

Great Ideas

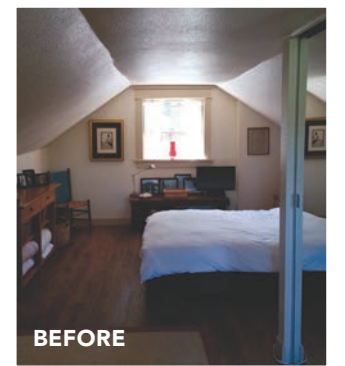
INGENIOUS SOLUTIONS TO COMMON DESIGN PROBLEMS

BY MAUREEN FRIEDMAN



On-point en suite

The owner of this small, two-story home didn't want to change the footprint of her house, but needed to improve its function. The existing bathroom was on a different floor than her bedroom, and she wanted it on the same level in addition to a shower and laundry. Natural light was an important consideration for the previously dim space, so the team at Roloff Construction incorporated a small window in the shower and a large venting skylight over the vanity. To keep the room feeling open and bright, they chose a floating vanity, kept the colors light and uniform, and added plenty of lighting. The low roofline presented a challenge: getting enough height at the vanity. The solution was to line up the skylight well with the wall and extend the mirror across the wall and into the skylight. The walnut counter in the laundry area, the wood in the vanity, and the marble mosaic floor in the shower help warm the space and add the organic feel the homeowner wanted.



BEFORE

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION Nathalie Roloff and Ellie Wellstead, Roloff Construction, Portland, Ore., rolloffconstruction.com

PHOTOS Nina Johnson, ninaleejohnson.com ("Before" photo courtesy of Nathalie Roloff)



Concealed in the kitchen

When it came time to renovate this 30-year-old home, one of the main goals was to open up the floor plan to achieve a design that was both suitable for day-to-day living and functional for entertaining. To look at the floor-to-ceiling cabinet doors on the back wall, one would expect to find an abundance of cabinet space. Not so. These doors lead to an office nook and pantry. Originally a dining room adjacent to the kitchen, this redesigned space is now tucked away and just the right size for its dual purpose. To increase the kitchen space even more to allow for a large island with ample seating, the left wall was extended 2 ft. into the yard. The wall now accommodates a long run of windows and base cabinets.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR McNeil Company, Omaha, Neb., mcneilcompany.com

INTERIOR DESIGNER Julie Hockney, jh Interior Design Studio, Omaha, Neb., juliehockney.com

PHOTOS Tom Kessler, courtesy of McNeil Company



Sleek and stylish storage

At 8 ft. by 6 ft. 2 in., this small bath serving a guest room didn't allow for much storage. The architect and homeowners came up with this wood-framed niche above the toilet area for extra towels and other niceties. Both the niche and the adjacent mirror are painted poplar, and the vanity is Brookhaven by Wood-Mode with a Matte Java stain finish topped with Cambria Greystone. Six-in. by 12-in. Pacific Grey tile graces the floor, while the shower walls are done in 4-in. by 8-in. Walker Zanger Soho White tile. Carrera marble in a basketweave pattern distinguishes the shower floor.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders, Cape Code, Mass., psdab.com

INTERIOR DESIGN SLC Interiors, Boston, slcinteriors.com

PHOTOGRAPH Brian Vanden Brink, brianvandenbrink.com



Wine any time

Here's a case where necessity was the mother of invention. The staircase leading from the second floor into the kitchen was situated in such a way that there wouldn't have been enough room to navigate around a large rectangular island. Architect John Cole decided to add a gentle curve to the island to allow for a generous landing area. In order to support the Jet Mist granite, the sides of the island needed to be sturdy. The side opposite the sink incorporates traditional base cabinets, which provide the requisite structural support. In order to prop up the other side, Cole incorporated a built-in storage area, designed to hold bottles of wine. To keep the bottles from rolling, a groove was routed into each shelf. Cole's clients were so pleased with the results that he has since incorporated the idea in other projects.

ARCHITECT John Cole, John Cole Architect, Arlington, Mass., and Freyburg, Maine, johncolearchitect.com

BUILDER Island Cove Building & Development, Raymond, Maine, islandcovebuilding.com

PHOTO Brian Vanden Brink, brianvandenbrink.com