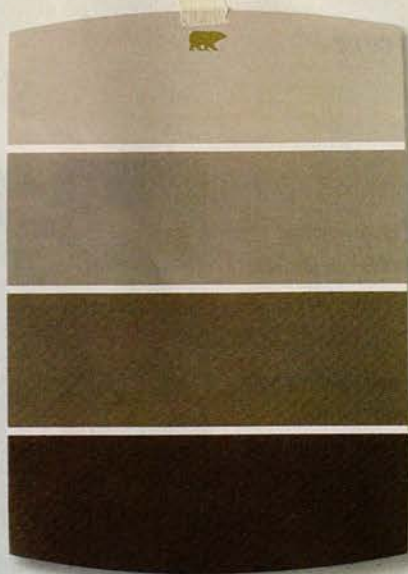
Fall foliage is glorious on trees, but in your gutters, not so much. Tackle debris buildup with these tips. If climbing a ladder, be sure to use a stabilizer bar for safety and to prevent damaging the gutters. —SAL VAGLICA

START IN THE CORNERS Use a gloved hand to clear debris from tight spots, such as corners and downspouts. Toss debris in a bucket instead of onto the ground, where it can become a slipping hazard. The LadderLimb (\$20; ladderlimbus.com) slides into any hollow rung, keeping your bucket in place.

CLEAR STRAIGHT RUNS A DIY plastic scoop is an easy, inexpensive tool for removing leaves. Peel the label off a quart-size plastic milk jug or a 20-ounce soda bottle. Use a utility knife to slice off the bottom at an angle to make the scoop.

FREE CONNECTIONS Usually, two elbows join the gutter to the downspout—a perfect place for clogs. A blast of water from a garden hose is often enough to clear them. For stubborn blockages, try a hand-crank plumber's snake, then use the hose to flush out the downspout.

CONSIDER A GUARD Fine-weave mesh covers like the Gutterglove Pro (about \$9 per linear foot; gutterglove.com) let water pass through while keeping debris out.



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More saving.
More doing.

Colorful fall blooms

By summer's end, a garden's vibrancy is on the wane. Horticultural expert Thomas Christopher gives his picks for perennials to plant now for rich hues into autumn. —s.v.

1 > Helen's flower (*Helenium autumnale*)

Blooming from early summer into fall on straight stems, Helen's flower is irresistible to bees and butterflies. The cultivar 'Salsa' (shown) has a chocolatey center and bright-red daisy-like petals around a ring of orange. This cultivar grows up to 20 inches high and 24 inches wide. Full sun; Zones 3–9

2 > Sweet Autumn clematis (*Clematis paniculata*)

While this species of vine features tiny white blooms, the new cultivar 'Sweet Summer Love' (shown) has fragrant dark-purple flowers from midsummer to early fall. Plant on a trellis or an arbor to give the vine space and it can fill up with over 2,000 flowers in a season. This one grows up to 12 feet high. Full sun to partial shade; Zones 4–9

3 > Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*)

Its blue and amethyst flowers and silvery-green foliage start in midsummer and last through midfall with little water or upkeep. The habit of 'Denim 'n Lace' (shown) is perkier than those of other Russian sages, making it a nice fit behind shorter plants in a border. This sage grows up to 32 inches high and wide. Full sun; Zones 4–9

4 > Japanese anemone (*Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica*)

These blooms last until the first frost, and the long stems look great lining walkways. 'Pamina' (shown) will spread dozens of semi-double rose-pink blossoms with yellow centers when planted in moist soil, and it grows up to 28 inches high. Partial shade; Zones 5–8



A polyurethane finish is no match for Fido's nails.

Fast fixes for floor scratches

Between footwear, pets, and furniture, wood floors can take a beating. Minimize the signs of wear and tear with these easy repairs. —MEGAN BAKER

THE PROBLEM:

High-heel dent

THE FIX: If the heel left an impression without breaking the surface, you can steam it out. Fold a damp dish towel into quarters and lay it over the dent. Set a hot iron on the towel and turn on the STEAM function. After about a minute, check your progress. The steam should cause the wood to swell and even out the dented portion. If necessary, sand smooth and refinish to match the surrounding area. Warning: Steam can turn

some floor finishes white, so test this method on a hidden part of the floor first.

THE PROBLEM:

Doggie nail marks

THE FIX: For shallow pet scratches, rub a small amount of tinted paste wax directly into the spot with a clean, soft rag. Let the wax dry, then buff the scratch and the surrounding area so that they blend seamlessly. If your floors have a darker stain, use a paste wax formulated for dark woods, such as walnut.

THE PROBLEM:

Dragged-credenza gouge

THE FIX: For a deep scratch that reveals bare wood, use fine-grit paper, working with the grain, to sand the scratch. Rub mineral spirits over the sanded area to pick up any fine dust. Using a plastic putty knife, fill the scratch with stainable wood filler. When dry, carefully sand away the excess with fine-grit paper. Stain to match your floors, then reseal the spot with polyurethane.

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← A coat of paint makes the kraft paper stand out. We used Dutch Boy's Pixley Falls

DIY to-do list

Come September, it's time to say good-bye to the less structured days of summer. Here's one way to stay organized when the kids go back to school: **a wall-mounted shopping list**. We made ours by topping a piece of ½-inch plywood with chair-rail molding, which we finished with decorative ends using a coping saw. A roll of kraft paper spins on a wood dowel, held by a pair of hooks and finished with ornamental knobs. An old hacksaw blade ensures a nice, clean tear. Place it by the door so that you can just write, rip, and go. Call it a noteworthy way to keep track of your to-dos. —M. BRUNNER

SEE HOW IT'S DONE
For the step-by-step and a how-to video, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015



Time-saving paint tips

Between spatter, drips, and spills, painting can be a messy job. Make quick work of cleanup with off-label uses for staples you may already have on hand. —KATHRYN O'SHEA EVANS

DISH DETERGENT To speed the release of latex paint from a brush, work dishwashing liquid deep into the bristles. Lather up—then rinse.

CHAPSTICK Apply the moisturizing lip balm along the edges of glass windowpanes using a cotton swab, and any errant paint will easily wipe off with glass cleaner and a rag.

COOKING SPRAY Mist olive or canola oil on your forearms and the backs of your hands before you paint so that droplets falling off a roller won't stick to your skin.

VASELINE Swipe petroleum jelly onto hinges and handles to protect metal surfaces from paint spatter.

SWIFFER SWEEPER This microfiber-duster mainstay is made for floors, but it also works wonders as a tack cloth on sanded walls, thanks to its 360° swivel, which captures dust in hard-to-reach corners.

SPIC AND SPAN The all-purpose cleanser has been leaving floors spotless since 1933, but it will do the same for your walls before you paint. Time-saving bonus: It requires no rinsing.

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tide.com/he



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Wonderfully weathered

Give wood furniture the look of a timeworn treasure with easy techniques using latex paint, stain, and other home-center staples. Here, Barb Blair, author of *Furniture Makeovers* (Chronicle Books, 2013), shows three easy ways to get aged patina.

—MICHELLE BRUNNER

One-color distressing

For a unique take on colorblocking, Blair painted the top of this table, leaving the lower half of the legs as is. To create wear around the edges, she used a fine-grit sanding sponge.

1. Apply color First, tape off the legs where you want your line to be. With a nylon brush or a foam roller, apply two coats of latex paint above the tape line and remove the tape immediately.

2. Distress—selectively Use a fine-grit sanding sponge on the corners and in other spots that would naturally see signs of wear, then wipe down to remove the dust.

3. Finish with a sealer Brush on two to three coats of water-based polyurethane for shine and protection.



Antiquing with stain

Easier to work with than glaze, says Blair, wood stain can be used to give a painted piece depth and to simulate shellac darkened from age. Note: It will take three to four days to dry and stop feeling tacky to the touch.

1. Brush on stain Start with furniture that has been painted—Blair used latex for this piece—and sanded. Wearing gloves, brush on the stain, working in small, manageable sections. Let stand for 2 to 3 minutes.

2. Blend with a rag Wipe away stain in the direction of the grain, not in a circular motion. If you applied stain with a heavy hand, go back and blend. Let stain collect in carved details to add richness and dimension.



Dry-brush painting

This technique works well with light-colored paint, such as this table's pale gray, since the almost-sheer effect is reminiscent of lime-washed or pickled wood.

1. Lay on color—lightly With a synthetic-bristle brush, dip only the very tips of the bristles into the paint. Blot excess paint on a towel. Work back and forth in quick, broad strokes. Paint with the grain of the wood and use a light touch. If the brush is getting paint-heavy, rinse it in water.

2. Sand and finish When the piece is dry, lightly sand with a fine-grit sanding sponge. Wipe away any dust, and finish with clear wax or polyurethane.



A colorful kitchen for \$558

A lackluster kitchen gets a vibrant new look with updated countertops and a backsplash, plus bright blue paint



BEFORE

BEFORE Despite a few upgrades, the space still felt dark and dingy.

AFTER By opting for tiled counters—and learning how to install them herself—homeowner Timisha Porcher saved hundreds of dollars. Fresh paint brightens up the space and makes it flow better with the rest of the house.



THE PROJECT TALLY

Painted the walls and ceilings with paint she had on hand, and chose a lively shade of blue for the cabinetry.....**\$35**

Purchased white-and-gray marble tiles for the countertops, along with the supplies to install them.....**\$343**

Scored sheets of mosaic tile on sale for the backsplash, patched the wall, and installed it herself.....**\$160**

Added new pulls to the cabinets.....**\$20**

TOTAL.....\$558

SOMETIMES IT TAKES a few tries before a DIYer's vision comes together. Just ask Timisha Porcher, who dreamed of adding color and personality to the outdated cook space in her Laurel, Maryland, home. To make her dream a reality, she had to deconstruct some of her previous updates that hadn't panned out—removing the trim she had installed on the cabinet doors and stripping the faux-granite contact paper on the laminate countertops. After taking a tiling class at the local community college, she decided to tackle the counters and backsplash herself. She removed the old

backsplash and patched the wall. Starting with the counters, she laid down large pieces of marble tile, then added a mosaic backsplash of glass, stone, and stainless steel for a bit of texture and shine. Next, she sanded down the cabinets and painted them a cheerful shade of blue, and gave the walls and ceiling a fresh coat. New hardware finishes off the cabinets. Now, says Timisha, who blogs about her DIY endeavors at toolboxdivas.com, she no longer loses her appetite when she walks into the kitchen. The best part? "I feel such a sense of accomplishment knowing I did it myself!" —KATELIN HILL



HARBOR
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Character study

The owners of a 1940s cottage blend past and present to get modern function with vintage charm

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEBORAH WHITLAW LLEWELLYN



BEFORE

BEFORE The bare-bones kitchen was short on space—and style.

AFTER Walls came down to create a larger, more inviting cook space. Salvaged materials like the sink, faucet, beadboard, and porch posts give it true vintage flavor.

→ **A COTTAGE KITCHEN** should be as comfortable as old khakis, and in this rebuilt space, salvaged materials do the job. “It surrounds me with comfort and warmth,” says Janice Lee, whose husband, Jim, used castoffs to remake the cook space in their 852-square-foot house, on St. Simons Island, Georgia. With the help of plumbing contractor Billy Baker, the couple took the 1940s tract house down to the studs and demolished two walls to create a larger kitchen in an open plan. Jim built most of the cabinets and the

island, pantry, range hood, and countertops with wood rescued from an old hardware store, a former theater, a barn, and a century-old kit house he helped cannibalize for parts. The couple’s prized 1930s cast-iron sink came from an island resident who bartered for a stainless-steel undermount, and the 1910 faucet from a collection Baker keeps under his bed. He says he didn’t mind having to fiddle with a century-old fitting. “Why go and buy something new,” he asks, “when you can make something old beautiful again?”

The fridge hides behind beadboard fronts. Ceiling-height cabinets with textured-glass panels give it a built-in look. Refrigerator: Dacor



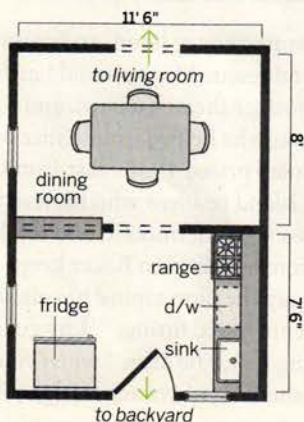
Homeowners Jim and Janice Lee gather at an island Jim made out of an old table, salvaged porch posts, and a granite remnant that had to be cut to fit—yielding scraps he put to creative use elsewhere.

SALVAGE STYLE

Check out another kitchen filled with secondhand finds at thisoldhouse.com/sep2015

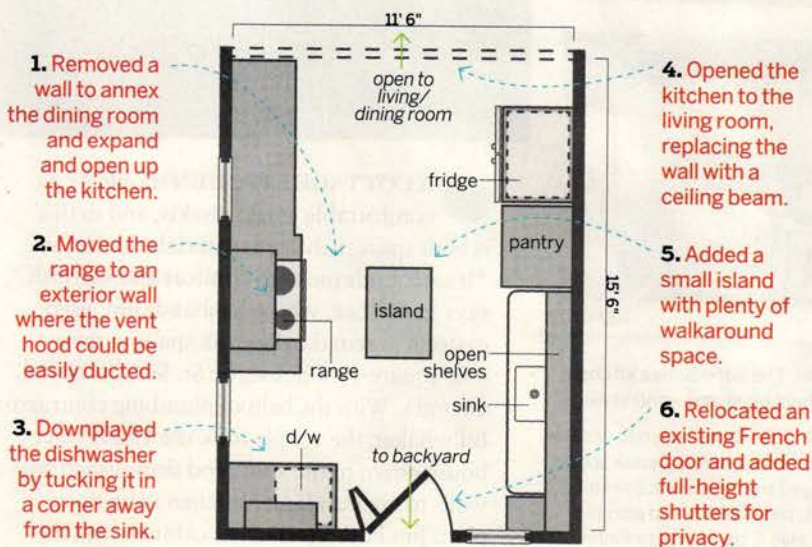
before

At just 86 square feet, the existing kitchen was cramped.



after

Two walls came out, adding 92 square feet to the kitchen and allowing a new layout with ample cooking space for two.





homeowner tip

JANICE LEE, ST. SIMONS
ISLAND, GA.

“We salvaged materials through our plumber, who knew of houses that were being renovated or torn down.”

Open shelves replace upper cabinets on the sink wall, allowing light to flow from the adjacent window. Cupboards with push-latch doors were built in place under the sink.



Decorative porch posts under the wall-hung sink suggest freestanding furniture. Jim made the trash-bin pullout, with a cubby for bags, using reclaimed tongue-and-groove boards and a home-center screen-door pull.



A granite remnant meets a chunk of salvaged butcher block over a vintage “jelly cabinet” found at a roadside sale. The pulls came from an old chest.



Jim made the range hood with reclaimed paneling and barn wood, and used paint and glaze to “age” the faux-tin backsplash tile. The table lamp, a family heirloom, adds charm while casting a glow during evening meals at a table nearby.
Range: GE

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Varathane



From plain to period-perfect

A healthy dose of Craftsman detail and a cheerful color palette give a new back porch front-and-center personality

BY JILL CONNORS • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX HAYDEN



BEFORE A rear addition gave no hint of the Craftsman style of the original house.

AFTER A three-color palette brings the porch's details to life. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Thicket (siding), Citrine (trim), Schooner (brackets). Roof: CertainTeed

EVEN IF THE BACK of a house plays second fiddle to the front, it shouldn't be a total afterthought. At Margot Clemmens and Al Sutherland's 1912 Craftsman, in Bellingham, Washington, a blunt 1940s back addition held a small office, a tiny mudroom, a makeshift laundry-bath space, and a back door sadly lacking shelter from the rain. So when it came time to replace the house's asbestos siding, the couple seized the chance to widen the scope of improvements, turning to local design-build team Cindi Landreth and Rick Dubrow. The idea of a back porch that mimicked the much-loved one in front—then

the couple's primary hangout—soon emerged as a crowning touch to a reworking of the back rooms and a welcome perch for unwinding with family and friends. Running the full width of the house, the new outdoor room is just 8 feet deep, to preserve 17 feet of usable backyard, and repeats many of the Craftsman details of the front porch, including knee brackets, square columns, and a triangular arch. A beefy cap on the railing lets it double as seating, and the three-color scheme makes the details pop. "Before, the back was just a way to get into the house," says Margot. "Now we love spending time out there."

• before + after: **back porch**

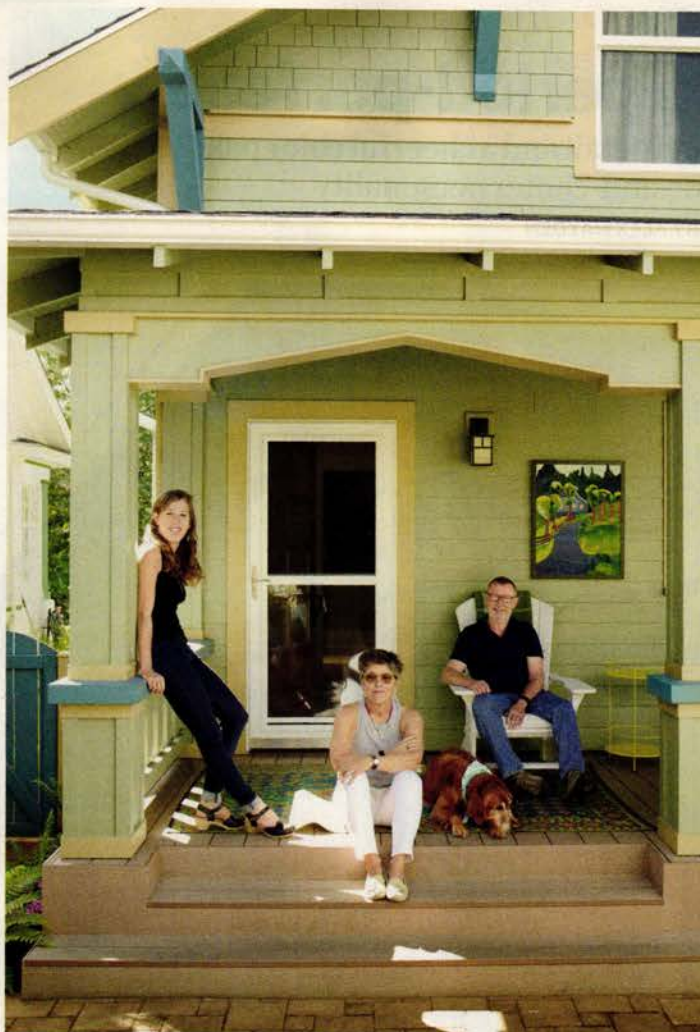
SCHOONER
Benjamin Moore



CITRINE
Benjamin Moore



THICKET
Benjamin Moore



The arch, a smaller version of one on the front porch, frames the back entry. Homeowners Margot Clemmens and Al Sutherland relax with daughter Cassandra and dog Millie. Door: Rogue Valley Door

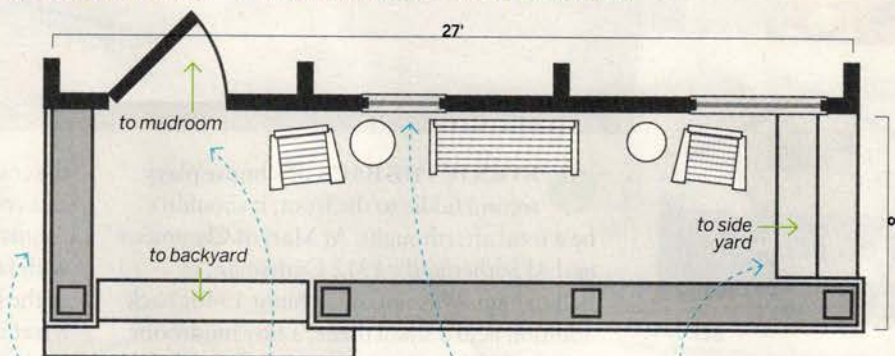
A 4-by-12-inch laminated beam with chamfered edges sits 2 feet off the porch floor, preserving an open sight line of the yard and serving as both drinks counter and seating. Beam: U.S. Glu-Lam



Exposed rafters suit the Craftsman style and provide a loftier feeling overhead. Rot-resistant composite decking and fiber-cement siding minimize upkeep. Decking: TimberTech. Siding: HardiePlank and HardieShingle

after

The back porch adds an outdoor hangout and 216 square feet of entertaining space—even when the forecast is for rain.



1. Reduced the backyard by a third to accommodate an 8-foot-deep porch with seating all around.

2. Kept the entry largely where it was, leading to the rebuilt mudroom and kitchen, so it's easy to stage a porch party.

3. Replaced two mismatched windows with a small one for the new bath when the stairs and laundry room were relocated.

4. Added a second set of porch steps to speed access to the exterior basement stairs around the corner.

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Two-tone treatment

Elevate your walls with a dramatic colorblocked look

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN

➔ A SCHOOL HALLWAY may seem like a strange place to find inspiration, but for those with an eye, every space has a lesson. Stylist Matthew Mead recalls liking the way one color went three-quarters of the way up the wall at his middle school, an idea he borrowed when he painted the open kitchen-and-dining area at his home, in Concord, New Hampshire. “The lower open shelf was a natural dividing line,” he says, and the colorblocks “make the two areas feel complete and connected.” Mead chose a favorite blue vase as a starting point for his palette, then played with oversize paint chips to get a combination he liked. After measuring and taping off the walls and—to really dramatize the scheme—part of a freestanding cabinet, he used interior latex in a satin finish and a paint sprayer with two bowls, which can be swapped out to save having to clean and refill one. “Using a sprayer calls for more preparation because you have to protect other surfaces,” he says. “But the smooth, continuous motion can be almost Zen-like.” The fine mist can cover evenly in one coat, he adds, but even if you do two, “it dries fast, and in one day, you’re done.” ■

A paint sprayer can speed up the job—once the floor and other surfaces have been draped and taped.

Sprayer: Wagner Flexio 890



Strategic use of white keeps the focus on the green-and-blue scheme.

Colorful colonial library

Re-create this storybook reading room with vivid colors, DIY details, and period-inspired accents

BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS • PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRIDLEY + GRAVES

➔ **FOR BIBLIOPHILES**, little is more intoxicating than a jewel box of a library filled floor to ceiling with books. Take this colonial era-inspired room, which husband-and-wife photography duo Gary Graves and Anne Gridley put together in their Pennsylvania farmhouse and peppered with curiosities. "This is our retreat from all things digital," Anne says. The hand-built green bookcases serve as an accent wall of sorts, putting the focus on the couple's collection of photography tomes. A gallery of images, many in clash-resistant black and white, provide visual interest; a fanback Windsor chair and a hutch table add to the colonial style.

For ways to create a similar room of your own, read on.

bold tones

Bookcases in Benjamin Moore's Kelly Green and a door in The Real Milk Paint Company's Blue Lagoon pop against Behr's Slate Gray floors. From \$40 per gallon; benjamin-moore.com. \$22 per quart; reallmilkpaint.com. From \$33 per gallon; behr.com

stereopticon

This precursor to the View-Master was invented in the 19th century; we bought this handheld one—complete with a set of reproduction cards—on eBay for \$23.

candleholder

Hurricane shades keep flames from flickering—and add to the old-timey mood. Shade, \$11; save-on-crafts.com. Snuffer and holder, \$14 and \$18; williamsburgmarketplace.com

A DOGGONE GOOD IDEA

A pet like the homeowners' corgi, seen at right, can add color and joy to a home. To adopt from a shelter near you, visit petfinder.com

PHOTOS: (STEREOPTICON, CANDLEHOLDER, ANTLERS, ART, BOOKCASE) ANDREW MCCALL; (PAINT) DABS; (HUTCH TABLE) TOUCHOFLIFE4



get this look for less

library light

Inspired by industrial models, this sturdy number is about twice the size of the homeowners' and casts a wider glow. \$38; homedepot.com



mounted antlers

Hand-painted in metallic bronze, this trio of resin antlers evokes a centuries-old look, no taxidermy required. \$105; nearanddeer.com



hutch table

This furniture piece—popular in the colonial era—has a top that flips up to form a bench seat. We spotted this pine reproduction on eBay for \$400.



Windsor-chair kit

Woodworkers will get a kick out of building this version of the circa-1790 chair. It's made of unfinished maple, oak, and poplar parts. \$340 for the kit; highlandwoodworking.com

affordable art

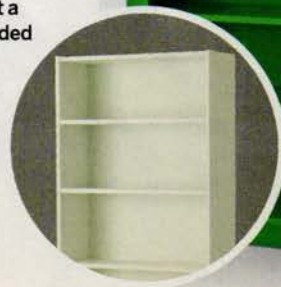
To make a gallery wall, we purchased a dog-eared copy of Edward Steichen's *The Family of Man* (\$5; amazon.com), then framed its photos on the cheap. Frames, \$1.99 and \$2.99; ikea.com



DIY

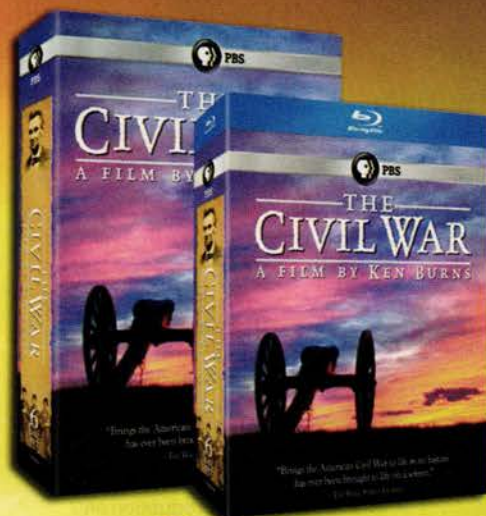
old-world bookcase

To get the homeowners' custom look at a fraction of the cost—and effort—we added ½-by-3-inch MDF molding to the face of a simple bookcase, trimmed the top with lightweight polyurethane dentil crown molding, and primed and painted it. Billy bookcase, \$60; ikea.com. Dentil crown molding, \$25; lowes.com



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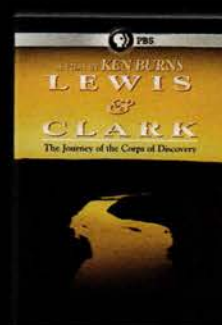
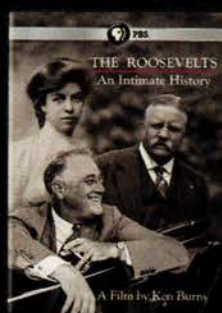
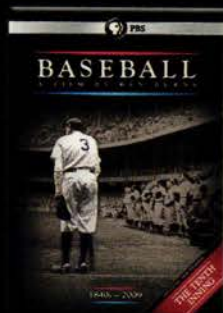
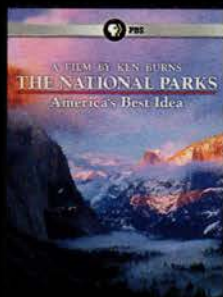
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Coloring inside the lines

A Folk Victorian farmhouse goes from ghostly to gorgeous with the help of three earth- and sky-toned paint palettes

BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS • ILLUSTRATIONS BY DRAWGATE



BEFORE

→ “WE BOUGHT A 1910 farmhouse that needs a complete remodel, including a paint job—help!” says Brandi Huff. She’s working to make the Folk Victorian in Milan, Michigan, that she’ll share with her husband and two sons move-in ready. We turned to architectural color consultant Bob Buckter for curb-appeal-boosting ideas.

“People choose white because it’s a no-brainer, but these architectural details deserve to be highlighted,” Buckter says. One tack: Use muted hues for the body and trim—such as the gray-blues, khakis, and pale yellows in the three palettes in this story—and contrasting colors to emphasize eye-catching features, like the fancy spindlework and turned posts. It’s a modern way to apply historically inspired colors.

Brandi’s reaction? “Looks awesome! We were so lost on what to do. The blue house is our favorite—it’s so homey.”

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Pick a palette

Draw out special details with one of these three color combos.

gray blue An all-American classic, steel blue makes for a welcoming facade, especially when paired with ice-blue trim, azure gable ends, and wine-red windows and accents. A charcoal-gray skirt anchors the scheme. Olympic’s **Silver Blueberry** (1), **Rendezvous** (2), **Blue Cloud** (3), **Bordeaux** (4), and **Granite** (5).



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warm khaki Set against an earthy-brown body color, trim and porch floorboards in maroon and a door and windows in turquoise pop. Using a lighter taupe on the stickwork of the gable end sets it apart from the scalloped siding. Behr's **Mississippi Mud (1)**, **Gobi Desert (2)**, **Chianti (3)**, **Agave Frond (4)**, and **Butternut Wood (5)**.



creamy yellow The warmest palette of the bunch: a French-vanilla body shade, with cinnamon accents and contrasting cool-blue windows. Glidden's **Popcorn White (1)**, **Golden Bamboo (2)**, **Classic Brick Red (3)**, **Rich Navy (4)**, and **Le Chateau Brown (5)**. ■



More saving.
More doing.

PROJECT OF THE WEEK

HOW TO BUILD A MEDICINE CABINET



Photo: Alan Shortall/Cornerhouse Stock

A mirrored medicine cabinet keeps your vanity as well-groomed as you are, with storage for stashing toiletries out of sight. Building the cabinet yourself could save you hundreds of dollars. You'll need to order a mirror cut to size, but the construction is pretty straightforward.

If you decide to paint the cabinet, select a semigloss finish, which will stand up to moisture and regular cleanings. If you want the warm look of stain, use a wood with an even grain, such as oak or cherry, and seal the cabinet with a water-resistant finish, like lacquer or varnish.

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

For step-by-step instructions, go to thisoldhouse.com/project

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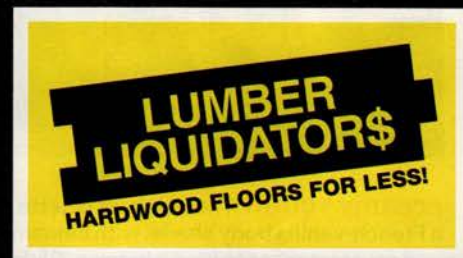
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All the Presidents' paints

Whether you live in a red state or a blue one, these paint colors—all from houses of former commanders-in-chief—just might get your vote

BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS

➔ **PAST HEADS OF STATE** are often viewed in black and white, but that doesn't mean they didn't live colorfully. Far from it: In George Washington's heyday, public rooms in the homes of the elite were often lined in Crayola brights. The eye-popping paint pigments were expensive and required painstaking labor to mix and apply—a perfect way to flaunt your wealth.

These days you don't have to live in a house with a historic pedigree—or have a major stash of cash—to find inspiration in our forebears' decorative choices. Strong interior colors continue to make a statement, and paint companies are replicating even the most brilliant shades to an exact match.

Read on for some of our favorite history-making hues.

THOMAS JEFFERSON Monticello

Rumor has it America's third president loved both a good dinner party and the latest fashions, so he had his dining room painted this brilliant yellow in 1815, when it was trending—and extravagant: Each pound of chrome pigment cost \$5, more than 33 times the cost of white-lead paint. The walls—repainted using hand-ground pigments matched to the original shade—may look extra-radiant now but were a godsend in the era of candlelight after dusk.



MONTICELLO YELLOW
Ralph Lauren Paint



JAMES MADISON

Montpelier

Here's what Dolley Madison ordered in 1820 for the Virginia couple's bedchamber, long known as the Honeymoon Suite: "Lively colours with fringe to suit." The walls of this bedroom in their Georgian-style mansion were recently restored with an 18th-century recipe for "distemper," a paint made from hand-ground pigments and hide glue. Conservators chose the shades below as the next-best thing.



ACORN YELLOW
Benjamin Moore



MARKET SQUARE SHELL
Benjamin Moore



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Lincoln Home

Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln lived in this Greek Revival home, in Springfield, Illinois, from 1844 until 1861, when they moved to the White House. In 1860 a newspaper described the facade as "a pale chocolate color," and it's just as delicious today. Preservationists used custom Sherwin-Williams formulas to paint the house in 2009, for Lincoln's 200th birthday.



CUSTOM COLORS
Sherwin-Williams

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon

Like many of their late-18th-century counterparts, the Washingtons had a fondness for bold colors at home, as anyone who has visited their Virginia estate—with its kelly-green dining room and Prussian-blue parlor—can attest. Our favorite? What they called the New Room, a blue-green grand salon added to the Georgian-style house in 1787 and used to greet—and impress—guests. Paint conservators used hand-ground pigments to reproduce the original finish. Lucky for us, Fine Paints of Europe has formulated precise matches.



PORCELAIN EDGE
Fine Paints of Europe



NEW ROOM WHITE
Fine Paints of Europe



LARGE DINING ROOM GREEN
Fine Paints of Europe



JOHN F. KENNEDY

JFK National Historic Site

"Jack" was born in the second-floor master bedroom of this Colonial Revival, in Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1917; he lived there for the first three years of his life. After his death, Rose Kennedy repurchased the house, restored it, and donated it to the National Park Service, having it painted in the colors she remembered from the year of JFK's birth. The rich gray siding, ivory trim, and dark-green shutters were in vogue at the time—and look equally handsome today. Benjamin Moore matched the historical hues for the house's recent spruce-up.

CUSTOM COLOR
Benjamin Moore



ESSEX GREEN
Benjamin Moore

CUSTOM COLOR
Benjamin Moore



GET THE CUSTOM COLORS!

Find the exact formulations for the custom shades shown in this story at thisoldhouse.com/sep2015

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE DIRECTORY, PAGE 95

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Wallpaper with a twist

Interior designer Sarah Richardson is known for using traditional elements with unstodgy flair, as seen here—and in her new book

BY KATHRYN KELLER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY STACEY BRANDFORD

→ **WHILE WALLPAPER** has been a quick route to colorizing a room for centuries, it's definitely made a comeback of late. And in Sarah Richardson's design toolbox, it's often an element of surprise—a way to add unexpected pattern and texture to a room's hard surfaces. A fan of classic molding profiles and paneling details, Richardson might use wallpaper as an accent or in combination with other wall finishes so that it feels lively but never overwhelming. Now she's sharing the secrets to her signature classic-meets-modern approach in *Sarah Style*. As the star of five home-design TV series and the interior designer of more than 300 rooms, she knows a thing or two about creating spaces that function—beautifully.

1. on the ceiling

This graphic paisley paper might have seemed busy and formal on the walls, but it feels fun and contemporary overhead. To pull the eye down from the pattern on the ceiling, Richardson let it continue onto the wall by about a foot and used another strong blue-and-white pattern on the drapes, which connects to painted wall stripes in similar hues.



Sarah Style, by Sarah Richardson (Gallery Books, 2014) is available at independent booksellers and on amazon.com.





2. bumpout accent

Richardson injects a small dose of color and pattern by making the chimney an accent wall. It's also a nice way to use a pricey paper without busting your budget. Highlighting the focal-point hearth helps pull your eye through the room. While a rosy paper with gilded accents might be too much on all four walls, a taste feels refreshing.



3. layered look

Just as crown molding divides the ceiling from the wall—creating a frame for an accent color overhead—chair-rail molding placed at plate-rail height offers the opportunity to add different wall coverings above and below it. A shared neutral palette keeps the textured grasscloth above in tune with the fun zebra-print on the lower section, so they play well together without being overpowering. ■

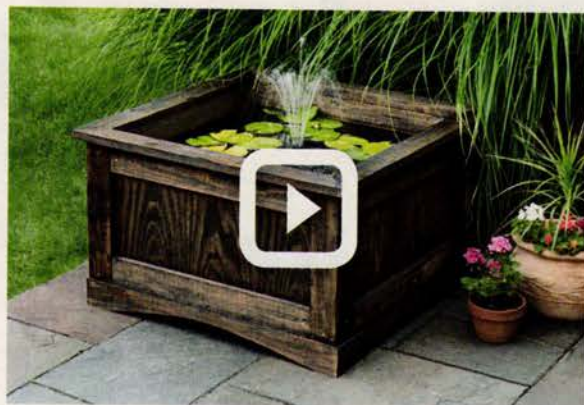
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Graphic shower curtains

Punchy colors and playful patterns give these functional pieces an artful twist

BY MEGAN BAKER

➔ **LOOKING TO UPDATE** a dull bath or inject some zing into one that's all white? A new shower curtain is an easy place to start, supplying an anchor for a new color scheme. Think of it as the equivalent of a rug in a living-space: At a typical 72 inches square, one of these large fabric displays can provide a jumping-off point for paint, linens, artwork, and accessories—whether you copy the colors, go for contrast, or both. Here, 10 of our favorite colorful curtains.



singing in the rain

CRATE & BARREL

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: Whimsical oversize raindrops in four shades of blue—a collaboration with Finnish design company Marimekko. \$60; crateandbarrel.com



star-studded

IKEA

Made of: Polyester

Size: 71"W x 71"H

Highlights: This quilt-like pattern is protected with a water-repellent coating that helps prevent mildew. \$13; ikea.com

grassy green

BIRCH LANE

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: A pattern reminiscent of flour-sack stripes gets a fresh kick from a lime-green hue. \$49; birchlane.com

perfect circles

LJ HOME

Made of: Polyester

Size: 72"W x 70"H

Highlights: A soothing blue-green keeps these interlocking hoops from looking too busy. Bonus: Comes with a liner and rings. \$44; wayfair.com

climbing trellis

GARNET HILL

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: This Moroccan tile pattern brings just a touch of soft-green color to an airy white curtain. \$40; garnethill.com

mosaic look

WORLD MARKET

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: Faded inks and charmingly imperfect edges recall handblock-printed fabrics. \$30; worldmarket.com

TIP

Add a shower-curtain liner to help block shower spray and prevent discoloration from soap buildup. Choose a soft polyester material over vinyl, which can off-gas unhealthy chemicals. For routine cleaning, throw both liner and curtain in the wash on the GENTLE cycle.

sharp chevron

HOME DECORATORS
COLLECTION

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: Narrow stripes dress up a playful zigzag.

Bold orange has all the punch of red—and all the versatility, too. \$30; homedecorators.com

dip-dyed

NINE SPACE

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 70"H

Highlights: This ombre pattern starts out white, then heats up more than halfway down, ending in a saturated sunset-yellow.

\$47; allmodern.com

perfect paisley

ECHO DESIGN

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: A traditional textile pattern in warm russet tones gets a contemporary update with a boost in scale.

\$40; echodesign.com

candy stripe

CRATE & BARREL

Made of: Cotton

Size: 72"W x 72"H

Highlights: Graduated banding gives the classic stripe a shake-up in eye-catching coral.

\$40; crateandbarrel.com



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One piece, five ways

A plain flat-pack dresser gets a vintage-hardware-fueled redo. Then another, and another...

BY MEGAN BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY WENDELL T. WEBBER

→ **ANYTHING CAN INSPIRE** a furniture makeover—a bold paint color, for instance, or a favorite wallpaper. But sometimes the finishing touches can be the starting place for a whole redo. After spotting a range of handsome vintage-inspired pulls and knobs, we were so charmed that we used them to build out complete looks for a plain flat-pack dresser. From mid-century conical knobs to Victorian-style drop pulls, these hardware pieces have such distinct styles that it's easy to let them inform a total transformation.

Of course, you can use any piece of furniture to re-create the looks shown on these pages, though solid wood offers more versatility for adding stain and custom skirt cuts than MDF might. But no matter your canvas, the looks here offer such a big style boost, it's hard to believe their roots started in anything so small.



BEFORE

Shown: Rast chest, \$35; ikea.com. Deltana cone cabinet knobs in brass, \$6 each; build.com. 6-inch white pine legs, \$9.95 each; tablelegs.com. Minwax Dark Walnut stain, \$8.97; homedepot.com

the details

mid-century modern

Gleaming brass knobs in a sleek cone shape recall the days of *Mad Men* and Sputniks. To match the look, we warmed up the dresser's frame with a walnut stain—a mid-century classic—and added tapered legs. Olive-hued paint on the drawers creates an eye-catching contrast.



SUBMARINE
Dutch Boy



art deco

Streamlined Jazz Age bin pulls in a black finish are highlighted by an allover coat of showstopping teal. Graphic gray stripes on black bands suggest the style's signature metallic inset details and add dimension to the chest's recessed kickplate and top edge.

the details



Art Deco solid iron bin pull, \$13 each; lookintheattic.com



**HAWAIIAN
TEAL**
Glidden



NOVA WHITE
Glidden



cottage

The chest's existing wood knobs inspired this charming redo. Pushing the kickplate forward made room for a scrolling jigsaw cutout to create an apron-front style. Nose-and-cove molding frames on the drawer fronts and a cornice made from solid crown molding finish the look. For a timeworn patina, we painted everything pale yellow before topping it with soft blue; then we sanded in spots to reveal the color beneath.

the details



Wood bin pulls, included with IKEA Rast chest; ikea.com



Solid crown molding and nose-and-cove molding



JOLIE BLONDE
Maison Blanche



**CREME DE
MENTHE**
Maison Blanche



folk victorian

Dainty drop pulls invite intricate embellishments, such as the tray-style top wrapped with solid crown molding and a curvy jigsaw-cut apron front made by moving the kickplate to the fore. Inky navy-blue paint sets the stage for multihued details, including faux panel trim in buttery yellow and stenciled floral designs that bring the focus front and center.

the details



Small William and Mary pendant pull with floral backplate, \$6.79 each; houseofantiquehardware.com



Solid crown molding



DARK DIVERSION
Clark + Kensington



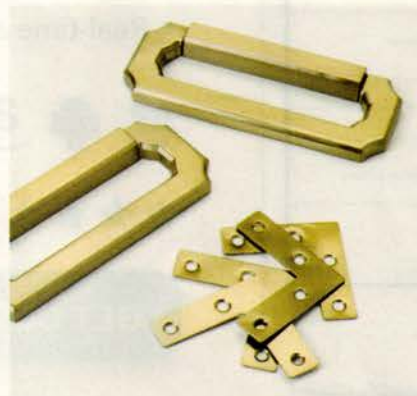
GOLDEN TICKET
Clark + Kensington



campaign look

Swinging campaign pulls and brackets anchor this minimalist dresser that was inspired by the 1970s revival of turn-of-the-century traveling furniture. Pushing the kickplate to the dresser front and building out the top edge with thin shelf-edge molding creates a perfectly boxy surface for brassy corner brackets—after a high-gloss coat of orange, that is. ■

the details



Champagne bronze pull with four corners, \$7.98 for a set; homedepot.com



OBSTINATE ORANGE
Sherwin-Williams

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Install shutters on a brick house

Use masonry anchors to attach working window coverings to a plain brick facade—and add some period charm, to boot

BY PAUL HOPE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIEULI



COST \$935 for a 36-by-64-inch window, as shown, not including hardware

TIME Two days

DIFFICULTY Easy. Accessing upper-level windows can be tricky.

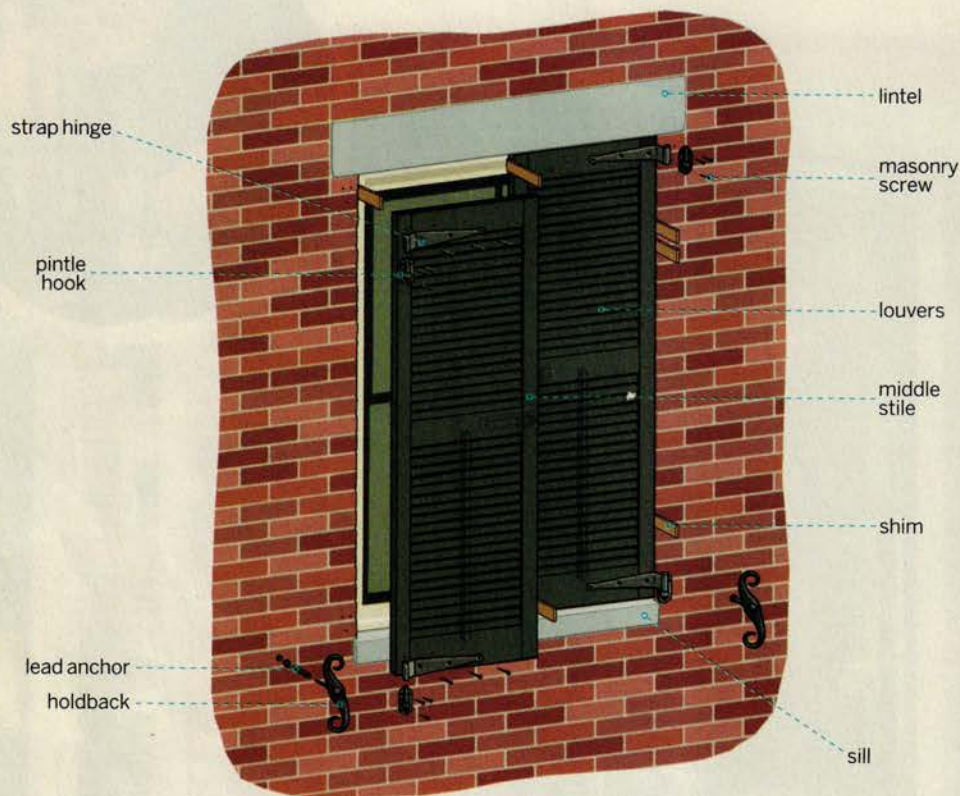
➔ **THERE'S A REASON CERTAIN ARCHITECTURAL** embellishments stand the test of time: Function is built into the design. Take louvered window shutters. They've been used for centuries to control light and draw air in through an open window. Their utilitarian lines make them equally appropriate on house styles from the colonial farmhouse to the rambling ranch. And if it's made of brick? No problem, with advice from *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva. He installs them on this mid-1800s brick rowhouse using masonry anchors and completes the look with period-accurate cast-iron shutter dogs as holdbacks. Follow along to learn how to add historical charm with a window treatment durable and timeless enough to weather another 100-plus years.

Composite Shutters:
Atlantic Premium Shutters'
Architectural Collection
Louver customized with tilt
rod, in black; theapcogroup
.com/brands/atlantic

DAY-TO-DAY TIMELINE

DAY 1 Measure and order the shutters (Step 1).

DAY 2 Mount the shutters (Steps 2–5).

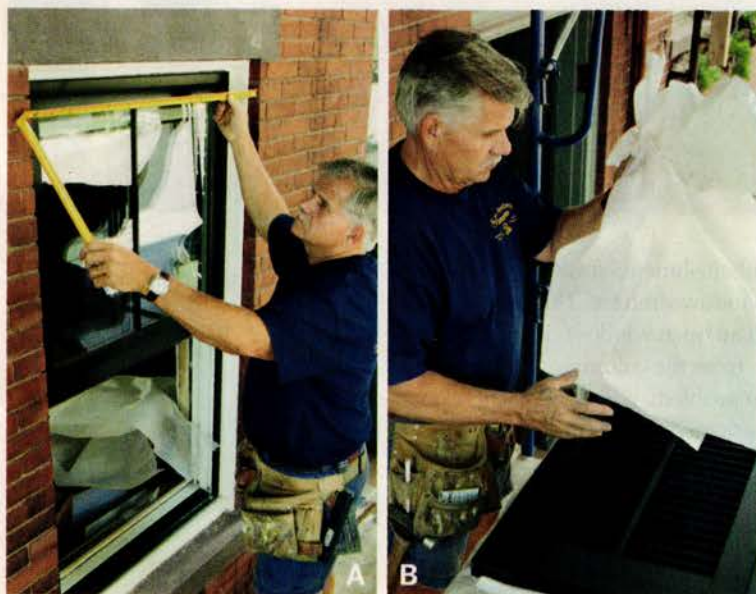


TOOLS

- > tape measure
- > pencil
- > rafter square
- > drill/driver and bits
- > wood shims
- > hammerdrill with $\frac{5}{32}$ -inch and $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch masonry bits
- > hammer
- > socket wrench with a 15-millimeter socket

MATERIALS

- > **shutters, ordered to fit** Get one pair per window.
- > **shutter hardware** Get one kit per window.
- > **holdbacks with hardware** Get one pair per window.
- > **slide-bolt latch and hardware** Get one per window.
- > **fasteners** $\frac{3}{16}$ -by- $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch self-tapping masonry screws



1 Order the shutters

A] Measure the opening. The shutters will completely fill the window opening and conceal the casing when closed. Measure the width of each opening brick to brick, as shown, at the top, middle, and bottom. To get the height, measure in three spots between the lintel and the sill. Measure the depth from the wall to the window casing to determine the hardware you'll need. The adage "measure twice" is critical here.

B] Size the shutters. To specify the proper width, use the narrowest of the three measurements. Subtract $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from that measurement (or follow the manufacturer's recommendations) to leave enough of a gap for the two shutters to close. Divide the number by 2 to find the width for each shutter. For the height, go with the shortest measurement and subtract $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to leave a slight gap top and bottom. When you have the shutters, dry-fit each one in its opening to check the sizing.

2 Check the sizing

A] Install the hinges. Rest the shutters side by side on a worktable, with the louvers slanting down and away from the house when closed, to shed water. Measure and mark lines bisecting the top and bottom rails of each shutter. Starting with the left shutter, center a strap hinge over the line, with the fastener hole of the strap end centered on the stile. Drill pilot holes and fasten the hinges with the included screws. Repeat the process with the other three hinges, making sure that the knuckles, also known as gudgeons, on the two adjoining shutters mirror each other.

B] Fit the shutters. Set the shutters in place inside the window opening, lined up with each other at the top and bottom and flush with the brick facade. Center the shutters by eye within the opening, and use wood shims to hold them in place on all four sides.



SEE HOW IT'S DONE

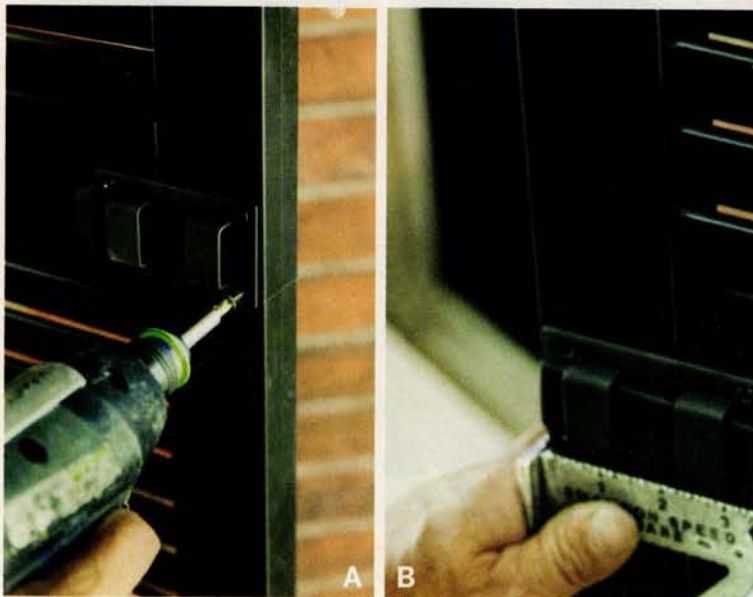
To watch the episode in which Tom Silva and TOH TV master carpenter Norm Abram install these shutters on the Charlestown project house, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015

3 Attach the pintles

A] Set the pintle. With the shutters set in place, slide a pintle up through the gudgeon of a strap hinge, as shown. Seat the pin base snugly against the hinge, and mark the pintle's fastener locations on the brick.

B] Drill the pilot hole. Fit the hammerdrill with the $\frac{5}{32}$ -inch masonry bit. Hold the pintle firmly against the brick at the marks, and drill through the plate and into the brick. Start slowly and make sure to hold the hammerdrill level and steady so that you don't egg-out the hole. To remove the bulk of the brick dust, keep the bit spinning as you pull the hammerdrill back from the hole.

C] Fasten the pintle. Use the drill/driver to drive a $\frac{3}{16}$ -by- $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch self-tapping masonry screw into each hole, stopping when the screwhead is seated flush in the pintle plate. Install the remaining pintles with the same method.



4 Add the closure

A] Attach the strike plate. Working from inside the house, measure and mark the midpoint of the middle stile on each shutter. Center the strike plate on one shutter, set in $\frac{1}{8}$ inch from the edge. Hold the plate in place, drill pilot holes, and fasten it to the shutter with the included screws.

B] Fasten the sliding bolt. Use the rafter square to position and hold the bolt in place on the opposite shutter, centered along the middle stile and set in $\frac{1}{8}$ inch from the shutter's edge. Drill pilot holes and secure the bolt to the shutter with the included screws. Close the shutters and test the latch.



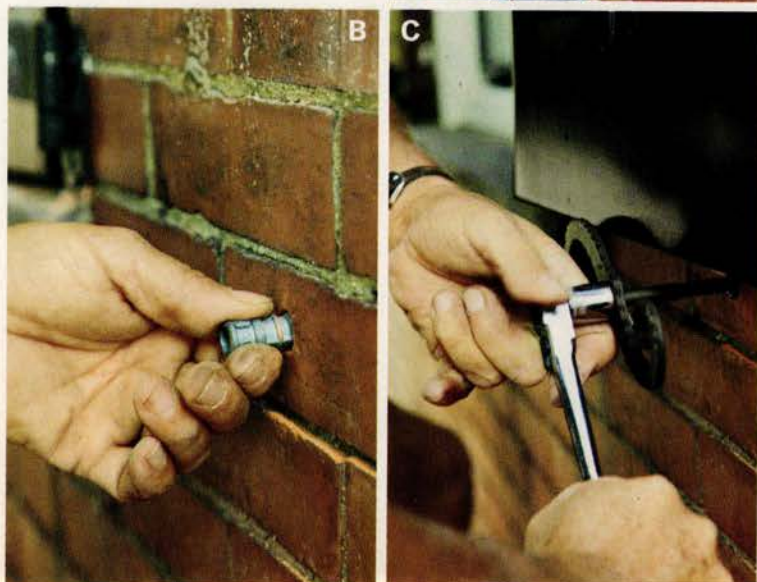
TIP
Start slowly and make sure your drill bit is perpendicular to the brick in all directions.

5 Install the holdbacks

A] Drill the holdback hole. Swing the shutters into the open position. Measure and mark spots on the brick facade, 1 inch below the bottom edge of each shutter and centered on its width. Fit the hammerdrill with the $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch masonry bit, and drill a hole at each mark, stopping at a depth of 3 inches.

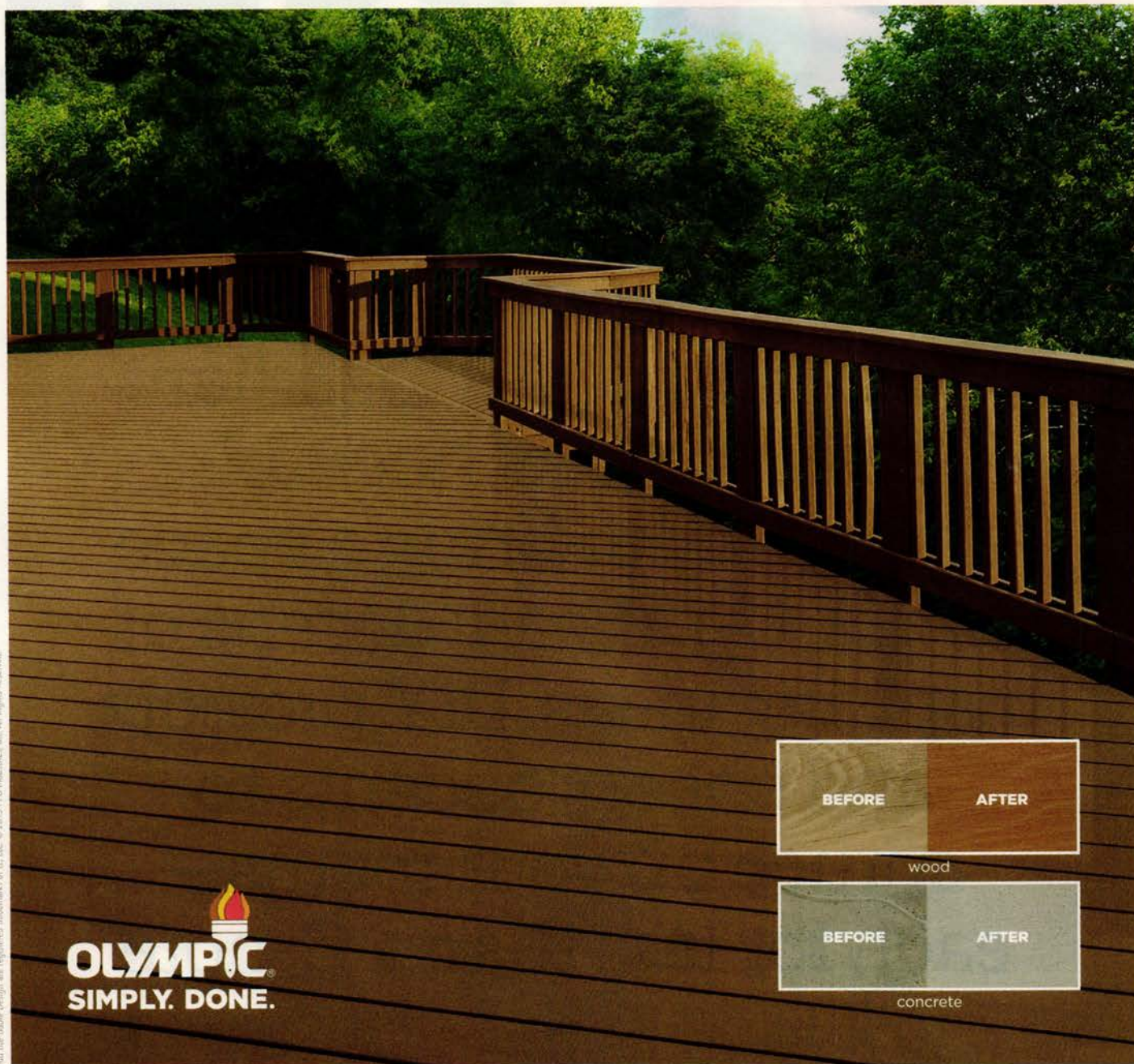
B] Set the anchor. Blow out any brick dust from the hole. Slip a $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch lead anchor into the hole and tap it in with the hammer, stopping when it's flush with the face of the brick.

C] Attach the holdback. Slip a lag bolt through the holdback. Set the tip of the bolt into the hole, and tap it a few times to help seat it in the anchor. Use the socket wrench to thread the lag bolt into the hole. ■





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Don't be a shrinking violet. From bold blues to radiant reds, striking hues are a sure way to bring a space to life. Up ahead: dozens of inspiring ideas, DIY projects, and cheery accents to spruce up your rooms—each for less than a C-note

by Michelle Brunner

1. GIVE STAIRS A LIFT

Paint the risers in graduated shades of a single color, going a bit lighter after every three steps for an ombré effect, as shown. Start with one saturated shade and cut it with 20 percent white each time you lighten up. Get the look here with Olympic's Semi-Gloss Paint in Caribbean Splash, \$28 per gallon; at Lowe's stores.



2. GO FOR A MONOCHROMATIC LOOK

Painting walls, trim, built-ins, and the ceiling the same color creates a lush, jewel-box effect. Just be sure to use different sheens to add some dimension: Try a semigloss finish for the walls, high gloss for the trim, and a flat formula for the ceiling. To get the look here, try Ralph Lauren's Interior Paint in Anchor Blue. From \$38 per gallon; ralphlaurenpaint.com for retailers





3. BRING IN A SIDE TABLE IN A HAPPY HUE

An easy antidote to too much wood-tone furniture: a cottage-style end table in a glossy painted finish, like this turquoise take. Convenience Concepts French Country End Table, \$86; wayfair.com

4. WALLPAPER A BOOKCASE

Line the backs of a shelf unit with bright, patterned wallpaper for an instant makeover. Remove the shelves so that you won't have to match the pattern above and below them, and use an adhesive-backed paper that's easy to maneuver and reposition. One we like: Lovely Lattice wallpaper, \$35 for a 2-by-4-foot panel; chasingpaper.com

5. HANG A VINTAGE POSTER

Frame art from the golden age of travel ads—their rich colors and standout graphics make a great focal point. "Côte d'Azur," anyone? 27½-by-39½-inch print, \$27; allposters.com

6. INSTALL STANDOUT LEDGES

Show off books, artwork, and decorative objects on a trio of powder-coated-iron floating shelves in one of 10 snappy shades. 24-inch Color Bar Ledge, \$29; landofnod.com

7. REVAMP A TABLETOP

Bring new life to a worn table by cladding its top with laminate in a bold color. For a clean edge, add decorative edge molding to a square or rectangular top or iron-on

edge banding to a round table. Find a step-by-step on cutting and gluing laminate at thisoldhouse.com/sep2015. Formica laminate sheet, 4 by 8 feet, from \$50; at home centers

8. ADD SOME HUE TO YOUR HOUSE NUMBERS

Mount cobalt-blue ceramic digits to the front of your home to add a dash of Gallic flair. French-style Ceramic House Numbers, \$19 each; rejuvenation.com

9. CUSTOMIZE A LAMP SHADE

Craft a vibrant shade from fabric you have with an easy-to-use kit that includes lampshade rings, glue, a molding stick, and more. DIY Lampshade Kit, \$20 and up; ilikethatlamp.com

10. EMBELLISH A PLAIN SHOWER CURTAIN

Upgrade a plain white cotton curtain by sewing a decorative grosgrain ribbon border 4 inches from the curtain's edge. Solid 2¼-inch grosgrain ribbon, \$5.55 for a 25-yard roll; papermart.com

11. CREATE A STATEMENT LIGHT

Reinvent an old-school brass-finish chandelier with a coat of glossy spray paint, then slip on coordinating candle sleeves. Rust-Oleum's Painter's Touch 2X Ultra Cover in Gloss Deep Blue, \$3.98; homedepot.com. Kaarskoker Designer Candle Covers, \$6 each; chandelierparts.com



12. TRY A SPLASH OF CITRUS ON THE FRONT ENTRY

Paint your door a welcoming bright color. Yellows, tangerines, and acid greens are trending as a way to stand out from the crowd of traditional shades like red, black, and navy blue. Get the look shown above with Glidden's Premium Exterior Semi-Gloss Paint in New Grass Green, \$28 per gallon; at The Home Depot stores.

13. PUT UP A BORDER

Use graphic vinyl decals to add pizzazz to your space. With bold colors and modern geometric designs, they're not your grandma's mimsy border. Jonathan Adler Carnaby Stripe Wall Border, \$9.99 for a 12-foot-long decal; wallpops.com

14. PERK UP A PLANTER

Replace a plastic hanging basket with a pot made of powder-coated galvanized steel in coral, aqua, or spring green. Socker hanging planter, \$5.99; at IKEA stores

15. BRIGHTEN DULL WOOD FURNITURE

Achieve the look of reclaimed painted planks with a colored stain in shades like Vintage Aqua, Rustic Sage, or Worn Navy. Varathane's 3X Premium Wood Stain, \$8.48 per quart; homedepot.com



16. UNIFY FRAMES WITH PAINT

Make a cohesive wall treatment by painting multiple frames a single shade. We like Glidden's Red Geranium, \$2.94 for an 8-ounce tester pot; homedepot.com.

17. COORDINATE CABINETS

Looking for a way to add some zest to a white kitchen? Here's an idea: Paint lower cabinets a crowd-pleasing watery blue, then line the backs of glass-front uppers with the same color. One to try: Dutch Boy's Interior Semi-Gloss Enamel in Laguna Blue, \$30 per gallon; at Sears stores

18. FRESHEN A FIREPLACE

Cover a dingy brick surround with glass tile in a goes-with-everything soft green. Just apply a good coat of thinset over bricks for a smooth surface. For a how-to, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015. Mint Green Subway Glass tile, \$9.97 per square foot; homedepot.com

19. COLOR YOUR CEILING

Try painting the "fifth wall" a shade 30 to 50 percent lighter or deeper than your wall color. Keep in mind: A matte finish absorbs light and eliminates ceiling glare. We like Olympic One's Interior Ceiling paint, \$22 per gallon; at Lowe's stores.

20. HIGHLIGHT FAMILY PHOTOS

For a lively, personalized gallery wall, add brightly colored mats to simply framed enlarged black-and-white prints from vacations and

special events. 8-by-10-inch Single Rainbow Mats, \$31 for a pack of 25; matshop.com

21. TINT YOUR WINDOWS

The words *stained-glass window film* likely conjure something cheap-looking and outdated. But new sheets with bold hues and the choice of two levels of transparency offer a fresh take on the idea. Decorative window tint in 10 colors, \$9.95 for a 16-by-21-inch sheet; wallpaperforwindows.com

22. PAINT A FUN TRASH BIN

Colorblock a galvanized bucket by spray-painting a wide band around the bottom and a darker shade inside. A combo we like: Rust-Oleum's Painter's Touch 2X Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Green Apple and Meadow Green, \$3.98 each; homedepot.com

23. USE STANDOUT GROUT

White subway tile, a kitchen and bath staple, feels fresh when grout gets a kick from adding pigment, like this turquoise. Try Colorants' 1-pound blue cement and grout pigment, \$32; amazon.com.



24. ADD BOLD KITCHEN ACCENTS

A retro-style fire-engine-red bread box provides a welcome dose of countertop color. Now Designs Bread Bin, \$39; amazon.com

25. COLORIZE SHUTTERS

Paint each louver a different shade of the rainbow using leftover paint or sample pots for a fun kids'-room effect. Farrow & Ball sample pots, \$8 each; us.farrow-ball.com

26. INSTALL A COLORFUL GLASS DOORKNOB

Give an interior door an eye-catching accent with a violet or green glass handle. Vintage doorknobs, from \$19 each; etsy.com

27. EMBOLDEN YOUR BATH

Add zip to an all-white bath by swapping out solid towels for a lively paisley print in red, teal, and orange. Venice bath-towel collection, from \$17 per towel; worldmarket.com

28. ADD A BRIGHT LIGHT

Wake up your kitchen with an enameled-metal industrial pendant in fire-engine red or kelly green. Nuvo Lighting Warehouse Pendant, \$40; atgstores.com

29. STENCIL A WAINSCOT

Paint a colorful repeating pattern between chair rail and base molding for a decorative wainscot effect. We like the Delicate Floral Panel stencil, \$39; royaldesignstudio.com.

30. CREATE AN ACCENT NOOK

Lend texture and color to an alcove with reclaimed Douglas fir and hemlock paneling that comes pretinted in jewel tones from Colorhouse paints. Windfall Cladding, \$11 per square foot; catalog.windfalllumber.com for retail info

31. BRING IN A WORLD OF COLOR

Hang a wallpaper map mural as a focal point; its vivid blues and greens give this room its color scheme, and it's a great way for kids to learn geography. 13-by-8½-foot wall map, \$57; target.com



32. HANG A PLATE DISPLAY

Got a mishmash of heirloom plates in the attic? Dust 'em off and create a colorful wall accent by hanging them together. Disc hanger for plates up to 12 inches, \$6; joann.com

33. GO FOR A HIGH-IMPACT BACKSPLASH

Tile the small area between the bathroom sink and the mirror with colorfully patterned cement tile. Most encaustic tiles are 8 by 8 inches, so you'll need only a few. Moorish tile, \$7.90 per tile; cementtileshop.com

34. PUT A PLAYFUL BORDER ON A CLAW-FOOT

Use scalloped painter's tape to create a "water line" around the exterior of the tub, then fill in with a seaworthy blue. Look for a

chip-resistant formula suitable for metal, such as Sherwin-Williams's All-Surface Enamel in Nautilus, \$23 per quart; sherwin-williams.com for retailers. FrogTape Shape Tape, \$10 for a 25-yard roll; homedepot.com

35. COLORBLOCK CURTAINS

Sew a length of colored fabric, such as a twin sheet, cut to size, along the bottom third of plain white panels. Cotton canvas window panel, from \$29; westelm.com; twin flat sheet, from \$10; target.com

36. LIGHTEN UP A DESKTOP

Make working from home more fun with a matching set of happy-hued desk accessories in 14 lovely colors, including Pool Blue and Coral. Starter set, with stapler, tape dispenser, pen cup, and a dozen pens, \$40; poppin.com

37. STENCIL A PILLOW

Paint your own colorful throw pillow with a kit you can customize. We like the Wild Berry Damask DIY pillow stencil kit with pillow, cover, stencil, paint, mini roller, and brush. \$45; cuttingedgestencils.com



38. GO BOLD WITH TILE—AND OTHER ACCENTS

Let a super-bright, vertically installed subway-tile backsplash set the tone for a few surprise hits of color. Here, a pendant light and a painted toekick reinforce the color scheme and provide a cheerful counterpoint to white cabinetry. Try Rittenhouse Square 3-by-6-inch ceramic tile in Sunflower, \$10 per square foot; daltille.com for more information.





39. UPGRADE KNOBS AND PULLS

Add zip to plain cabinets by swapping out the usual knobs for this candy-colored hardware, which comes in 20 different designs, each available in 20 vibrant hues. Splash by Amerock, from \$7 each; splashbyamerock.com

40. MAKE TRIM POP

Painting wood trim a bold hue is a high-impact way to introduce an accent color in an otherwise neutral space and draw attention to architectural details. Look for a water-based acrylic-alkyd paint, such as ProClassic Interior Enamel, \$78 per gallon; sherwin-williams.com for retailers.

41. HIDE BATH SUPPLIES IN A GRAPHIC BASKET

Stash hand towels or spare TP rolls in a colorful catchall. One that caught our eye: Printed woven basket, \$59; westelm.com

42. TRY TWO-TONE WALLS

Paint beadboard a shade or two darker than the walls. One surefire trick: Pick shades from the same color strip. We like Olympic's Pale Moss Green for upper walls and Guacamole for wainscot, \$28 per gallon; at Lowe's stores.

43. DISPLAY A COLLECTION

Set out vintage jadeite pieces or bold Fiestaware on an open shelf to bring color to an all-white kitchen. Vintage jadeite pieces, from \$8.50 for a fluted cup; etsy.com. Fiestaware, from \$6 for a small plate; fiestafactorydirect.com

44. BRIGHTEN THE MUDROOM

Clear clutter with metal lockers in primary shades—perfect for stashing shoes and backpacks. Welded steel single-tier locker in one of 17 colors, \$86; brookstone.com

45. GIVE CHAIRS A MAKEOVER

Paint mismatched flea-market finds a single unifying color or give identical chairs a new look by painting each a different shade. Choose a chalk-based paint to minimize prep work on chairs that may already be finished. One to try: Maison Blanche Furniture Paint, \$11 and up; maisonblanchepaint.com for retailers

46. BRING IN A KITCHEN MAT WITH CHARACTER

Dress up the area in front of the sink with a Persian-inspired throw rug. The jewel tones and intricate pattern hide dirt and also wear well. One we like: Aristocrat rug, 2 by 3 feet, \$29; homedecorators.com.

47. PAINT FURNITURE LEGS

Give an armchair or ottoman a new look by painting its legs a fun color. Junk Gypsy's chalk-and-clay paint goes on without primer. Paint, \$23 per pint; junkgypsyspaint.com for retailers

48. PLUG IN A SUNNY SCENCE

Brighten any room with a yellow wall sconce. One that's not hardwired can be moved from room to room. Crate and Barrel Knox sconce in yellow, \$80; crateandbarrel.com

color!

GET MORE INSPIRATION

See photos for all the tips in this story in our online gallery at thisoldhouse.com/sep2015



49. PUT PATTERN UNDERFOOT

Update a wood floor that's seen better days by painting on a checkerboard design and sealing it with polyurethane. Here, buttery-gold and creamy-white checks lend a farmhouse vibe. Get the look with Sherwin-Williams's Porch & Floor Enamel in June Day and Antique White, \$57 per gallon; sherwin-williams.com for retailers. For the complete step-by-step, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015.

50. CREATE SOME WALL ART

Make a simple wood frame from 1-inch-square dowels held together with 2-inch deck screws. Staple fabric along the middle of one side, then pull it taut on the opposite side and secure it in the middle with a staple gun. Continue pulling and stapling, working your way around the frame. IKEA "Stockholm" fabric, \$9 per yard; at IKEA stores ■



HOUSE OF HARD KNOCKS

A novice homeowner **triumphs**
over DIY disasters with the help
of friends, family, and YouTube



by
Deborah Baldwin
photographs and styling by
Gridley + Graves
produced by
Tisha Leung



PENCIL POINT
Behr



CHOCOLATE FROTH
Behr



SLATE GRAY
Behr



CHARCOAL BLACK
Behr

First-time homeowner Bradley Huber (RIGHT) his 1930 Craftsman (OPPOSITE and ABOVE) after a color palette experiment involving pea green. The formerly wan-white house, which he bought in 2011, is now as green as well as out. Paint: Behr's Pencil Point (siding), Chocolate Froth (pale trim), Slate Gray (porch floor and ceiling), and Charcoal Black (dark trim). Pea green: Lowe's

Plus! Secret to a brilliant BBQ: Vintage both on a budget. EVER TOOL AND LUGS



T

HERE'S THE EASY WAY, and then there's Brad's way.

Meet Bradley Huber, millennial homeowner. High-school social studies teacher by day, home-improvement student by night, a man who knows what he needs to know and where to turn when things

go wrong—which is fairly often. “It got so when the phone rang we’d think, What catastrophe has he come across now?” says Brad’s amiable mother, Leslie, who runs a dairy farm with his handy dad, Keith. “When he bought his house, we kinda chuckled. He’d never been interested in power tools before.”

All that’s changed now. “Brad’s inspiring because he does the research and keeps working at it until he gets it right,” she says.

Not that the path to self-knowledge is ever easy.

At one point, unhappy with his kitchen cabinets—he had already tried adding molding to the slab doors, but it was impossible to keep clean—Brad decided to swap out the fronts for something in Shaker style. “I called in people to give me quotes,” he says. “But they were absurd. So I decided to make my own doors.” He found a video online showing how to cut grooves in the stiles and rails so that the center panel could slide in place. “They were not perfect, but I was really pleased with the way they came out,” Brad says. “Then I started hanging them, and it was one of those SOS moments: I don’t know what I’m doing, and I get the third door up, and it doesn’t fit. So I called a friend and said, ‘You have to come over right now—it’s an emergency!’ After that it was all right. It was just one of those times where you need somebody to hold something so it doesn’t slide around.”

And isn’t that true of so many things around the house?

On the plus side, Brad knew from the beginning that with this house he’d found a great match. A man of infinite patience if limited means, he had been trawling the real-estate market in Rochester, New York, in search of a place whose mortgage payments would be no larger than his rent. Also, he’d been bitten by the



ELEPHANT SKIN
Behr



WHEAT BREAD
Behr

ABOVE: Brad renovated his living room through trial and error. He built the mantel piece by piece with precut oak plywood, added a gas insert found on Craigslist, framed the flat-screen—hiding its wires and DVD player among books—and finished the walls with two neutral shades.

OPPOSITE: Earlier, he hung the flat-screen down low and tried a wall of bold stripes—but they clashed with the dining room’s new wallpaper. Paint: Behr’s Elephant Skin (hearth wall) and Wheat Bread (window wall)

“I put paint chips up against the woodwork, painted samples on the wall. But **it’s hard to tell if a color is right** until you’ve done the entire room.”



end result

first try



FLOOR PLAN

Cosmetic enhancements gave the house—just 864 square feet, front porch included—a new look. The attic and the basement, which holds a workshop (not shown), remain unfinished.



remodeling bug and was dying to call a place his own.

In early 2011 he turned to a listing for an 864-square-foot two-bedroom, one-bath 1930 Craftsman. Its location, in a streetcar suburb called Irondequoit, wasn't ideal—Brad was 25 at the time and wedded to downtown—and it was hard to know which was more dismaying when he showed up for the open house: the washed-out 1950s aluminum siding or the surge of rival bargain hunters. "It's usually a Realtor and some cookies," he says. "This was wall-to-wall people."

The house was in pretty sad shape but, like any good teacher, Brad could sense potential. For one: original unpainted woodwork and period windows. For another: the width of the range, at 30 inches, too small for its allotted space. Brad had just the thing to fix that problem—a 36-inch 1950s Chambers stove, which he had acquired and put in storage like a soup pot in a hope chest. "I had already started nesting," he says.

He bit down and made an offer. "Not a penny more," he recalls saying of his upper limit of \$67,000.

"When they called and said, 'We're going to accept,' I was like, *Wha-at?*" Brad's life as a laid-back renter was over, and his days as a homeowner who finds time to redo everything—and then blog about it—had officially begun.

They say the first year is always the hardest, and that was certainly the case here. While busy romancing the decor, Brad overlooked the furnace, an old wheezer with an expensive oil habit ("I was more focused on painting,"

"I found a wallpaper I liked for the dining room, one with a subtle pattern—**the blue walls were too loud.** But then it didn't go with the living room...."

he concedes). When the first stunning utility bill landed with a thud, he turned the heat to 62°F—during the day. At night he dialed down to the 50s and dove under quilts.

Efforts to liven up the Craftsman's bland exterior were so fraught that the neighbors gathered to watch. "The color was supposed to be an olivey green with ivory trim and gold accents," says Brad, who painted nine swaths of sample greens on the garage before settling on one. He kept his nose to the paintbrush until finishing an entire side, then stepped back. His No. 1 green had dried to the color of pea soup.

"It was awful!" he says. "I was upset because they say, 'Get these samples and you won't go wrong,' and I didn't want to spend any more time picking a paint color. Also, I had friends coming over to help me paint, and when you have free labor...."

"So I went back to the store and picked out the darkest gray they had. I thought, What's the worst that can happen? It was called Pencil Point, but I didn't think much about the name, I just had them make however many gallons."

As more and more graphite-colored paint went up and the sun went down, the house began to disappear into the darkness. Brad recalls thinking, *What have I done? I've painted my house black! And I've got so many gallons of it.*

But this time the paint dried to a deep, on-trend blue-gray—or would that be blue-tinged pencil? Whatever—at least the neighbors went back inside.

Elsewhere, Brad tinkered with ways to honor both Craftsman authenticity and contemporary tastes. The living room proved a challenge because previous owners had torn out a fireplace between two windows to make room for a TV in that spot. Naturally, when Brad reinstalled a period-style mantel, late 2011, he had the same problem trying to park the TV. So he put it *in* the fireplace, diverting the eye with a boldly striped accent wall.

While the room looked fine, the stripes conflicted with the gray patterned wallpaper that claimed space a year later in the adjacent dining room.

That room Brad had originally painted two shades of blue, one the same as the darker blue stripes. "I thought, Eh, it's all right," he says, but "the look was just not quite as fresh as I wanted." Watching *Downton*





LEFT: Brad painted before replacing the kitchen appliances, countertops, sink, flooring, and cabinet doors. "My main concern is that yellow with the black-and-white checkerboard floor reads too retro," he told readers of his blog. "I'd like some feedback on that, so chime in." *Paint: Behr's Galley Gold (walls)*



GALLEY GOLD
Behr



LEFT: Wallpaper with a Spanish tile design, a band of darker gray above, and a stylish pendant light give the dining room an updated look.

BELOW: The initial scheme—"Too bold," Brad says now—echoed the blues in the now-defunct living room stripes. *Wallpaper: Lowe's. Area rug: Flor. Pendant light: Overstock. Curtains: IKEA. Travel poster: Allposters.com*



end result

first try

Abbey one night, he found inspiration in Lady Sybil's bedroom, where she was prettily framed by faintly patterned wallpaper.

"I kept hearing these awful stories about wallpaper, but the one I found at the home center was prepaste," Brad says. "Once the first sheet went up and I got the hang of trimming it and sliding it around the wall with my palms, I had it all up in a few hours." Spoken like a seasoned pro.

More-mundane repairs required outside assistance. "If I really need to talk to someone I'll go to the independent hardware stores because they are familiar with houses in the area and they can tell me what to do. They'll order special parts for things like the tub taps."

Brad also spent a lot of time online. "I'd try something simple like changing a faucet, and there'd be no shutoff valve," he says. "It would be two in the morning, so I would go to YouTube and type in 'changing a faucet.'" Umpteen links would pop up. "You page through them till you find someone who knows what they are talking about and had the same problem."

Lest you picture him watching Tom Silva and the rest of the *TOH* gang from the comfort of a recliner, much



viewing was done on a cell phone propped up amid the mess on the basement worktable, where he would watch the first minute and a half of, say, “How to Build a Mantel” before mounting the stairs to perform Step 1, then running back down to watch Step 2, find another bit of molding, and run back up—repeating as needed.

It was tempting to bring in a pro on such occasions but hard for a penny-pincher to part with the necessary cash. Worried that his vintage stove’s gas line might be subpar, Brad lined up a free energy audit from a company trying to sell him a new furnace, and while politely conversing about drafts managed to confirm that the auditor had checked for leaks.

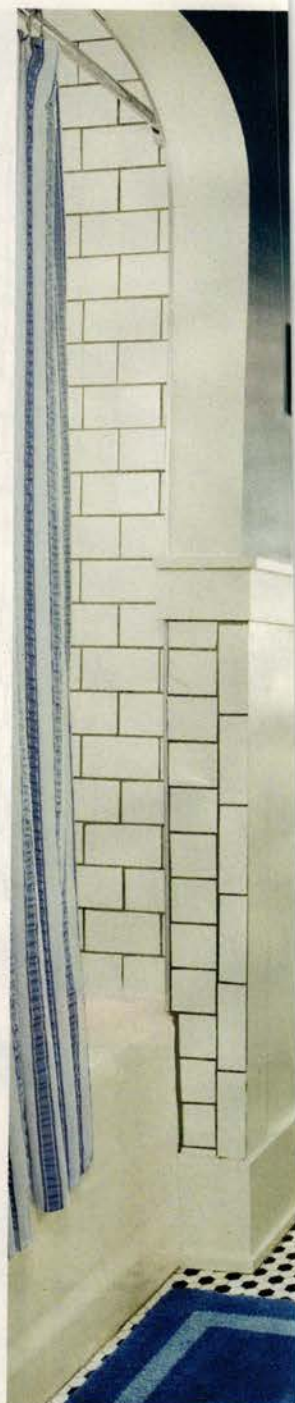
Brad found solace in other novice homeowners’ blogs. “I like the stories and the timelines,” he says of his fellow sufferers. “You feel like you’re part of a team for a minute, you go through their trials and tribulations.” Also, “they are always doing something on the cheap,” which he could appreciate. Rather than overpay, he scoured Craigslist for months before forking over for a dining table and chairs. At school, he was known to sprint to his car when the bell rang at 3 P.M.—to get to the nearest estate sale before it closed at 4 P.M. “By then everything was half price, and I could get a lot of stuff inexpensively,” Brad says. “There were so many things



WEEKEND GETAWAY
Benjamin Moore

ABOVE: A soothing green complements the front bedroom’s wood door and furnishings.

BELOW: Brad retiled the tub alcove with white subways and dark-gray grout—without benefit of a tile saw. *Paint: Weekend Getaway (bedroom walls). Tile: The Home Depot*



“Every month I would set aside money and then go as far as it would take me—it kept me from **biting off more than I could chew.**”



LEFT: Formerly Pepto-Bismol pink, the bath has a new beadboard ceiling, faux board-and-batten wainscot, and open shelves, all painted with a white “hiding and leveling” latex. *Paint: Muralo custom blend (woodwork and trim) and Benjamin Moore’s Blue Danube (walls). Vanity: The Home Depot. Curtain fabric: DwellStudio*



BLUE DANUBE
Benjamin Moore

SHOP THIS STYLE

To find furnishings similar to those used in this house, go to wayfair.com/thisoldhouse

I needed”—like old suitcases, which he picked up for a buck each and turned into end tables that also hide his collection of DVDs.

Gaining access to the right tools was a challenge. Brad rented a sander to do the floors, tracked down smaller items at a thrift store devoted to tools, borrowed others, and when forced to spring for a table saw went for the midrange brand. Other times he did without. “You try to make do,” he says.

“I knew I wanted to retile the shower, so first I got quotes from people, and they’d say \$3,000, and I’d say, that’s not going to happen...but I could afford the tile itself.” Just not a wet saw. Instead, he followed instructions online for scoring and snapping tile. “That worked okay-ish,” he says, “but I was never able to get a precise cut, and that made the job harder than it needed to be.” Especially when he decided to tile the ceiling, too.

Some jobs he has vowed to never try again, or at least not without reinforcements. “I wanted beadboard on the rest of the bathroom ceiling,” he says, “and that was not a job for one person. You’re trying to hold it and nail it, and then the piece falls, and it’s very upsetting.” It didn’t help that he was doing all this hammering while standing on the toilet.

To help relieve his frustrations, he’d show up at work the next day and vent in the teachers’ room. Unfortunately, schools like his no longer offer shop class.

Brad’s folks were able to lend an occasional hand, but they are an hour away and couldn’t do much beyond fielding phone calls after dinner—peak SOS time for home improvers with day jobs. “We did help him pay for new electrical service,” Leslie says. “And Brad’s other family members replaced the sash weights, so the windows now work.”

Brad is quick to acknowledge his support system. In fact, says this tired but wiser 29-year-old, one of the most important lessons he’s learned is to better scope out a project before plunging in. “There are jobs where you hire someone,” he says. Blacktopping the driveway fell into that category. Says Brad, “I wanted a warranty.”

Over the past four years, “there may have been some dark hours,” he will admit. “But at the end of the day, I got what I wanted. The house isn’t perfect, but it’s a good reflection of me.” ■

ALL
ABOUT

Linoleum Flooring

Durable, easy to clean, and eco-friendly before green was a selling point, linoleum is winning new fans. Here's what you need to know if you're considering it for your home BY LAURA GOLDSTEIN

WHEN THE RMS *TITANIC* SET SAIL IN 1912, many of its public spaces featured linoleum flooring, and nearly 100 years later, an expedition to the famed wreck discovered those tiles—still intact. Patented by Frederick Walton in 1863, linoleum remains one of the longest-wearing and most versatile flooring materials a homeowner can choose. “The material itself hasn’t really changed, but it now comes with a durable factory finish, so there’s a lot less maintenance,” says Joel Hirshberg, president of Green Building Supply, in Fairfield, Iowa. Pigments have improved too, allowing for a broader palette of some 170 stay-true tints.

Linoleum’s smooth, water-resistant surface is comfortable underfoot, and its natural ingredients shrug off dirt and bacteria, making it the floor of choice for hospitals, schools, and libraries. All that in an easy-to-clean, budget-friendly package that’s priced comparably with higher-end vinyl but has green cred that newer material can’t match.

Here’s the lowdown on lino and how to put this hardworking surface to use in your home’s most demanding rooms.

RECIPE FOR A “GREEN” FLOOR

Linseed oil (1) gives linoleum its name; a Latin mash-up of *linum* (flax) and *oleum* (oil). Other components are cork dust (2), wood flour (3), pine resin (4), ground limestone (5), and pigments (6) pressed onto a jute backing (7).



VITALS

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Sheets and tiles run \$4 to \$6 per square foot and click-together pieces, \$7 to \$9. For a pro installation of sheets and tile, add an extra \$2 to \$4 per square foot.



DIY OR HIRE A PRO

Sheet flooring requires a pro, and even an experienced DIYer may find it tricky to glue down tiles. Click-together linoleum was designed for DIYers.

WILL IT LAST?

Linoleum can wear for decades when properly installed and maintained.

HOW MUCH CARE?

Moderate—damp-mop with a pH-neutral cleanser recommended by the manufacturer. Because it's porous, linoleum now comes sealed with a UV-cured factory finish that also makes it water resistant. The finish is not covered under warranty; you can expect about five to eight years of normal wear before it needs to be refreshed with a buffer or a liquid polish.

WHERE TO BUY IT

Flooring retailers and green-building suppliers

A third color adds a twist to the classic two-tone checkerboard pattern in this kitchen. Forbo Click in Van Gogh, Sky Blue, and Silver Shadow, starting at \$7 per square foot; forboflooringna.com

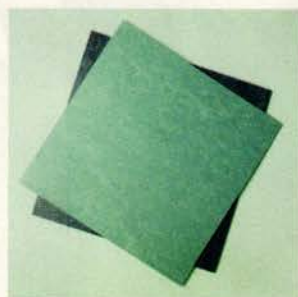
Linoleum three ways

Three major manufacturers—Forbo, Armstrong, and Tarkett—produce the lion's share of lino. Backings and installation techniques differ, depending on the type



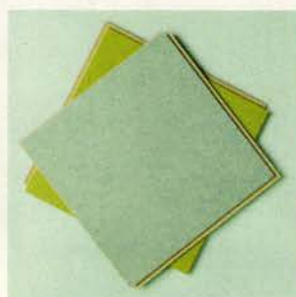
SHEETS

Sheets 6½ feet wide and backed with jute can be laid over any properly prepared level subfloor, above or below grade, as long as no moisture can penetrate. After being glued down with a water-based adhesive, sheets are flattened with a 100-pound roller. Keep the floor clear of heavy furniture for three days to avoid creating dents.



MODULAR TILES

Tiles generally come in 10-by-10-inch and 20-by-20-inch squares, as well as 10-by-20-inch rectangles. The backing is polyester instead of jute, for dimensional stability. The edges are slightly beveled, so the pieces fit together tightly, making seams all but invisible. Installation is the same as for sheet linoleum.



CLICK-TOGETHER TILES

For this DIY-friendly option, linoleum is glued to water-repellent, high-density wax-sealed fiberboard with a cork backing in 12-by-12-inch squares and 12-by-36-inch panels. The tongue-and-groove pieces fit together without glue and can be laid over subfloors that aren't totally level; furniture can be replaced immediately.



THREE EASY PIECES

Modular tiles make it easy to put a pattern underfoot. Place 10-by-10-inch or 20-by-20-inch squares in a standard checkerboard or pitch them at a 45° angle. Use 10-by-20-inch rectangles in a chevron or subway-tile motif, combine them with squares for a basketweave, or blend different shapes for a design all your own.

Lino versus vinyl

By the 1920s, linoleum was a household staple, especially in kitchens. It began to slip from favor in the '60s thanks to vinyl being pitched to harried housewives as “no wax” flooring. Back then, vinyl was made with a top coat, while lino had to be site-finished and required regular resealing with a liquid wax. Many people still use *vinyl* and *linoleum* interchangeably, but while the resilient materials do have similarities, they differ in significant ways.

VINYL

PROS

- > Low maintenance
- > DIY-friendly
- > Waterproof
- > Vibrant colors and patterns

CONS

- > Nonrenewable material
- > Not recyclable
- > Can off-gas volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- > Not color-through, so patterns fade with wear

LINOLEUM

PROS

- > Renewable materials
- > Recyclable
- > Color goes all the way through the material
- > Naturally antistatic and antimicrobial

CONS

- > Most versions require pro installation
- > Water resistant, not waterproof
- > Linseed-oil smell when new
- > Needs resealing every five years or so

Pick your pattern

As these very different kitchens show, there's a style of linoleum to suit every taste

1 > COLOR-CODED Two different shades of sheet linoleum let you visually separate the work zone from the dining space. Similar to shown: Armstrong Marmorette in Oak Brown and Bamboo Tan, \$4 per sq. ft.*; armstrong.com for dealers

2 > BOLD BORDER Add dimension to a small space from the ground up by inseting a premade border inlay. Shown: Forbo Marmoleum in Bleekerstreet, \$6 per sq. ft., and New Traditions border, \$21 per lin. ft.; forboflooringna.com for dealers

3 > COTTAGE CARPET This casual cook space is livened up by sheet linoleum in a trio of shades spliced together to create the look of a graphic rug. Similar to shown: Armstrong Marmorette in Turf, Melon Head, and Parchment Beige, \$4 per sq. ft.; armstrong.com for dealers

4 > STRIATED SQUARES Square click-together tiles in a linear design, arranged horizontally and vertically, create a basketweave pattern. Shown: Forbo Marmoleum Click in Trace of Nature, \$7 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com for dealers

5 > STRIKING STRIPES The foundation for this eat-in kitchen's casual vibe is the floor's simple wide stripes in cool blues and greens. Similar to shown: Johnsonite Harmonium Veneto sheet in Majestic, Lakeside, and Sherwood, \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com for dealers

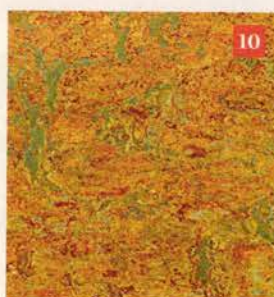
6 > STARBURST INLAY Custom hand-cut inlays—like this eye-popping starburst made by Kyla Coburn Designs, Central Falls, Rhode Island—can be created using tile and sheet linoleum. Search online for a local linoleum artisan. Similar to shown: Forbo Marmoleum in Bleekerstreet, Black Hole, and Cloudy Sand, \$6 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com for dealers

*Prices do not include installation.



Choose your color

Linoleum has always been available in rich, saturated colors with graphic or swirly patterns. But modern manufacturing is creating brighter color combos as well as more neutral tones closer to stone, tile, and wood



1] PURPLE A muddled plum in matte. Marmoleum Modular 10-by-10-inch and 20-by-20-inch squares and 10-by-20-inch rectangles.* Starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

2] CHERRY RED A rich wine red with hints of pink. Marmorette sheets, \$4 per sq. ft.; armstrong.com

3] CHARTREUSE A variegated, reflective green. Marmoleum Modular 10-by-10-inch and 20-by-20-inch squares and 10-by-20-inch rectangles, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

4] CARLSBAD Stone-like gray with clouds of white. Harmonium Veneto sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

5] ORANGE SHIMMER Concrete gray with hints of tangerine. Marmoleum Modular 10-by-10-inch and 20-by-20-inch squares and 10-by-20-inch rectangles, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

6] LEMON ZEST A cheery marbled yellow. Marmoleum Modular 10-by-10-inch and 20-by-20-inch squares and 10-by-20-inch rectangles. Starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

7] COLOUR STREAM A torrent of colors. Marmoleum Striato sheets, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

8] STRAWBERRY FIELDS A radiant red with dashes of white. Marmoleum Piano sheets, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

9] DURANGO A limestone-like mix of earth tones and soft blue. Harmonium Veneto sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

10] ASIAN TIGER Rusty brown and orange with six other colors. Marmoleum Vivace sheets, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

11] PRINT White splattered with black. Artoleum Graphic sheets, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

12] WITHERED PRAIRIE Warm wood-like browns on a click-in cork backer. Marmoleum Click 12-by-12-inch squares and 12-by-36-inch panels, starting at \$7 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

13] BLOOMING A deep purple with some darker swirls. Harmonium Veneto sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

14] MESA Warm beiges reminiscent of travertine. Harmonium Veneto sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

15] SCENARIO A 1950s look: gray flecked with white and black. Artoleum Graphic sheets, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

16] SUMMER PUDDING The color of mashed berries. Marmoleum Modular 10-by-10-inch and 20-by-20-inch squares and 10-by-20-inch rectangles, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

17] ASTUTE A handsome mix of dark blue and black stripes. Harmonium Lenza sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

18] SHITAKE Marble-like movement in browns and tans. Marmoleum Click; 12-by-12-inch squares and 12-by-35-inch panels, starting at \$7 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

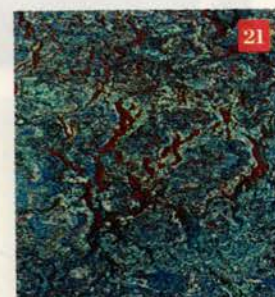
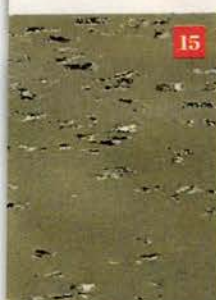
19] CLOUD NINE A cream tile dappled with bright white. Harmonium Veneto sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

20] SPROUTING A light-green marble look. Harmonium Veneto sheets, about \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com

21] CHAGALL'S CIRCUS Mostly deep blue with browns and red. Marmoleum Vivace sheets, starting at \$5 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com

**Sizes of Forbo's Modular and Click tiles are nominal.*





Must-know install info

Proper installation is key to linoleum's durability

Because they're glued down and rolled flat, sheet and tile linoleum must go on over a perfectly flat surface—otherwise you'll end up with trapped air blisters or popping seams. That's why an experienced pro (or a "master mechanic," as they're known) should do the job. "But a homeowner can help by prepping the subfloor before installation," says Lane Brettschneider, of Lane's Floor Coverings & Interiors, in New York City. Using a trowel, fill holes, seams, and other imperfections with a portland-cement-based compound, then sand smooth. Sweep clean or vacuum with a beater brush. A dry surface is also crucial. If installing linoleum over new concrete or on a below- or on-grade slab, take a moisture reading with a relative humidity probe (available at home centers); you may need to install a vapor barrier. Because linoleum responds to changes in temperature and humidity, let it acclimate in your space for at least two days before installation, at a minimum room temperature of 68°F.

Looking to DIY click-together tiles or planks? You needn't worry about leveling the subfloor. But do let tiles or planks acclimate for two days before installation. When clicking tiles together, "it's all about the angle," says Green Building Supply's Joel Hirshberg. "Find that sweet spot—about a 15-degree to 20-degree angle—push down slightly, and the tiles will snap into place." For a full install how-to, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015.

Easy floor fix

Linoleum is tough stuff, but if it's ever gouged or dented, a DIY repair is easy—as long as you save a remnant after installation. Shave slivers off the scrap with a sharp utility blade. Grind them up with a mortar and pestle, then mix with clear-drying wood glue to form a paste. Overfill the damaged area with the paste and let dry overnight. Sand off the excess with 250-grit or finer aluminum-oxide paper until the repair is flush with the surface, then reseal with the manufacturer's proprietary floor finish.

GOOD TO KNOW Linoleum's hallmark marble patterns help hide dirt, especially when they're a blend of two or more earth tones. The swirls do a better job than most solid hues at hiding crumbs, spots, pet hair, and scratches.



Install click-together tiles at a 15- to 20-degree angle and they'll snap right in.



BOLD BORDERS

Forbo does the stenciled-on border designs of vintage sheet linoleum one better with inlaid strips of individually cut pieces that are crisper and longer wearing. They also allow for more detail. From \$21 per linear foot

Where to use it

Lino can go anywhere, though certain formats lend themselves to particular spaces

1 > BATH Linoleum is mildew resistant and can stand up to moisture. But it's not waterproof, so a sheet is best in baths because it has fewer seams. It's typically run up the base of the wall a bit, with a curve, so that water can't get underneath. Can go over radiant heat if the surface temperature doesn't exceed 85°F. Similar to shown: Johnsonite Harmonium Veneto in Lighthouse, \$2.50 per sq. ft.; www.tarkettna.com for dealers

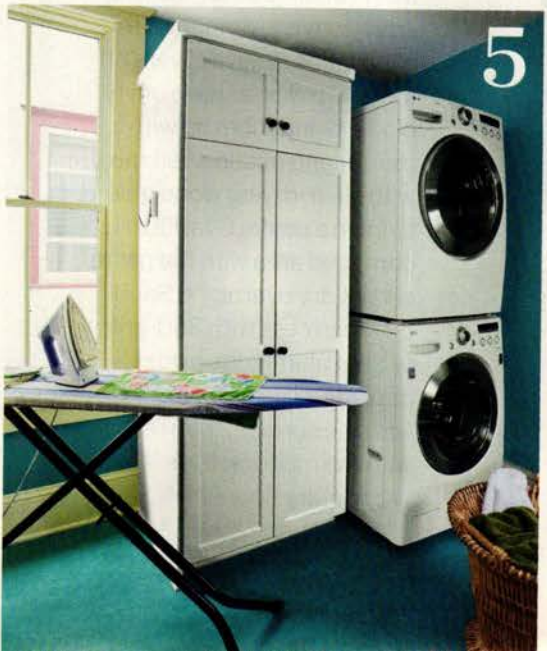
2 > ENTRYWAY Because it repels dirt and cleans easily, linoleum is great for heavily trafficked areas. Feel free to use light colors. Shown: Forbo Click panels in White Cliffs and Pacific Beaches, \$9 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com for dealers

3 > FAMILY ROOM Color combos are unlimited, making linoleum ideal for jazzing up an informal space. Shown: Forbo Click panels in Walnut, Red Copper, Camel, and Silver Birch, \$7 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com for dealers

4 > OFFICE Wheels glide smoothly over linoleum, so you can protect a wood floor by using a remnant under a rolling chair. Similar to shown: Armstrong Marmorette sheet in Stars at Night, \$4 per sq. ft.; armstrong.com for dealers

5 > LAUNDRY ROOM Tolerant of dirt and muck and fine over concrete or a single layer of another resilient flooring—provided it's smooth and dry—linoleum is a smart choice for utility spaces. Mudrooms, shops, and finished basements are other prime spots. Similar to shown: Armstrong Marmorette sheet in Bluebird, \$4 per sq. ft.; armstrong.com for dealers

6 > PLAYROOM Tough enough for whatever your kids can dish out, and antimicrobial to boot, linoleum is an excellent choice for a child's space. Plus, its antistatic properties repel pet hair, so furry family members are more than welcome. Shown: Forbo Click in Barbados, Pineapple, and Lime, \$7 per sq. ft.; forboflooringna.com for dealers



The rug revival

At one time, linoleum manufacturers dedicated catalogs to these low-maintenance coverings

In the 1890s, Frederick Walton began to broaden the appeal of his wonder flooring by incorporating patterns created with a stencil or block-printed with wood. Produced in standard rug sizes, typically with a border around the main motif, these floor coverings were marketed as a low-cost, easy-care alternative to wool carpets. They became all the rage, taking linoleum beyond the kitchen and bath to the dining room and living room with ornate Orientals, colorful florals, and jazzy geometrics. While genuine vintage specimens are scarce, a new generation of artists, including Christopher Stearns, of Westling Design, in Seattle, are creating modern versions. Stearns hand-cuts pieces of linoleum, then glues them to the reverse (paper) side of sheet vinyl and binds them with a black-rubber "reducer," as shown. A foam rug pad goes underneath for a cushiony feel. A custom-made rug starts at \$35 per square foot; westlingdesign.com.



Linoleum rectangles come together to form a colorful, carefree rug. The sloped reducer edging prevents tripping.

What about "bloom?"

Linoleum oxidizes even after the floor is in place, which makes it harder and more durable over time. But that same oxidation process can also give linoleum a yellowish cast, called ambering or bloom. Most noticeable right after manufacture, the discoloration goes away once linoleum is exposed to natural or artificial light. The brighter the light, the faster the bloom fades. In areas that light doesn't reach—say, under furniture—the ambering remains until those areas are exposed, when it will fade to match the surrounding floor.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

After installation, use a buffing machine with a recommended pH-neutral cleaner to gently scrub the floor and preserve the finish, something a pro charges about \$3 per sq. ft. for. Repeat this every few years to restore the top coat's luster; it might also require a liquid polish, depending on the manufacturer. Damp-mop with the same cleaner or a mild dish soap mixed with water for everyday dirt. In cases of extreme wear, a pro can sometimes strip, then reapply a finish for about \$6 per sq. ft.

MORE USES FOR LINOLEUM

Think outside the box—and off the floor—with this versatile product

WALLS > Rigid Lincrusta sheets, another Frederick Walton invention in the 19th century, adorned the walls of many a Victorian home. But don't let the intricately embossed designs fool you: This stuff is hard-wearing yet easy to clean, and you can paint it. No wonder it still holds appeal as wainscot, a full wallcovering, and for decorative friezes.



COUNTERTOPS > Linoleum makes a smooth, comfortable counter surface; you may have seen it at the checkout of your local Whole Foods. Made from sheeting, it's often given a metal or wood-strip banded edge. While not ideal for food-prep areas, where it could accidentally be cut by a knife, its antibacterial properties make it a natural for the kitchen—a nice retro touch for a breakfast bar or other dining area.

DESKS AND TABLES > Although not advertised to the residential market, linoleum-topped desks, tables, and even bulletin boards have long been a staple in offices, hotels, and other commercial institutions. Having lino installed? Hang on to a remnant to create a stylish, carefree work surface. ■

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47

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

Q

Can you tell me the colors and brand of paint in the laundry room on page 17 of the April 2014 issue?

—PAULA HUFF, LAKEVIEW, ARK.

A

We get these requests all the time from readers who fall in love with a color they've seen. Even where we do pinpoint the maker and hue, the variation in printing and the light in your room will likely result in confounded expectations. Here's a safer approach: Take the page to a paint store and find paint chips that match. The store can then mix up samples for you to test at home.

—THE EDITORS

*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

We'd like to build a short stone wall next to our flagstone patio. How far down do we need to dig?

—JONATHON HOTZ, RESTON, VA.



After Roger Cook digs the trench for a mortared stone wall, he tamps the soil at the bottom of the trench with a plate compactor. It's the first of many times it will be used to form a stable base for the wall.

ROGER COOK REPLIES: It all depends on how the wall is built. If it's held together with mortar, it will need a well-tamped base of crushed stone that reaches below the frost line. Without that base, even a slight heave of the soil during freezing weather can crack the mortar. A dry-stack wall, which doesn't use mortar, can move with the soil as it swells and settles with the seasons. For this type of wall, a crushed-stone base about 6 inches deep is sufficient.

For your project, I'd go with a mortared wall. It will hold up better than a dry-stacked one, given all the activity that low walls next to patios are subject to. And mortared walls are generally faster and easier to build than dry-stacked, even with the extra digging.

Start by calling 811 to have the location of the wall surveyed for buried pipes and wires. When you know it's okay to excavate, dig a trench 2 feet wider than the thickness of the wall down to the frost line established by your local building department. Tamp the ground at the bottom of the trench with a plate compactor, then line the sides and bottom with filter fabric to prevent fine soil particles from infiltrating the crushed stone and interfering with water drainage. Now dump in a 3- to 4-inch layer of ¾-inch crushed stone, shovel it level,

PHOTOS: (THIS PAGE) ANTHONY TIEULI; (OPPOSITE PAGE) WENDELL T. WEBBER

and settle it into place with the plate compactor. Continue adding and compacting 4-inch layers until the base is about 8 inches below grade. You can now build the wall.

But if either the ground or the patio is pitched toward the wall, hold off on the final layer and lay a 4-inch perforated drain pipe next to the filter fabric on one or both sides. It will intercept surface water and carry it to a dry well. Spread and tamp the last layer of crushed stone next to the pipe(s), then build the wall. For a step-by-step of the building process of a stone wall, go to thisoldhouse.com/sep2015.

When the wall is finished, cover the crushed stone with filter fabric and loam on the ground side and with tamped stone dust and



What is it?

A
Pipe caliper

B
Log stand

C
Ladder gripper

D
Miter clamp

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 90

flagstones on the patio side. The base will be hidden, but it's your guarantee that the visible part of the wall will remain intact.

Cure a popping floor

Two years ago, my daughter had engineered flooring glued down over a concrete slab that had minor dips and waves. Now when she walks on the low spots, the floor pops. Can we fill them in without removing the floor?

—JOE HARRIS, BOSTON, GA.

TOM SILVA REPLIES: Let me first say that no flooring does well if installed over an uneven surface. It's well worth taking the extra time beforehand to fill the low spots with patching or leveling compound because it saves headaches and repair time later on.

You can stop the pop without removing the flooring by using a polyurethane wood glue, such as Gorilla Glue (gorillatough.com). This type of glue foams as it cures, so after you inject it underneath the flooring it will fill the space.

To make the fix, first drill a hole or two through the floor near the center of the areas you want to fill. Each hole should be just big enough to fit the bottle's nozzle. Next, bore a shallow recess for a

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wood plug at each hole, taking care not to bore all the way through the flooring. You can make your own plugs out of scrap flooring; you just need a drill and a plug cutter. Or go online and buy matching plugs at bearwood.com.

With the wood plugs close at hand, squirt a generous amount of glue into the hole at the bottom of each recess. Immediately stick a plug into the recess to keep the glue from bubbling out. Wait 24 hours for the glue to cure, then put painter's tape around each plug to protect the flooring while you sand the plug flush. Dab some finish on it to match the rest of the floor, and remove the tape. That should hide the repair and keep the floor quiet.

What is it?

D Miter clamp

The Miter Clip, with its pointed teeth and locking jaws, applies steady pressure to both sides of glued outside miter joints and pops off easily after the glue sets. \$18; trimclip.com



Q Troubleshoot a dripping toilet

One of my toilets makes a dripping sound like it's leaking. I've checked under it and in the wall where the water comes out, but everything is dry. What now?

—JAMES DICKSON,
MURFREESBORO, TENN.

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES: If there's no evidence of any water outside your toilet, the dripping noise is probably coming from inside the tank. Try this simple test: Turn off the water supply to the tank, hold down the flush lever until the tank is empty, and listen for a drip. Dollars to doughnuts,

Stomping Out Burglary, One Home at a Time



Chad Laurans, founder and CEO of SimpliSafe, invented a smarter way to protect your home

How One Engineer Changed Home Security Forever

After finding his home burglarized, Chad Laurans knew he needed home security. But every alarm company he looked into wanted to charge him \$45 a month and lock him in a three year contract.


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you won't hear a thing.

There are only two ways for water to drip out of a tank: around the flapper valve or through the overflow tube. So while the tank is empty, take off its lid and inspect those two items. If the tube has a crack that extends below the tank's fill line—the mark on the tank showing what the water level should be when the tank is full—it will allow water to leak into the bowl. A cracked tube should be replaced. If that's not it, take off the flapper and inspect its underside. Any discoloration could indicate that the flapper isn't making a tight seal with the valve seat. Wipe off the flapper and the valve seat it fits into, and reinstall it.

Now turn the water supply back on and watch as the tank fills up. If the water reaches the rim of the overflow tube, water could be spilling over it. To fix this, adjust the float ball or float cup so that the fill valve shuts off the flow when the water reaches the fill line.

One more thing: If there's a little float on the flapper's chain, make sure the float sits at the fill line when the tank is full. A submerged float could lift the flapper valve slightly and prevent it from making a tight seal.

I'm fairly sure that one of these fixes will put an end to the dripping.

Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

Go to: thisoldhouse.com/asktoh

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



To ensure a good crop of grass on bare ground, Roger broadcasts about 5 pounds of seed for every 600 square feet, then works it into the soil with the back of a leaf rake.

Q Lawn woes

Three years ago, I leveled a low spot in the lawn with 1 to 2 inches of topsoil, and now grass won't grow there. I reseed the spot in the spring, but it doesn't come back after the winter. What should I do?

—STEVE MONTONE, WINDSOR, N.Y.

ROGER COOK REPLIES: It's really not that difficult to grow healthy turf from seed, as long as you provide the right conditions for it to germinate and thrive.

Maybe there's something wrong with the soil you used. Grass prefers topsoil rich in organic matter and with a pH between 6 and 7. A soil test will tell you whether you need to amend or replace what you have.

Or maybe you inadvertently planted an annual ryegrass, which doesn't survive the winter. Look for a cool-season perennial species, such as tall fescue or Kentucky bluegrass, and don't forget to check the date on the bag to make sure the seed is fresh.

The real problem, I suspect, is your timing. You'll probably have better luck if you plant the seeds in the early fall, when rainfall is plentiful, weeds are in decline, the ground is warm, and the air is

cooler. Just provide consistent moisture during the four to six weeks it takes for the seeds to sprout and become established, and you'll be rewarded with a thick stand of fresh green seedlings that should bounce back next spring.

Or plant sod, if you don't mind the expense, and water it liberally until its roots take hold.

Q Elms gone wild

The roots of our Siberian elm tree have run amok. They are growing mostly along the top of the soil and sending up little elm trees wherever they go. We don't want to lose the tree, but the roots and shoots are ruining our yard. What can we do?

—CAROL NOATES, LAS VEGAS

KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES: I took your question to Tchukki Andersen, a board-certified master arborist with the Tree Care Industry Association. Here's her advice.

"All tree roots are looking for an ideal mix of moisture and oxygen. Most find it underground, but where rain is scarce and the soil highly compacted—typical conditions in Las Vegas—roots will be happier along the surface.

"Cut off the suckers—the little trees sprouting from the roots—and spray the cuts with a growth inhibitor such as Sucker-Stopper RTU (treestuff.com) to keep them from coming back.

"As for the roots, cover the area under the branches with about 3 to 4 inches of composted mulch. 'Composted' is important: It means the mulch has been broken down by microbes and will add fertility to the soil. So is the thickness: More than 4 inches of mulch could starve the roots of oxygen and kill the tree."



More great stuff

Of the many new tools, materials, and other home-improvement products that we discover every month, here are the standouts. —THE EDITORS



Look, Ma, one hand!

SD cordless screwdriver, by Worx

Thanks to the screw-gripping arms near the tip of this tool, you can drive and back out fasteners one-handed. And there's no hunting for the right bit: A built-in revolver-style cassette keeps six of them always at the ready. Makes a handy addition to the kitchen drawer. \$40; worx.com



Stop sanding

Oil Bond paint additive, by Latex Agent

With this additive, you don't have to sand and prime before painting oil-based coatings. Simply wipe it on to clean and degloss the old finish. Wait an hour for it to dry, then mix some into your choice of latex top coat. The additive in the paint chemically cross-links with the wiped-on coat, creating a firm bond. Perfect for encapsulating lead-based paint. \$15 per quart; latexagent.com



See the heat

Thermal imaging camera, by Seek
With this thumb-size device, it's easier and less expensive than ever to pinpoint air leaks, buried pipes, water damage, insect infestations, or even malfunctioning wiring (above). Mounted on a smartphone, the camera captures infrared energy and translates it into colorful heat signatures displayed on the phone's screen. \$249; thermal.com



Clever window

Next Generation Ultimate Double Hung, by Marvin

The sash lock looks as traditional as the rest of the window, but it engages the jambs through a hidden mechanism in the rail. A quick turn opens both sashes, which lock automatically when shut. To tilt the sash in for cleaning, push the lock's button. These are a few of the many smart features in this well-designed unit. Starts at \$369; marvin.com



One tube to glue them all

Gorilla construction adhesive, by Gorilla Glue

The unique hybrid chemistry of this muscular adhesive allows it to grab within 30 seconds, cure within a day, and bond to nearly everything, including wood, metal, foam, and concrete. Because it cures due to moisture in the air, not an evaporating solvent, it doesn't shrink and doesn't stink. Use it indoors or out; it's paintable, waterproof, and UV-resistant. \$8 for a 9-ounce tube; gorillatough.com

Hiding in plain sight

TV-mount wall safe, by Cannon

Stash your valuables in a wall safe that doubles as an articulating mount for a flat-screen TV. An electronic keypad opens the ½-inch-thick steel-and-gypsum drop-down door, giving access to the upholstered 8½-inch-wide by 3½-inch-deep safe. It's lighted by two LEDs and has a secret compartment under its false bottom. \$412; cannonsecurityproducts.com





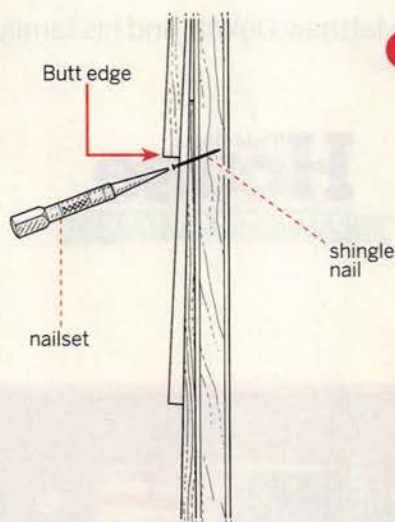
Norm's tricks of the trade

Q Some cedar shingles are missing on one side of my house. Is there a way to replace them without re-siding the whole wall?

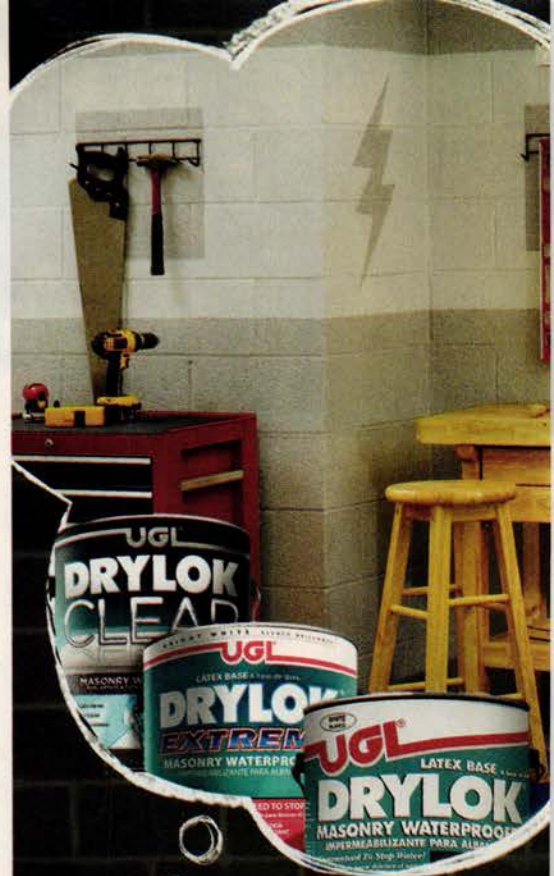
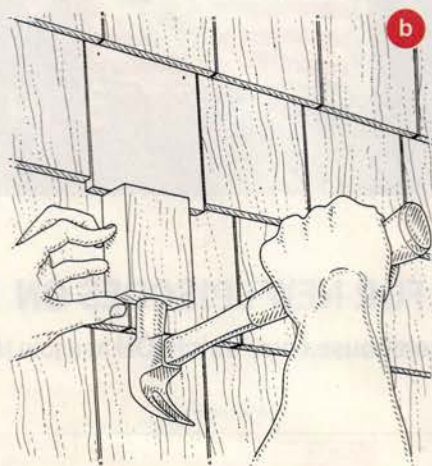
—DAVID MYERS, NESCONSET, N.Y.

A If the rest of the siding is still in good shape, you certainly can install new shingles where needed. But how do you keep the nailheads out of sight when you reach the top course? Here's the trick.

1] Prep the opening. Get a box of top-grade shingles the same length and wood species as the others on the wall. Pound any exposed nails flush. If nails are hiding under the course above, cut them off with a hacksaw blade or a recip saw, or pull them out with a shingle ripper, like the one made by Dasco (dascopro.com). Now trim a replacement shingle to fit tight between the neighboring shingles.



2] Nail and tap. Slip the shingle under the course above until its lower edge—the butt edge—is about 1/4 inch below the butt edges of its neighbors. Hammer a pair of shingle nails—each one placed at least 3/4 inch from the shingle's sides—at an upward angle just below the butt edge of the upper course [a]. Use a nailset to tap the nailheads against the shingle without marring the course above. Now put a scrap of wood under the new shingle's butt edge [b] and tap the scrap until that edge is flush with the other shingles in its course. As you do so, the shingle will push the nails up slightly, tucking them neatly out of sight under the upper course. ■



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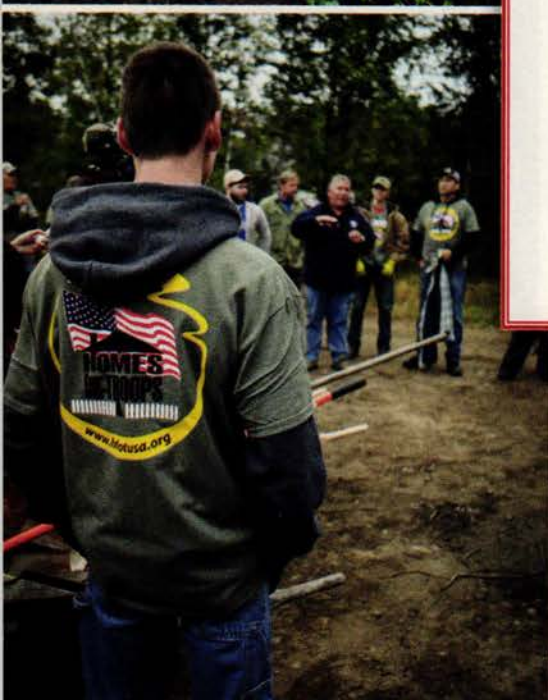
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Photos: Kevin O'Connor

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Directory

SEPTEMBER 2015

COVER: See the listing for *Before + After Kitchen*.

HOME SOLUTIONS (pp. 13–24) **Salvaged-mantel headboard:** Fabric (in-store only), foam and batting: joann.com. **Colorful fall blooms:** Thanks to Thomas Christopher, coauthor of *Essential Perennials*; timberpress.com.

BEFORE + AFTER KITCHEN: **Character study** (pp. 27–29) **Plumbing contractor:** Billy Baker, St. Simons Island, GA; 912-638-6399. **Ceiling fan and faux-tin backsplash:** lowes.com. **Light fixture:** homedepot.com.

BEFORE + AFTER PORCH: **From plain to period-perfect** (pp. 31–32) **Designer-builder:** Rick Dubrow (builder) and Cindi Landreth (designer), A-1 Builders and Adaptations Design Studio, Bellingham, WA; 360-734-5249; a1builders.ws. **Garden consultant:** Ginny Crump, Kent's Garden & Nursery, Bellingham, WA; 360-384-4433. **Rug:** dashandalbert.com. **Throw:** ilbean.com. **Furniture:** Swansons Nursery, Seattle, WA; 206-782-2543; swansonsnursery.com. **Oil painting:** Margot Clemmens (homeowner).

PAINT IDEAS: **Two-tone treatment** (p. 35) **Designer:** Matthew Mead; holidaywithmatthew mead.com. **Sprayer:** wagnerflexio.com. **Paint:** DE 5520 Crocodile Tears and DE 5745 Barrier Reef; californiapaints.com.

PHOTOSHOP REDO: **Coloring inside the lines** (pp. 39, 41) Thanks to Bob Buckter, Architectural Color Design, San Francisco, CA; 415-922-7444; drcolor.com. **Gray blue:** C48-4 Silver Blueberry, C52-2 Rendezvous, D48-5 Blue Cloud, C35-6 Bordeaux, and D17-5 Granite; olympic.com. **Warm khaki:** Mississippi Mud 710D-5, Gobi Desert 710-C, Chianti S-H-150, Agave Frond 490F-6, and Butternut Wood 710D-6; behr.com. **Creamy yellow:** 46YY 86/166 Popcorn White, 30YY 63/231 Golden Bamboo, 50YR 16/295 Classic Brick Red, 50BB 08/171 Rich Navy, and 20YY 18/140 Le Chateau Brown; glidden.com.

HISTORIC HUES: **All the Presidents' paints** (pp. 43–45) **Monticello:** Ralph Lauren Paint's Monticello Yellow was discontinued as of press time; bring your copy of *TOH* to your local paint store for a close match. **Montpelier:** 2161-40 Acorn Yellow (walls) and CW-30 Market Square Shell (trim); benjaminmoore.com. **Lincoln Home:** Find the custom formulas at thisoldhouse.com. Similar to shown: 6116 Tatami Tan (siding), 0045 Antiquarian Brown (trim), and 6454 Shamrock (shutters); sherwin-williams.com. **Mount Vernon:** Porcelain Edge MV14 (walls), New Room White MV120 (trim and wainscot), and Large Dining Room Green MV1 (frieze); finepaintsofeurope.com. **JFK National Historic Site:** Find the custom formulas at thisoldhouse.com. PM-11 Essex Green (shutters). Similar to shown: AF-700 Storm

(siding) and OC-95 Navajo White (trim); benjaminmoore.com.

BOOK LOOK: **Wallpaper with a twist** (pp. 46–47) **On the ceiling:** Charlton Paisley T9017; thibautdesign.com. **Bumpout accent:** Brockhampton Star BP 532; us.farrow-ball.com. **Layered look:** Etosha T1866 (zebra print) and Corsica T3658 (grasscloth); thibautdesign.com.

COLOR! 50 BOOSTS UNDER \$100 (pp. 62–69) Thanks to Sue Wadden, color marketing and design manager, Sherwin-Williams; sherwin-williams.com.

HOUSE OF HARD KNOCKS (pp. 70–77) **Porch:** **Light fixture and furniture:** lowes.com. **Living room:** **Sconces:** homedepot.com. **Rug:** ikea.com. **Dining room:** **Pendant light fixture:** overstock.com. **Wallpaper:** lowes.com. **Rug:** flor.com. **Curtains:** ikea.com. **Kitchen:** **Sink:** ikea.com. **Vinyl floor tile:** Armstrong; homedepot.com. **Faux-tin backsplash:** lowes.com. **Countertops:** lumberliquidators.com. **Dishwasher:** craigslist.com. **Bedroom:** **Dresser:** craigslist.com. **Bathroom:** **Tile:** homedepot.com. **Brackets and shelves (stair risers):** lowes.com. **Faucet:** pfisterfaucets.com. **Curtain fabric:** DwellStudio; joann.com.

ALL ABOUT LINOLEUM FLOORING (pp. 78–85) Thanks to Lane Brettschneider, Lane's Floor Coverings & Interiors, New York, NY; lanes-carpets.com. Joel Hirshberg, Green Building Supply; greenbuildingsupply.com. Dave Paulson, Forbo Flooring Systems; forboflooringna.com. Jeremy Salomon, Tarkett; www.tarketta.com. Carol Swedlow, Aronson's Floor Covering, New York, NY; aronsonsfloors.com. Rafael Ventura, New Vision Floors, Whittier, CA; newvisionfloors.com.

ASK THIS OLD HOUSE (pp. 87–93) **Q+A: Elms gone wild:** Thanks to Tchukki Andersen, Staff Arborist, Tree Care Industry Association, Londonderry, NH; 800-733-2622; tcia.org. ■

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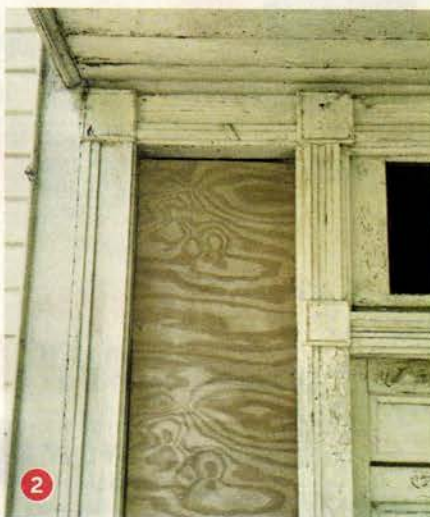
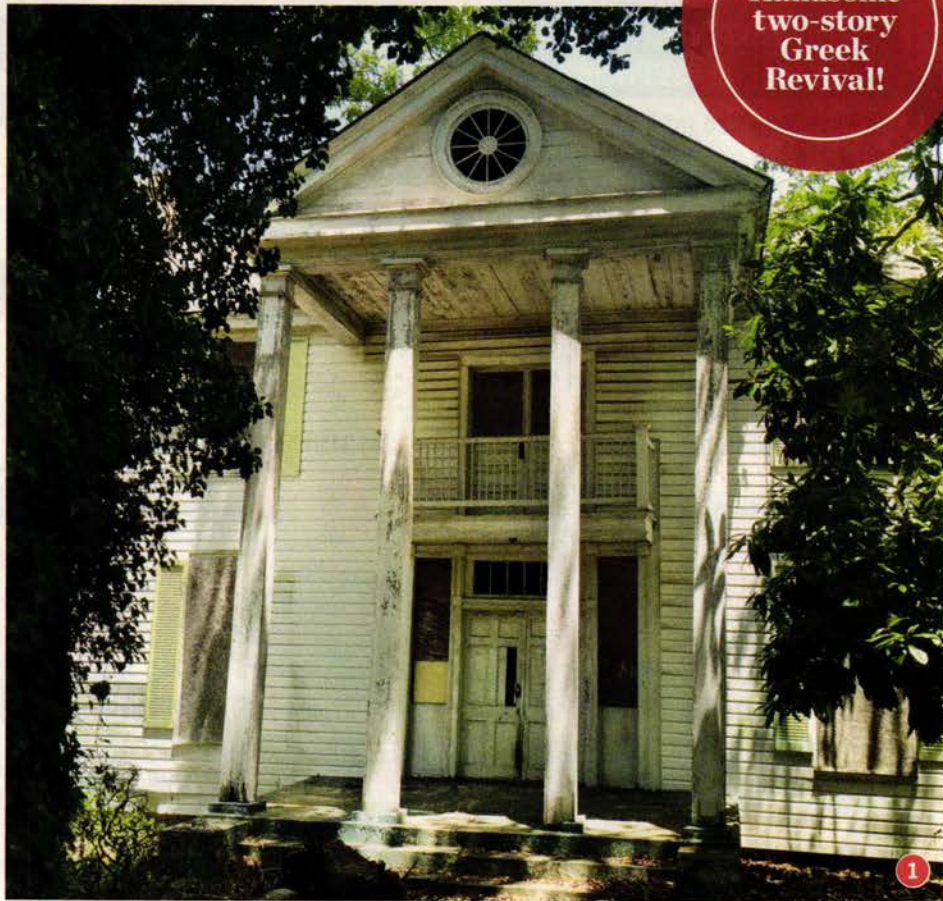
THE HISTORY First named Mount Ariel, the village of Cokesbury was founded in 1824 as a Methodist outpost with visions of a utopian future. Sadly, that vision was short-lived, but 30 years later the community was revived with the founding of an all-female Masonic college. This house, built around that time, likely served as a residence for school faculty. Although the women's college was followed by a string of other area schools, there's no longer a college in the town. The property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, and the house has been vacant since then.

WHY SAVE IT? The two-story bears the hallmark triangular pediment of the Greek Revival style, supported by square columns. A small balcony crowns double front doors, which have sidelights and a transom. Inside, simple but elegant molding adorns the six fireplaces, and stepped casings surround many of the doors and windows.

WHAT IT NEEDS The home had been updated with new plumbing and electrical, but those upgrades were torn out in a previous (unfinished) remodel and will have to be added. The basic structure is sound, and the roof is in good shape. Inside, most of the original heart-pine floors are in relatively good condition, though all need refinishing; the walls are beyond repair in parts. But this classical house nestled in a rural area an hour and a half from Columbia is primed for a forward-looking rehab—all it needs is the right owner to help usher it along.

—MEGAN BAKER

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1. A grand, full-height entry porch, typical of Greek Revival homes in the South, gives presence to the otherwise plain facade. The second-floor balcony is accessed through a set of double doors.
2. Stepped molding around the front door matches casings inside the house.
3. Three separate chimneys—two on the sides and one in the back—serve six fireplaces. Paneled mantels echo the charming no-frills style of the home.



GOT A HOUSE?

If you know of an old house that should be saved and is for sale, write to savethisoldhouse@timeinc.com or This Old House, 135 West 50th Street, New York, NY 10020.