

KITCHENS & BATHS

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Midcentury kitchen makeover

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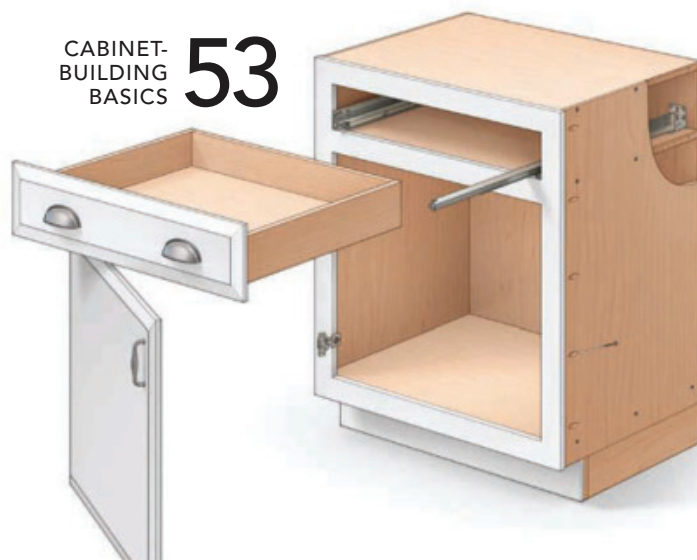
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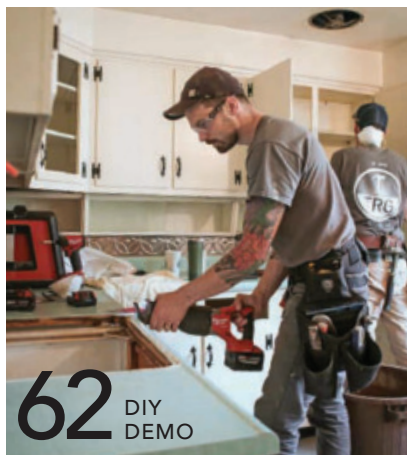
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KITCHEN
MAKEOVER



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SUPER
CUSTOM



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DIY
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A BATH
LIKE A
SPA

IN EVERY ISSUE

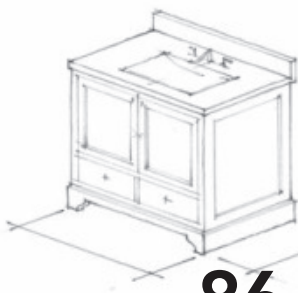
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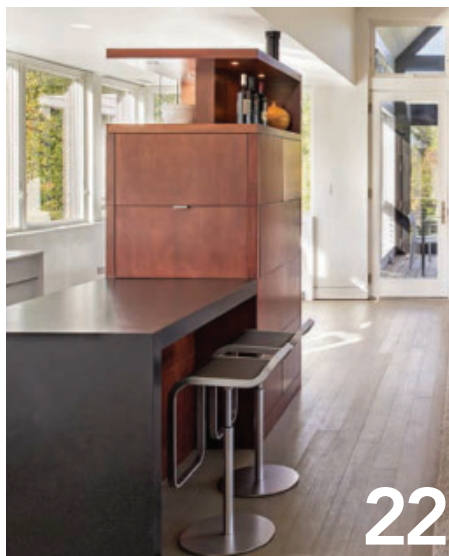
Custom burner layout, Intimate kitchen workstation, Smart cooktop, Pendant rises to the occasion, Teak shower bench, Secret faucet feature, Metal shower pans, Prefab pizza oven, Beautifully textured basins, Modern artisanal tiles



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Wood and stone island, Mixing materials in the kitchen, Counter intelligence, Multipurpose storage and seating, Cutting-board food disposal, Sink as sculpture, Closet conversion, Ultra organized vanity



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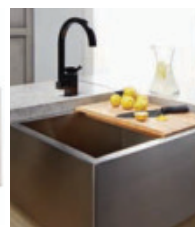
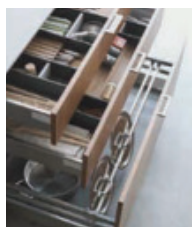
Picture perfect

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Tyler Grace, remodeling contractor



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GREAT NEW
PRODUCTS



ON THE COVER: Architect Joana Tan Jamo remodeled a former great room to bring function and traditional style back to this kitchen. Learn more on pp. 38-41. Photo by Marleen Cafarelli.



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BARN-STYLE
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2018 Call for Entries

It's a year away, but we're already scouting for the next issue of *Kitchens & Baths*. We're interested in new or recently remodeled projects of every style from all over the country. And we're not looking only for big, luxuriant kitchens and baths; well-designed projects built on a tight budget are dear to our hearts. But big or small, expensive or thrifty, they must be highly functional and beautifully crafted.

Send us floor plans, before and after photos, and a brief description explaining which aspects of your project might be interesting to our readers. We prefer online submissions at FineHomebuilding.com/kitchen-bath-submissions. We are also happy to receive email submissions at fhcallforentries@taunton.com or to review CDs or hard copies of your materials, which you can send to *Kitchens & Baths*, *Fine Homebuilding*, 63 S. Main St., P.O. Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506.



FineHomebuilding.com/kitchen-bath-submissions
ENTRIES DEADLINE FEBRUARY 16, 2018



Kitchens & Baths slideshow

Check out our gallery of additional photos from all the kitchen and bath projects featured in this issue.



The best and worst in bathroom trends

In Episode 68, the guys discuss popular design details such as floating vanities, shower windows, fancy sinks, and more.



Help with kitchen cabinets

If you want to build or install kitchen cabinets, start by checking out our collection of the best articles on the subject.

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Fine Homebuilding: (ISSN: 1096-360X) is published bimonthly, with a special 7th issue in the spring and a special 8th issue in the fall, by The Taunton Press, Inc., Newtown, CT 06470-5506. Telephone: 203-426-8171. Periodicals postage paid at Newtown, CT 06470 and at additional mailing offices. GST paid registration #123210981.

Subscription Rates: U.S., \$37.95 for one year, \$65.95 for two years, \$93.95 for three years. Canada, \$40.95 for one year, \$71.95 for two years, \$102.95 for three years (GST included, payable in U.S. funds). Outside the U.S./Canada: \$55 for one year, \$98 for two years, \$141 for three years (payable in U.S. funds). Single copy U.S., \$7.99. Single copy Canada, \$8.99.

Postmaster: Send all UAA to CFS. (See DMM 707.4.12.5)

Non-postal and Military Facilities: Send address corrections to Fine Homebuilding, PO Box 37610, Boone, IA 50037-0610

Canada Post: Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Fine Homebuilding c/o Worldwide Mailers, Inc., 2835 Kew Drive, Windsor, ON N8T 3B7.

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contributors

THE VOICES OF EXPERIENCE



JOANA TAN JAMO, AIA, ("Old School," pp. 38-41) is principal architect and owner at JTJ Architects, LLC in Woodbury, Conn. She is a graduate of McGill University's School of Architecture in Montreal and the London Business School. Joana lived and worked in Singapore, Canada, and Europe before settling down in rural Connecticut in 2000. She seeks to help homeowners realize their dreams of a happier, healthier, and more efficient living environment.

ROB SANDERS, AIA, ("More Midcentury," pp. 68-71) received a Bachelor of Architecture from Cornell University in 1981 and pursued additional studies at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. A resident of Wilton, Conn., he founded Rob Sanders Architects, LLC in 2003. Rob is involved in a number of civic organizations, including the Wilton Center Design Committee, the Wilton Library Association, and Ogden House, an HUD-subsidized housing facility.



Designer **JACQUELINE FORTIER** ("Full of Personality," pp. 30-34) bridges the gap between architecture and interior design in many of her building and remodeling projects. "Much of what I do, now that architectural plans are drawn with computers," she says, "is replace the hard, straight lines with elegance, character, and an element of surprise." Now based in St. Paul, Minn., Fortier previously lived and worked in New York and Los Angeles.

STEVE CAMPBELL ("A Family Affair," pp. 72-73) received his Bachelor of Architecture at the School of Architecture and Interior Design at the University of Cincinnati in 1990. In 2001, he joined The Johnson Partnership in Seattle, Wa., where he is involved in all phases of a project, from schematic design through construction. His architectural interests include exploring sustainable practices as well as the use of computers and 3D modeling to improve architectural design.



write an article

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Home Decorators Collection Brookfield Kitchen in Pacific White

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Design is in the details

For years now, we've been publishing a similar story line. It goes something like this: "Todd and Sarah loved their home, but their kitchen was old, cramped, and disconnected from the rest of the house. There was too little storage and no place for family and friends to gather. When they called me to design their remodel, it was clear that they wanted a great room with a more social kitchen." I made up this particular story for the sake of this note, but it's not far from the introductions to countless articles on kitchen design.

In "Old School," on page 38, however, you'll meet Jean and Ellen, who tell a different tale. They had a "social kitchen," carved out of a great room, with plenty of space for guests to gather and wide open to the dining room and main living area of their home. They found cooking with everyone in the kitchen frustrating and working in the kitchen with the TV or music playing and people socializing to be very loud. Jean and Ellen asked their architect to move the kitchen away from the living space and make it more private and functional. We've been hearing from other homeowners, too, who describe their great rooms as clunky, cavernous, cold, and uncomfortable, lacking intimacy and coziness.

So, are social kitchens and great rooms actually a bad idea? No, they're not. But design is in the details, and open space, big islands with lots of stools, or simply knocking down the walls between the kitchen, dining room, and living area does not make a great room—just a big one. The purpose and area of each space still needs to be well defined with architectural cues and the kitchen still needs to function first as a workshop for the cook or cooks.

Coincidentally, this is what Asa Christiana found when he interviewed designers and architects for his article "Timeless by Design" on page 74. Their responses were less about style and more about function and flow, the details found on the floor plans. And, in a similar way, this is what Paul DeGroot and I discuss in "The Best in Modern Bath Design" on page 46. With all of today's beautiful tubs, tiles, vanities, sinks, and advanced building materials and the design options they make possible, it's easy to let shiny objects get in the way of good bath design.

So as you read this issue and admire the pretty kitchens and baths, try not to be too dazzled by the great view through the kitchen or the fancy sink in the bathroom. Instead, notice how everything is arranged to be comfortable and convenient. Notice how much effort was put toward custom storage. And look for the designer's restraint when it comes to colors, textures, and materials. Miles Davis said of jazz, "It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you don't play." That often seems to be true of kitchen and bath design, too.



—BRIAN PONTOLILO, design editor

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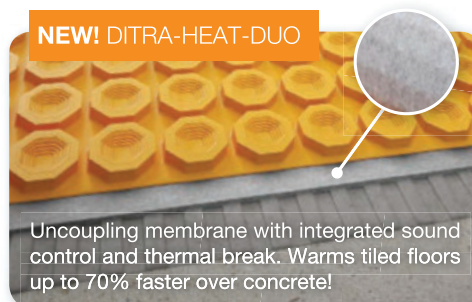
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How Can a Toilet System Help Combine Modern Convenience with Traditional Style?

The Lyke home – a 3,500-square-foot contemporary home completed in 2012 – is located in the upscale historic neighborhood in Houston called The Heights. It's a home that pays homage to tradition while giving the homeowners the design that accommodated their busy personal and business lifestyles.

The main section of the residence looks like the typical three-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bath home. Upon closer inspection, however, there is an artist's studio and a separate structure that functions as a hair salon business. With an ADA-compliant bathroom required to make the bathroom accessible for clients of the salon, Geberit became the system of choice. The Geberit system meets ADA requirements and offers the aesthetic richness of a clean, modern

look the homeowners were looking for. "I always wondered why residential construction in America did not use wall-hung toilets like I see in European hotels and occasionally in commercial applications in America," said homeowner Robert Lyke. "They are cleaner, quieter, and more attractive, and they take less space and maintenance."

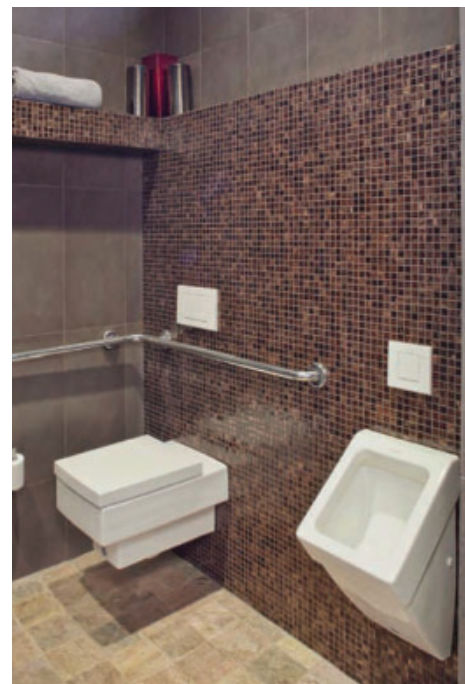
Solution: Geberit

With millions of installations throughout the world, the message was clear: Geberit in-wall systems allowed unique design without reductions in reliability, performance, installation flexibility, and maintenance. Taking the toilet off the floor changed everything.

Geberit in-wall systems offered one way to combine modern convenience with traditional style in bathrooms throughout the Lyke home, where a total of five wall-hung toilets, as well as a urinal, were installed. The salon powder room does double duty: it serves the pool area and is set up as a wet room with a shower. The wet room concept works well with wall-hung fixtures, which keep the entire floor clear for easy cleaning. The low-flow, earth-conscious aspect of the dual-flush toilets was a bonus. Every Geberit toilet system comes with dual-flush built in.

When the Houston chapter of the American Institute of Architects chose the Lyke residence as one of the stops on its home tour open to the public, Greg Swedberg, principal of 2Scale Architects, predicted that the Geberit Concealed Tank and Carrier System with wall-hung fixtures would be one of the most asked-about design components in the home — and he was right. Geberit in-wall systems captivated visitors to the home, just as they had caught Swedberg's eye from the start.

To learn more about how builders, architects, and designers are solving special bathroom construction problems with the help of Geberit, call 866-787-3924 and ask for a copy of *Inspire*, our reference projects magazine. Or visit Geberit on the web at → geberitnow.com/inspire

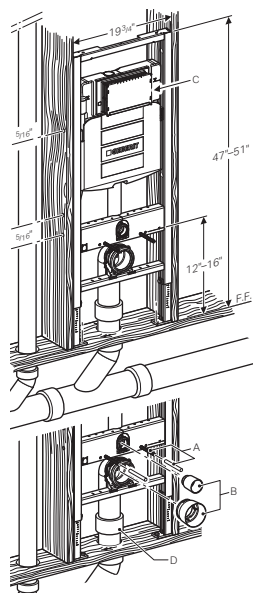


↑ The Lyke Home includes five Geberit in-wall systems for toilet and urinal.

↓ Geberit Toilet Systems give builders tremendous flexibility for their clients, offering benefits like easy cleaning and more clear space in the bathroom.



Easy Installation a Key Benefit



A Install 1/2" rods with plastic sleeves.
B Pipe plugs and
C mud guard during the rough-in installation
D Complete waste elbow connection with 3" DWV shielded coupling (D - provided) to waste pipe.

One of the benefits builders find attractive about the Geberit system besides its aesthetic appeal is the ease of installation and maintenance. The product ships complete with everything the builder needs. For example, installing the tank and carrier is simple because it's all one unit. After locating the carrier within the stud with the face plate flush with the front of the surrounding studs, anchor and bolt hole locations

are marked, as well as the location for the 3" DWV discharge pipe. Then the system is removed, holes are drilled, and a 4" hole is bored through the sole plate and floor to accommodate the discharge waste pipe. Once the discharge is installed through the floor and connected to the waste line, the system fits back into the framework and bolts in place.

SPEC

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BY ROB WOTZAK

COOKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Designed by a passionate Dutchman who longed for a more functional kitchen, PITT Cooking's independent gas burners take kitchen layout to a whole new level. Unlike the fixed grid of burners in a typical cooktop, PITT burners sit in individual holes in a countertop in a custom layout of your choosing (as long as they are at least 3³/₁₆ in. apart). This lets you match the burner spacing precisely to the way you cook. Plus, you get the striking combination of a professional-grade kitchen with a minimalist modern aesthetic.

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- Burners easily disassemble for cleaning
- Prices start at \$1200 (for a single burner)

pittcooking.com

Photos: courtesy of the manufacturers

FALL/WINTER 2017

15



INTIMATE KITCHEN WORKSTATION

Move the sink to the corner of a kitchen island and you instantly double the workspace around it. This seems like a simple solution, but it's one that designer Matthew Quinn has executed elegantly in the SocialCorner sink by Home Refinements. More than just for modern good looks, the flat sides take advantage of every available cubic inch, and the subtle creases in the bottom of the sink allow for ideal drainage. As with all Home Refinements collections, optional hardwood and stainless-steel accessories—such as colanders, cutting boards, and drying racks—easily attach to the SocialCorner, making it even more of a kitchen space saver.

- Brushed stainless steel
- 23-in., 29-in., and 35-in. right- or left-corner models
- \$2750 to \$2900

homerefinements.ca



CHANGE POTS AND PANS ON THE FLY

Orchestrating a multicourse meal is a snap with Thermador's Freedom Induction Cooktop. With an array of 48 induction elements replacing the static zones on a typical cooktop, you are free to add or change the position of up to four pots anywhere on the cooking surface at any time. The heating elements "follow" your pots as you move them around, while sensors in the cooktop turn down the heat if a pot boils over or any stray objects contact the surface.

- Full-color touch-screen control panel
- 4600w PowerBoost for fast boiling
- Frameless glass cooking surface
- \$5000

thermador.com



THIS PENDANT RISES TO THE OCCASION

Whether you're eating breakfast, baking cookies, doing homework, or hosting game night, the kitchen island is often the right spot for the job. But a single lamp would be hard-pressed to cover all of those tasks well. Enter the Counter Weight pendant light from George Kovacs. Raise the lamp with a gentle push, and the beam of light spreads from a cozy spot (just right for a solo task) to a wide flood (perfect for social gatherings). There are plenty of other adjustable-height lamps on the market, but with its satin stainless-steel finish and unadorned fabric shade, this pendant makes a great focal point for any space without stealing the show.

- Requires three standard E26 bulbs
- Height adjustable from 34 in. to 95 in.
- \$263

minkagroup.net



A HOLISTIC DESIGN/BUILD EXPERIENCE

It's tough to describe what the talented people at Henrybuilt do, because nobody else works quite like them. Yes, they build gorgeous modern cabinets with perfectly matched design details and purposeful components. Yes, they get deeply involved in every stage of every project (whether it's a small dressing room or an entire house) to ensure that the spaces they help to envision and create match their clients' needs and desires. And, yes, they even have their own modular, returnable shipping containers to make sure that everything they build gets to your home safe and sound. But to really understand Henrybuilt, you need to head on over to their website or get in touch with them directly. No matter what your expectations are, you will be pleasantly surprised.

- Custom cabinets based on an integrated system that helps to maintain a high level of aesthetics, functionality, and quality
- Unique proprietary components turn backsplashes and wall panels into flexible storage systems
- Contact Henrybuilt to discover more about their services, products, and pricing

henrybuilt.com





SETTLE DOWN IN THE SHOWER

Maybe you find sitting while showering to be more practical, or perhaps you just want to take some time to relax in the shower. Whatever your reasons for wanting a comfy spot to sit, ARB Teak's Fiji corner shower bench should fit the bill. The compact, three-legged bench tucks neatly into the corner of all but the smallest showers, and it would be tough to find a room that wouldn't welcome its natural wood finish and clean lines. ARB Teak also sells larger benches and other teak bathroom accessories if you're looking to create a more spa-like space.

- Solid teak construction is naturally mold resistant, anti-skid, and durable
- Unfinished (natural oils in wood maintain water resistance)
- 16 in. long by 31½ in. wide by 18 in. high
- \$549

arbteak.com



SECRET FAUCET FEATURE

Add a mix of whimsy and convenience to your bathroom sink with this lighthearted design from American Standard. The Green Tea Widespread faucet has a not-so-obvious bonus—a pullout spout. With it, you can do all sorts of things that you can't do with a regular faucet, from grabbing a sip of water while brushing your teeth, to rinsing your hair, to filling a wash bucket.

- Brass pullout spray hose with 2-ft. reach
- Drip-free ceramic-disc-valve cartridge
- \$474

americanstandard-us.com

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- Diamond Spas also builds custom metal wall panels, tubs, and sinks
- Prices start at \$2500 for copper and \$2300 for stainless steel

diamondspas.com



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In the Mugnaini workshop in California's Sonoma Valley, the artisans marry their own custom-made steel frames with precast components from renowned Italian oven maker Valoriani before wrapping the assembly in stucco, sheet metal, or a custom material of your choice. The combination of time-tested European materials and modern American technology produces ovens that are easy to install and use. Mugnaini's masonry kits allow for completely custom ovens. With the numerous sizes, shapes, and finish materials available, it's best to contact the folks at Mugnaini and perhaps even take one of their introductory classes to figure out which oven suits you best.

- Preassembled ovens ship ready to install in your house or outdoor kitchen
- Steel oven stands put ovens at a comfortable height for cooking
- Portable gas oven: \$3750; preassembled ovens with steel bases start at \$5750; masonry oven kits start at \$2250

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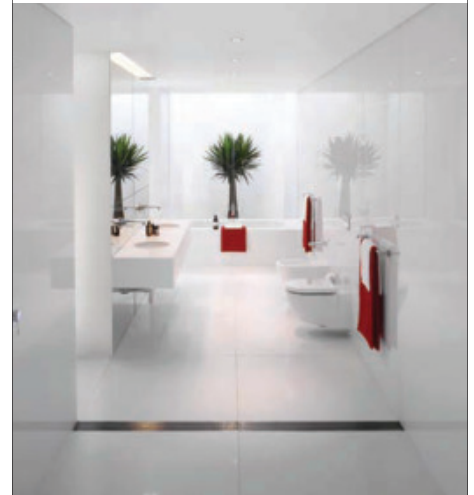
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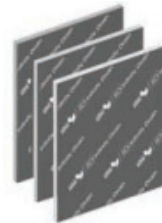
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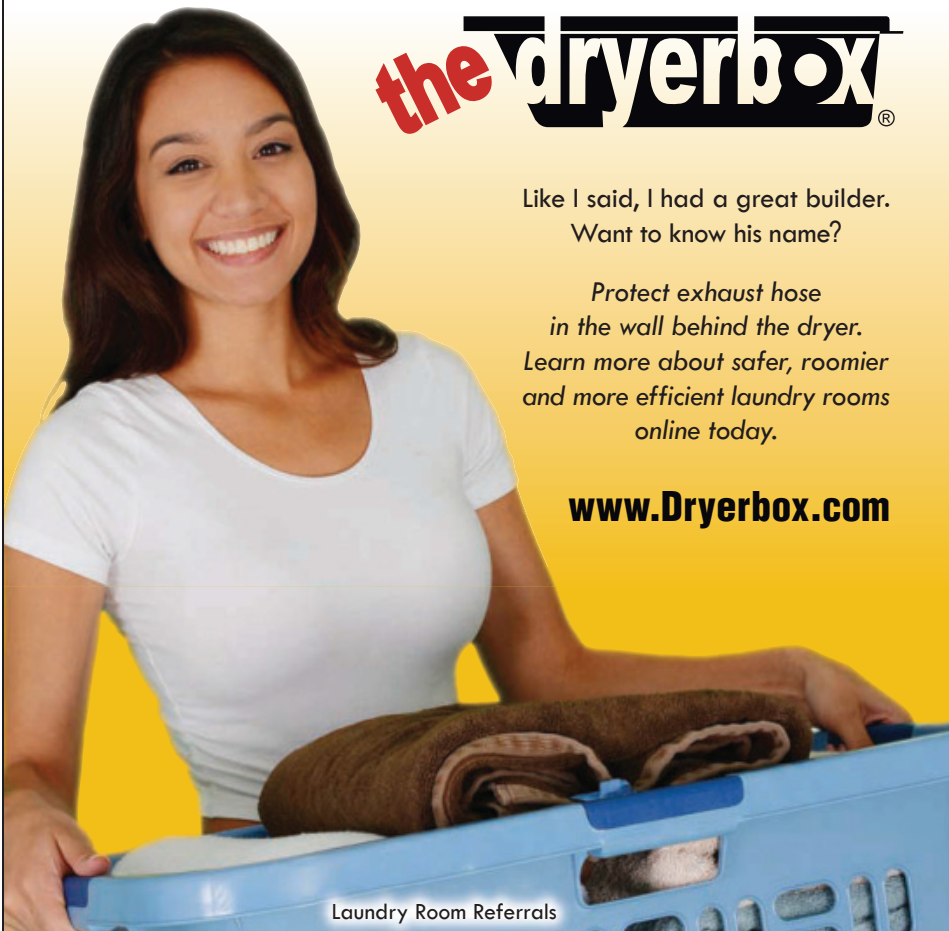
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INGENIOUS SOLUTIONS TO COMMON DESIGN PROBLEMS

BY MAUREEN FRIEDMAN

Wood and stone and storage

A striking design feature in this kitchen is its unique and functional island. Painted custom cabinets are topped with a slab of black granite nestled into the curved dining counter of Tineo (Indian Apple) wood. Where the two countertop materials meet, the Tineo is fitted into a $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. by $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. rabbet cut into the granite to allow the wood to move. The 9-ft. 8-in.-long eating area can easily accommodate five. The island includes a Franke prep sink and Kenmore black-glass downdraft cooktop. To the left of the cooktop is a 9-in. pullout for storing oils and additional drawers for spices. A wine rack at the far end of the island faces the refrigerator. There was no good place for the toaster, so the architect came up with an easy and fun fix. He designed a drop-down door with a pullout drawer to allow the toaster to be easily accessible when in use and hidden from view when not.

ARCHITECT Richard G. Holt,
Cormack Construction
Management, Madison, N.H.,
cormackconstructionmanagement.com

CUSTOM CABINETRY
Simon Thomas, The Wood Works,
Cormack Construction Management

PHOTO Cheryle St. Onge,
cherylestonge.com





Mixing materials

As a remodeler with a master's degree in architecture, Jon McLoughlin works hard to find the right aesthetic to meet his clients' needs. McLoughlin says that on no other project was that goal better achieved than in this kitchen he designed for a family in West Linn, Oregon. What is unique is the way the different materials he selected came together and complement each other. Combining reclaimed barn wood with modern-looking cabinetry gives a contemporary vibe to the 100-plus-year-old wood. The reclaimed barn wood also serves as a striking backdrop to the dark stained walnut shelving. The same dark walnut is used for the island's seating area, where a gentle S-curve joins the wood to the honed granite of the island's work area. The cantilevered walnut butcher block is anchored by a custom-fabricated steel C-channel brace, which brings an edgy, industrial look to the island.

DESIGN Jon McLoughlin, Hallmoon Construction, West Linn, Ore., hallmoon.com

CONSTRUCTION Hallmoon Construction

PHOTO Sarah Markstaller, courtesy of Hallmoon Construction

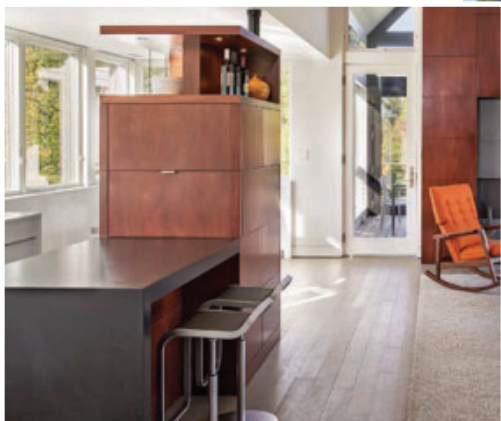
Counter intelligence

Homeowner and custom woodworker Kevin Schrier wanted to transform the dark upper floor of his split-level house into an open, contemporary space. His design was heavily influenced by the work of Bay Area concrete expert Fu-Tung Cheng and to a lesser extent by architect John Lum. After spending many hours looking at photographs for ideas, Schrier drew and redrew his plans until they were exactly what he wanted. He did all of the cabinet construction, concrete work, and installation himself. For the most part, he followed his detailed plans, but he also remained flexible during the building process and made several on-the-fly design changes. The island has concrete sides with glass-tile inlays. The island top is Sapele with an end-grain bamboo cutting board recessed into the Sapele. To surround the main sink, Schrier made a green concrete countertop with integral drain boards on either side. He incorporated inlays of copper bars, geodes, and turquoise into the concrete.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION Kevin Schrier, Kevin Schrier Custom Woodworking, Corvallis, Ore., kevinschrier.com

PHOTOS Courtesy of Kevin Schrier





Combining custom with cost-effective

Architect Felix Gonzalez and his team designed this elegant multipurpose island. The mahogany-veneered unit provides flexible storage and seating for both the kitchen and living room. The original island plan was much simpler: a desk and an area to house the bar stools on the living room side, with room for a convection and microwave oven on the kitchen side. But as the client's requirements grew to include an appliance garage and additional storage areas, the design team rethought the piece to give them everything on their wish list, including a variety of compartmentalized areas in which to store wine and other bar-related items. On the kitchen side, the area behind the bar stools has a shallow base cabinet with drawers. There is also a drawer under the convection oven and a display shelf at the top similar to the one facing the living area. The seating area features a black-granite waterfall countertop with a leather finish. The white base cabinets around the perimeter of the kitchen are from Ikea—a cost-saving feature that allowed the homeowners to splurge on the island/room divider.

PROJECT ARCHITECT Felix Gonzalez, Wiedemann Architects, Bethesda, Md., wiedemannarchitects.com

CABINETMAKER Eben Connor, The Master's Woodshop, Hagerstown, Md., themasterswoodshop.com

PHOTOS Anice Hoachlander, hdphoto.com



At your disposal

Photographer Ken Gutmaker shot this elegant kitchen counter in one of the showrooms at the San Francisco Design Center. Incorporated into the cutting-board counter is a very useful feature—a slot for food scraps. Compostable items can be swept right from the cutting board into a removable bin below the counter. An attractive lid keeps utensils from accidentally dropping down into the bin and odors from coming back up.



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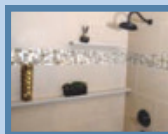
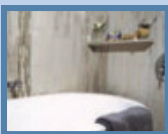
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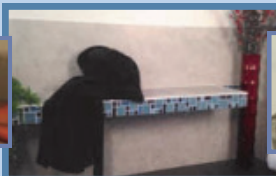
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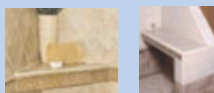
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Sink as sculpture

Architects Ted Arleo and Michelle Kriebel designed this contemporary kitchen with its floating sink as part of a whole-house renovation. The husband-and-wife team gutted the house, a classic two-story 1960s stucco box, and added a third floor with sweeping views of the city. The glass pane below and casement window above the sink are part of a ribbon of glass that wraps over the roof, where it becomes a skylight, and down the front of the house. The sink extends under the adjacent counter surface to the left. The plumbing and disposal for the sink are located in the 24-in.-deep by 14-in.-wide cabinet. The kitchen cabinets are Echo Wood veneer, a recycled wood product pressed into veneers with abstracted grain patterns. The counters are honed Carrara marble.

ARCHITECTS Michelle Kriebel and Ted Arleo, Arleo Architects, Inc., San Francisco, arleoinc.com

BUILDER Blair Burke General Contractors, Inc., San Rafael, blairburke.net

CUSTOM SINK Joe Yick, Robert Yick Company, San Francisco, yickcompany.com

CUSTOM WINDOW Blomberg Window Systems, San Francisco, blombergwindows.com

PHOTO Ken Gutmaker, kengutmaker.com

Closet conversion

The homeowner and architects wanted to add some unexpected touches and “girly bling” when bringing this house back to its Victorian roots. In the closet of the dining room, with its traditional wainscoting and transom window, they installed a modern surprise—a secret bar. The custom bar is made of maple plywood and hardwood with a painted finish and a countertop of Carrara marble. The bright-orange paint, chosen to match the kitchen stove, and the bar’s mirrored back-splash bring a dash of color and light to the room. Lighting for the bar is triggered by a switch incorporated in the closet door. As the door is opened, the light comes on, revealing the tucked-away secret.

ARCHITECT AT6 Architecture Design Build, San Francisco, at-six.com

CABINETMAKER Anderson’s Quality Woodwork, Rohnert Park, Calif.

PHOTO Ken Gutmaker, kengutmaker.com



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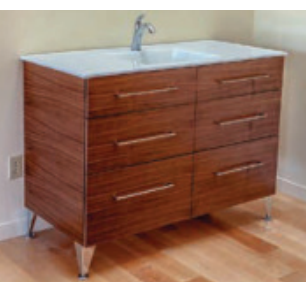
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Ultra organized

Since the top drawers in cabinets seem to be used the most, when woodworker Anatole Burkin built this bathroom vanity, he designed the drawers to maximize internal storage space. The graduated drawers

run on full-extension self-closing slides and each drawer bank is shaped to wrap around the sink basin and plumbing. Although it looks like there are six drawers, there are only three. Burkin added the split in the false fronts for visual balance. The top drawer is made of two separate internal boxes attached to the drawer front and positioned to clear the sink basin. The center drawer is U-shaped to clear the drain line and the bottom one is notched for the very bottom edge of the P-trap. Built for a master bath, the 48-in.-wide by 24-in.-deep by 36-in.-tall cabinet is quartersawn walnut plywood and maple finished with General Finishes Exterior 450 varnish. The integrated vanity top and bowl (Ceramic/Impressions K-27831) and faucet (Alteo single handle) are from Kohler. The pulls are polished chrome from Top Knobs' Mercer collection (TK547PC), and the chrome legs are from Rockler (35955).



DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION Anatole Burkin, Santa Rosa, Calif. **PHOTOS** Courtesy of Anatole Burkin



Crafting a powder room

Along with other renovations to the main floor of a 1924 Craftsman house, creating a proper guest powder room was a priority for this remodeling project. Architect Rebecca Fant created an elegant 21-sq.-ft. powder room from a portion of a seldom-used and inaccessible half-bath, an existing linen closet, and the home office's closet. Early in the design process, her client purchased a vessel sink, which became the inspiration for the vanity, mirror, and surround Fant designed to unify the room. A local woodworker made the custom integrated wood vanity and wall unit out of carefully selected burl maple. His craftsmanship allows the wood grain and joinery to be appreciated while not competing with the work-of-art sink. A black toilet was chosen to complement the underside of the vessel sink, as well as to allow the toilet to recess into the shadows.

ARCHITECT Rebecca R. Fant, AIA, Architecture Matters, PLLC, Charlotte, N.C., archmatters.com

CABINETRY David A. Jarrell, Concord, N.C.

SINK Suzanne Crane Fine Stoneware, Earlsyville, Va., artscraftspotteryandtiles.com

PHOTOS Bob Donnan Photography, bobdonnan.com, courtesy of Architecture Matters



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Full of Personality

This kitchen has everything the owners need, all the style they could want, and nothing more

BY JACQUELINE FORTIER

Homeowners Eric Foster and Daniela Bell are also restaurant owners, which means they work hard. When they're not working, they spend a lot of time at home with their daughter, Thalia, and a variety of animals. Eric enjoys baking, Daniela cooks the meals, and Thalia is a budding artist. The family regularly hosts fund-raisers in their 1870s Minnesota home, which is located in a historic district. Unfortunately, the house had, at various times, been divided into apartments. When Eric and Daniela bought the home, its overall condition was funky at best. The kitchen had been remodeled using cheap oak cabinetry and had absolutely no style. Worse, the layout didn't take advantage of the three windows that offer both light and views.

Referred to me by Flannery Construction, with whom I've collaborated on numerous projects, Eric and Daniela turned out to be ideal clients, lending their trust to me as the designer and imposing very few restraints. Daniela's only directions were that she didn't want a white cookie-cutter kitchen, and she wanted to honor the age of the house.

Beyond the historic charm of the home, I saw a family with a lot of personality who would use the kitchen in very specific ways. My main goal with every kitchen design is to ensure that it functions exactly how the clients will use it. And I realized that for Eric and Daniela, I could redesign the kitchen within the existing footprint and be creative

with the details while still honoring the home's traditional style.

Making art in a bonus space

The new floor plan is designed to take advantage of the large windows on the west side of the kitchen. Previously, both the sink and stove faced the interior walls, leaving the cook's back to the windows. In the new plan, the sink is in the island, so the majority of the time they spend in the kitchen, Eric and Daniela are able to look out the windows and take in the views of downtown St. Paul.

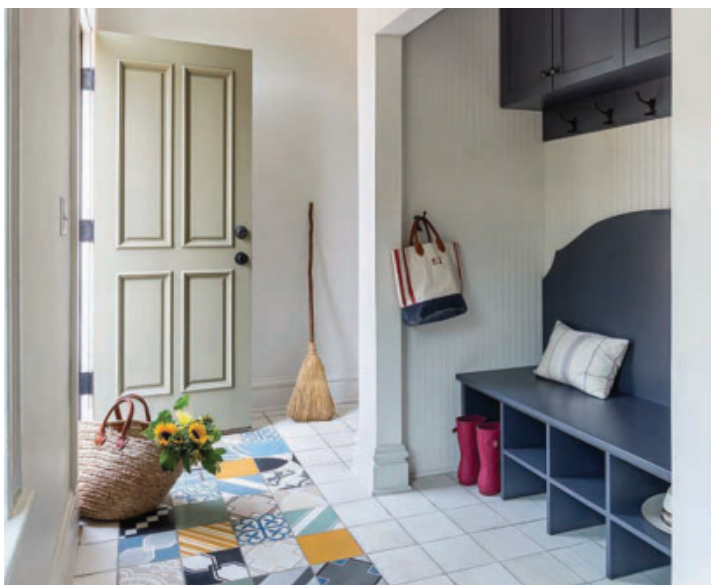
I relocated the stove so that it is now conveniently positioned across from the sink. To the right of the stove, the new kitchen has a baking area for Eric, including a soapstone countertop above large drawers for baking-pan storage. The cabinets above are designed to store flour, sugar, and other ingredients. On the other side of the oven is a butcher-block countertop for Daniela to prepare meals. With this arrangement, the couple can be in the kitchen side by side, both of them using the range and sink. Everything they might need is literally less than three steps away.

Once we had chosen to relocate the refrigerator, the existing kitchen offered us a bonus space: the alcove that previously housed the fridge. I presented Eric and Daniela with several options. It's important to be realistic about how a kitchen will be used. Kids want to be in the kitchen while their parents

are cooking, but parents don't want to have to clean up their kids' projects at mealtime. Since we'd already planned the island as the place where the family would eat most of their meals, we chose to make the alcove into an art nook for Thalia.

The art nook has drawers below the built-in benches for storing supplies, and the walls are finished with magnetic paint so that Thalia can keep a running display of her favorite projects. The table is made out of soapstone, making it virtually indestructible, and the built-in benches are painted





"My main goal with every kitchen design is to ensure that it functions exactly how the clients will use it."

dark blue in order to keep any messes a little more hidden.

Open to the kitchen is the hallway that leads to the back door, which leads to the garage and is the family's daily entrance into the house. When the remodel began, there was a bifold closet in the hallway that held the washer and dryer. I convinced the owners that it made more sense to put a functioning mudroom bench there, and moved the washer and dryer upstairs. Though it was an obvious location for a mudroom bench, when we had a neighborhood open house, the mudroom received even more comments than the kitchen.

Paying homage to the home

I try to design each kitchen that I work on to match the personality of its users. Well, Daniela has a huge personality, so this kitchen had a lot to live up to. The kitchen was originally intended to be more colorful than it turned out. But as we went through the design process, it became obvious that the kitchen had the potential to become quite sophisticated, so I toned down the color scheme. I then snuck in several details to reflect Daniela's personality without letting the design become too kitschy. The "chicken coop" cupboard—with its chicken-wire panel—is an example of how we honored Daniela's desire to have chickens in the city.

We also left an open wall space to put in an old hutch that introduces additional texture and color. With the inclusion of open shelves and a plate rack in the cabinet design, Daniela is able to add color to the room with the dishes she chooses to display. The open shelves provoke a certain nostalgia that transports anyone who looks at them back in time. I've included this detail in other designs, and it inevitably becomes one of the features that my clients like the most about their kitchens. I also designed the mudroom tile "rug" to include the jolt of color that Daniela craved.

The most unique material was used on the island, which we wanted to be the stellar feature of the kitchen. A pewter countertop from Francois & Co. adds a touch of luxury to the otherwise humble, earthy materials.

The kitchen cabinetry has a tight footprint, so storage solutions had to be worked out in the initial design stages. It helped that Eric and Daniela are tall, because their main storage cupboards are above the open dish and glass racks. If they were any shorter, this



would not have been possible. There is no storage on the island. Instead, to the right of the sink are the garbage and recycling and to the left of the sink are two dishwashing drawers. The old hutch has to pick up a lot of the remaining storage duties and therefore had to be very functional. I replaced the hardware on the hutch to make it more usable, and gave it a major cleaning.

The kitchen has an adjoining parlor with a bar to store extra glassware and an unused closet that we opened up to store cookbooks, the microwave, and other less frequently used kitchen items. That borrowed space made it possible to keep the existing kitchen footprint without expanding the floor plan.

I find that wood island legs are usually too country for my taste. In this case, I used metal for both the art-nook table and the island legs. When the owners and I went to go see the metalwork in progress—before it was powder coated—we fell in love with the visible artist's hand where the bars are welded. We opted not to paint it, keeping it natural with only beeswax and linseed oil to protect it from rust.

The kitchen cabinetry can all be seen in one eye shot and we crammed a lot of detail into it. So, to keep the kitchen from becoming too busy, we chose to put cabinet fronts on the dishwasher drawers and fridge and we painted the island and the cabinets to cut



“I try to design each kitchen that I work on to match the personality of its users. This kitchen had a lot to live up to.”



See more photos of this kitchen at
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“Every room needs at least one thing that makes it special.”



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- DISHWASHER DRAWERS** Fisher & Paykel

down the busy look of wood grain. However, I glazed over the paint finish to avoid the plastic look that new, painted cabinets can have. The glaze helps the cabinetry blend in with the dark countertop and the antique finish of the backsplash tiles.

Over the island, I went with clear globe pendants with a unique shape from Cyan Design. I had the pendants' shiny chrome finish aged by my lighting guy, Brett Anderson, to fit with the rest of the kitchen's

matte finishes. I also incorporated under-cabinet lighting in the plate and glass racks to illuminate the work surfaces. This took great coordination between the cabinet-maker (Zroka Cabinet & Fixture Co.) and the electrician, but was well worth the effort.

There was not a lot of talk about the budget for this project. We simply focused on what we felt the space needed functionally and what the family wanted stylistically. I think every room needs at least one thing

that makes it special. Here, the wow factor is provided by the pewter island counter. Otherwise, everything that we added or took away had a reason for us doing so. This makes for a thoughtful remodel that combines function with an interesting aesthetic. □

Jacqueline Fortier owns Jacqueline Fortier Studio, a design firm specializing in remodeling older homes and building fine new homes. Photos by Andrea Rugg.

Three of a Kind

Colors, materials, and patterns unify a new home's three distinct bathrooms

BY SEAN FLYNN



MASTER BATH



GUEST BATH



POWDER ROOM

After an evening of biking, gardening, or strolling by the river, my clients—a husband and wife—enter their mudroom, where they leave their shoes and outerwear. They can then step directly into the laundry room to drop off their dirty gear and continue on to grab fresh clothes from the closet. From there, it's straight through to the master-bath shower. Once clean, they need only take a few more steps to collapse onto their bed and enjoy the breathtaking views of the nearby river. Not only do the rooms conveniently flow between one another, but the design, materials, and colors used in each tie the home's interior spaces together as well.

The homeowners chose a hybrid design/build approach to reach the goals they had for their new home. My construction firm was hired early in the process to partner with architect Andrea Kerz Murray of Vermont Integrated Architecture, starting just after schematic design.

Construction soon began, with the floor plans setting the tone for the design. The process became a close collaboration between the owners, the architect, and me, with many on-site meetings and mock-ups, and lots of waving of arms. But we worked well together and eventually achieved the cohesive style the owners were looking for.

That style is modern with a hint of midcentury, with splurges on design and materials. Rich walnut, waterfall edges, and crisp blue, yellow, and green painted and tiled backdrops are used in various permutations. Perhaps nowhere is the home's unified design better exemplified than in the three bathrooms—a powder room and master bath on the first floor, and a guest bath on the lower level. □

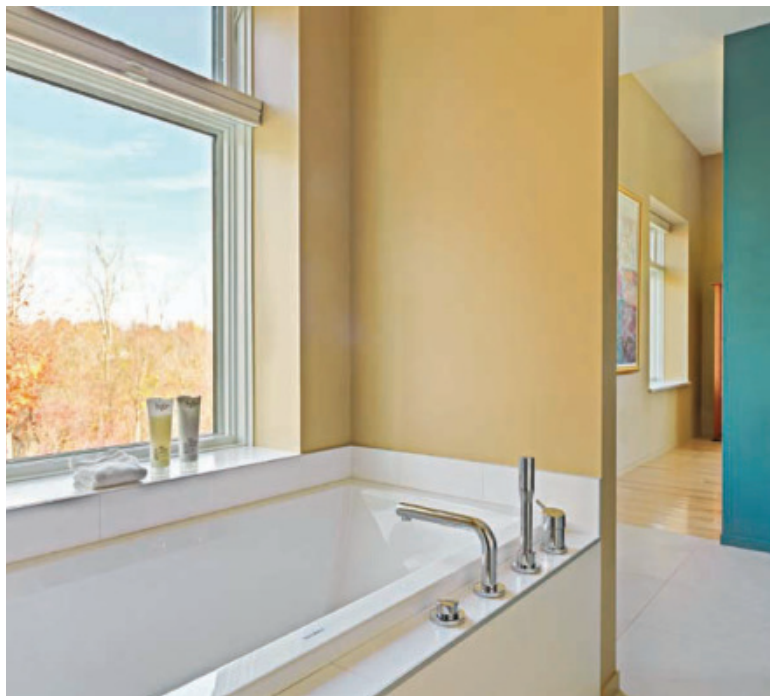
Sean Flynn is president of Silver Maple Construction in New Haven, Vt. Photos by Susan Teare.

MATERIALS MAKE THEM WORK



Master Bath

The master bath is situated between the walk-in closet and the master bedroom and serves as both a dressing room and a bathroom. Its most prominent features are a two-person shower, a soaking tub, a private commode, and a custom-built double vanity. These aspects allow the clients to inhabit the bathroom together with plenty of room to breathe. Lighted vanity mirrors, recessed lighting, and a window situated above the tub add soft and natural light to the space. The large-format floor tile, walnut vanity, and blue and yellow wall colors tie the design to the adjacent spaces and the other baths.



IN THIS BATH

Duravit Vero vessel sink
Grohe Concetto faucet
Tech Lighting Gia mirror kit
Duravit Vero bathtub
Grohe Concetto bathtub filler and handheld shower
Marazzi Pietra di Noto white floor tile
Porcelanosa Marmi China wall tile with silver edge
Benjamin Moore "Twilight Gold" and "Baltic Sea" wall colors



Guest Bath

This bath is part of a guest suite in the basement. The vanity was purchased from Duravit, but still matches with the tone of the master bath's custom cabinetry. Taking advantage of the thick double-stud walls, nestled above the recessed tub is a deep shelf and a small window, which provides daylight in what would otherwise be a dark space.

IN THIS BATH

Duravit Fogo walnut vanity
 Duravit Vero vessel sink
 Grohe Concetto faucet
 Toto dual flush toilet
 Duravit Daro bathtub
 Grohe Concetto shower fixtures
 My Time shower tiles in "My White"
 Classique porcelain floor tiles
 Benjamin Moore "Baltic Sea" and "Frappe" wall colors



Powder Room

The long, narrow powder room is adjacent to the entryway. The green tile from the foyer seamlessly seeps into the bathroom. The sink basin sits on top of two custom-built floating walnut shelves, which are supported by steel brackets. A window looking out onto the front courtyard brings in natural light. A sleek LED fixture lights the vanity from above.

IN THIS BATH

Duravit Vero vessel sink
 Grohe Concetto faucet
 Toto dual flush toilet
 Tech Lighting span light
 Vermont Structural Slate Co. "Unfading Green Slate" tile
 Benjamin Moore "Lush" and "Glacial Till" wall colors



See more photos of these bathrooms at FineHomebuilding.com/magazine

Old School

A new kitchen breaks with the trend of open living space and delights with classic style

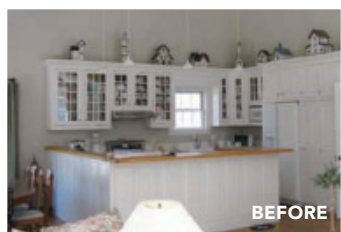
BY JOANA TAN JAMO

Many homeowners today share the desire to connect their kitchen to their living spaces. In new homes, this often manifests as a great room. (In remodels, this usually means walls are knocked down.) Jean and Ellen's colonial New England home had a great room, but they didn't like it at all.

The kitchen was too small. Jean bakes and Ellen is into healthy cooking; they often work in the kitchen at the same time and were always bumping into each other. Guests made the kitchen feel even smaller. And whether the sisters were having a normal day at home or a dinner party with a handful of friends, when the open space was used for multiple activities or by too many people, it was loud.

Jean and Ellen needed a kitchen with a plan that would work for two cooks, and they wanted it to be separate from the living space in a traditional layout aligned with the original style of the house. Not only did the addition I designed provide the necessary functional space for the kitchen, it greatly improved the look of the backyard.

When it came to the new floor plan, two things were important: a thoughtful entry into the new kitchen and an efficient layout within the



Skillfully separated.

Located about where the oven once stood, the passageway between the living space and the new kitchen is wider than a normal doorway to provide connectivity, but has double pocket doors for times when more separation is desired.



MORE DETAILS

APPLIANCES Thermador

FAUCETS Kohler

PENDANT LIGHTS
Restoration Hardware

See more photos of this kitchen at
FineHomebuilding.com/magazine





Walnut and the window seat. Two of the kitchen's more special details are the black-walnut island top and the window seat (which now has a breakfast table installed).



Vented for aroma. Stainless-steel door panels provide ventilation and texture at certain storage zones like the coffee station seen here.

kitchen based on how it would be used. The new entry does two things. First, it determines how the kitchen is seen from the living space. We made the opening wide enough to provide a decent view into the kitchen and positioned the island, sink, and three windows along the central axis of the view. In this way, the opening frames interesting architectural features and the view extends outside.

The entry also creates an architectural pinch point between the living space and the kitchen. So, while we made the passageway wide enough to offer a decent view, we also lined the vestibule with bookcases and a paneled soffit. The transition between the two spaces is smooth, and yet there is a marked sense of entry as you walk through the tight vestibule into the spacious kitchen. When it came to organizing the kitchen itself, we chose to orbit the island with zones for cooking and baking and specific types of storage for things like dry goods and compost.

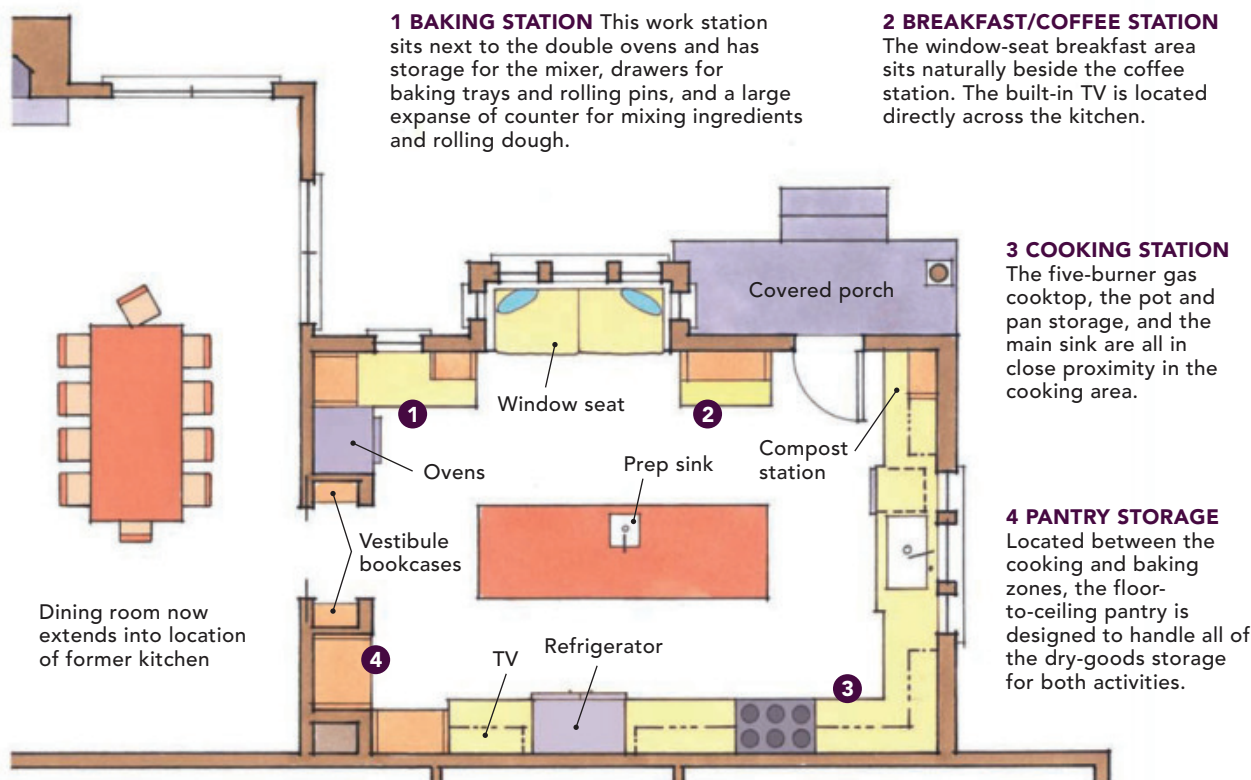
Ellen and Jean had no doubt that the style should be classic New England. We chose to work with muted colors, starting with white cabinets and grey backsplash tile. Ellen picked River White granite countertops with speckled mauve accents. The island was painted a bluish grey and the black-walnut countertop was made by Parkerville Wood Products. This was one of the bigger spends, but we wanted the island to stand out with furniture-like appeal. We also splurged on nickel hardware, which provides a gleaming accent against the muted background.

The cabinets have mostly flat-panel doors and drawers with beaded openings. We used glass doors for the upper cabinets that flank the sink with muntin divisions mimicking those of the central windows and stainless-steel mesh panels from McNichols in a few locations. The mesh panels, like old-school bread cupboards, vent the coffee and compost stations and allow the TV's remote to work



IN THE ZONE

The kitchen addition is organized around the central island with purposeful work and storage zones.



with the cable box concealed behind a small door. Jim Licari Junior and Senior of Licari Woodworking were remarkably helpful with the cabinet design. They turned my elevations into shop drawings and were able to fine-tune the storage with solutions like custom inserts that store the exact pots and pans, glassware, and flatware that Ellen and Jean own and an appliance garage that hides the mixer and food processor right on the countertop.

Regardless of layout and style, all kitchens need good lighting. With two exterior walls in this kitchen, we had an opportunity to capture significant natural light. Since we had already decided on the triple windows at the sink, we decided to add transom windows that extend to the ceiling above. We also made the breakfast bench a bump-out with windows on all three sides. The simulated divided-light windows are from Marvin's Integrity line and match the home's existing windows.

We used three fixture types in the kitchen. Recessed cans in the ceiling provide general and ambient lighting, while undercabinet lights illuminate tasks at the counters. Two large pendants provide task and accent lighting at the island.

I recently had the opportunity to visit the completed project, and could see that Ellen and Jean use the kitchen as intended and are pleased with the result. That is the ultimate reward for a designer, and marks the outcome of a successful job. My clients had a clear vision and thoughtful opinions, and all of us worked collaboratively together with the contractors involved in the project. □

Joana Tan Jamo, AIA, NCARB, is principal at JTJ Architects, LLC in Woodbury, Conn. (jtjarchitects.com). Photos by Marleen Cafarelli (photoartworks.smugmug.com), except where noted.



A better backyard to boot. The original two-story colonial had a shed-roof addition that created awkward massing between the two forms and a terribly boring back elevation. The new addition brings the forms together. The new rooflines and the window-seat bump-out add a lot of interest to enhance the colonial character.



Traditional Touch





See more photos of this bathroom
at FineHomebuilding.com/magazine



Combining two barely functional bathrooms gives a young family a bigger bath with classic charm

BY DANIELLE BURGER

When physicians Rebecca and David called me in to look at the master bath in their 19th-century LaGrange, Illinois, home, I could immediately see the problem: bland beige tile, a cramped layout, and bad lighting. The 7-ft. by 8-ft. space had a small neo-angle shower without a tub. Rebecca and David were hoping to add a soaking tub and an oversize vanity, but this was no small feat given the tight space we had to work with. And that wasn't the end of the challenges. To maintain the correct proportions on the exterior, we couldn't move the windows, and the existing radiator had to stay where it was due to the budget. If that weren't enough, there was a new baby on the way, so all construction had to be completed by the due date.

Making room for a bigger bath

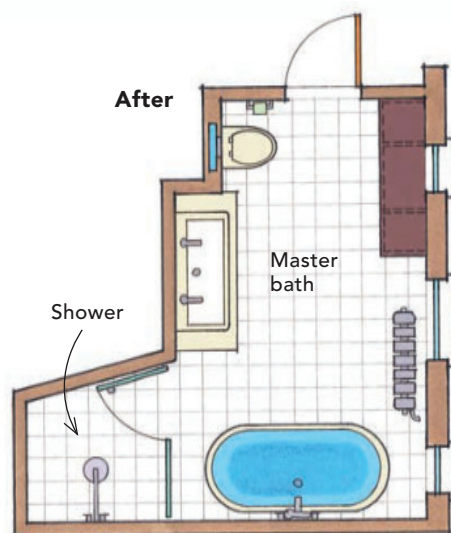
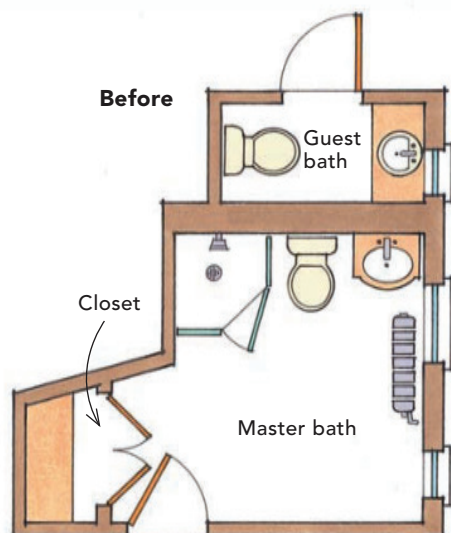
Rebecca and David's upstairs floor plan was typical of older homes in the Chicago area, with quaint but small rooms. In a house like this, I often find that it's helpful to combine the small, individual rooms into larger spaces. My plan included turning the second bedroom into the master bedroom, so we could eliminate a door opening and carve some space from the existing small sitting room to create a master-bedroom closet. I also planned to combine the former master bathroom and the guest half-bath into one larger bathroom that would include a tub, walk-in shower, and oversize vanity.

At first, Rebecca and David were hesitant to move their bedroom, but they were convinced once they reviewed the new floor plan that included everything on their wish list. We put the shower in what was originally a closet within the old master bathroom, and continued the Porcelanosa tile into the shower space without a threshold, making the space feel larger. A trench drain against the back wall adds to the seamless look. We placed the Barclay Lydia slipper tub next to the shower at the bathroom's widest point. Aside from its sculptural, asymmetrical shape, we chose this model because, at 28½ in. wide, it could fit through the existing door without removing the jambs.

With the radiator staying where it was, the only remaining wall for the vanity wasn't wide enough for two sinks. To make the most of the space, we used a 40-in. Duravit Vero vessel sink with two single-hole Brizo Tresa faucets. This arrangement saves at least 12 in. over a conventional

ONE BATH FROM TWO

To create enough space for a double vanity and soaking tub, the guest bath and master bath were combined into a single master bath. The new space is accessed through the former guest bedroom, now the new master bedroom.



MORE DETAILS

KNOBS/PULLS/HINGES Atlas Homewares

COUNTER MSI Q Premium Natural Quartz

BACKSPLASH/SURROUND Adex tile, TEC grout

LIGHT FIXTURES Pottery Barn Mia chandelier, Hortons Home Lighting mini pendant lights

PAINT Benjamin Moore "Oil Cloth"

SPACE-SAVING TOILET

By tucking the tank inside the wall, a wall-hung toilet can save 2 sq. ft., a precious amount in a small bath. In this bath it also prevented the toilet from partially blocking the doorway, a problem in the original guest-bath layout.





CABINETS FOR NARROW SPACES

Bookshelf cabinets, which are available in most cabinet lines, are 12 in. deep and an ideal solution for narrow spaces. This setup is made from two 15-in. and one 24-in. Dura Supreme Cherry bookcase cabinets and a matching one-piece top. The finish is "Poppy Seed."



DOUBLE VANITY IN A SMALL SPACE

A 40-in.-wide vessel sink provides room for two, but takes up less space than two separate sinks. Not only are single-hole faucets easier to keep clean, they take up less room than spread-handle designs.

double vanity. Over the sink is a mirror I found in a salvage shop.

Wall mounting saves space

Another strategy for small baths is to use wall-hung toilets, like the Kohler Veil we used in this bath. Because the steel frame and tank (model K-18829-NA) are within the wall, we saved up to 12 in. of space in front of the toilet, allowing us to use an elongated bowl without blocking the walking path from the door. Wall-hung toilets

have other benefits too: They're easy to clean, and they allow for uninterrupted finished flooring. Opposite the toilet is a linen storage cabinet with open shelving. It matches the vanity and is made from three semicustom bookcase cabinets with a wood top. Bookcase cabinets are often 36 in., but we had this one made to match the 32-in.-high vanity.

I like to have layered light in all bathrooms, both for interest and to make it easier to apply makeup and style hair. In addition to the natural light from the two windows, we installed 6-in. damp-location-rated LED can lights. The pendants on both sides of the

mirror have vintage bulbs that look great in an old house, but their yellow glow gives people a sickly skin tone. With 3500K (cool white) can lights overhead, the color is more balanced. A GFCI-protected crystal chandelier over the tub creates an attractive focal point.

Dealing with the unexpected

This project went smoothly, and the contractor (Khurram Sayeed of VK Kontrakting) did a great job. The only hiccup was dealing with the old waste line and vent stack. Remodeling around a 100-year-old cast-iron waste stack is always a concern, but we weren't planning on complete replacement. Unfortunately, the old stack was leaking and had to go (fortunately, the rot from the leak was limited to a small area). With a bigger plumbing bill than expected, we saved money by omitting the subway tile behind the bath. With no other surprises, the project was completed on time and on budget, and two days after we finished, Rebecca and David had their baby. □

Danielle Burger, CKBD, owner of Kitchen Vitality Design, is an award-winning kitchen and bath designer in Charlotte, N.C. Photos by Marina Storm.

The Best in Modern Bath Design

From curbless showers to vessel sinks, it's important to get the details right

BY BRIAN PONTOLILO AND PAUL DeGROOT

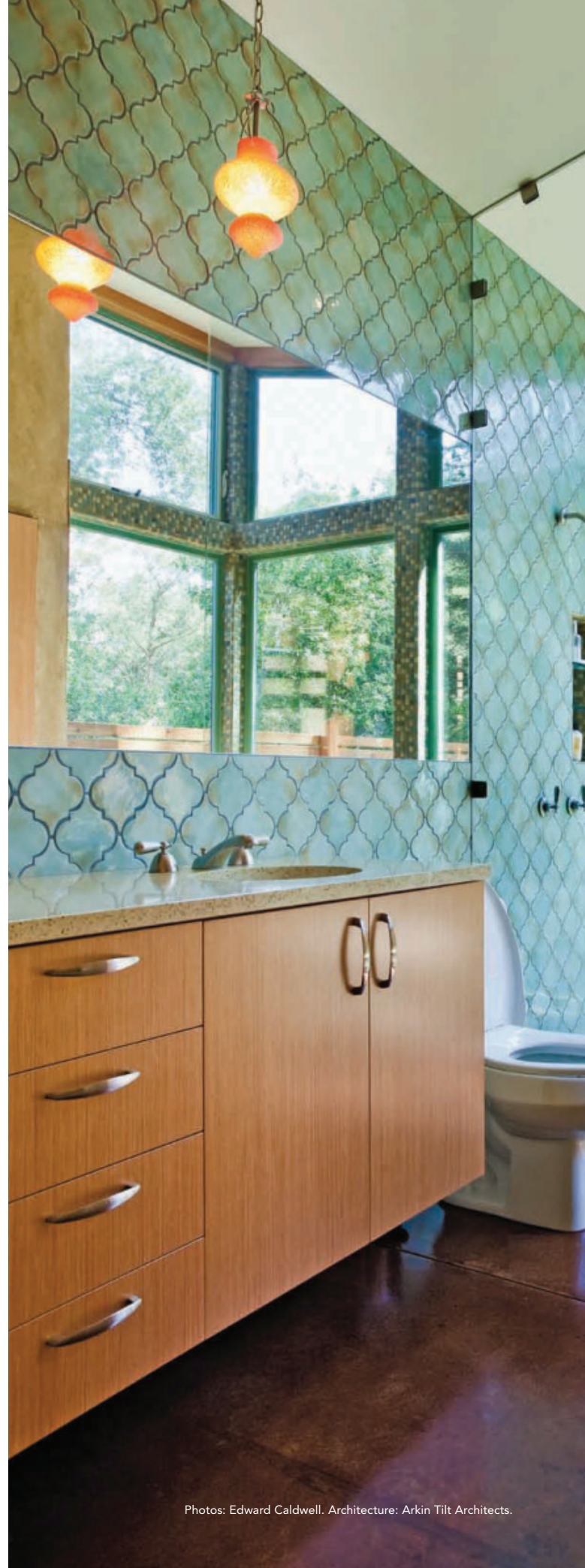
We ask a lot of our bathrooms. They're our workshops for hygiene, health, and beauty; a salon and a spa; a pit stop and a retreat. A full bath will have at least a toilet, sink, and combined tub and shower. Toilet-paper holders, mirrors, towel bars and hooks, and some amount of storage are basic necessities too. Yet today, we often deck out our bathrooms with everything from wall-mounted toilets to steam showers.

Bathrooms with private water closets for the toilet, double-sink vanities, and separate shower and freestanding tub arrangements are now quite common. Large windows and skylights, backlit medicine cabinets, towel warmers, and an abundance of designer materials can add style, comfort, and convenience. And advanced building materials expand project possibilities to the edges of a designer's creativity.

If a luxury bathroom is in the budget, go for it. To make the most of today's trends, though, it's important to know the refinements that make them work. In this way, making your bath beautiful won't sacrifice the function that's vital to this hardworking room.

As you continue reading, you'll repeatedly encounter the term *modern*. While its usage here is generally meant to imply that the design features we discuss and the baths we show are current and trendy, they are also often modern—or at least transitional—in style. But that doesn't mean that the ideas can't be translated into more traditional baths. They can. □

Design editor Brian Pontolilo and Austin, Texas, architect Paul DeGroot (degrootarchitect.com) are long-time collaborators and friends.





CURBLESS SHOWERS

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

The popularity of curbless, or barrier-free, showers stems from homeowners' desire for safer, more accessible, and more airy bathrooms. Homeowners want showers they can safely use when they get older or become less mobile. Curbless showers fit the bill and tend to have a more open, expansive vibe compared to so many conventional showers with step-over curbs.

The slope of the shower floor in a curbless shower is often gentle enough to be barely noticeable, playing up the seamless quality of the space. While using a slip-resistant surface in the shower is recommended, changing floor color or material isn't necessarily required. Many baths have large-format tiles outside of the shower and small-format grids or mosaic made of the same stone or porcelain on the inside.

Sleek, minimalistic glass enclosures are commonly used with curbless showers to enhance the bright, airy feeling. Some designers choose to omit the shower door altogether, leaving the shower partially open. To keep water contained, a fixed panel of glass might be all that separates the wet area from, say, a nearby vanity. It should be noted that the more open the bathroom, the quicker the heat from warm water will escape the shower.

Open, curbless showers are common the world over. In countries where space efficiency is critical, it is not unusual to find the shower, toilet, and lavatory positioned around a floor drain. This "European style" or "wet bath" concept is trending here now. A popular application is pairing a shower and freestanding tub in the wet zone; less often a toilet will replace the tub. In either case, the floor under the tub or toilet needs to be flat—neither fixture likes an inclined installation very much. Put the drain and sloped floor where the showering occurs.

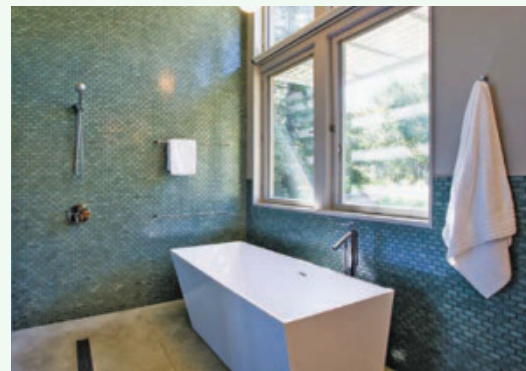
Four cautions

1 When there is no curb to act as a water stop, the waterproof shower-pan installation is extra critical, especially at the juncture between the flat and sloped floor. Thanks to linear drains and innovative tile systems from Schluter, Wedi, and others, getting the drainage and waterproofing details right is easier than ever. Preformed, tile-ready shower pans are available too, but using them may require that the shower subfloor be lower than the adjoining subfloor. As always, follow the manufacturer's instructions to the letter.

2 If you plan to install an open shower, you should either make sure that all other fixtures are out of the range of sprayed and splashing water, or be prepared to clean regularly. Even if you don't mind the tub or toilet getting wet, that splatter will leave water marks and soap and shampoo residue.

3 Forget about using a thick bath mat outside a hinged shower door on a curbless shower. The bottom of the door will likely be too close to the floor to clear the mat when it swings open. An expensive alternative is a sliding shower door with top rollers. A less expensive option is using a shower door that swings both ways—into the shower and out of it. (Note that a door that swings only inward is neither safe nor recommended.)

4 Whether you go doorless or not, locate the shower control valve so you don't have to walk all the way into the shower to start the hot water. It's inconvenient and a code violation. Ideally, the control should be within a 36-in. reach of the shower entry, which may mean it is remote from the showerhead.



FLOATING VANITIES

GRACEFUL STYLE AND STORAGE

Like barrier-free showers, the most notable effect that a floating (or wall hung) vanity cabinet has on a bathroom is to create a sense of spaciousness. The expanse of floor seen beneath the cabinet makes the bathroom feel bigger than it actually is. Wall-hung vanities with open shelves below the counter amplify the impression of openness even more.

Commonly built with the clean lines of frameless cabinetry, floating vanities are decidedly modern, even minimalist in style. A long wall-hung vanity is impressive—cantilevered off the wall, seemingly defying gravity, while emphasizing the horizontal lines of the room. But that doesn't mean it needs to be big. There are lots of smaller bathrooms that would benefit from a narrower floating vanity cabinet.

Naysayers are quick to point to the reduced storage of wall-mounted cabinets, which is true. So it might not be the best answer for a shared kids' bath that's on the small side. But more often, a nearby linen cabinet and medicine cabinet can supplement lost storage space. Different homeowners have different storage needs, so customizing storage toward that end is the rule. Drawers are generally more useful than shelves behind cabinet doors. You can even consider designing drawers to fit around the sink plumbing (see "Great Ideas," p. 28).

Floating vanity cabinets are an easy way to accommodate custom-height counters for taller or shorter homeowners, or children. It's important to make sure your plumber is aware that you intend to install a floating vanity so they can install the rough plumbing appropriately. If the vanity is to be open in front, with the drain pipe exposed to view, select decorative chrome valves, supply lines, and drain fittings.

Though a 2x4 or 2x6 stud wall should be plenty strong to handle the vanity weight, best practice is to install two rows of solid horizontal blocking, 2x6 or larger, between all the wall studs to mount the vanity. In this way, weight can be distributed uniformly to every stud. The rows should coincide with both the top and bottom mounting rails of the cabinet.

Most floating vanities are custom built. For extra strength, the cabinet shop should glue all casework joints before mechanically fastening them and use a solid $\frac{3}{4}$ -in.-thick plywood back panel. In the case of store-bought wall-hung vanities, it goes without saying to carefully follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.





Freestanding tubs were all but replaced by built-in tubs in bathrooms after World War II. Today, they're back, and are quickly becoming a mainstay in modern bath design. The standard cast-iron, claw-foot tub, however, is now one of hundreds of options. Freestanding tubs are available in acrylic, fiberglass, metal, wood, stone, and composite materials. Many of today's freestanding tubs are more fitting for modern or transitional bathroom designs.

Offering deep soaking capacities, air jets, sound systems, and many more indulgent features, freestanding tubs are ideal for homeowners who use their bath as a retreat. They are generally a luxury item reserved for master baths, as they require that the bathroom be big enough to comfortably fit both a tub and a separate shower. They're also expensive. Only a few acrylic tubs are available for under \$1000, and prices quickly skyrocket from there.

Freestanding tubs come in a variety of sizes and shapes, but how comfortable a tub is for its users should be considered as much—if not more—than the way the tub looks. Unfortunately, filling and test-driving tubs in showrooms isn't possible, but certainly ask permission to take your shoes off to sit in them.

When planning the location of your tub, consider placing it near windows or under a skylight and try not to leave the bather staring at the linen cabinet or commode. Some tubs have center drains and fillers that allow you to face either direction in the tub. Some must be ordered as left-drain or right-drain, with internal back and arm contours on the end opposite the drain. Round tubs allow soaking in different directions. And make sure you plan good places for towels to hang nearby and a handy ledge, sill, or cubby for toiletries.

If you must have walls on three sides of the tub, don't crowd it too tightly. If the unit you choose does not have an integral faucet, you'll need room on the floor for a freestanding tub filler or a nearby wall to mount a faucet. The fixture you choose will determine where the tub sits in relationship to it. These rough-in dimensions and details are critical during the early stages of construction. Bring your plans to the showroom and have the salesperson assist you.

DAYLIT SHOWERS

MAKE BATHING DELIGHTFUL



Architects and designers are commonly asked, “Can I have lots of natural light in the shower? I love that feeling! And can I open the window on nice days?” Still, shower windows are a controversial topic. Critics point to the vulnerability of a window in a wet area, and of course there are privacy concerns. So let’s assume that an experienced designer and builder can work together to choose products and build an assembly that will keep water out of the walls. And let’s assume that no one would put a big, clear-glass window in a shower if the exterior wall faces a public park. With these assumptions made, it safe to say that a shower full of daylight and views is delightful.

While large, tempered clear-glass view windows in a shower are rare, there are sites where privacy is not a concern. But most of us need to balance our desire for daylight with the need for privacy. Obscured glass is a great option. Window companies offer a handful of textured patterns from which to choose with varying degrees of privacy.

Even with perfectly watertight construction, it’s not a good idea to subject any sort of window to deluges of water with

every shower. Place windows wisely to limit this from happening. Transom-style windows are great for showers. With sills set at or above eye level, they let in light without sacrificing privacy, and can even be operable to let steamy air out and fresh air in. Moreover, high sills don’t usually get wet from shower spray, so there is less risk of water migrating into the wall or fouling window seals or cranks.

If windows don’t fit into your plan, consider skylights. Both a traditional skylight and a tubular skylight can provide enough light during daytime hours that you don’t necessarily need to turn on the lights. Although they don’t provide a sky view like a traditional skylight, tubular skylights are generally much easier and more affordable to install than traditional skylights. Common sizes are 10-in. and 14-in. diameters, either of which delivers a punch of daylight more than strong enough to brighten an average-size shower even on cloudy days. Some tubular skylights include integrated LED lights and exhaust venting, making it possible to get daylight, electric light, and ventilation from this single fixture.

Aside from looking cool, a wall-mounted toilet is a great way to free up precious floor space in a bathroom. Code requires 15 in. from the centerline of the toilet to adjacent fixtures or walls and 24 in. of clear space in front of the toilet. Most designers recommend even more space around a toilet. While wall-hung toilets don't help with clearances to the sides of the bowl, they project up to 10 in. less from the wall than a floor-mounted toilet, making a wall-hung toilet just the ticket for a small space.

A wall-hung toilet bolts to a steel-frame assembly called a "carrier," which fits inside 2x4 and 2x6 walls. The tank and flushing mechanisms are built into the carrier. Installation is only tricky because it is new to many residential plumbers, but wall-hung toilets are not untested. They've long been the standard in much of Europe and in commercial construction. Most models have a plate that mounts on the wall above the toilet with the flush buttons. The plate can be removed to access the tank for some maintenance, but major repairs may require opening up the wall above the toilet. It is wise to back the toilet up to a closet or other space that is accessible from the back side or to install a removable access panel.

Among the advantages of wall-hung toilets is that they're easy to clean around, the toilet-seat height is customizable, and they are known to be quieter than standard floor-mounted models. These advantages come at a cost, so expect to pay a premium for a wall-hung toilet.

WALL-HUNG TOILETS OFFER MANY ADVANTAGES



A SIMPLE SINK THE OPTIONS ARE ENDLESS

The venerable white, oval, drop-in lavatory sink is typically made of vitreous china or enameled cast iron. It is simple and functional, durable and easy to clean. It's a great choice for most bathrooms. But bathroom sinks are a product category that has exploded. Assuming that your sink will be mounted in a vanity countertop, you can now also choose from glass, fire clay, solid surface, stone, synthetic stone, and a variety of metals. You can choose a sink that's square, rectangular, round, or "organically shaped." Double vanities can have two sinks or one trough. You can get your sink in just about any color and install it on the counter, flush with the counter, or below it.

Before choosing a fancy bathroom sink, though, consider two things: the sink's role in the design and the many things we do at our bathroom sinks. When it comes to design, a colorful glass bowl can be the focal point in a bathroom if the surrounding materials are calm and subdued. On a vanity with lots of wood grain or busy granite, it can be one thing too many. When other details are meant to be the focus, consider a more basic sink that blends into the design without calling attention to itself.

We use the sink to wash our hands and face, brush our teeth, and shave, and stand over it to use the mirror when combing our hair and putting on makeup. Splash pools and vessels make a design statement, but sacrifice functionality. They may be better suited to powder rooms or guest baths. In baths that get daily use, consider sinks with deep bowls and installations that make it easy to clean the counter. And keep in mind the relationship between the size of the vanity top and the size of the sink. In a powder room, it may be okay for a sink to take up most of the counter. In a master bath, you'll want enough counter space on either side of the sink to place your Q-tips, razors, and hair dryer.

One more thing about those white, drop-in workhorses: the good ones cost about \$100. A high-quality glass vessel sink can cost ten times as much.



SLIDING DOORS |||||

MAKE A LOT OF SENSE

Sliding barn doors can add a lot of style to a house, and they don't project into rooms the way a swinging door does. So, they must be great for bathrooms, right? Well, not without careful consideration. Barn-door tracks require that the door panels float away from the wall surface. The result is a healthy gap all the way around the door when it is rolled closed. Sound and light rush through gaps like water. And consider the wall space consumed by barn doors when they are open. A 3-ft.-wide door needs that same amount of open wall space next to it, making the space unavailable for bathroom accessories if the barn door is inside the bath and furniture if it is outside. Understanding these drawbacks, barn doors may best be saved for baths in private hallways or within master suites where privacy is not a major concern.

Pocket doors have the same space-saving advantages as barn-style sliding doors, but, when closed, they provide the same level of privacy as a swinging door. Though pocket doors have a reputation for being problematic, today's hardware is better than ever and a good builder can easily install trouble-free pocket doors. Moreover, the door itself can be the exact same door you use for every hinged interior door in your home.

Another place where a sliding door makes sense is at a shower—for accessibility, as mentioned earlier, and for space savings. In a remodel of a skinny bathroom where a toilet or cabinet is crowding the shower, it could be that a sliding unit is the only way to install a 24-in.-wide door, the narrowest width allowed by code.



Sliding doors are now commonly available for standard 60-in.-long tub/showers stalls, even at most home centers.

Lightweight, aluminum-framed glass doors have largely replaced shower curtains due to their affordability. Frameless glass shower enclosures with robust sliding door mechanisms are pricey, but the fact that these units have no bottom track to collect mildew and soap scum is reason enough to splurge.

The last word, regardless of style

Some aspects of design leave no room for debate. If a swinging shower door can't open all the way without bumping into the vanity, well, that's just bad design. But, of course, there are aspects of design that are subjective. What style we choose for a bathroom, for example, is a matter of personal preference, and traditional baths are objectively no better or worse than a contemporary bathroom. In this way, we didn't agree on everything in this article. So here are a few final takeaways from each of us. When you're done reading, you're invited to share your own thoughts on bathroom design at FineHomebuilding.com.

PAUL

- I love doorless showers. Whether it's curbless or not matters less to me. It's warm and humid in central Texas where I live, so I don't need super-hot showers. I love the open feeling, and I want the extra air circulation for speedier drying and less mildew.
- My clients love freestanding tubs and I agree that they look beautiful and aren't as visually imposing as deck-mounted, platform tubs. So, I'll always try to find a way to make a freestanding tub work.
- When I do a floating vanity, it's as much for the wow factor as it is for the increased spaciousness. Wall-mounted faucets up the ante as well.
- I try not to let clients get hooked on trendy choices driven strictly by aesthetics. Ensure that your design decisions are guided equally by functionality and form. Your bathroom will be better for it.
- I've never done a barn door in a bathroom and I hope I never do! There are better places to use them in a home.

BRIAN

- The only reason I can think of not to put a big window in your shower is wasted energy. Otherwise, talk to your designer and builder, choose the right window and waterproofing details, and go for it. It will fail someday, but probably not before the bath is remodeled anyway.
- In my opinion, many big, expensive baths look too busy. To avoid letting your design get too loud, choose just one or two focal points and let them shine.
- Make sure your bath has plenty of storage. In my experience, when everything has a place, homes stay clean and uncluttered.
- Save space wherever possible. Even if you don't need it for a fixture or an accessory, your design will benefit from the breathing room. And create the illusion of space with as much open floor and all the light and views you can get.
- I bet Paul designs a bath with a barn door in the next year or two. When he does, we'll publish his tips for doing it well.



A cabinetmaker offers smart construction details for the most common types of cabinets

BY BRENT BENNER

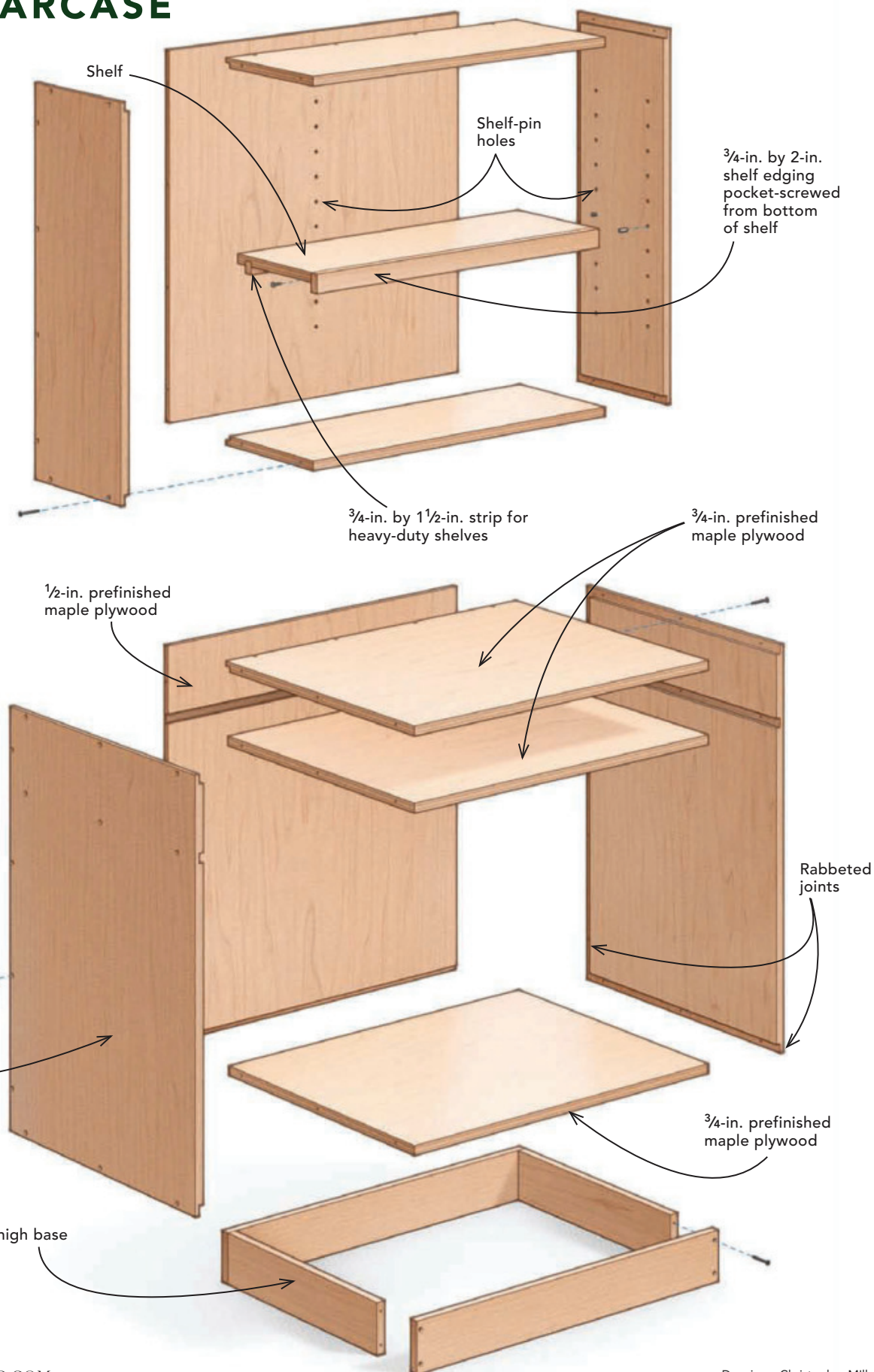
Custom Cabinets: An Inside Look

Designers normally don't provide construction details beyond elevation drawings for kitchen cabinets. As a cabinet builder, it's my job to fill in the details. Regardless of style, the cabinet boxes, or carcasses, are similar. The differences in how I build each style of cabinet lie in how the doors and drawers relate to the frames. Euro-style cabinets have no face frames; the doors and drawers cover the carcase edges. Overlay and inset cabinets have traditional face frames, but the former's doors and drawers overlay the cabinet faces, while the latter's are inset within the faces. □

Brent Benner owns The Roxbury Cabinet Company in Roxbury, Conn. Photos by Brian Vanden Brink, except where noted.

ALL CABINETS START WITH A BASIC CARCASE

All styles of cabinets have carcasses made of similar materials and joinery. The base cabinet carcasses are sized to sit on a 4-in.-high base, usually made from plywood scrap and recessed from the front of the cabinets to create a toe space. This frame is leveled so the cabinet carcasses can be placed on it without having to fuss with each one. I use prefinished maple plywood for all carcass parts. For cabinets wider than 3 ft., a row of holes for shelf pins is drilled down the center of the back. Heavier-duty shelves get a $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. by $1\frac{1}{2}$ -in. hardwood strip set in a dado along the back edge for additional support.



EURO-STYLE CABINETS

Euro-style cabinets lend themselves to sleek, modern decor. The doors hang from Euro hinges, which allow for adjustment in several directions to simplify fitting the doors with even gaps between them. Euro cabinets save labor and material costs by eliminating the face frame. The sides of Euro cabinets screw to each other with no space between, so they offer the most interior space of any cabinet style.



Drawer slide
screwed to side

Doors and drawer fronts
lap plywood edges

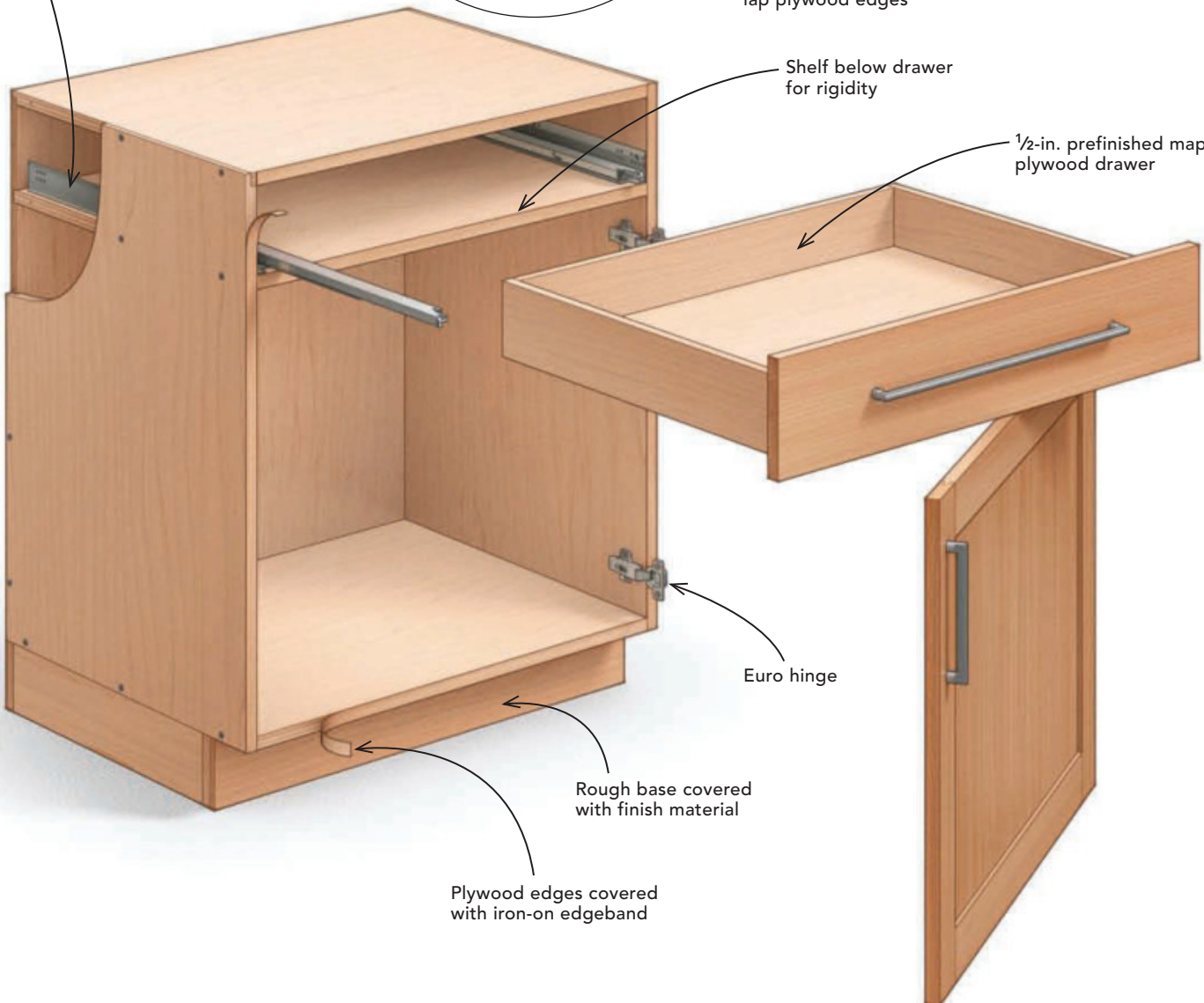
Shelf below drawer
for rigidity

1/2-in. prefinished maple
plywood drawer

Euro hinge

Rough base covered
with finish material

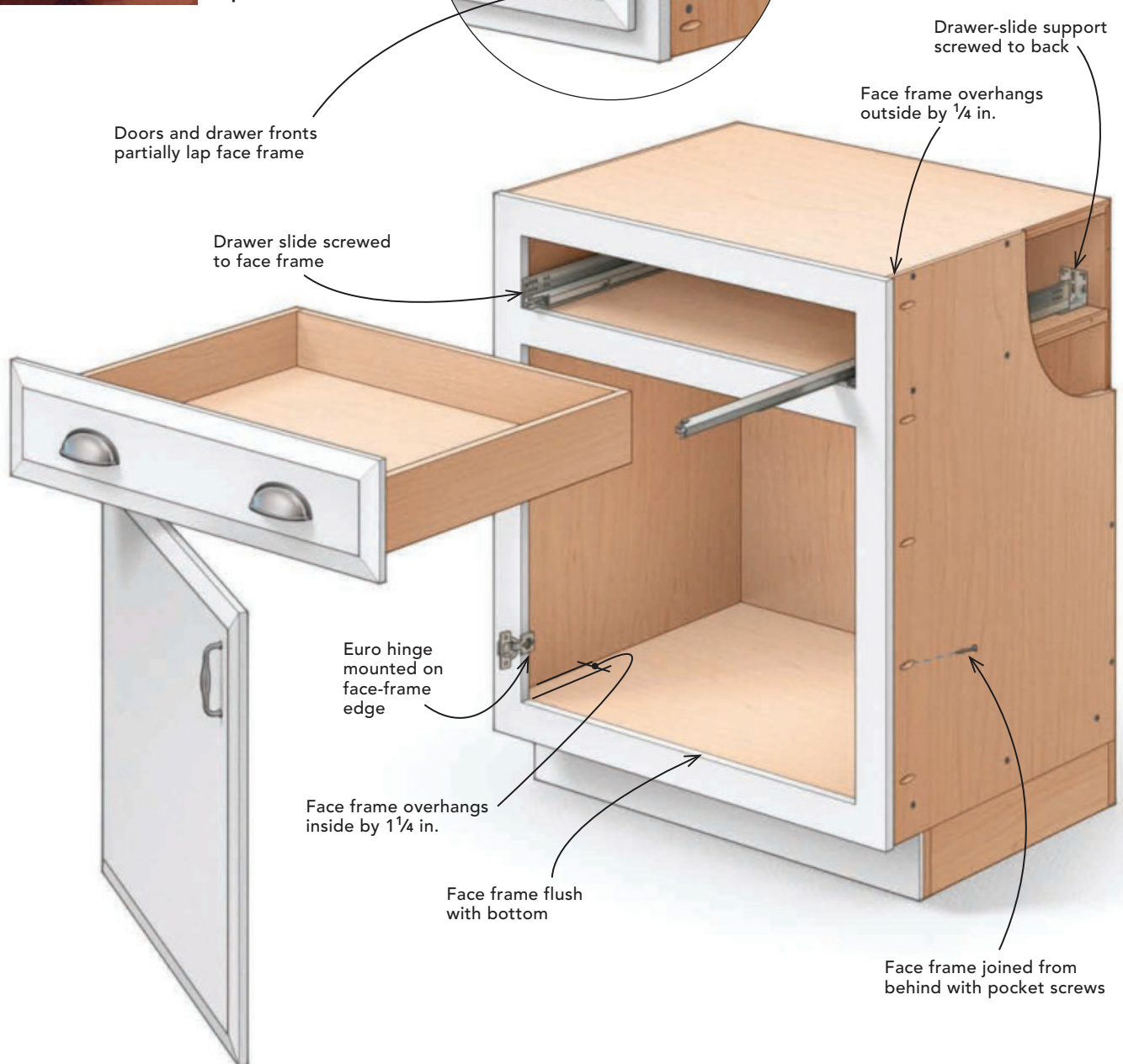
Plywood edges covered
with iron-on edgeband



OVERLAY CABINETS

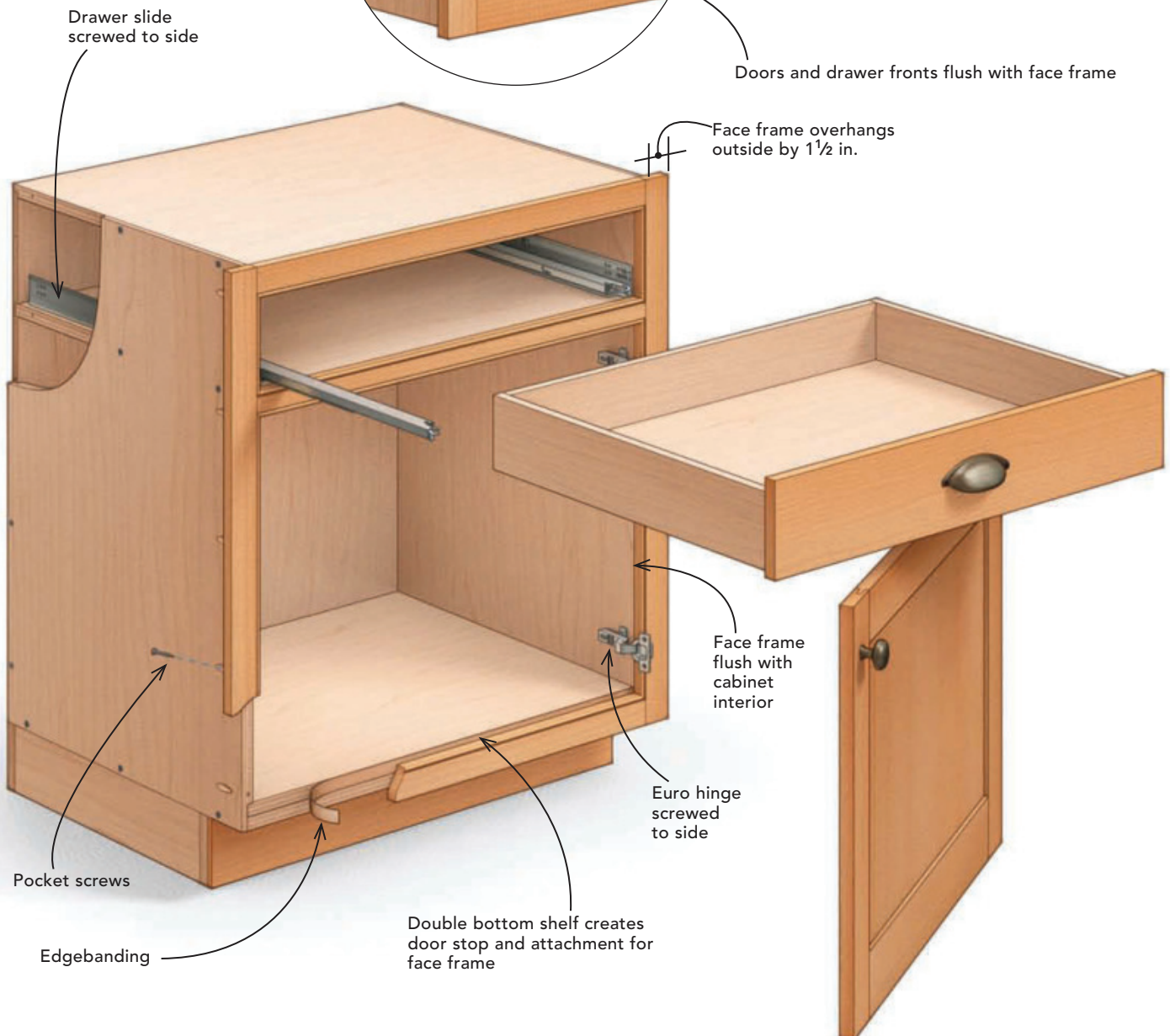


For a traditional look, overlay cabinets have a face frame made from $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. by $2\frac{1}{4}$ -in. hardwood, joined together and to the carcass with pocket screws. The larger space between doors and drawers makes adjusting them easier than with Euro cabinets. The face frame overhangs the outside and inside of the carcass. This limits access to the interior, and, compared to Euro cabinets, the drawers and interior space will be smaller.



INSET CABINETS

Inset doors and drawers offer a custom look, but it's time-consuming to create even gaps all around, and more expensive to build. To make it easier to mount the drawers and doors, I set the inside edge of the face frame flush with the inside of the carcass, letting it overhang $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. to the outside of the case sides. Built this way, inset cabinets have the least amount of interior space.



Kitchen Under \$20k A Labor



Do some work yourself
and be selective with your
spending for an elegant kitchen
remodel on a tight budget

BY JEFF SOLLENBERGER AND PATRICIA JOB

of Love

After long careers working on other people's homes, we retired and finally had the time to remodel our own. As soon as we finished with that, we realized that we needed something new to do, so we looked for a fixer-upper in historic Old Colorado City. Hoping to remodel and sell the house as an investment, we didn't want to get involved in a lot of structural work. We bought a simple bungalow from the 1940s with a floor plan that is still relevant today.

We bought the house for \$156,000, knowing that the potential for profit was in our sweat equity. To make a decent wage for the time we put into the project, we'd have to make a big impact on the dated house with minimal cash outlay. With that in mind, we made the biggest improvements to the kitchen and its connection to the living room.

The existing kitchen was dark, drab, and closed off from the living room. With the cabinetry, appliances, and sink all aligned on one wall, the layout was inefficient, and the kitchen lacked storage. There was no eating area and one wall had jogs and a tiny closet with the toilet stack inside—not a pleasant surprise to find in a kitchen. The challenge was to make the kitchen work without changing the footprint and to incorporate the room in the rest of the house.

Some of the solutions were obvious: We widened the arched opening into the living room, sacrificed a window for more cabinetry, straightened the jogged wall, and hid the toilet stack inside a new pantry.

To create a more functional working layout, we designed a U-shaped plan with a basic work triangle. But it's really the peninsula that makes the plan work so well. It



TURNING THE CORNER

Originally aligned along one wall, the kitchen's plan was clunky. The new U-shaped layout creates a work triangle, and still keeps the path from the living room to the back door out of the workspace.

SWEAT EQUITY IS PRICELESS

To complete this kitchen remodel for \$16,760, Jeff and Patricia invested a lot of their time. Jeff did all of the framing and finish carpentry. Patricia did the tiling and painting. They hired a helper for some of the tasks and subs for electrical, plumbing, and drywall. To make sure the kitchen was functional, durable, and stylish, they spent their money wisely on materials.

LOW COST, HIGH IMPACT

CABINETS The affordable mail-order knockdown cabinets cost \$2268. Customizing the doors on site cost another \$560, and professional painting cost \$650. Help with assembly and installation cost \$960 in labor. Hardware added \$58.

BACKSPLASH Using porcelain-plank floor tile cost only \$110 and help with the installation added another \$275 in labor.

FLOORING Pulling up the old linoleum before patching, sanding, and staining the original oak flooring cost \$650 in materials.

SKYLIGHT Because the kitchen's plan took away one of the existing windows, a skylight was installed. To center the skylight over the sink without modifying the roof framing, Jeff cheated the skylight well a bit to the left. The total cost was \$618.

PANELED WAINSCOT Using leftover materials and applying the frames to the drywall kept the cost to \$385. Rounding out the trim package, the crown molding cost \$477 in materials and labor.

EXTRA STORAGE Framing a simple closet with basic shelves inside is an affordable way to add pantry storage. The doors, installation, and hardware cost about \$238. The shelving cost about \$190.

SINK WINDOW Keeping the original sink window in place cost nothing. New paint brought the old window back to life.



MONEY WELL SPENT

COUNTERS The leathered Black Pearl granite counters are the showpiece of the kitchen. The two slabs cost \$1510, installed.

DECORATIVE TASK LIGHTING Three Feiss Urban Renewal pendants and a Nuvo Lighting down-light bowl pendant set the kitchen's style at \$274.

REFRIGERATOR To meet the demands of the modern family that will ultimately live here, Jeff and Patricia splurged on a \$995 Samsung French-door fridge. The more affordable range and venting microwave added \$1632 to the appliance package. Reusing the existing dishwasher cost nothing.

ENTRY DOOR To bring in daylight and provide views to the backyard, a Thermo-Tru ¾-view entry door was installed for a total cost of \$450.

MISCELLANEOUS COSTS ADD UP

PLUMBING AND GAS \$1063

ELECTRICAL \$870

DEMOLITION/DUMPSTER RENTAL \$675

DRYWALL \$684

SINK AND FAUCET \$298

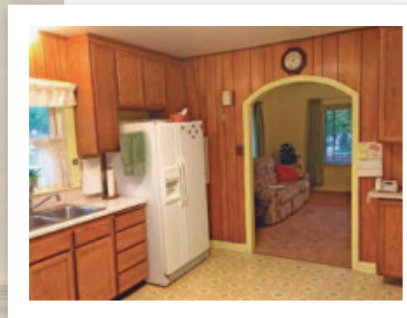
PAINT \$630

WINDOW BLINDS \$125

INSULATION \$115



See more photos of this kitchen at FineHomebuilding.com/magazine



INVALUABLE OPENING

Perhaps the greatest impact on the space is the new open connection to the living room, created for the cost of some framing lumber and a day's work.

allowed us to create a large opening at the living room for a view of the new stone fireplace, with each room still well defined. It offers extra storage. And it functions as a buffet, a bar, and a place to rest your elbow.

We knew that the style of the new kitchen had to be traditional and timeless, in keeping with the home. A calm color palette, crown molding, panel wainscot, vintage-style hardware, and glass accent lighting all help create the style. The key was balancing our spending among these materials.

Our biggest purchase was the Black Pearl granite counters. They have a leathered finish that looks similar to soapstone. We love them and always get compliments on the uncommon finish. We also put a good portion of the budget toward the pendant lights. The only appliance we splurged on was the refrigerator.

The cabinets are probably where we saved the most. We ordered knockdown cabinetry with flat-panel doors from CabParts. We then modified the MDF doors, inserting beadboard panels. We also saved a bunch of money by refinishing the home's original floors, hidden under layers of linoleum and carpet. This tied the rooms in the house together nicely. The backsplash is affordable porcelain floor tile and the wainscot panels are applied directly over the drywall, which we made sure was very smoothly finished.

We did all of the carpentry with an occasional helper, Chip Hilton. We also did all of the tiling and painting (except for the cabinets). After we primed the walls, we liked the color so much that we had the paint store do a color match of the primer color, which turned out to be a subtle gray that we loved against the Behr "Polar Bear" white trim and cabinet color.

The project took about nine months to complete and we spent about \$80,000. The house sold for \$285,000 in two weeks. We were happy: We brought an outdated old house back to life, had a fun project to work on together, and got paid for our efforts. □



Jeff Sollenberger has been a carpenter for the last 46 years. Patricia Job has been part of Jeff's design/build team for the last seven years. They've now started a second investment project. Photos by Rob Reinmuth, except where noted.



DIY Kitchen Demolition

Put down that sledgehammer—a careful, methodical approach gets better results

BY TYLER GRACE

Most people think that the demolition is the easy part of remodeling a kitchen. Simply show up with your muscles and sledgehammers and go to town. But to me, demo days are some of the most critical on any job. Proper demolition makes for a safer site and lays the foundation for an easier install, saving time and money. These benefits can be a huge selling point to potential clients. For a homeowner doing the job themselves, the potential savings from doing it right can be even greater. But no matter who is doing the work, attention to detail is crucial.

The setup and execution for this kitchen demolition were fairly simple, and followed the same principles that any demolition should: Protect the home and its occu-

pants, have a plan, work methodically, stay organized, and keep the space clean.

First, do no harm

My first step in any demo is to locate all utility shutoffs and the circuit-breaker panel, and make sure I know as much about the hidden utilities as possible. There is nothing worse than hitting a water line and having to scramble to locate the main shutoff. Every employee and subcontractor on site should know where these utilities are. If building plans for the house exist, study them to figure out the locations of mechanical runs and other issues you may have to contend with. If you don't have plans, spending some time in the basement, crawlspace,



PREP WORK



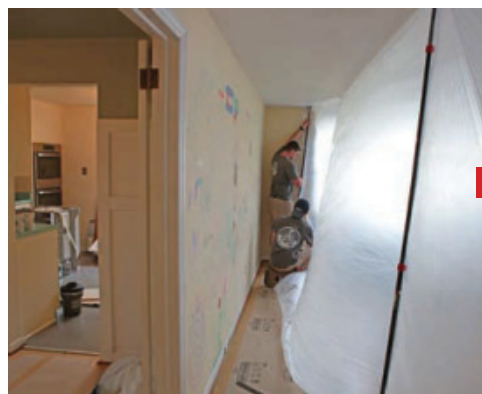
SHUT OFF UTILITIES

Find and turn off any electrical, gas, water, and other utilities in the space before starting your demolition. Miss this step and you could end up with a jolt, water damage, or even an explosion.



PROTECT THE FLOORS

To protect flooring that's not part of the demo, put down delicate-surface painter's tape around the perimeter of the room to protect the floor finish, then tape thick, heavy paper such as Ram Board to the tape. For additional protection during heavy demolitions—or when demoing a room where the floor will stay—add a layer of hardboard on top of the Ram Board.



ISOLATE THE SPACE

To keep dust and debris from spreading around the house, close off the work area with plastic sheeting held up with telescoping poles and sealed around the perimeter with tape. A self-adhesive zipper stuck to the plastic creates a temporary doorway that can be opened only when necessary to keep the rest of the house clean.



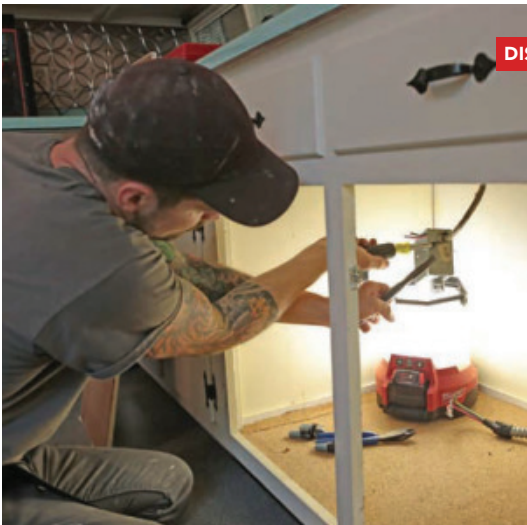
SCRUB THE AIR

Sealing a piece of cardboard in a window opening in the work area and running your air-scrubber hose through it allows you to create negative pressure that helps prevent dust from escaping the work area as the scrubber filters the air.

and attic can turn up useful clues as to where hazards might be hiding.

The next thing I do is install floor protection from the front door to my work area. If needed, I also install protection from the front door to my dumpster. On areas that need to be covered throughout the job, I use a product called Ram Board—a thick, heavy paper designed to protect flooring through a remodel. When protecting hardwood flooring, as in this job, I first like to put down delicate-surface painter's tape around the perimeter of the room, then secure the Ram Board to this sacrificial layer using a heavier-duty tape without any risk of damaging the floor finish. If I have heavy demo to do, I will install hardboard on top of the Ram Board. On stairs and

REMOVE APPLIANCES, FIXTURES



DISCONNECT THE CORDS

After turning off circuits and testing to make sure they aren't live, disconnect and cap electrical connections as necessary to remove appliances and prevent damage to components that will be reused later. Labeling every wire, switch, and other electrical accessory you disconnect will make it easier for you or your electrician to know what goes where later on.



CUT THE COUNTERS

Use a reciprocating or circular saw to cut wood or laminate countertops into manageable pieces for removal. Stone and solid-surface countertops can be broken into pieces if they're not being saved.



DISASSEMBLE THE PLUMBING

It's likely that you'll have to disconnect some plumbing before removing the cabinetry. Melting soldered joints rather than cutting through copper pipe takes some additional time, but is less destructive, allows you to reuse materials and reduce waste, and makes it easier to cap off lines that need to be turned back on to supply other parts of the house.



PRY THE CABINETS

If removing screws doesn't free the cabinets from the walls, use pry bars to break them loose. Once they're off the walls, break the cabinets down into smaller pieces so they take up less dumpster space.



MOVE THE APPLIANCES

Remove anything that will be reused or salvaged and store it in a safe place. Any hardware or fasteners removed from an appliance should be put in a resealable plastic bag and taped to the appliance so they don't get lost.

AND CABINETS



Cabinetry is fastened in various ways. Remove screws that attach cabinets to each other and the walls for easier removal. Be careful with upper cabinets, because the screws may be the only thing holding them up.



areas leading to my work site, I use Econo Runner, a non-slip, non-porous padded floor-protection sheeting that can be pulled up at the end of each day and reused.

After all of the floors are protected, I install cardboard on any door jambs, railings, newel posts, and other fixed features that could be damaged while removing debris from the house.

I follow that up by adding dust barriers to close off the work area. This starts with taping any doorways or windows to prevent air infiltration or the transmission of dust from my work area to other parts of the house. I then use spring-loaded ZipWall poles and plastic sheeting to create a temporary barrier to isolate my work area. The plastic gets taped to the ceiling, the adjacent walls, and the floor so the space is completely sealed off. To access the work area, I use ZipWall self-adhesive zippers. You just stick the zipper to the plastic and slit the plastic down the center of the zipper, and you're left with a zip-sealable entryway.

I then install and seal a piece of cardboard on a window inside the work area through which I run the duct for my BuildClean air scrubber. The scrubber runs throughout the job, creating negative air pressure in the space to keep dust from escaping into other parts of the house.

I like to have trash cans inside the work site to hold smaller debris and make it easier to carry out of the house. Larger debris can be broken into smaller pieces and removed in the cans, wrapped in drop cloths and removed, or carried out of the house in one piece by two people. This prevents dust and small bits and pieces from trailing behind. If the debris is especially messy, I have gone as far as lining my trash cans with trash bags that I can seal up while moving through the home to the dumpster. I also try to collect as much debris in my work area as possible prior to opening the dust wall and bringing the material outside. Every time the dust wall is opened is an opportunity for airborne dust to escape into the home. Keep it closed until you absolutely must open it.

It's a good idea to protect your body and lungs during the demolition process. At minimum, you should use a high-quality disposable dust mask to protect your lungs from airborne dust and debris. A good pair of gloves can save your hands from cuts and scrapes, and it isn't a bad idea to wear pants and heavy boots. Last but not least, use safety glasses to protect your eyes. It's better to be safe than sorry.

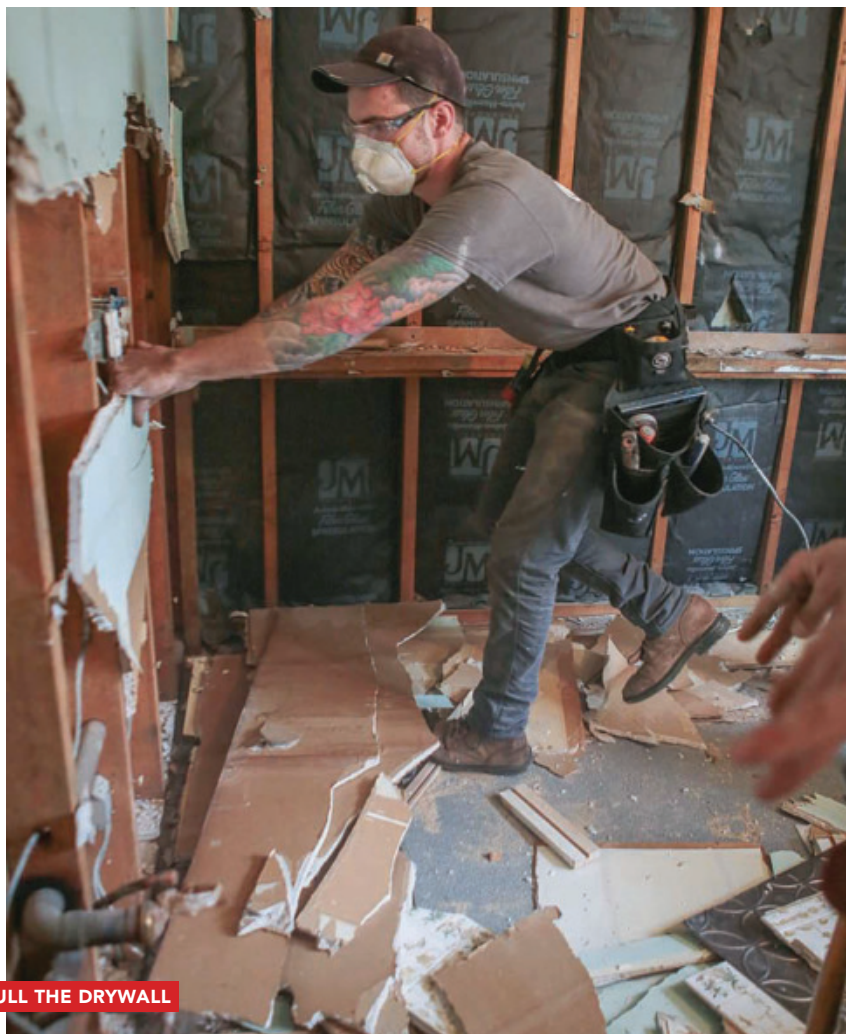
If this all sounds like it's adding up to an expense you'd rather cut from the budget—whether as the builder bidding on a job or a homeowner hiring a contractor, or even if you're doing the work yourself—consider that the place you're working is where a family eats, sleeps, and breathes. Site protection should be a requirement, not an option.

Appliances, fixtures, and cabinets come first

Once our work-site isolation and protection is in place, we start the demolition process. After turning off any circuits and closing shut-offs to areas that will be taken apart, I generally start by removing appliances, as well as electrical and plumbing fixtures. You'll probably have to do some plumbing and electrical work as you go in order to pull appliances and prevent damage to components that will be used later. I like to disassemble copper joints by melting the solder, which makes it easy to cap off the lines quickly. Any appliances or fixtures that will be reused are moved to a safe location, and screws or small miscellaneous parts are put in resealable sandwich bags and taped to the item they belong to so they won't get lost.

After those items are out, I start removing the countertops and cabinetry. I cut wood or laminate countertops with a reciprocating

TAKE IT DOWN TO THE STUDS



PULL THE DRYWALL

Carefully make a hole in the drywall with a hammer and remove the drywall with your hands. This method yields larger pieces and less mess than smashing it with a hammer or sledgehammer, and diminishes the risk of damaging utility lines that might be hidden in the walls or ceiling. Wear a respirator to protect your lungs from dust.

ing or circular saw, then pry the counter sections out with flat bars and crowbars. Stone or solid-surface tops are removed by cutting the silicone around the perimeter and underneath, breaking them into smaller pieces if need be, and prying them out with flat bars and crowbars. Fasteners holding cabinets in place are backed out, then the cabinets are pried free from the wall and each other. Not all cabinets are built the same, so the method of demolition may require additional cutting or frame removal. However they're built, breaking the cabinets down before taking them out of the house makes them easier to move and allows them to be stacked flat, which takes up less space in the dumpster.

Walls, floors, and ceilings are messier

Next, we remove the drywall or plaster from the walls. Plaster usually has to be busted up with a hammer, the lathe removed with a hammer or flat bar, and the nails pulled using a hammer, pry bar, or



STAGE THE DEBRIS

Collect demolition debris inside the contained area and bring it to the dumpster in as few trips as possible to minimize the introduction of dust to the rest of the house.



MOVE THE INSULATION

Before removing the ceiling drywall, relocate attic insulation so it doesn't end up as a mess on the floor. Often, you can pull up or scoop out the insulation and reuse it.

end-cutting pliers. For drywall, carefully punch small holes with a hammer and pull it off by hand to minimize the mess.

After opening the walls, I remove and bag any cavity insulation prior to addressing any minor plumbing or electrical terminations. I label and temporarily cap any electrical circuits or fixtures that I remove or pull from the wall studs so the electrician knows what is what. I do the same for the plumbing. If there is anything major that needs to be removed or relocated, I will get professionals in ASAP to do so, so that I can proceed with the demolition.

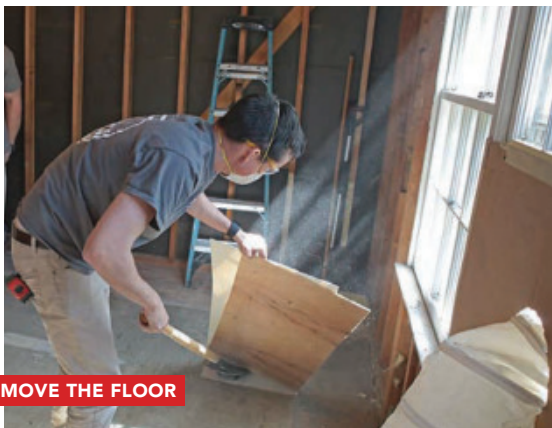
Clean, continue the demo, then clean again

The floor demo comes next, at which point I will usually sweep everything up so that the space is safe and relatively clean, to prevent injuries. Depending on the flooring material, you can use various tools, but I find that a shingle shovel works best. It has spiked teeth and an angled pivot point on the bottom of the blade for getting under and



PULL THE CEILING

Stand on a ladder or stable platform to remove ceiling drywall by hand. This is less dangerous and creates less dust and debris than removal by hammer.



REMOVE THE FLOOR

A shingle shovel can slide under flooring and pry it up for removal. Flooring and underlayment can also be cut in place into more manageable pieces—just make sure the kerf on your demo blade is set only deep enough to cut what you want to cut.



VACUUM AND SCRUB

Finish off the demo with a thorough vacuuming, and let your air scrubber run through the night to remove residual airborne dust so the job site is clean enough that you don't have to wear a respirator for the rest of the project.

prying up the plywood underlayment or tile. You can also cut the underlayment into smaller sections prior to removal if you wish. Be careful to set the blade depth of your circular saw just deep enough to get through the underlayment, not the subfloor. If any subfloor needs to come out to repair rot or relocate utilities, we do that after the next step—the ceiling demo.

If there is blown-in insulation above the ceiling, this part of the demo can be quite a mess. On this job I scooped out and relocated as much of the insulation as possible within the attic prior to removing the drywall to avoid having two feet of insulation on the floor and in the air. After the drywall is removed, I remove any nails, staples, screws, and other unwanted fasteners and protrusions from the walls, floor, and ceiling.

I will also vacuum out joist bays, stud cavities, flooring, and other places where dust and debris have collected. Once everything is out of the space, we go through and do a final cleaning with a HEPA

vacuum to guarantee an extremely clean site. After the work area is tidied up, I clean my way out of the house and remove any floor protection outside of the work area.

If I can, I'll leave the air scrubber running for a night after the demo is complete to remove all of the airborne dust from the space. Getting the workspace to this level of cleanliness means I won't have to wear a dust mask throughout the remainder of the job.

If possible, I leave up the temporary plastic walls and floor protection for the duration of the project. Once the job is complete, I break down the walls, roll up the floor protection, and throw it all in the dumpster. After a final cleaning and walk-through, I hand the job off to the customer. □

Tyler Grace is an *FHB* Ambassador and owner of TRG Home Concepts in Haddon Heights, N.J. (trghomeconcepts.com). Photos by Brian McAward.



BY ROB SANDERS

In contrast to more traditional homes, which tend to shut out the site, this midcentury modern house attracted Amy and Matt Collins because of its many views of the wooded property. The living areas are wrapped mostly in glass, so the open interior living spaces are brightly lit. And because it was affordably priced, they knew they'd be able to make improvements in the future. Their first project was to add a master suite and a studio for Matt, who is an illustrator and works at home. They

knew they'd need to address the outdated and clunky kitchen soon after. When a tree fell on the house and damaged the roof above, they took the opportunity to remodel all of the living areas.

A 312-sq.-ft. solution

It was easy to see what was wrong with Amy and Matt's kitchen, and it was more than just the kitchen itself that wasn't working. There were big problems to solve that



Midcentury

An '80s kitchen is remodeled and taken back to its roots

included the surrounding dining and living rooms, and the entry too. The existing kitchen—built circa 1980—had a narrow Pullman-style layout, which dead-ended against a bathroom wall. The cabinetry was ubiquitous (and pretty ugly) '80s white laminate. With the kitchen located right next to the main entry door, it was the first thing visitors saw when they came in the house.

While it was open to the dining area, the kitchen's narrow width made it difficult for more than one person

to use. And there was no place for family or guests to hang out with the cook. Because the existing kitchen was located on an exterior wall with big windows, there were few upper cabinets. The open shelves, exposed to the adjoining hallway, meant dishes attracted dust and required vigilant arrangement. Finally, the living areas adjacent to the kitchen were a bit too open to the home's private areas, with one bedroom door practically in the living room. A redesign of the kitchen layout and

surrounding areas would go a long way toward fixing this problem.

Amy and Matt needed an expanded kitchen, improved storage, and a more elegant and defined entry space. They wanted room for helpers in the kitchen and a place to visit with the cook without interrupting the work triangle. On their wish list was a 36-in. commercial-style cooktop and double oven. Preserving the house's open plan and maintaining large windows with broad site views was a must.

To meet these goals, we added 312 sq. ft. to the house, moved the kitchen away from the exterior walls, and relocated the entry. Not only does this arrangement give the kitchen the space it needs, but it also helps define the other spaces within the house, including the dining

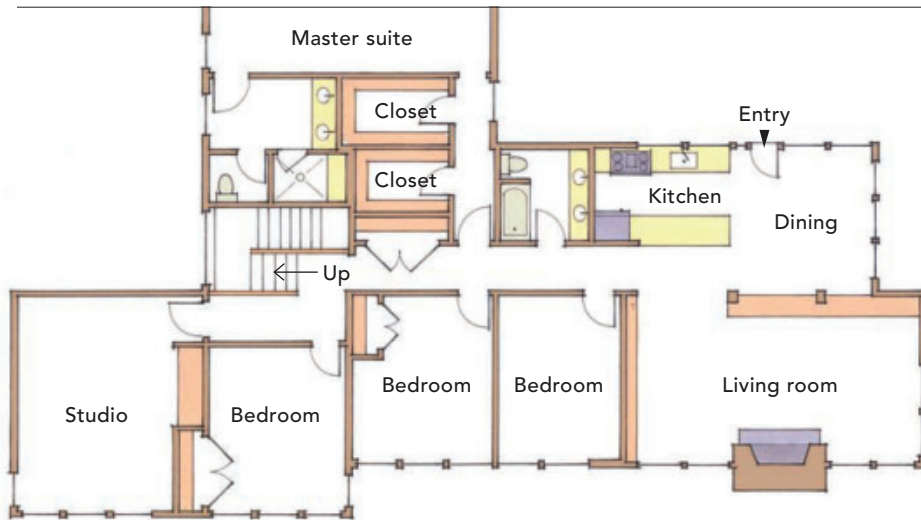
and living rooms, while still keeping them connected to one another.

To draw a more distinct line between the living areas and the more private spaces, we relocated two bedroom doors. We also renovated the existing bathroom, shrinking it from a full bath to a powder room for guests to use, and added a new full bathroom deep within the home's bedroom wing.

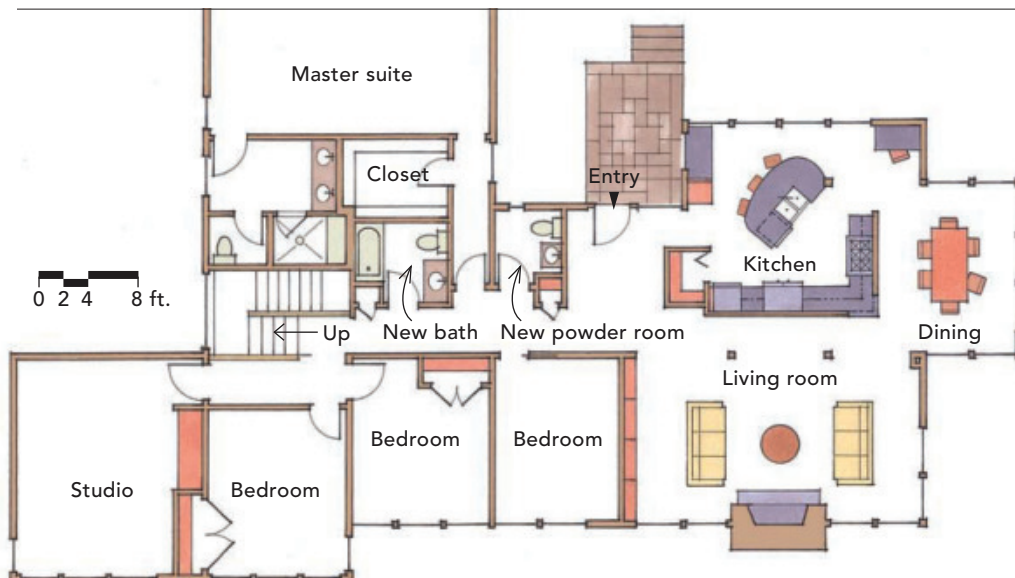
A budget with style

The house is a timber frame, and Amy and Matt were interested in maintaining, if not emphasizing, that aspect of the design. Though we built new partition walls for the kitchen, we kept them short of the ceiling. In this way, the roof rafters remain continuously exposed through the

A PROBLEM-SOLVING NEW PLAN



BEFORE The original galley-style kitchen was open to the dining room on one side and shared a wall with a bathroom on the other, creating a dead end. An exterior door opened awkwardly into the kitchen/dining space. Simply expanding the kitchen wouldn't address circulation issues nor the awkward placement of the entry.



AFTER Relocating the front door gave the kitchen the width it needs, and provided a proper entry space for the home. Now positioned along an interior wall, the kitchen layout is a simple L-shape with an island set at an angle. Circulation around the living areas flows freely, but the new plan more effectively defines each space.



MORE DETAILS

CABINETS Brookhaven by Wood-Mode

SINK AND FAUCET Kraus

LIGHT FIXTURE Hubbardton Forge

living space. We did not modify the structure; we worked around it, even leaving a post at the corner of the kitchen island. The only place we added to the timber frame was where we needed to extend the roofline, which we did using welded steel hangers to match the originals.

Stained cherry, black granite, and stainless steel dominate the material palette. The cabinet hardware is oil-rubbed bronze by Colonial Bronze, a local Connecticut company. These materials provide a neutral and timeless design, are easy to maintain, and will age gracefully.

Amy and Matt realized their dream with a Thermador six-burner gas cooktop and double oven. The granite counters and Lightyears pendants over the island are certainly a luxury, but, given their prominent placement and the fact that we weren't spending much more on lighting, we all decided they were worth the money. We also spent a good portion of the budget on custom fir windows from Quantum Windows & Doors. The new, insulated win-

dows minimize the energy penalty of all the glass, particularly compared to the original single-pane units.

We took a few important steps to save money. The walk-in pantry is a simple stick-framed closet with site-built shelving, as opposed to more pricey cabinetry. It also serves as a room divider. The semicustom cabinets are all common modular sizes, and we avoided unnecessary trim. The fridge is a standard-counter-depth unit. The stainless-steel panel and 4-in. granite backsplashes are more economical than tile.

This project did much more than improve Amy and Matt's kitchen—it improved their entire house in function, flow, and style. And the house is more midcentury now than it was when it was built in the midcentury. □

Rob A. Sanders, Jr., AIA, is principal at Rob Sanders Architects in Wilton, Conn. Photos by David Sloan, except where noted.

Views abound. The south-facing dining room has views of the wooded site and the home's existing terrace. Deep roof overhangs provide seasonal shading. Open corner shelves offer a view from the living room and let afternoon light into the kitchen.



A Family Affair

A homeowner hires her siblings to take her dated master bath from cramped to contemporary

BY STEVE CAMPBELL

My sister-in-law, Victoria Buker, is a landscape architect who works in construction management. When her master bathroom—untouched since the house was built in 1953—needed an upgrade, she recruited me to do the design, my brother-in-law, Dan Buker, to be the general contractor, and my wife, Katherine Buker, to install the tile. Victoria wanted the remodel to convert the cramped space into a modern, contemporary bathroom with a spa-like feel.

Fortunately, the master bath wasn't the only room in the house that we were remodeling, so we had some control over the size and shape of the room. In the end, we decided to keep the shape a simple rectangle and the size relatively small, and used the cabinetry and materials to create the calm and elegant style that Victoria was looking for.

The vanity consists of two horizontal planes. The upper section has drawers below the counter and two sinks above. The lower shelf is open to allow for storage flexibility and to make the small room feel spacious. The open bathroom vanity was custom-designed and built by Dan and engineered with Unistrut metal brackets. The vanity is finished with walnut and walnut-veneer plywood. The stone countertop is made up of three separate remnants found at local fabricators.

Additionally, a low cabinet, split between the toilet and the shower, has open shelves that face the toilet to provide more storage space, while inside the shower the same structure functions as a shelf for storing toiletries.

Victoria wanted a large walk-in shower to modernize the space. The new shower's curbless entry ensures accessibility. Its frameless

BASIC SPACE, SPA-LIKE FEEL

Before the renovation, the bathroom was small and dark. The new space is clean and modern and the simple rectangular arrangement offers just enough room for the toilet, walk-in shower, and double vanity. The curbless shower and its glass partitions go a long way toward creating the spa-like feel the homeowner was after.



Tile and barn style. The horizontal wall tile accentuates the bath's broad, rectangular shape. A sliding barn-style door adds style without cluttering up the sparse bath design.



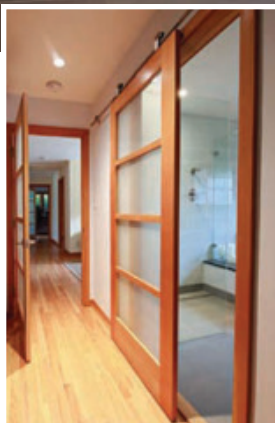
glass walls keep the room feeling as open as possible. The shower has a linear drain and its tiles have an anti-slip finish. Katherine waterproofed the tile shower with Schluter Ditra and Kerdi waterproofing products. The 12x24 porcelain tile is the same throughout the space, making the room feel larger than it actually is.

Victoria loves her new master bathroom and it was rewarding to do the work as a family. If the new bath lasts as long as the original bath did, it too will be long overdue for an update. But that will be work for the next family who owns the home to tackle. □

Steve Campbell is an associate architect with The Johnson Partnership and has been with the firm since 2001. Photos by Mike Hipple, courtesy of the author.

MORE DETAILS

HARDWARE Linea Rail
SHOWER Kohler Purist
LINEAR DRAIN QuickDrain
SINKS Lacava Aquaplane
FAUCETS Mirabelle
SCONCES Kohler Purist
WALL TILE Ann Sacks and Pental Surfaces



See more photos of this bathroom at FineHomebuilding.com/magazine



Timeless by Design

Designers from across the country agree—it's not style that makes a kitchen last, it's function

BY ASA CHRISTIANA

If you are planning a new kitchen, you have a lot of reasons to get it right. Not only is remodeling a kitchen a major disruption, but to raise the stakes, it's the most expensive room to remodel, with plumbing and electrical systems to relocate; cabinets, appliances, and countertops to buy; and maybe even changes to make to walls, windows, and doors.

I asked designers from around the country how they'd go about making a kitchen that wouldn't need to be remodeled anytime soon. Their responses were remarkably unified, and the idea of "openness" came up in every interview.

A far cry from yesterday's shut-away spaces focused on cooking, the modern kitchen is home to more activities than ever: eating, entertaining, doing homework, surfing the web, and crafting as well as cooking. "There is no going backward on the kitchen being a social place," says Jean Rehkamp Larson, who runs an architectural firm in Minneapolis. "Whether for kids, friends, whatever, we need extra counter space and extra flow. We don't want to be surrounded by storage. We want openness and natural light."

Closed-off formal dining rooms are being traded for dining areas that connect to the kitchen, along with breakfast nooks, kitchen islands, and other places for casual meals and bites. "Back in the day, everyone would hang out in the formal living room while Mom slaved away in the kitchen alone," says Chad

Esslinger, who runs a design firm in Illinois. "Today, the kitchen is where the hosts are, where the food and drinks are. If it's small and down the hall, it's not conducive to a gathering. That's why nine out of ten new homes have the kitchen opened up to the family room."

Jason Urrutia, who runs a design firm in the Bay Area, says, "In a perfect world, there is a dining room on one side of the kitchen and a family room on the other."

We can now assume that open, social kitchens are here to stay, and begin to refine their design for optimal function, including guest seating, open storage, and tons of daylight.

The outdoors is in

"No one ever complains about too many windows," says designer Nicole Starnes Taylor. "They connect you to the outdoors and bring in natural light. In tight-packed Seattle, we try to capture certain views and screen others."

When weather permits, kitchen life spills outside the walls, and designers put access to the outdoors high on their list. "People don't realize how soothing it is to have a big French door open to the patio," Urrutia says. "It's a wow factor for resale, and not a trend that is going to disappear."

Outdoor entertaining is another trend that's here to stay, and the outdoor access definitely goes in the kitchen so you don't have to carry trays and plates through the living room. The

trick is to locate doors so people aren't forced through work zones to get outside.

Islands and peninsulas manage chaos

Openness alone can be chaotic. In addition to open spaces, every designer mentioned the need for separation between cooks and visitors, with zones tailored to each. "Make sure the place where the cook is dealing with knives and hot things is isolated from where people are circulating and lingering," Starnes





LOTS OF ROOM, LOTS OF LIGHT

Windows and white surfaces maximize the effect of daylighting, while a generous island both connects and separates cook and company.

Taylor says. The kitchen island is the preferred tool for keeping folks out of the cook's way while still keeping them together.

In narrow kitchens, a peninsula at the end of a run of cabinets can be a substitute for an island. But an island has distinct advantages. More windows and wider entryways in today's kitchens mean less wall area for cabinets, and a big island offers valuable storage. Also, peninsulas can create traffic jams, while an island allows another escape point from the kitchen's work area.

Perhaps the most important element of an island is a big countertop. "The island is usually the most open work area in the kitchen, used for baking, two or three people working on a non-cooking project, kids' science projects, even taxes," says Tom Ahmann of Ahmann Design in Iowa.

If there is enough room in the island for a sink and food-prep area, some designers will add it, but not if the sink overwhelms the island's overall workspace and limits how it can be used. A completely clear island is

especially important in small kitchens with a dearth of counter space. If you do add a sink to an island, it's important to include the dishwasher and trash/recycling nearby to complete the prep area.

When it comes to the size of a kitchen island, bigger is better, and most designers favor a single level at 36 in. high, with a large unbroken countertop for general use and stools on the outside. Raising a portion of the counter offers a way to create separation from a stovetop or dirty dishes, but it also



1

means glasses and plates can fall forward. On the other hand, a section of counter at table height (30 in.) can be added on one side of an island to take the place of a kitchen table, working well for kids and universal access.

Power outlets are critical for charging electronics while people hang out. For lighting, designers prefer pendants over islands and peninsulas to create a focal point and gently encourage people to sit rather than stand.

The triangle shifts

When drawing floor plans, many designers locate the sink first, because people spend the

most time there. “My first choice is to tie it to natural light,” Starnes Taylor says. “My second is to put it in the island so the cook can communicate with others without looking over his or her back.” The sink is also the center of the prep zone, meaning that the trash and recycling must be nearby.

In the classic kitchen triangle, the sink, stove, and fridge are all within a stride or two, but that rigid rule has become more relaxed to leave room for multiple cooks and better flow. While the range and sink are inextricably linked, the refrigerator can be an outlier. This approach makes it easier

to leave counter and floor space around the fridge, which allows guests to serve themselves drinks without clogging up the cook zone. If it is separate from the cooktop, the oven is another appliance that can be moved outside the cook zone.

No matter where the corners of the triangle end up, designers agree that counter space is essential on both sides of the stove and sink and on at least one side of the fridge and the pantry cabinet if applicable. Wall ovens need landing space too, but a nearby island or peninsula will do in a pinch. For Tamara Herrmann, who handles sales and design for

1 Open kitchens are wonderfully inviting, but no cook wants to be tripping over guests while preparing meals. An island provides separation while allowing traffic to flow, and becomes a space for family members to hang out day to day.

2 Big windows create a strong connection to the outdoors while admitting tons of natural light. In combination with a minimal number of upper cabinets, they make for an open and inviting kitchen.

3 Hanging commonly used kitchen tools in plain sight not only puts them conveniently at hand, it adds organic interest that no amount of froufrou moldings can match.

4 In a major break from the past, kitchens are no longer isolated workspaces. Instead of being separated from the rest of the house, today they connect directly to spaces such as dining nooks.



Crown Point Cabinetry in New Hampshire, the rule of thumb is 30 in. of counter on both sides of the range and sink. “We can’t always maintain that in small kitchens,” she says, “but we try to.”

Do more with fewer cabinets

The downside of an open kitchen is fewer cabinets, but designers make no apologies for this. “An open floor plan is more important than storage,” Esslinger says. “Some things can be moved to other parts of the house, like pots and glassware you hardly ever use. How much stuff do you really need?”

In fact, to keep kitchens feeling as open as possible, designers like Starnes Taylor avoid upper cabinets altogether, instead utilizing only windows and one or two floating shelves above the countertops. “I worked in coffee shops, bars, and restaurants, and came to appreciate the efficiency of open shelves,” she says. “Shelves force you to buy nice things that will last a long time, and those things show people who you are and what’s important to you. If you can hide stuff, you tend to accumulate so much more and don’t measure its value. With open shelves, you hold on to what’s useful and functional,

what inspires you and makes you happy. Stylistically, it goes back to a farmhouse aesthetic. There is authenticity when tools are displayed, a real connection to what’s happening, like an industrial building where you see the tools.”

Other designers warn that shelves are dust and grease collectors, while upper cabinets offer more storage, as well as a tidier look. Ana Rottkamp, senior designer at Knockout Renovation in New York City, mixes shelves and upper cabinets. “Open shelving is more cost-efficient,” she says, “but we use it in a balanced fashion, on either side of a window,



1 If you want a cooktop or sink in your island, make sure there is adequate space, as in the island shown here. If your island is small, put the kitchen fixtures elsewhere and reserve the island for socializing and daily tasks.

2 Small kitchens have the same requirements as big ones, and benefit even more from large windows. When there's no room for an island, a peninsula serves the same purpose of creating connected separation.

3 While minimizing the number of upper cabinets opens up the feel of a kitchen, it also limits storage. Rethinking your material needs is one possible solution, but another one is a walk-in pantry.

4 Light, neutral colors make a kitchen look bigger, and it takes a long time to tire of these colors. Kitchens should also be fun, so kick up the whimsy with sconces and colorful touches you can easily change.



as a place to stack dishes easily, with cabinets around it.”

Every designer spoke out strongly against cabinets that stop short of the ceiling. To minimize cleaning, maximize storage, and create a cleaner look, they run cabinets to the ceiling, or to a soffit for ceilings higher than 8 ft. Full-height uppers employ a two-tier approach in most cases: normal-size cabinets for things used every day, and an upper tier for lesser-used things. “The upper 12 inches can become a display cabinet with glass and lights,” Rottkamp says. “People have to use a stool to get to it, but it is really beautiful.”

Designers are on the same page when it comes to favoring drawers over doors in lower cabinets to make the contents accessible. The ideal is big lower drawers that face upward, their contents at your fingertips.

A pantry is another response to the open kitchen, whether it's a converted closet or bathroom, or a floor-to-ceiling cabinet with pullout hardware and door racks for storage and to make items more accessible. Some homeowners and designers prefer a walk-in pantry, which offers three walls of supplies.

A popular cousin to the pantry cabinet is a hutch, formed by bringing an upper cabi-

net down to the countertop, sometimes with small drawers near the bottom. It's another farmhouse touch that adds character, as well as much-needed storage and organization.

Light highlights design

While some favor an even flood of light and others prefer a targeted array, all designers recommend more light rather than less, and bright, long-lasting LEDs where possible. Like wide doorways and user-friendly cabinets, additional light helps people of all ages and abilities use the kitchen. Today's best kitchens include task lighting, under-



4

cabinet lighting, above-the-island pendants, and sometimes even lighting at baseboards as night-lights, with separate switches for everything so you can set different moods.

Lighter-colored walls and cabinets also make a kitchen feel brighter and more open. Says Starnes Taylor, “I keep color below the countertop line and white above. It’s a powerful way to make a space seem open. Upper cabinets and bold colors make walls feel like they are closing in, while a dark floor disappears and makes rooms seem more open.”

All designers suggest neutral palettes, asserting that adding the things you use

daily, like appliances and colored dishes, plus touches like flowers or art, will add all the pop you need without making a permanent statement you might regret in the future.

Distinctive lights over the island or peninsula create a focal point that is easy to change. Pulls are another place to play. “Take a risk there, follow a trend,” Starnes Taylor says.

“I add a bit of wood to give an earthy feel,” Urrutia says, citing cutting boards, serving boards, and wooden bowls. He notes that open shelves can hold glass canisters with cereal or pasta or rice in them, softening the crispness of the white.

“A nice island idea is all butcher block, or a solid walnut slab,” Esslinger adds. “It gives a farmhouse look in a light-colored kitchen.” Other designers suggest interrupting a long, seamless countertop with a large cutting-board insert.

Create a kitchen that functions well, is a wonderful place to cook and for guests to gather, and which serves as beautiful backdrop for your life, and your kitchen dollars will last for decades. □

Asa Christiana writes about woodworking and home design in Portland, Ore.

THROUGH THE LENS

DESIGN IDEAS FROM OUR PHOTOGRAPHERS



Picture perfect



Location Portland, Ore.
Remodel design Risa Boyer
Architecture, risaboyer.com
Photographer Lincoln Barbour

// What I love most about the midcentury modern style is that it looks futuristic. Now that we're in the 'future,' the remodels of these midcentury marvels speak to nostalgia. I really wish I had grown up in the space age. //

—Lincoln Barbour



Location San Francisco
Architect Andre
Rothblatt Architecture,
andrerothblattarchitecture.com
Photographer Ken Gutmaker

Contributing photographers Lincoln Barbour, Ken Gutmaker, Susan Teare, and Brian Vanden Brink have photographed many of the design projects featured in *Fine Homebuilding* magazine and on FineHombuilding.com. Here are a few of the beautiful kitchens and baths they've shared with us in the "Through the Lens" blog, along with their reflections on some of the projects.





Location Portland, Ore.

Design Erin Davis, Mosaik Design & Remodeling, mosaikdesign.com

Photographer Lincoln Barbour

// Small spaces, mirrors, and reflective surfaces make photographing bathrooms a challenge. That was not the case with this master bath. Using wood as the primary material for the walls transforms this bath into a warm and inviting space. **//**

—Ken Gutmaker

Location Tiburon, Calif.

Architect Polsky Perlstein Architects, polskyarchitects.com

Photographer Ken Gutmaker

THROUGH THE LENS CONTINUED



// This kitchen has the homey, warm, and comforting feel of a barn, while also incorporating contemporary aspects to give it a more polished and cohesive look. Through the combination of materials and styles, the space becomes extremely functional, as well as unique, welcoming, and intimate. **//**

—Susan Teare

Location Weybridge, Vt.

Architect Joan Heaton Architects, joanheatonarchitects.com

Builder Silver Maple Construction, silvermapleconstruction.com

Photographer Susan Teare



Location South shore of Massachusetts

Architect Doreve Nicholaieff, nicholaieff.com

Banquette design and construction Paul Reidt, Kochman Reidt + Haigh Cabinetmakers, cabinetmakers.com

Photographer Brian Vanden Brink

Location Weston, Vt.

Architect Keefe and Wesner
Architects, keefeandwesner.com

Construction Stewart Construction,
stewart-construction.com

Photographer Susan Teare



// Years ago, I shot a historic house that was put up for auction. The breeze was blowing, moving the diaphanous curtains and making a ghostlike appearance during the long exposure. Alone in the house, I had plenty of time to consider the passing of time and the changing nature of style. **//**

—Brian Vanden Brink

Location Western Maine

Photographer Brian Vanden Brink



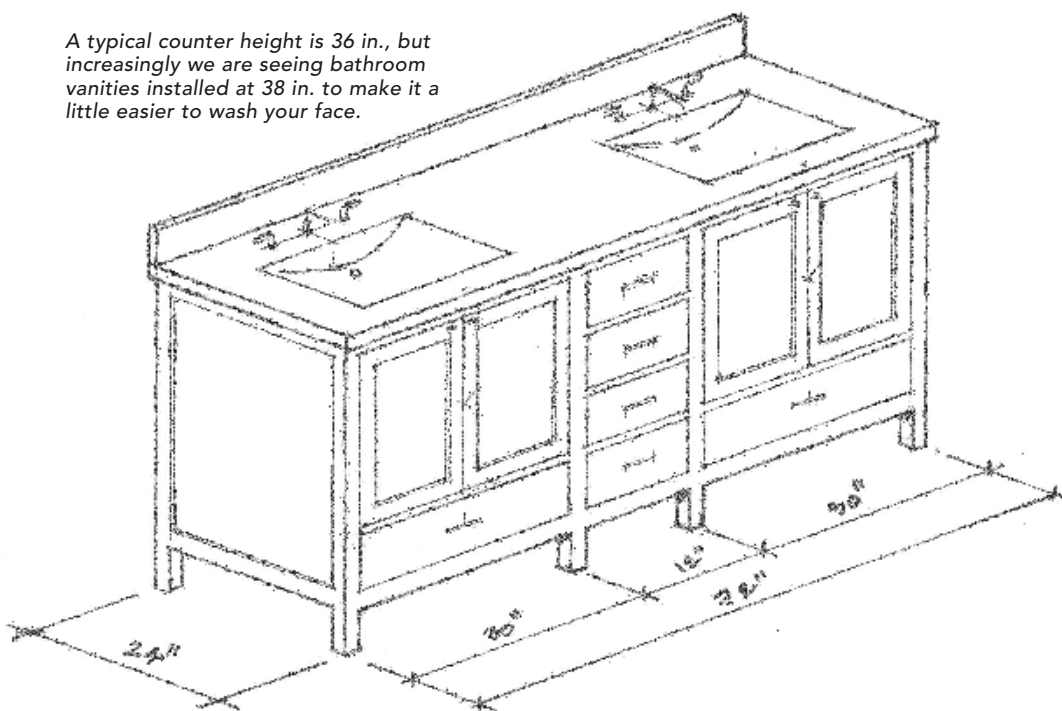
BATHROOM VANITIES

BY MARIANNE CUSATO

A well-detailed bathroom vanity is an efficient and elegant piece of furniture in your bathroom, while a poorly detailed vanity is a frustrating eyesore that contributes to marital strife. The following set of tips can be applied to all styles of cabinetry. The goal of these suggestions is to help you both when building a custom design, as well as selecting a stock product off the shelf.

Marianne Cusato is the author of *Get Your House Right: Architectural Elements to Use and Avoid*. Drawings by the author.

A typical counter height is 36 in., but increasingly we are seeing bathroom vanities installed at 38 in. to make it a little easier to wash your face.



VANITY SIZE AND CONFIGURATION

Double-Sink Vanities

A double-sink vanity is ideally no less than 72 in. wide. They are commercially available starting at 60 in., but before installing the smaller size, it's worth considering the homeowner's pattern of use. Will more than one person be in the bathroom at the same time of day? If not, and if you have limited space, it may be preferable to install a single sink. This leaves more counter space and allows for more drawers for storage. One variation to consider is using a single larger sink with two faucets. This gives the best of both worlds—a little more counter space as well as the ability for two people to use the sink at the same time.

Micro Vanities

In urban apartments and smaller homes where every square inch is at a premium, look for a thinner vanity that projects from the wall 18 in. rather than the full 24 in.

Single-Sink Vanities

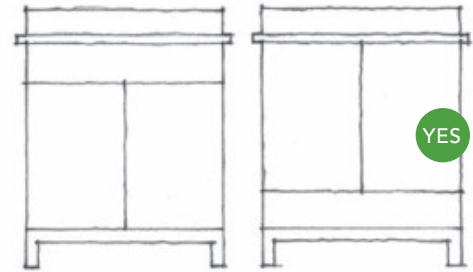
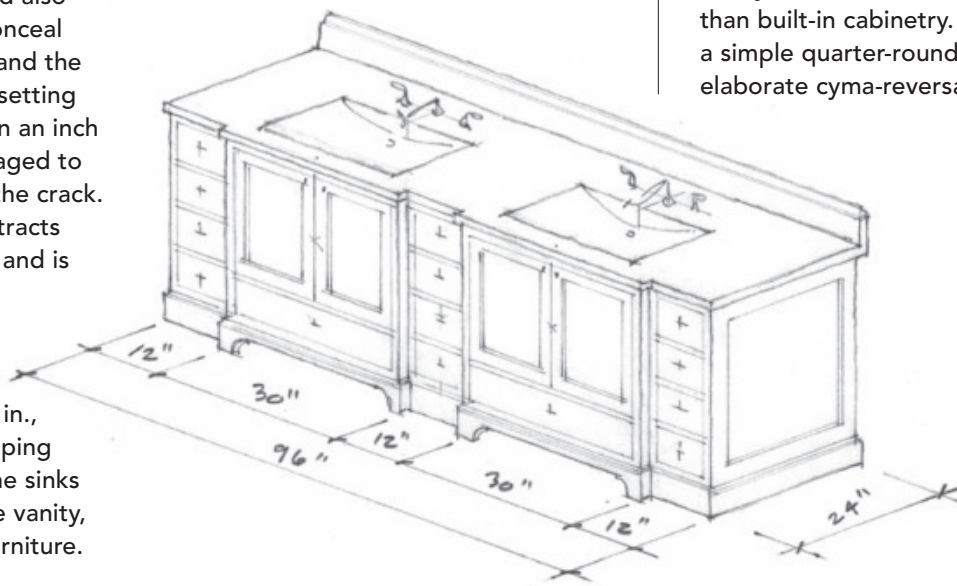
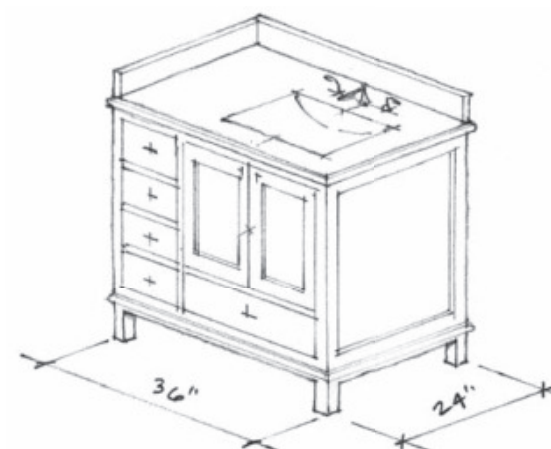
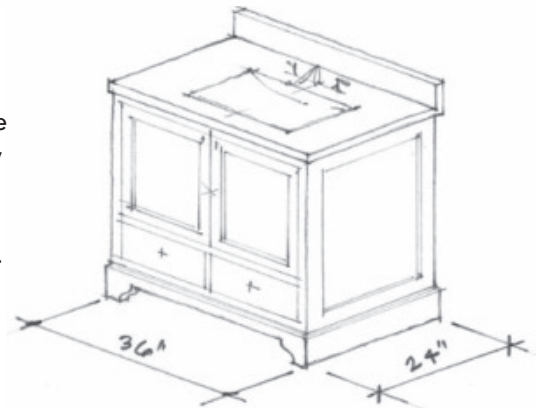
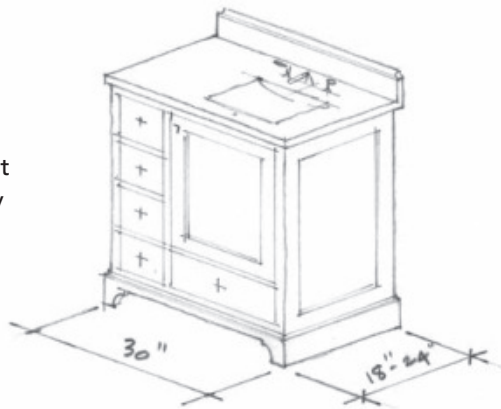
A good target dimension for a single vanity is 36 in. This gives enough space for storage and a clear counter. If you are installing in a corner, you can offset the sink to one side to maximize storage. If the vanity is centered in a space, it may look better to center the sink, but this will reduce storage. See below for notes about corner installations.

Corner Vanities

Many, if not most, vanities are located in the corner of a room. This introduces a design dilemma, as most stock vanities are built to be freestanding. If you are unable to purchase a vanity designed to fit into a corner, the next option is to set the vanity four or more inches from the corner; this allows the vanity to be freestanding and, most importantly, allows you to clean between the vanity and the wall easily. Another option is to engage the vanity to the wall. In this case, caulk the joint where the counter meets the wall, and also add a thin filler piece to conceal the gap between the wall and the side of the cabinet. Avoid setting the vanity counter less than an inch away from the wall or engaged to the wall without covering the crack. This leaves a space that attracts moisture, dust, and debris and is nearly impossible to clean.

Mega Vanities

For larger vanities over 96 in., give or take, consider stepping the cabinetry forward at the sinks to modulate the size of the vanity, making it look more like furniture.

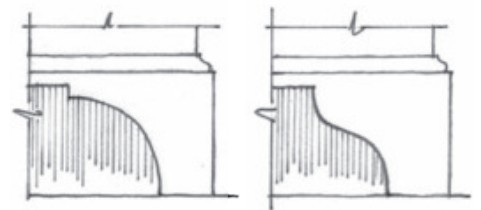


A false drawer front is common, but not the best storage solution.

A real drawer below the doors is more practical.

MAXIMIZING STORAGE

Storage and efficiency are essential in a vanity, yet the default design for most vanities includes a fixed panel in front of the sink where the depth of the bowl blocks the path for a drawer. Rather than forfeiting this space, an alternative option is to run a drawer along the bottom of the vanity, then place the cabinet doors above the drawer. You will still have room for the toilet brush and a small trash can.



Quarter round

Cyma reversa

TOE KICKS AND FEET

Dress the vanity up with feet and legs in front of the toe kick. This makes the vanity feel more like furniture, rather than built-in cabinetry. Profiles include a simple quarter-round cutout or more elaborate cyma-reversa profiles.

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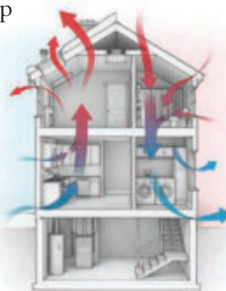
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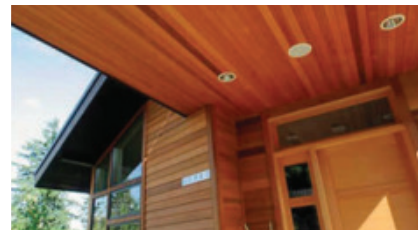
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When asked if he installs baseboard in a closet as carefully as he does in a living room, Tyler Grace answers, "Of course." Why? "Because I can't walk away from something that's not the best that I can do. It doesn't matter if anybody's going to see it. It could be 100 ft. in the air. If I can do better, I'm going to do better."

A small-scale remodeling contractor, Grace has one employee, a box truck filled with expensive German power tools, and a tattoo of a hammer on his leg. He also has 48,000 followers on Instagram.

Though he went to college, Grace says, "You don't need a college degree to do this. You need to work your butt off and be dedicated to doing nice work and bettering yourself every day." Given that he started his company seven years ago with no tools, no truck, and no experience, the formula seems to be working for him.

"So many people told me that I would regret going into construction, that I didn't want to 'work' for a living, that I wouldn't be able to earn decent money, that I should use my degree. I would be lying if I said it was easy. I would be lying if I said there weren't days I wanted to give up. But I would be living a lie if I didn't follow my heart. I'll take my dirty, beat-up hands and exhausted body every single day, if it means I get to create something from nothing, make people happy, and get paid to do so."

— Kevin Ireton, editor at large

"Basically,
I want to get paid
for being fussy."

TYLER GRACE
REMODELING
CONTRACTOR
MEDFORD, N.J.



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