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Packed with Storage & Work Space, page 32

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from the editor

"Outdoor living" has become a popular catchphrase, but for many of us, it was a way of life long before it became a trend. At my house, outdoor areas have always served as extensions of our living space during the summer.

What has changed, though, is the way we view our outdoor living spaces. The deck has become another "room" in our home thanks to better furnishings that add style and function.

Easy Deck Makeover. If you'd like to give your deck the finished look and feel of a room, then be sure to check out our deck makeover on page 20. It's filled with great ideas that you can use to create a space that suits your outdoor living needs.

More Fresh Ideas Inside. Of course, we know that summer isn't all about being outside, so this issue also features plenty of tips and projects that bring a fun, fresh feeling indoors. They're designed to be easy and affordable. Plus, like all of our ideas, they're adaptable so that you can fit them to your life and your style.

DAVE

You can create your own style for your home, and it's easier than you might think. To help, many of our articles include options that we hope will spur your imagination and inspire you to put your unique spin on our ideas.

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give just about any furniture or decor item a rich, metallic look!

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Create a "built-in" office area with an extra-small footprint, plus plenty of convenient storage and work space.

We all want our homes to make a great first impression. It's easy to achieve by putting your own creative spin on items that often go unnoticed. We'll show you how to give a budget-friendly but boring doormat a makeover that's sure to bring smiles to all who cross your doorstep, plus a simple way to turn an ordinary tree branch into an illuminated focal point that welcomes all.

in this section

Make Your Entry Fun with
Fresh Doormat Options PAGE 4

Brighten Exterior Spaces with a
Cool Twinkling Tree PAGE 8

Cheer Up Dreary Doormats With Paint

Often, doormats serve their basic purpose but do little more. That's too bad, because a doormat gives visitors a first impression of your home and gets seen by everyone who comes and goes. Why not take advantage of this prime real estate by displaying a mat that's stylish and fun, as well as functional?

From Plain to Perfect. Fortunately, it's easy to give doormats a cheerful, durable makeover with paint. We chose utility mats from the home center because they're inexpensive, long-lasting, paintable, and easy to stencil. You'll also need to pick up some good-quality exterior latex paint, so your design will hold up to years of foot traffic and the elements.

We'll Show You How. On the next pages, you'll find step-by-step directions for making the cute doormat shown above, plus ideas for customizing your own design. You can use our color combinations *(see page 50)*, or choose colors that best accent your own entryway.

How to Create the Clever Owl Design

Who-o-o wouldn't smile when they approach our cheerful owl-themed welcome mat? It's fun to create using easy-to-make stencils, some simple tools, and exterior latex paint. Just read on for details, and study the photos below.

Making the Stencil. You'll find a pattern for the owl design at MyHomeMyStyle.com. Print it out, and firmly press it onto the adhesive side of a sheet of contact paper, making sure there are no bubbles *(Step 1)*. This helps prevent paint from bleeding through the printer paper.

Next, cut out the letters and the owl, and arrange all of the pieces on the doormat. Then spray stencil adhesive on the back of a piece, place it back in position face up, and firmly press it to the mat *(Step 2)*.

Applying Paint to the Mat. Now you can use a 3"-wide roller to apply paint evenly over the entire doormat. Press lightly— the first coat should barely cover the surface. When the paint dries, it creates a seal that will help keep the heavier second coat from seeping under the cutouts. You can aim for full coverage when you roll on the second coat.

Then apply paint to the owl's eyes as shown in *Step 3*, and let them dry. Finally, peel off all of the cutouts to reveal the design.

Make the Stencils & **Apply the Paint**

STEP BY step

1 **Adhere the printed pattern** to the sticky side of the contact paper, and then cut out the owl and the letters *(Inset Photo)*.

2 **Spray stencil adhesive** on the back of each letter and pattern piece, and press them onto the mat in the proper positions.

3 **After rolling on two coats** of paint, take off the outer eye circles. Then use a stencil brush to dab paint in those areas.

Stylish Design Options

There are endless ways that you can customize plain-Jane doormats. Try rolling paint over leaves from the craft store for a tropical feel, or use painter's tape to create geometric patterns. To display your address, apply paint over self-adhesive house numbers, and then remove them.

online extra!

Step-by-Step Plans

Get free step-by-step instructions and patterns for these doormats online at **MyHomeMyStyle.com**

Make a Unique, Enchanting Tree of Lights

A real tree branch decked out with string party lights invokes a warm and friendly feeling wherever it's displayed. And since you select the style of lights, the finished "tree" is sure to look great with your decor. Here's everything you need to know about this easy project.

Set the Mood. Start by perusing the delightful variety of string lights available at party stores, garden centers, and online *(Resources, page 50)*. Whether you want your lighted tree to give off a fun, festive vibe or a soft, romantic glow, there's a light set sure to achieve the goal.

Choose the Branch & Container. The only other supplies you'll need for this budget-friendly project are a shapely tree branch that's sturdy enough to support the string lights, the container of your choice to hold it, several pounds of sand to keep the branch secure, and some flexible wire to attach the lights.

You can leave the branch in its natural state, or use spray paint to make it the color of your choice. Another option: Leave the sand unadorned, or accent it with seashells, smooth pieces of glass, or florist's moss.

colorful string lights mimic Asian-style paper lanterns!

Lovely Lotus Flowers

The metallic silver petals of these lotus flower lights reflect the clear bulbs and enhance this tree's magical effect. These lights look especially nice when paired with silver-toned accessories.

Dazzling Dragonflies

These cute dragonflies hover effortlessly, bringing a playful spirit to any evening scene. They feature twisted wire bodies and mesh wings. You can combine several light sets for a brighter effect.

STEP BY step

Illuminating a Tree — Easy as 1-2-3!

1

Place a branch in a container, surround it with sand, and tape paper over the container to protect it from overspray.

2

Spray a coat of paint over the entire branch, let it dry, and then apply a second coat. Use a light touch to avoid drips.

3

Arrange the string lights evenly over the "tree," securing them to the branches with short lengths of craft wire.

Sprucing up your home doesn't always require a lot of tools or time. There are plenty of fast and fun ways to get a new look for any room. Over the next few pages, we'll offer some inspiration for adding privacy and elegance to your windows with attractive shade options. We'll also show you how to enliven your decor with beautiful modern floral motifs.

in this section

Upgrade Window Treatments with ***Stylish Shade Choices*** *PAGE 10*

Get a Fresh Look by Adding ***Modern Florals*** *PAGE 12*

Room-Enhancing Window Shade Options

You don't have to choose just aesthetics, privacy, or functionality when you're searching for window treatments. Today's window shades offer all three. The huge variety of materials, styles, and light-filtering or light-blocking features ensures that you have plenty of options for every room.

The only downside to all of these choices is that it can be difficult to pick a favorite. We'll explain some popular shade types to help you make your selection.

1. Fabric Roman Shades are raised and lowered by cords that pass through rings on the back sides. This gives the fronts of the window treatments their stylish simplicity.

Pros: These shades are available in a variety of fabric choices. You can also choose different styles, such as pleated or relaxed.
Cons: If you pick a trendy fabric, roman shades can look dated quickly. Some custom fabric options can also be pricey.

2. Roller Shades operate on a simple roller mechanism, which provides an unobtrusive profile when the shades are pulled up. When pulled down, they have a clean, modern look.

Pros: The shades are easy to operate and are available in many colors, materials, and light-blocking or light-filtering options.
Cons: Even light-blocking versions can allow light in around the edges. You may also want to "dress them up" with drapes.

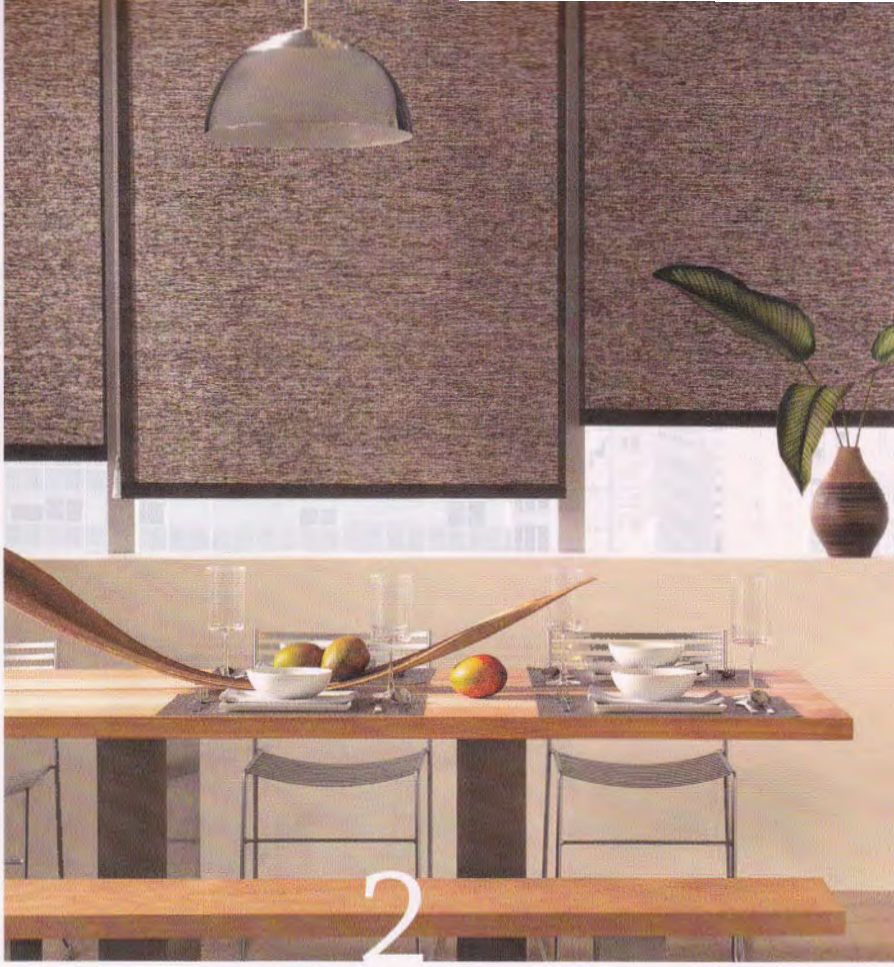
3. Natural Woven Shades often function in the same way that fabric roman shades do. The difference is in the material: They're made of woven natural fibers such as bamboo.

Pros: Natural woven shades add a lot of texture to a space. This type of shade can also let in pleasantly filtered light.
Cons: Their look may not work well in some decor styles. If you want more privacy, you'll need a liner, which may cost extra.

4. Cellular Shades are made up of air-trapping cells that create their honeycomb look. These shades are widely available with one or more layers of cells.

Pros: Since the shades' cells trap air, they offer insulation. They're also available in various blackout and light-filtering options.
Cons: As is the case with roller shades, you may find the need to enhance them with drapes. They can also be difficult to clean.

1



2

3

4

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY: THE SHADE STORE, TheShadeStore.com

Spruce Up Any Space with a Modern Floral Makeover

It's time to change the way you feel about decorating with floral prints and patterns. Floral home decor no longer means frilly bedding, dated flowered sofas, or fussy Victorian wallpaper. Instead, today's floral decor can cheer up your home with style that lasts year-round.

What Makes It Modern? Contemporary floral prints and patterns are nearly as diverse as the flowers they represent. There are, however, some characteristics to look for when you want to add florals to a modern space. For example, some modern florals are identified by their clean lines. Many decor items display silhouettes or abstract representations of flowers. Today's florals can also go to the other extreme by featuring true-to-life depictions of flowers through photos or other artwork.

A Statement in Any Space. Whether they're abstract or realistic representations, modern florals add plenty of drama to a space. We'll show you some of our favorite decor and DIY project ideas that will refresh any room. Then turn to page 50 to learn where you can find the decor pieces and project supplies for your own home.

Select a Space & **Add a Fun Floral Twist!**

Eat.

It's no wonder why flowers are often used as the centerpiece for a lavishly prepared dinner table. Flowers instantly brighten a space, and they make dinner parties and everyday meals more enjoyable. By carrying floral motifs throughout the room, you'll multiply this effect.

Dine in Style. To make a dramatic style switch in your dining room, look for dinnerware that incorporates floral motifs. We found a set of eye-catching dishes that feature high-impact X-ray flowers. Choosing these gray and white dishes allowed us the freedom to add color through other accessories.

If you're happy with the dishes you have, you can use table linens to incorporate modern floral patterns. Look for bold table runners, napkins, and placemats with clean-lined floral designs.

Modern Classic. There's nothing quite as charming as fresh flowers on a table. To turn this dining room staple into a centerpiece that works with contemporary decor, choose sleek and simple

Sleep.

If you've been hesitant to update your bedroom's decor, now is the time. Florals are a popular choice for bedrooms, which means you'll have plenty of bedding and accessory options. Flower motifs with a modern twist make your room stand out.

A Fresh Beginning. Seeing vibrant floral decor in the morning is a surefire way to get your day off to a cheerful start. Bedrooms provide many surfaces that allow you to incorporate these flowered decor pieces.

It's easiest to start a bedroom makeover by choosing your favorite floral bedding. We prefer large-scale, dramatic floral prints like the one shown above. This keeps the room from feeling too busy and lets you incorporate other floral accessories.

Decorative Details. After you've chosen your bedding, you're ready to add decorative pieces such as accent pillows *(right)*. You can pick more intricate prints and designs for pillows since they're smaller elements that won't make the space seem cluttered. Just be sure to keep your color palette consistent throughout the entire room.

Relax.

Your home's living room or den can benefit from the lively look that modern floral decor provides. The best part is that this fresh style can work with the furniture you already have.

Stylish Seating. To switch your living space's style, add a floral accent chair in colors that complement your furniture set. Mix-and-match furnishings give your living space a casual look. Plus, adding just an accent chair is a cost-effective way to incorporate a trendy upholstered piece into your home. If you can't find a chair with a print you like, visit a thrift store to purchase a chair that you can re-cover in floral fabric.

Art Upgrade. Changing your wall art can also make a big impact on the look of your space. Abstract floral prints and oversized wall decals featuring floral cutouts will breathe new life into the rooms where your family members spend their time. The wall sculptures shown below provide another simple way to add interest to a living space.

customize it:
Make Your Own Wall Art with a Floral Stencil

When you can't find the perfect affordable art piece to complement your decor, try making your own. We bought a stencil set with a fun floral design, which was the perfect addition to the eating area shown below. Instead of applying the design to the wall, however, we used it on canvases from an art supply store. This allowed us to create custom art in the color we wanted. Plus, blank canvases are easy to hang and come in many sizes.

You can paint your canvas with a base color or leave it white if you prefer. Then tape the stencil to the canvas *(above)*. Use a sponge to dab coats of the accent color into the spaces *(inset)*. Once the paint is dry, you're ready to hang your new custom art.

STUART WOODS
ORCHID BLUES
ROBERT K. TANENBAUM

make magic with warm, gleaming metallic foils

When you want the look of real metal leaf without the cost, consider versatile metallic foils. They can transform a mundane piece into something special, and they're fun to work with, too. Just prepare the surface, transfer the foil, apply stain and sealer, and admire the results!

Metallic foils offer a simple and affordable way to add the lustrous look of metal to any paintable surface. They won't tarnish like real metal leaf, and the thin sheets come fused to cellophane, so they're easy to work with. To apply them, you just rub the foil onto a surface that's been primed with a tacky undercoat called size. We'll walk you through each step of the process on the next few pages.

You can apply metallic foil to selected portions of an item like we did with the drawer front and candle-lantern tops shown at left, or you can cover an entire piece. The foil is available in a range of sizes, so larger pieces like headboards, tables, and chests can get a great-looking metallic look, as well.

Choose Your Colors. Metallic foils also come in an amazing array of hues. You can select traditional metal colors or nearly any color in the crayon box. There's even a holographic collection that will give your project a shimmering rainbow effect. When you're choosing foil colors, remember that transferring at least two different hues will add interest and depth to your finish.

The application process does require several specific materials, which are available online *(see Resources, page 50)*. Besides the sheets of foil, you'll need size, stain, extender, and clear sealer. There are several shades of stain available, so select one that will complement your foil colors.

Foil is fun to work with even if you've never applied leafing before, and it isn't messy to handle. Before transferring a sheet of foil to your project, loosely scrunch it up. This will give the finished metallic surface more character and interest than a smooth sheet.

Apply the **Base Coat & Size**

STEP BY step

1

Apply a base coat that's darker than your foil color to help create a richer-looking finish. Be sure to let the base coat completely dry before moving on to the size step.

2

Roll on a thin, even coat of size where you want to transfer foil. It goes on milky but dries clear in 15 to 30 minutes. It remains tacky even when dry, which lets the foil transfer from its backing to your project's surface.

Steps for Success When Applying Metallic Foils

Metallic foils can be applied over any type of well-adhered paint. Your project's base color matters because only 70 to 90 percent of the foil will transfer, so the surface beneath will be partially visible. To prepare the surface for painting, scuff it with fine sandpaper, wipe off the residue, and then apply a coat of black or any other shade that's deeper than your foil's color *(Step 1)*.

Size It Up. When the base coat is dry, you can apply the water-based size *(Step 2)*. One coat of size remains tacky and workable for a few hours. For larger projects, you can apply a second coat of size (allowing 20 minutes of dry time between coats) to extend the open time to several days. Just be sure to let the second coat turn completely clear before beginning the transfer process.

Foiling Around. Now it's time for the fun part: applying the metallic foil. Start with the color of foil that you want to appear the most dominant. Cut a sheet so it's a few inches wider and longer than the area you want to look metallic. Then scrunch the sheet into a loose ball *(Step 3)*.

Next, lay the sheet over the sized area with the bright side up, and start transferring the foil *(Step 4)*. Apply light pressure at first. Once the foil has transferred to the size, it can't be removed, and nothing else will stick to that place.

Check Your Progress. To see how well the foil is transferring, just pull the backing off a bit, and then gently lay it back down. It's fine to lift the backing repeatedly while you work. If the foil doesn't seem to be transferring well, just use harder pressure and work on a smaller area. When you're happy with the look of the first layer of foil, you can move on to the second one *(Steps 5 and 6)*.

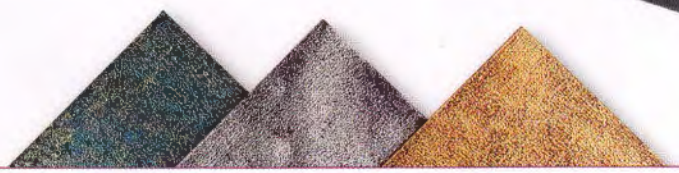
Staining & Sealing. Now apply a thin coat of water-based gel stain in the color of your choice *(Steps 7 and 8)*. Finally, when the stain is dry, brush or roll on a coat of clear sealer to bring back the shine and protect the surface from wear.

Remember, working with metallic foil invites variety and artistic expression— there isn't a "right" tool to use or a "correct" finished appearance. Your selection of foils, transfer techniques, and stain will give your project a look that's truly unique.

Creative & Colorful

You really don't need any special skills to create a variety of great-looking metallic effects. Flat surfaces like the drawer front on our entry table make good starter projects. Once you've gained confidence with the materials and transfer techniques, you'll find that more intricate surfaces like the tops of our Asian-style candle lanterns are just as easy to give a beautiful, metallic gleam.

You can choose from an assortment of fun colors like "Plum Passion," "Candy Apple Red," and "Peacock Blue," or go with more traditional metal hues like gold, silver, bronze, and pewter. Mix and match the colors freely to create exactly the look you desire.



Add the **Metallic Foil & Gel Stain**

3 **Crumple a sheet of foil** into a loose ball, and flatten it back out. The wrinkles will give your metallic surface a textured look.

4 **Lightly tap on the sheet** with a stippler brush to transfer the foil. Vary your strokes and pressure to create a random effect.

5 **Leave some areas of size exposed,** so the second color of foil can adhere. Then lay a sheet of the next color right on top.

6 **Apply the second color** with a tool that transfers the metallic foil more aggressively, such as a smoother blade.

7 **Roll on a coat of gel stain** that's been thinned 50 percent with extender to increase its translucency and open time.

8 **Wipe off excess stain** with a soft cloth. The gel stain adds interest and warmth to the finish and gives it a professional look.

from drab deck to outdoor oasis

Create the ultimate outdoor living space! Whether your deck needs an update or a complete redo, it's easier than you imagined to give it a fresh infusion of outdoor style.

Decks are fairly standard issue these days. Unfortunately, their looks are also usually very standard, just like the deck in the *Before Photo*. It was functional but lacked style. Plus, it left the homeowners feeling like they were on display every time they used it.

Multi-Stage Makeover. To transform this deck into the beauty shown at right, we restored and restyled the decking and the existing railings. We also added privacy with a tall screen at one end. To tie the deck and yard together, we surrounded it with a planting bed and added plants in colorful containers. After that, we outfitted the deck for dining, conversation, and more. Read on to find out how we did it.

before the makeover!

Turn Your Deck into an Outdoor Room

Pump Up Your Privacy. A tall screen keeps you from feeling like you're on display to your neighbors. It offers some shade but still lets in light and breezes to prevent the deck from feeling closed in. Atop the privacy screen, short slats mimic the look of a pergola for the perfect finishing touch.

Connect the Deck & Yard. Placing the stairs in the center of the back deck rail makes them feel incorporated rather than tacked on. A planting bed bridges the height difference between the ground and deck to further tie the two together. Plus, the plants hide the unsightly deck structure.

online extra!

Step-by-Step Plans

Find detailed instructions, builder's plans, and planting guides at ***MyHomeMyStyle.com***

Create a Cozy Seating Area. Even a modest deck (this one measures 21 feet by 14 feet) can offer space for more than just a dining table or a few chairs. The outdoor couch, chair, and ottoman on this deck provide an intimate area for conversation or just to relax. A privacy screen backdrop and the pergola "roof" enclose the space just enough to complete the outdoor-room vibe without making the deck feel hemmed in.

Dine in Style Outdoors. Don't settle for drab colors for outdoor dining. Instead, infuse the area with bright, bold hues. An umbrella can add pop, and so will colorful seat cushions. You can opt for indoor cushions as long as you store them in a protected place when they're not in use.

Refresh the Decking

Exposure to the elements and everyday wear take their toll on deck boards. This leaves them looking lifeless after a few seasons. But with a few hours' worth of work, you can make most boards look as good as new.

The process is actually very simple. You don't even need a pressure washer. Just use a deck cleaning solution, which you can buy at any home center, a hose, and a scrub brush.

Break out the Brush. Apply the cleaning solution according to the manufacturer's instructions. Usually you'll dampen the deck and then spray or pour on the cleaner. Then scrub the boards with a stiff-bristle brush on a long handle *(Step 1)*. You'll see the dirt come up in a hurry. Rinse off the deck thoroughly using a garden hose before the grime dries.

Seal to Protect. Let the deck boards dry for a couple of days, and then coat them with a stain or clear finish designed for decking. Roll the finish on the entire length of each board to prevent lap marks *(Step 2)*. Then touch up between boards with a brush.

Flip Over **Fresh Decking**

QUICK tip

A damaged deck board may not have to be replaced. Flip it over, and you'll usually find a good face. Cleaning and staining will blend its color with surrounding boards.

Pump Up Privacy

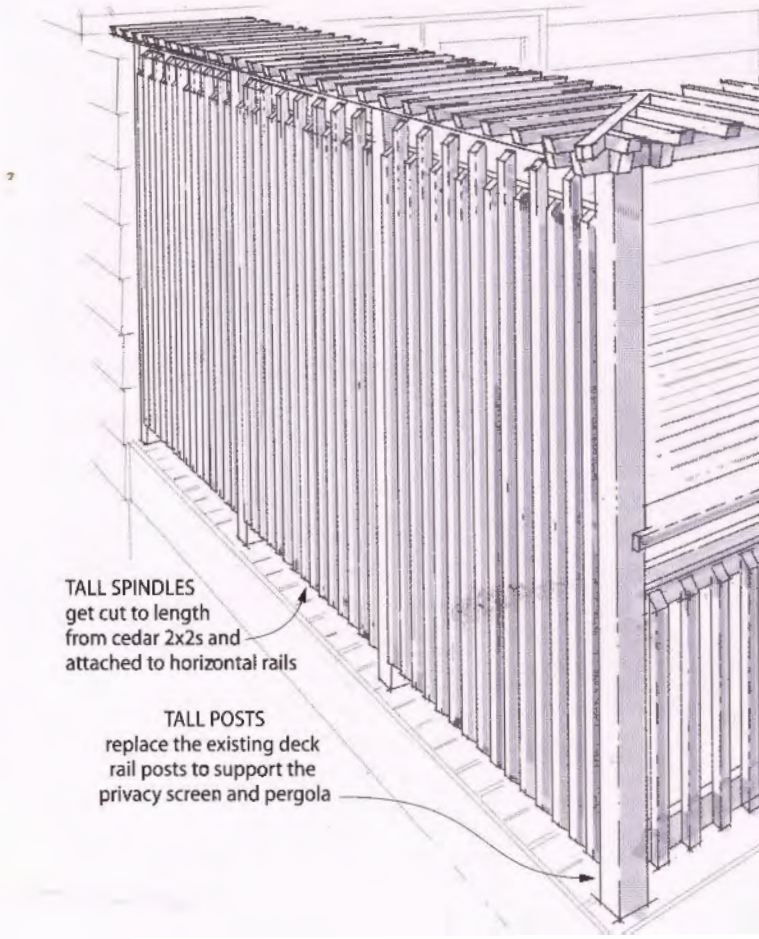
No matter how well you get along with your neighbors, you'd probably like a little privacy on occasion. The question is how do you accomplish that without putting up walls?

The answer is to create a privacy screen like this one. It's made up of tall spindles that strike a balance between openness and obscuring.

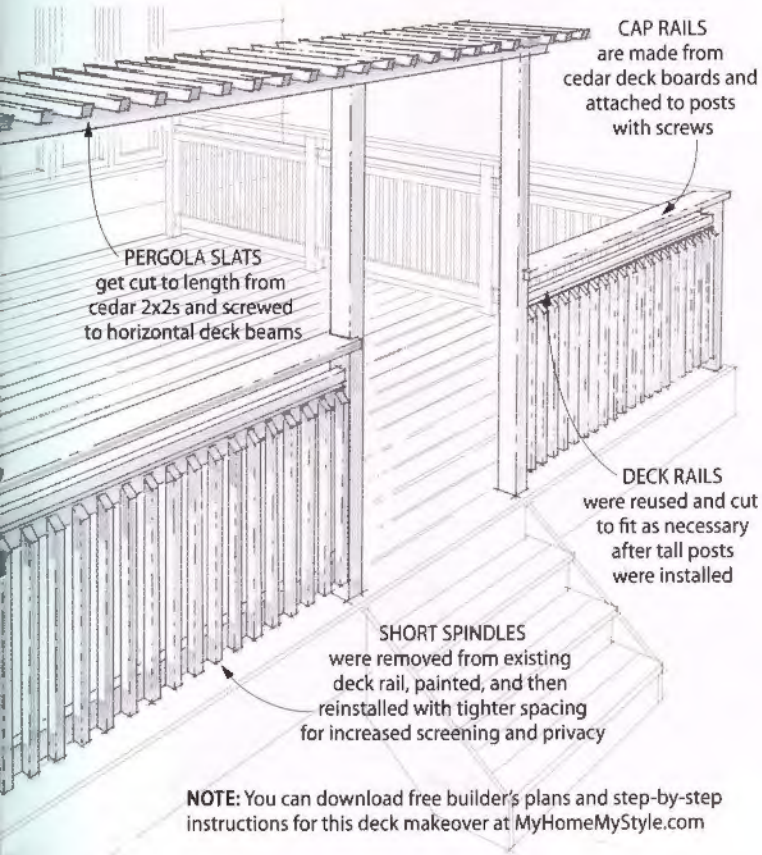
Simple Construction. You can see how the screen goes together in the *Illustration* below. If you'd like complete plans for the privacy screen and the rest of the deck, plus step-by-step instructions with full-color photos that show everything in detail, you'll find them free on our website *(see page 22)*.

Building this great-looking privacy screen starts with installing tall posts. You should be able to remove your existing railing posts and replace them with taller versions like we did.

Once the posts are in, all you have to do is mount horizontal rails between them, and then add the tall spindles. We used long 2x2s to match the rest of the spindles in our deck railing. If you plan to paint the rails, posts, and spindles, do so before you install the spindles. If necessary, you can touch up the paint after all of the pieces are in place.



Cap it with a Pergola. To take your privacy screen a step further, top it off with a "pergola." Though it's small, it gives the illusion of a roof and makes this deck feel like an outdoor room. Like the privacy screen, the pergola is easy to build. The horizontal slats are made, once again, from simple 2x2 boards, and they get attached to a double top beam. The only tricky part is that cool-looking corner *(Photo, above)*, but our free plans show you how it all goes together.



NOTE: You can download free builder's plans and step-by-step instructions for this deck makeover at MyHomeMyStyle.com

Rebuild the Railings

One of the easiest ways to transform the look of your deck is to change up the appearance of the railings. The good news is that you don't have to throw everything out and start over to create a whole new look.

Reuse & Refresh. If your railings are in good shape, try to come up with a new design that reuses the pieces. That's what we did.

Just pull down the existing railings, disassemble the parts, and give everything a good cleaning. If any parts are rotten, you'll want to throw them out and replace them. Chances are good, though, that you'll be able to reuse most of what you have.

Bring in a Better-Looking Deck Rail. To make the railings on this deck more attractive, we started by painting the posts and horizontal rail parts to match the home's trim. Then we painted the spindles to match the body of the house.

Another great trick is to change up the spacing of the spindles. Most of the time they get positioned with the maximum space in between that is allowed by building codes. But there's no code that says they can't be closer together. We had removed a lot of spindles to add the privacy screen, so we reused those and had almost enough to accommodate the closer spacing. We cut the few we needed to match the existing ones.

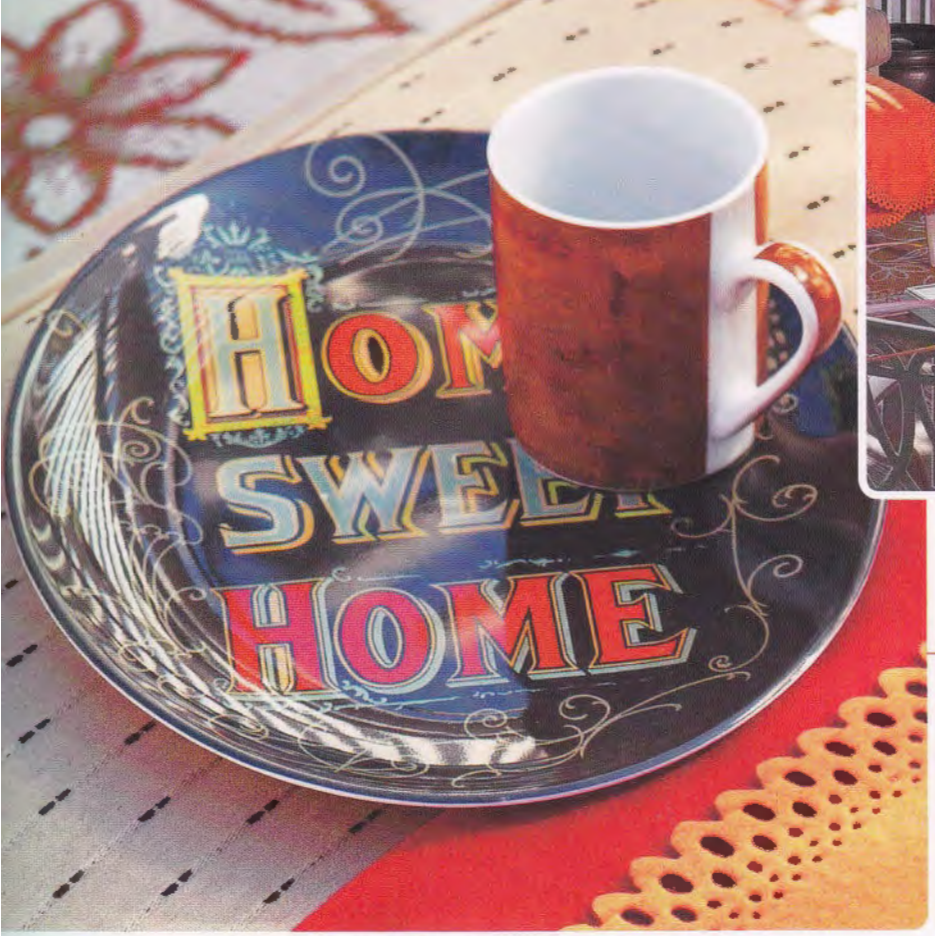
Cap It Off. To give your revamped railings a truly finished look, consider topping them off with flat cap rails *(Photo, below)*. They look great and make convenient places to lean or set a beverage. We gave ours a natural finish to match the deck boards.

Cozy Seating Space

Conversation areas outdoors can be just as inviting as any indoor space thanks to furniture that's more comfortable, more durable, and better-looking than ever. You can even use rugs meant for outdoor use to help define the area. An ottoman makes a perfect coffee table, while pillows provide comfort and color.

Simple Serving Center

Even if you only have space for a small table, you can make your deck more functional and less cluttered by adding a small serving center. It's also a perfect place to store chair cushions and other accessories that need protection from the elements. This serving center was a cast-off microwave cart that we refinished with exterior stain and some colorful paint.



Dramatic **Dining**

Just because you're dining outdoors, it doesn't mean you have to rely on disposable dinnerware. Choose colorful tableware to add sophisticated style to your outdoor table. You'll find a great selection of plates and accessories that are made from plastics and other durable materials, and you can incorporate placemats and decorations meant for indoor use.

Creative **Plant Placement**

Plants add personality to any deck. Their shapes help soften hard, straight lines, and they provide bold pops of color. On our privacy screen, we added plant shelves cut from 2x10 boards that get screwed to the tall spindles. We also used hanging plants to screen one side of the seating area. They hang at different heights from whimsical hooks (available in garden centers) for a bit of extra flair.

monkey around with fun hooks to lend personality to hanging plants!

low price, high style

storage ottoman

Don't let appearances deceive you. You can make an ottoman that looks like it cost hundreds with basic boards and hardware. We'll show you how to put it all together this weekend.

In the past, an ottoman was nothing more than a simple footrest. But somewhere along the line, this basic piece of furniture evolved into a hardworking wonder that serves as a stool, a seat, and a storage box all in one. As a result, the modern, multipurpose ottoman often wins out over more traditional coffee tables as a fashionable furniture choice for your living room.

Not Your Ordinary Ottoman. In many cases, today's "storage" ottomans are nothing more than plywood boxes and lids wrapped in fabric or leather. As you can see at left, however, an ottoman can be so much more. This one has all the style of a high-end piece of furniture—for about $150 worth of materials.

Elegant Look, Easy Construction. At the same time, though, this stylish ottoman really isn't much more difficult to build than a plywood box. It's made from MDF panels instead of plywood, but the construction is remarkably simple for the look you get.

The things that set this particular ottoman apart are end panels that are set in slightly to create a space to stash magazines, as well as sides that have a cool U-shaped cutout on them to accommodate a cushion. We'll show you how to make these features—and assemble the rest of this stylish ottoman—on the following pages.

MyHomeMyStyle.com

Simple Steps to Making Your Own Storage Ottoman

Despite its sophisticated look, this ottoman can be yours with basic tools, materials, and hardware. As shown at right, most of the parts (sides, ends, bottom, and lid) are made from ¾" MDF. The top rails are 1x6 boards, and the cleats are 1x2s. The aluminum rods, hinges, and legs are also easy to obtain *(Resources, page 50)*.

Cut, Then Drill. You'll want to start by cutting all the parts to the dimensions shown at right. The aluminum can be cut with a hacksaw, and the MDF is easy to cut using a circular saw guided by a straightedge *(Step 1)*. Then you'll use a jigsaw to create a U-shaped notch in each side *(Step 2)*.

Finally, those sides need six holes to accept the aluminum rods. Carefully lay out these holes, and drill them as shown in *Step 3*.

Assemble the Ottoman. The rods can be difficult to paint around later on, so you may want to paint the recessed ends of the ottoman before adding them. Then insert the rods, and assemble the bottom, sides, and ends with wood glue and finish nails *(Step 4)*.

After that, it's just a matter of attaching the solid-wood cleats and top rails *(Step 5)*, painting the rest of the ottoman, and screwing on the hinges *(Step 6)* and legs. You can purchase an inexpensive custom cushion *(page 50)*, or make your own. Our online article shows you how.

Smaller **Storage Option**

As you can see, this ottoman option offers a completely different look with just a few simple adjustments. This version features a 24" cushion instead of a 36" cushion. To build it, all you have to do is make the bottom, sides, and lid 12" shorter than what's shown in the *Illustration* at right.

Of course, the other things that set this ottoman apart are the paint and cushion choices. Feel free to pick colors and patterns that suit your own tastes when making your ottoman!

online extra!

Free Article: **DIY Cushions**

Making your own cushion is easy! We have a free article that shows you how at ***MyHomeMyStyle.com***

STEP BY step

Prepare All the **Ottoman Parts**

1

Cut the ottoman parts to size using a circular saw guided by a straightedge. You can buy one, or just use a straight board.

2

Make the notch by first drilling holes at the corners. Cut the "shoulders" *(left)* and the bottom *(right)* of the "U" shape with a jigsaw.

3

Drill holes for the aluminum rods with a cordless drill. Tape wrapped around the drill bit indicates where to stop drilling.

Cut fabric to wrap around cushion and base *(see article at MyHomeMyStyle.com)*

½" Staple

CUSHION (4" high-density foam x 18" x 35¾")

CUSHION BASE (½" MDF x 18" x 35¾")

2" Finish Nail

1¼" hole, centered

2"

LID (¾" MDF x 16⅛" x 35¾")

RAIL (¾" x 5½" x 20")

¾"

Concealed Lid Hinge

4"

3¼"

⅝"

END (¾" MDF x 9½" x 16½")

3/16" hole, countersunk

1¼" Screw

3"

5¾"

3¾"

1¾"

END CLEAT (¾" x 1½" x 16½")

BOTTOM (¾" MDF x 16½" x 44")

4"

⅜" hole, ⅜" deep

SIDE CLEAT (¾" x 1½" x 34½")

ROD (⅜"-dia. alum. x 17⅛")

SIDE (¾" MDF x 10¼" x 44")

3¼"

NOTE: Mount legs ¼" in from ends and sides

NOTE: See page 50 for sources, including a website for ordering a custom cushion for this project

#14 x ⅝" Pan-Head Sheet Metal Screw

2" Finish Nail

120mm Aluminum Leg

4

Assemble the ottoman bottom, sides, ends, and aluminum rods with glue and clamps. Drive in nails to complete the job.

5

Mount the top rails and cleats, also using glue and nails. Once these are on, you can paint all the ottoman parts.

6

Attach the lid with special "concealed lid hinges" *(see page 50)*. Then add the legs and a cushion of your choosing.

turn a spare corner into an instant office space

With a store-bought cabinet, boards and hardware, and a few spare feet of wall space, you can create a roomy, fully functioning home office this weekend! Our step-by-step instructions show you how.

Most people would love to devote an entire room in their home to an office. But let's face it: For a lot of us, it's just not in the cards. Whether they're for kids, guests, or other uses, a home's bedrooms can get occupied pretty quickly, leaving little space left over for your office.

Small & Stylish. Even if you don't have a whole room to devote to it, you can still set up a hardworking, fully functioning office—and one that's stylish to boot! The secret is to make a compact desk and storage system with inexpensive lumber and hardware and then outfit it with the latest in space-saving electronics.

This office takes up just over five feet of wall space, which makes it perfect for a small corner of almost any room in the home. And it offers all the shelving, storage, and computing capabilities of a much larger office.

Easy to Assemble. To top it all off, this compact office is also super simple to build. The key component is a pantry cabinet that you can buy right off the rack at the home center. The other parts are just boards mounted to the wall with shelf standards and brackets. We'll show you how to put it all together—and provide options for accessorizing the office—on the following pages.

JIM
KAY
interior style
POEMS

Easy Steps to Your Own Instant Office

Your journey to this great-looking office starts at the home center, where you can pick up all the materials. In addition to the cabinet, you'll need a couple sheets of plywood, plus a few boards and molding pieces for the shelves *(see Resources, page 50)*.

Complete the Cabinet. You'll make a few alterations to the cabinet before painting it. First, glue and nail a piece of ¼" plywood to each side. This builds out the sides to make it easier to add molding to the cabinet.

As for that molding, it just wraps around the bottom of the cabinet. It's made up of two layers of 1x4 boards, but the back boards are raised ¾" to create a "reveal" between the two layers *(Cabinet Bottom Detail)*. You can cut these boards to length and then glue and nail them in place.

Build the Top & Desk. Now turn your attention to the top and desk panels, which are built similarly. Each is cut from ¾" plywood using a circular saw *(Box, below right)*. Then two pieces of edging get glued and nailed to each panel. The edging is a little different for each panel, but you can see how to do each one in the *Cabinet Top Detail* and *Desk Detail* at right.

Bring on the Shelves. That just leaves the shelves, which are the simplest parts of all. Each one is a 1x10 board cut to length with a piece of ¾" x ¾" molding glued to the underside of it.

We also added an angled magazine shelf to our office setup. This shelf is made from plywood and has edging and a shelf rest glued and nailed to it. You can see how to make and mount it in the *Angled Shelf Detail* at right.

Paint & Install. With the parts assembled, you can now prime and paint them. Then you can set about installing your new office on the wall. The steps below and on page 36 show you how.

STEP BY step

Anchor the **Cabinet & Top**

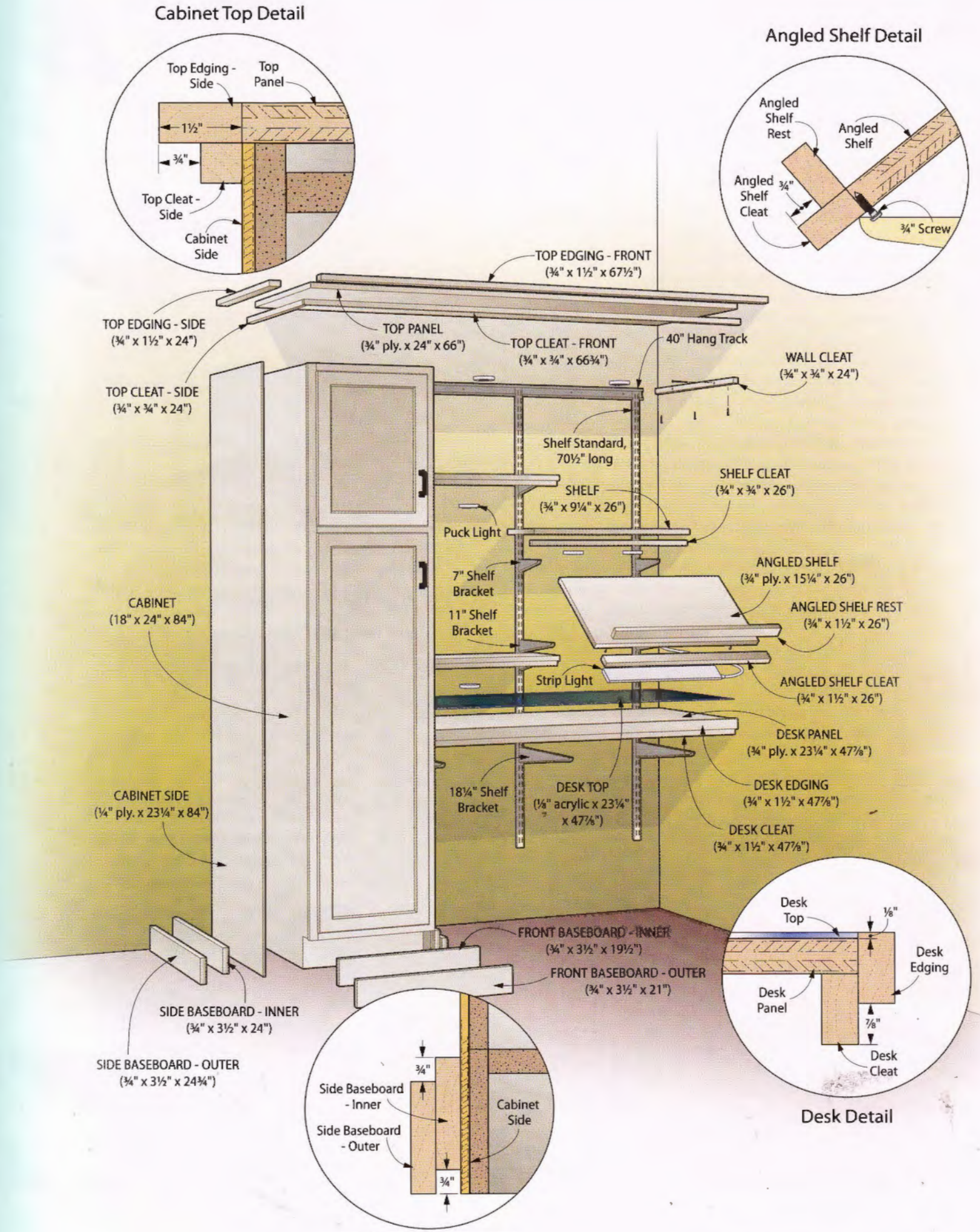
Secure the pantry cabinet to the wall by driving a few 2½" screws through the back and into wall studs.

Attach the top panel by driving screws into a wall cleat. The other end gets nailed to the top of the cabinet.

online extra!

Learn the Secrets: How to Cut **Plywood Sheets Like the Pros!**

Cut plywood accurately and easily with a circular saw. We'll show you how at ***MyHomeMyStyle.com***


Cabinet Top Detail
Top Edging - Side
Top Panel
1½"
¾"
Top Cleat - Side
Cabinet Side
Angled Shelf Detail
Angled Shelf Rest
Angled Shelf
Angled Shelf Cleat
¾"
¾" Screw
TOP EDGING - FRONT (¾" x 1½" x 67½")
TOP EDGING - SIDE (¾" x 1½" x 24")
TOP PANEL (¾" ply. x 24" x 66")
TOP CLEAT - FRONT (¾" x ¾" x 66¾")
40" Hang Track
WALL CLEAT (¾" x ¾" x 24")
TOP CLEAT - SIDE (¾" x ¾" x 24")
Shelf Standard, 70½" long
SHELF CLEAT (¾" x ¾" x 26")
SHELF (¾" x 9¼" x 26")
Puck Light
ANGLED SHELF (¾" ply. x 15¼" x 26")
7" Shelf Bracket
ANGLED SHELF REST (¾" x 1½" x 26")
CABINET (18" x 24" x 84")
11" Shelf Bracket
Strip Light
ANGLED SHELF CLEAT (¾" x 1½" x 26")
DESK PANEL (¾" ply. x 23¼" x 47⅞")
18¼" Shelf Bracket
DESK TOP (⅛" acrylic x 23¼" x 47⅞")
DESK EDGING (¾" x 1½" x 47⅞")
CABINET SIDE (¼" ply. x 23¼" x 84")
DESK CLEAT (¾" x 1½" x 47⅞")
Desk Top
⅛"
Desk Edging
Desk Panel
⅞"
Desk Cleat
FRONT BASEBOARD - INNER (¾" x 3½" x 19½")
FRONT BASEBOARD - OUTER (¾" x 3½" x 21")
SIDE BASEBOARD - INNER (¾" x 3½" x 24")
SIDE BASEBOARD - OUTER (¾" x 3½" x 24¾")
¾"
Side Baseboard - Inner
Side Baseboard - Outer
Cabinet Side
¾"
Desk Detail
Cabinet Bottom Detail

Secret Behind the Shelving

What really makes this compact office so simple is the hardware. It's a system of shelf standards and brackets that hold all the parts securely and make them easy to move around. We painted the hardware to match the wall.

The standards get mounted to a "hang track" that sits below the top panel *(Steps 1 and 2)*. The brackets simply snap in place to accept all the shelves *(Steps 3 and 4)*.

Let There Be Light. Of course, every office needs to be well lit. We discovered a handy solution that doesn't even need wires. You can read all about it in the *Sidebar* below.

A "No Wire" Office Lighting Solution
Battery-powered puck lights often leave a lot to be desired. This cool new LED option from Utilitech is a notable exception. It features a secure baseplate that the light snaps into and simple push-button operation *(Photos, left)*.

Super Strip Lighting
For even greater illumination of the work surface, we mounted this plug-in LED strip light under the angled shelf.

Mount All the **Shelf Hardware**

Mount the hang track with the included screws. Hit wall studs, or use heavy-duty wall anchors if you can't.

Hang the shelf standards on the hang track *(left)*. Then secure them to the wall with screws at the bottom *(right)*.

Snap the shelf brackets into place in the holes in the shelf standards. They are simple to reposition as needed.

Position the desk panel and shelves above the brackets, and secure them from beneath with screws *(inset)*.

4 Simple Ways to Accessorize Your Office

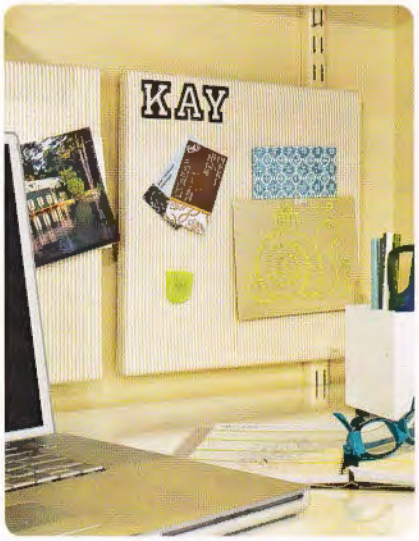
Any good office provides more than just storage and shelving. While this office has those in abundance, it also offers you opportunities to inject extra style and function into the space.

Easy Add-ons. Take the interior of the cabinet, for example. Rather than just piling it high with papers, we added a shelf mounted above drawer slides for a wireless scanner-printer *(Photo, right)*. The simple piece of hardware on the bottom of the cabinet pulls out for easy access to a wastebasket and a paper shredder.

Whether you plan to set up your office for study, leisure, or hard work, we have ideas that will make it even more convenient and comfortable to use. Three more of our simple add-ons that you can try are shown in the photos below.

Mount a sheet of steel to the back of the door with adhesive to create a magnetic board for notes and photos.

Outfit the angled shelf with your favorite magazines to make the space more welcoming and less business-like.



Wrap canvas frames with fabric to make stylish surfaces for pinning up memos, cards, and other fun items.

add character with a sliding door

Take a room from ordinary to unique by replacing the door with a charming, modern sliding door. From creating the door to concealing the doorjamb to installing the hardware, the whole process is fun, fast, and easy!

before the makeover!

Make a Door Serve as Decor!

A traditional hinged door often limits the style of a space more than it adds to it. The "swing" can cause problems when it comes to arranging furniture, allowing for walking space, or accessing whatever's behind the opened door. And plain hinged doors don't offer much to rave about aesthetically, either.

A sliding door is a sophisticated alternative to an awkward hinged door. With a less obtrusive footprint, you have the freedom to place something beside or even a few feet in front of the door's opening without creating an obstacle. It's also a sensible choice for a door that stays open a lot of the time.

As you can see in the *Photo*, we're not talking about pocket doors here. Although pocket doors have similar benefits, installing one is a much more complex project. You'll find that this project is quite simple.

A Slammin' Door! Practicality aside, a sliding door gives a space a fun focal point. While pocket doors hide inside the wall and traditional doors are usually identical throughout a home, a sliding door can have tons of character without looking out of place.

STEP BY step

Create a **Modern Barn Door**

1 **Use construction adhesive** to attach strips of hardboard vertically on the face of the door. We made ours 3½" wide.

2 **Stick the strips down** using spacers to maintain consistent gaps. We simply used pieces of 3/16" hardboard.

3 **Attach MDF boards** around the door's perimeter and across its diagonal. Carefully mark each cut before making it.

If you like the look, you may even want to add a sliding door to a pass-through in your home that doesn't require a door.

Now, where to find that decorative door? Designer doors can cost a lot, and salvaged doors may be tough to come by—so we decided to come up with a do-it-yourself alternative.

The foundation can be as simple as a cheap slab door. Use one that's a couple of inches wider than your original door, so it overhangs the sides of the opening. Our hinged door was 32" wide, and we used a 36" door to create our sliding door.

Dress Up a Door. The steps along the bottom of page 40 show how to transform the slab door into the featured "barn door." We based this design on a traditionally rustic style and chose a bold paint color to give it a modern twist. Also check out the two door design options shown on page 43. *Resources* for all the materials used are provided on page 50.

Depending on which rooms your sliding door separates, you could dress up both sides. You could also just concentrate on the front and simply paint or stain the back.

Conceal your existing doorjamb to make your new sliding door really pop. It just takes a few simple steps and paint that matches your wall.

Discreet Doorjamb. Once that's done, you can turn to your doorway. If you're installing your sliding door in place of an existing hinged door, you have some preliminary work to do before you can hang the new door hardware.

Follow the sequence of steps below to cover up evidence of the hinged door and prepare it for a sliding door. Then sand and paint the casing and doorjamb to match the wall color *(Photo, above)*. That way, the woodwork won't draw attention away from the door.

When you're ready to install the wall-mounted sliding door hardware, turn the page for the details.

STEP BY step

Fix up the **Existing Doorjamb**

1

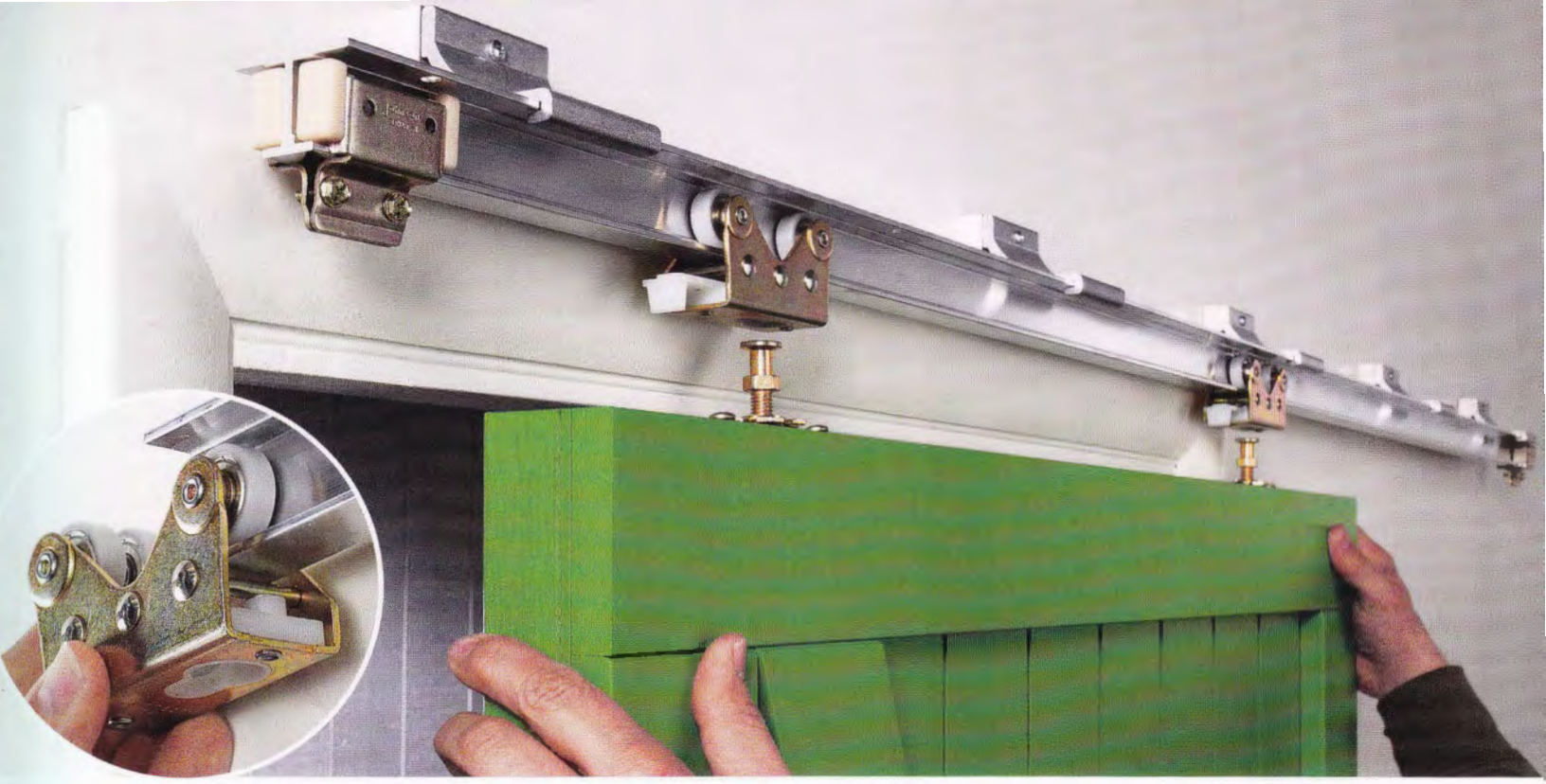
Remove the old door hardware, including the hinges and the strike plate. Also pop off the wooden side stops.

2

Repair the recesses in the jamb with putty. It may take two coats to get an even surface. Then fill any nail holes.

3

Move the stop at the top of the doorway to the front edge, so you won't see a gap between the casing and the door.



Hang the **Hardware & Door**

There are all sorts of mechanisms available for interior sliding doors. Some are sleek and subtle; others feature oversized rustic-, contemporary-, or industrial-style details. We decided to use a relatively affordable and accessible kit from Johnson Hardware *(Resources, page 50)*. It's easy to install and comes in a few different styles and sizes.

Right on Track. Once your doorway is prepped, you can begin the installation process. Any sliding door hardware kit you buy should come with complete instructions, but this will give you a general overview.

One thing to point out is that we attached small blocks—the same thickness as the door's casing and painted to match the wall—to the bases of the track brackets with double-sided tape *(Step 1)*. This is an inconspicuous way to prevent the door's casing from interfering with the sliding door. Also, be sure to position the brackets so the door hangs at the correct height.

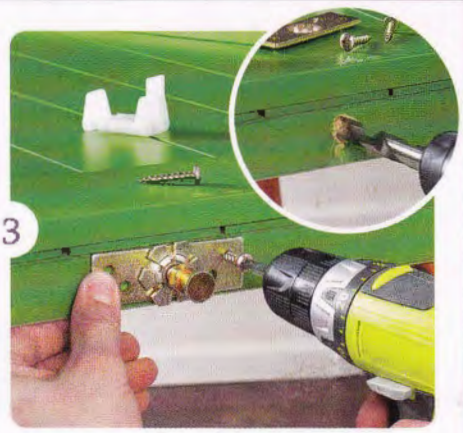
After completing the steps below, you can hang your door *(Photo, above)*. Finish up by fastening a guide to the floor and securing a stop at each end of the track.

STEP BY step

Mount the Track Hardware to the **Wall & Door**

1 **Secure the track brackets** to small blocks of wood, and then screw them to wall studs above your doorway.

2 **Slide the track into the brackets,** make sure it's level, and then insert the hanger wheel mechanisms *(inset, top of page)*.



3 **Attach the door plates** to your door. This requires you to drill holes for the extendable pivot pins *(inset)*.

Design Ideas for Any **Style Space**

Get a Refined Look **with Flooring**

Believe it or not, the planks on this door are adhesive-backed strips of vinyl flooring that cost less than two dollars apiece! "Shadow lines" stand out between the strips because of the black paint applied to the door.

Paint a **Simple Pattern**

Painting a door can also create a cool effect. All you need is a brush or roller, a couple colors of paint, and painter's tape. We chose two subdued colors for a clean, sophisticated look. The possibilities are endless!

STEP BY *step*

Stick on **Vinyl Planks**

After painting the door black, apply a full layer of contact cement to reinforce the adhesive on the planks. Then use 3/16" spacers to carefully position the planks *(Step 1)* and a J-roller to push them down *(Step 2)*.

Mask off Lines & **Paint**

First paint the door with the color you want in the "background" of your pattern. Transfer a pattern onto the door with painter's tape *(Step 1)*. We created 12" squares. Then fill in the openings with a second color *(Step 2)*.

Easy home projects and ideas can be easy on your wallet, too. We'll show you how to make inexpensive pieces that you can be proud of. An enclosed message center gives you a lot of storage space for a minimal investment, and the tripod lamp uses simple parts to create an impressive room focal point.

in this section

Contain Your Clutter with a
Message Center PAGE 44

Make a Stylish & Unique
Tripod Lamp PAGE 48

From *Window Shutters* to Stylish Message Center

It seems that every home has a spot that accumulates keys, Post-it notes, mail, and other clutter. Even if you've purchased an expensive wall-mounted message board or organizer system, it can quickly look disorganized when the hooks are full and the board is covered with messages.

We've come up with a clever message center that lets you conceal your clutter behind stylish window shutter doors. This shallow organizer cabinet provides plenty of room inside to hang anything from keys to dog leashes, plus spots for mounting small message boards. It's perfect for an entryway, kitchen, office, or any other space that requires a compact storage solution.

Convenient & Customizable. Our message center features key hooks, a dry erase calendar, and a few other organizing accessories. You can put your own custom spin on the storage inside by adding the combination of accessories that works best for you.

Simple to Assemble. The message center has classic good looks, but don't be intimidated by this high-end appearance. It's actually quite easy to make this project, and you'll just need basic tools and supplies.

The doors are made from unfinished shutters that you can order online *(Resources, page 50)*. They're surrounded by a case made from parts that you'll cut to size and then glue and nail together. We'll show you all the construction details on the next two pages.

shutter doors can quickly hide entryway clutter to keep your home neat and organized!

SIMPLIFY
RUBY

Build a Basic Box & Add Charming Window Shutters

Despite this project's sophisticated look, its case is really just a few pieces of lumher that get cut to size and nailed together. The back panel is a piece of beadboard that you can cut to size or get cut for you at the home center. You'll also need some baseboard shoe molding, which helps create the recess for the back panel.

Prepare the Parts. The shutters shown here have vertical frame pieces that extend past the rails, and these need to be trimmed flush. Then you'll cut the parts to the dimensions shown in the *Illustration*.

Next, you're ready to make notches in the shelf *(Step 1)*. These notches make the shelf bump out slightly, which allows the back panel to sit flush inside the case *(Shelf Detail, right)*.

Build the Case. The case's top, bottom, sides, and shelf get glued and nailed together *(Step 2)*. Be sure to clamp the pieces together tightly as you connect them.

Next, you'll attach the wall cleats and the back stops *(Step 3)*. You'll need to use the back panel as a spacer to inset these parts. With those in place, you can attach the door stops and the back panel, and then glue on the top and bottom trim boards *(Steps 4 and 5)*. Then paint the shutters and the cabinet in the color of your choice.

Attach Stylish Shutters. Once that's done, you're ready to attach the shutters and latches *(Step 6)*. The shutters that we ordered have a bottom rail that's wider than the top rail. To make the project look balanced, we attached the upper shutter upside down and backward. This puts the shutters' wider rails at the top and bottom of the cabinet. Finally, hang the cabinet by driving screws through the cleats and into a wall stud.

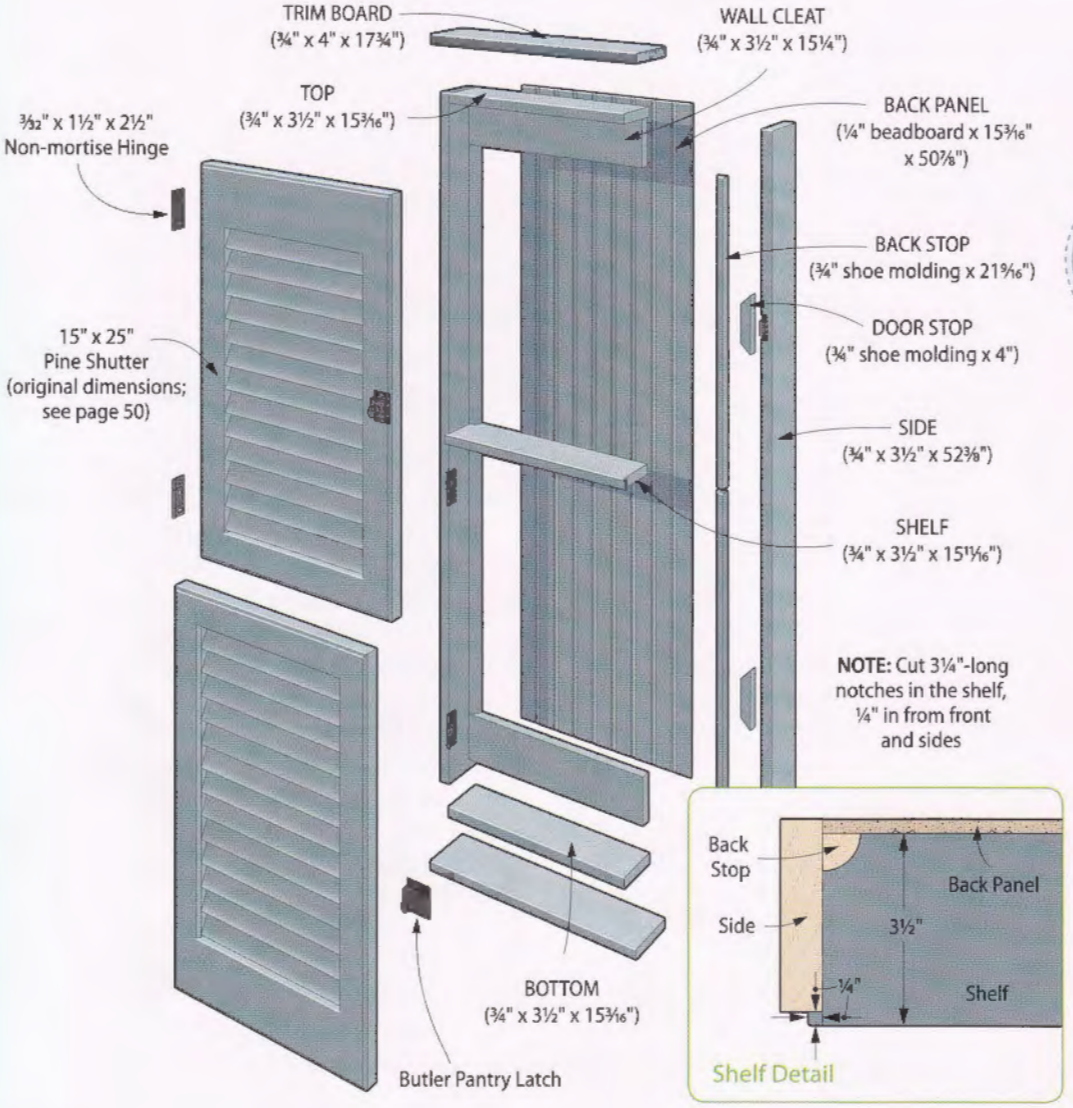
STEP BY step

Assemble a **Shutter-Door Cabinet**

1 **Cut a notch** on each side of the shelf with a jigsaw. These notches allow the back panel to sit flush in the case.

2 **Glue and nail the top and bottom** to the sides. Then slide the shelf into place, and attach it with glue and nails.

3 **Secure the wall cleats** in the case with glue and nails. Next, glue and nail in the back stop pieces.



Custom-Sized **Shutters**

Window shutters make attractive doors for the message center. We found a company that will create custom-sized shutters *(Resources, page 50)*. You can also order wood shutters from the home center. If your shutters differ in size from ours, you can easily modify the cabinet dimensions to accommodate the variations.

Turn the cabinet over, apply glue, and set the back panel into the recess. Drive in brads to fasten it in place.

Glue the top and bottom trim boards onto the cabinet. Then paint the cabinet and the shutter doors.

Attach hinges to the shutters and case, and then add latches. Hang the cabinet by driving screws through the wall cleats.

Create a *Contemporary* Tripod Lamp

This unique, industrial-looking lamp has really been turning heads around our office. Its cutting-edge style is unusual enough that the first question people ask is, "Where did you get that?" This is followed closely by, "How much did you pay for it?"

Inexpensive Industrial-chic. You can just imagine their surprise when we tell them that the base came from Walmart, the lighting parts came from Lowe's ... and the total cost is about $100. Plus, it's so simple that you can assemble it in a matter of minutes.

Tripod Meets Track. The "base" of the lamp is actually a camera tripod. As for the rest of the lamp, it's comprised of track lighting components that typically get mounted to the ceiling. These include the track itself, a power supply with a cord, a power switch, a light fixture, and a "barn door" style shade that slips over the lightbulb. You can find a list of the parts we used on page 51.

Build the Lamp. The track we found is available in 4-foot lengths, but luckily it's easy to cut the track to a shorter length *(Step 1)*. Plus, it only takes a few basic pieces of hardware to attach the track to the tripod. You can see this in detail in the *Illustration* at right and *Step 2*. Once you have it all assembled, we suggest applying self-adhesive weather strip to the open portions of the track as a safety precaution *(Step 3)*.

¼"-20 Round-Head Machine Screw, ⅜" long

⅜" x 7/16" Rubber Foam Self-Stick Weather Strip (cut to fit)

¼"-dia. hole, centered

Lighting Track Head

Lighting Track (cut to 24" with a hacksaw, see *Step 1*)

⅜" I.D. Flexible Vinyl Tubing (cut to ⅝" long)

Tripod Mounting Plate

LED Bulb

Cover top of power connector with black electrical tape

¼"-20 Coupling Nut (cut to ⅝" with a hacksaw)

57" Tripod

"Barn Door" Style Light Shade

Lighting Track Live End Power Connector with Plug and Cord

NOTE: See page 51 for a complete list of sources for this project

STEP BY *step*

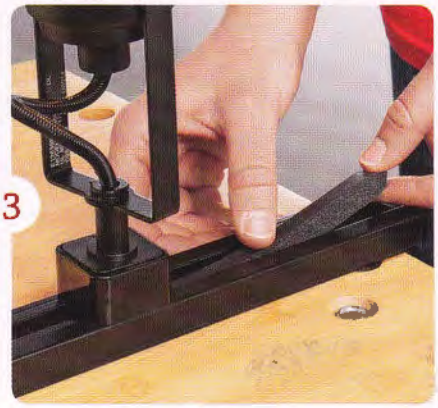
Trim the Track & **Attach the Tripod**

1

Cut the track to length with a hacksaw. Before you cut, mark the line clearly with masking tape, and clamp the track securely.

2

Thread the tripod's bolt into a coupling nut that's secured in the track *(Illustration, above)* to connect the tripod and track.



3

Cut weather strip to length with scissors, and apply it in the open portions of the track to cover the contact points.

make it your own

Painted Doormats, page 4

Apache Mills 2' x 3' Ribbed Utility Mat in Black, purchased at Menards

"Kenya" Premium Plus Ultra Exterior Paint #UL140-19; **"Tahoe Blue" Premium Plus Ultra Exterior Paint** #UL220-3, Behr.com, 877-237-6158 | purchased at The Home Depot

Lighted Tree, page 8

Wire Dragonfly String Lights #3188273, PotteryBarn.com, 888-779-5176

Lotus Flower String Lights #63917, LampsPlus.com, 800-782-1967

3½" Orange Round String Lights #4PTYS-OR, PaperLanternStore.com, 877-256-8578

style spotlight

Window Shades, page 10

Maharam Flat Roman Shade in Mikado, Pink; Nature Concept Roller Shade in Grassweave, Bark; Nature Concept Standard Woven Wood Shade in Suzuka, Cappuccino; ⅜" Double Cell Cellular Shade in Light Filtering, Lace, TheShadeStore.com, 800-754-1455

Modern Floral Decor, page 12

4-Some Bud Vase #569103; **Xray Dinner Plate** #125477; **Xray Salad Plate** #125485; **Xray Soup Bowl** #125493; **Pressed Vinyl Cubic Placemat in White** #670246, CB2.com, 800-606-6252

Organic Dandelion Twin Duvet Cover #3019155; **Organic Dandelion Standard Sham** #3019148; **Organic Dandelion Euro Sham** #3019163, WestElm.com, 888-922-4119

Flower Art in White (set of 25) #120-5177, Chiasso.com, 877-244-2776

Rose Stencils (set of 3), SunnysPaint.com, 804-287-8523

14" x 18" Fredrix Ultra Smooth Portrait-Grade Artist Canvas, purchased at Michaels

Folk Art "Forest Moss" Acrylic Paint #527, PlaidOnline.com, 800-842-4197

Floral Bouquet Pillow #2473240, Pier1.com, 800-245-4595

Cynthia Rowley Rochelle 26" x 26" Pillow; Cynthia Rowley Rochelle 16" Round Pillow; McKenzie Sunflower Linen Chair, purchased at T.J.Maxx

paint power

Metallic Foil Magic, page 16

"Bright Copper" Metallic Foil; "Coppery Gold" Metallic Foil; "American Walnut" Stain & Seal; Neon Leon Stippler Brush; Flexible Smoother Blade; Wunda Size; SoSlow Super Extender; MasterClear Topcoat, RoyalDesignStudio.com, 800-747-9767

Tao Foyer Table #394557, WorldMarket.com, 877-967-5362

Lanterns, purchased at Pier 1 Imports

features

Deck Makeover, page 20

Cedar 4x4 Boards (posts); **2x2 Boards** (spindles); **¾ x 6 decking** (rail caps); **#10 x 2½" Stainless Steel Screws,** purchased locally

"Vanilla Milkshake" Paint (spindles) #OC-59; **"Ashley Gray" Paint** (rails) #HC-87, BenjaminMoore.com, 800-344-0400

"Natural" Penofin Verde Stain, Penofin.com, 800-736-6346

Albany Deep Seating with "Stone" Frames and "Renata Hemp" Fabric, MallinFurniture.com, 800-251-6537

Martha Stewart Dining Set, purchased at Kmart (no longer available)

Outdoor Throw Pillows, purchased at Kohl's and Target

Bright Zen Chair Pads in Persimmon #415492, WorldMarket.com, 877-967-5362

Throw, purchased at World Market

Garden Treasures Umbrella Centerpiece with 6 Votive Holders #63660, Lowes.com, 800-445-6937

Akro-Mils 24" Universal Deck Planters in Terra Cotta, purchased locally

Rust-Oleum Stone Creations Paint (planters), purchased at The Home Depot

Cast Monkey Plant Hangers, purchased locally | **Similar Item: Cast Iron Monkey Hanger** #90414775, Bibelotshops.com, 877-379-9300

Note: A complete list of plant materials is available at MyHomeMyStyle.com/Extras

Storage Ottoman, page 28

(4) **¾" MDF x 24" x 48" Handy Panels; ½" MDF x 24" x 48" Handy Panel;** (3) **⅜" 36"-long Aluminum Rods; 8'-long Pine 1x2 Board; 6'-long Pine 1x6 Board; Wood Glue; 2" Finish Nails; Primer; "Black" Paint,** purchased at The Home Depot

(1 pair) **Concealed Lid Hinges** #00H54.01; (4) **120 mm Aluminum Legs** #00S81.40, LeeValley.com, 800-871-8158

"Richloom" Fabric (black ottoman); **"Mika Citron" Fabric** (white ottoman); **4" High-Density Foam,** purchased at Jo-Ann Fabrics & Crafts

Jonathan Louis Sofa, purchased locally

Note: You can order an inexpensive custom upholstered cushion to fit on your ottoman at CushionsXpress.com

Corner Office, page 32

18" x 24" x 84" Unfinished Oak Pantry Cabinet; Sheet of ¼" Oak Plywood; Sheet of ¾" Oak Plywood; (3) **8'-long Oak 1x2 Boards;** (3) **Oak ¾" Square Dowels;** (2) **8'-long Oak 1x4 Boards; 8'-long Oak 1x10 Board; 24" x 48" Acrylic Sheet; 24" x 48" Sheet of Galvanized Sheet Metal;** (3) **Real Organized 70½" White Double Track Standards; Real Organized 40" White Hang Track;** (6) **Real Organized 7" White Double Track Brackets;** (2) **Real Organized 11" White Double Track Brackets;** (3) **Real Organized 18¼" White Double Track Brackets; Wood Glue; 2" Finish Nails; 1¼" Screws;** (2) **Aged Bronze 3" C/C Craftsman Pulls;** (2) **22" Heavy-Duty Drawer Slides; Rev-A-Shelf 35-qt. Double Waste Container;** (3 packs of 2) **Utilitech 2-Light White LED Cabinet Lights; Utilitech 5-Light 18" LED Linkable Under-Cabinet Strip,** purchased at Lowe's

(3) **12" x 12" Canvas Frames,** purchased at Michaels

"White Diamond" Paint (office parts) #OC-61; **"Powell Buff" Paint** (walls) #HC-35, BenjaminMoore.com, 800-344-0400

easy makeover

Sliding Door, page 38

Wall-Mounted Sliding Door Hardware Kit for a 36"-wide Door #200WM721, JohnsonHardware.com, 574-293-5664 | HomeDepot.com, 800-466-3337

Durham's Multipurpose Water Putty; Jeld-Wen 36" x 80" Unfinished Slab Door; Sheet of 3/16" Hardboard; (4) **8'-long Primed MDF 1x4 Boards; Loctite Power Grab Construction Adhesive; Contact Cement,** purchased at The Home Depot

"Lime Candy" Paint #6011-8 (barn door), ValsparAtLowes.com, 888-313-5569

Cryntel 4½" x 36" Sierra Plank Vinyl Flooring in Sienna, purchased at Lowe's

"Navajo White" Paint #1822 (patterned door); **"Riviera Sand" Paint** #320E-3 (patterned door), Behr.com, 877-237-6158 | purchased at The Home Depot

DKNY Soho Garden Bedding, purchased at Bed Bath & Beyond

Ladder, purchased locally

dollar-wise design

Message Center, page 44

(1 pair) **15" x 25" New York Shutters,** PineShutters.com, 603-352-3205

(2) **8'-long Poplar 1x4 Boards; 4'-long Poplar 1x6 Board** (ripped to 4" wide); **Sheet of ¼" Beadboard; ¾" Base Shoe Molding, 8' long; #6 Finish Nails; ⅝" Brad Nails; Wood Glue,** purchased locally

(2 pairs) **1½" x 2½" x 3/32" Non-Mortise Hinges with Flat Tops in Dark Antique** #NM-7; (2) **Small Butler Pantry Latches in Dark Antique** #SL-4, Horton-Brasses.com, 800-754-9127

"Plymouth Rock" Paint #1543 (walls); **"Jamestown Blue" Paint** #HC-148 (message center), BenjaminMoore.com, 800-344-0400

The Board Dudes 11½" x 11½" Magnetic Dry Erase Monthly Calendar; Artist's Loft Tools of the Trade Natural Cork Tiles (pack of 4); **Artist's Loft Tools of the Trade Magnets** (set of 6), purchased at Michaels

Brainerd 4-Hook White Key Rail #198612, Lowes.com, 800-445-6937

Customized Small Dog House Wall Decal Sticker in Chocolate and Kiwi #DHS-D, GraphicSpaces.com

Graphic Floral Patchwork Rug #437397, WorldMarket.com, 877-967-5362

Pet Dish, purchased at Marshalls

Tripod Lamp, page 48

Vivitar 57" Tripod #VIV-VPT-2457, Walmart.com, 800-925-6278

Portfolio 4' Track Section in Black #120833; **Portfolio Track Live End Power Connector with Plug and Cord** #232976; **Portfolio Universal Track Head** #197724; **GlacialLight LED Bulb** #GL-BR30; **⅜" x 7/16" Rubber Foam Weatherseal Self-Stick Tape; ⅜"-long ¼"-20 Round-Head Machine Screw; ¼"-20 Coupling Nut; ⅜" Inside Diameter Clear Flexible Vinyl Tubing; Black Electrical Tape,** purchased at Lowe's

WAC Lighting Barn Door Attachment #PAR30BD, LightingDirect.com, 800-375-3410

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Add Outdoor Style with **Perfect Plants**

online extra!

On the following pages, you'll find information and planting guides for the plants we used to dress up the deck shown below. For more information about this deck makeover, see the May/June 2011 issue of *My Home My Style*.

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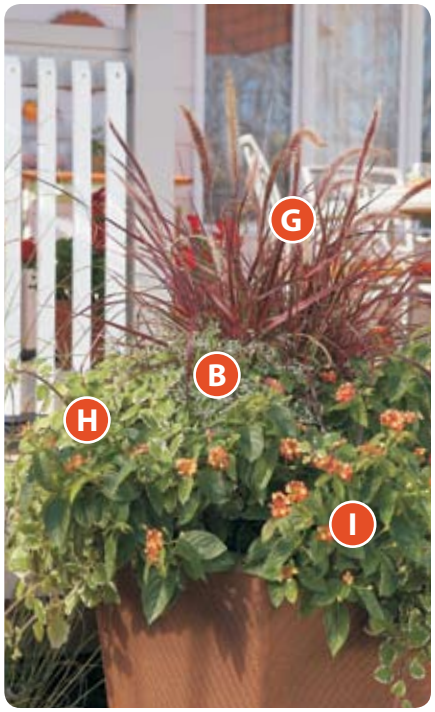

Containers Plant List

A **Scarlet sage** *Salvia splendens* 'Lighthouse Red'
B **Euphorbia** *Euphorbia hypericifolia* Diamond Frost® ('Inneuphe')
C **Boston fern** *Nephrolepis exaltata*
D **Sago palm** *Cycas revoluta*
E **Rubber plant** *Ficus elastica*
F **Spurge** *Euphorbia xmartini* 'Ascot Rainbow'
G **Purple fountain grass** *Pennisetum setaceum* 'Rubrum'
H **Variegated Swedish ivy** *Plectranthus madagascariensis* 'Variegated Mint Leaf'
I **Lantana** *Lantana* 'Radiation'

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check out the May/June 2011 issue for more dramatic deck ideas

Containers Plant List

- **A** **Cordyline** *Cordyline australis* 'Red Sensation'
- **B** **Ornamental pepper** *Capsicum annuum* 'Medusa'
- **C** **Calibrachoa** *Calibrachoa* Superbells® Dreamsicle
- **D** **Vinca** *Vinca minor* 'Illumination'
- **E** **Variegated sweet flag** *Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon'
- **F** **Lantana** *Lantana* Luscious® Citrus Blend™
- **G** **English ivy** *Hedera helix* 'Misty'

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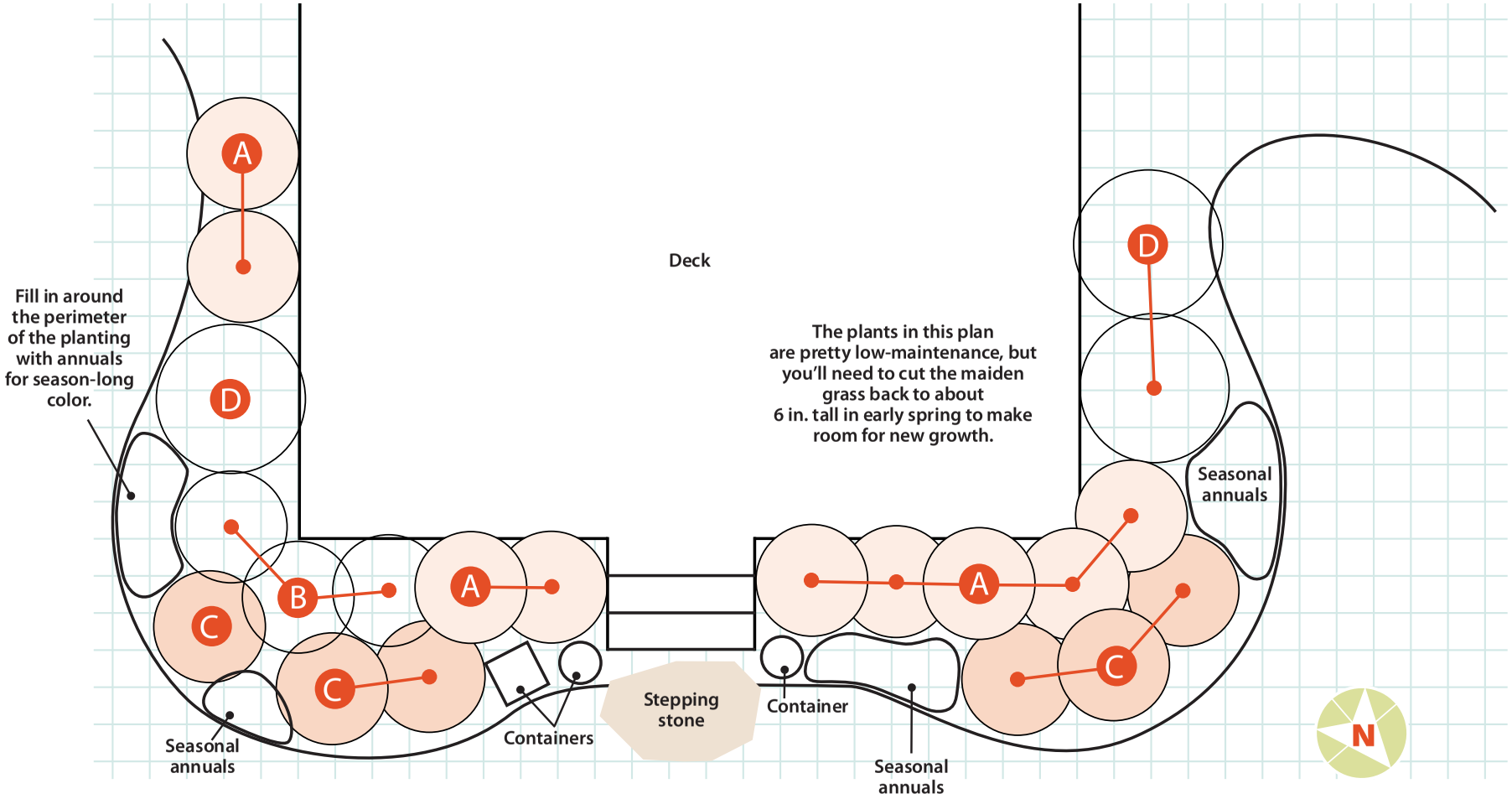

Scale: 1 square = 1 square foot

A Maiden grass *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus'
Perennial; narrow leaves have white variegated stripe down center, tan fall plumes change to silver; full sun; 4 to 6 ft. tall, 3 to 5 ft. wide; cold zones 4 to 9, heat zones 9 to 1
Number to plant: 9

B Upright juniper *Juniperus scopulorum* 'Wichita Blue'
Evergreen shrub; can be sheared lightly to maintain upright shape; full sun; can reach 10 to 15 ft. tall and 4 to 6 ft. wide; cold zones 3 to 7, heat zones 7 to 1
Number to plant: 3

C Japanese barberry
Berberis thunbergii atropurpurea 'Royal Cloak'
Shrub; burgundy foliage on arching stems; full sun; 3 to 5 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 4 to 8, heat zones 8 to 1
Number to plant: 6

D Arctic blue leaf willow
Salix purpurea 'Canyon Blue'
Shrub; blue-green leaves on red-brown twigs turn yellow in fall, can be sheared to maintain shape; full sun; 4 to 5 ft. tall, 3 to 4 ft. wide; cold zones 4 to 7, heat zones 7 to 1
Number to plant: 3

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From Drab Deck to **Outdoor Oasis**

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On the following pages, you'll find detailed photos and instructions that will help you make over your deck and add a privacy screen and pergola. For more information see the May/June 2011 issue of *My Home My Style*.

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STEP BY step

Remove Old Rails and **Add New posts for Privacy**

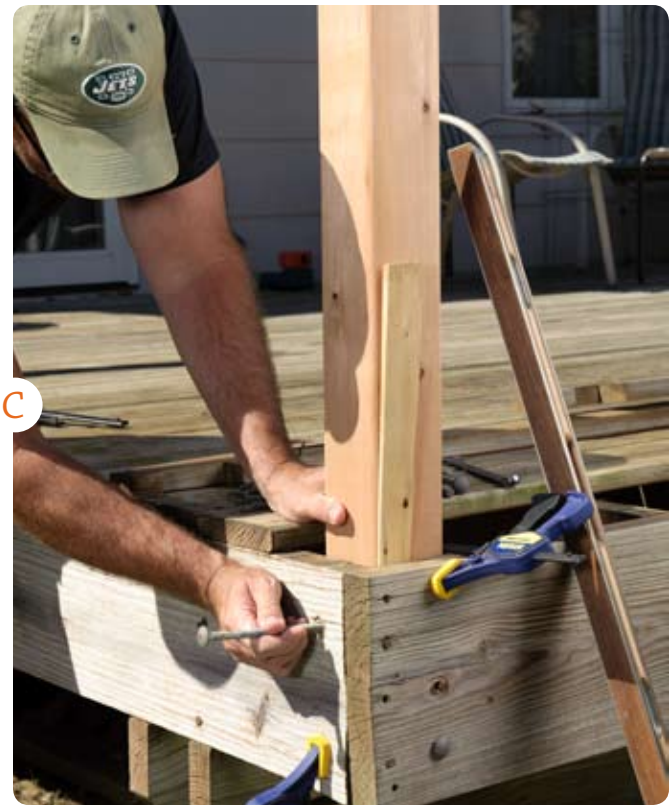
A

Remove the old railings to get your deck makeover underway. Try to locate all of the screws or nails that hold the rails in place, and then work carefully so that you don't damage the pieces as you remove them. If the rails and balusters are in good shape, you can reuse them to save time and money.

B

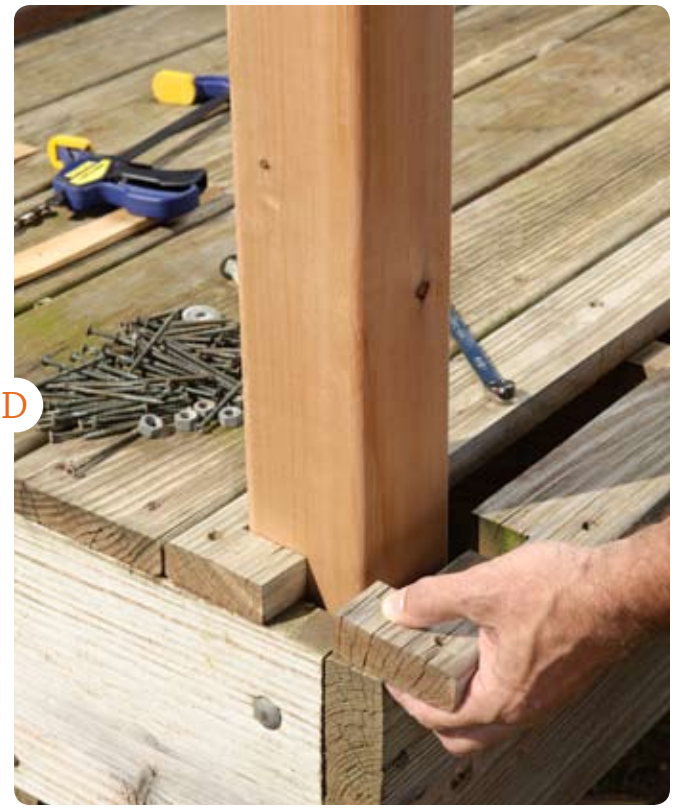
Replace short posts with tall ones in the area where you want to put up the privacy screen. If your deck boards are notched around the posts like these, then it may be necessary to remove a few boards to get access to the post-mounting hardware. Remove the boards carefully so that you can reuse them later.

C



Mount the new posts using galvanized lag bolts. Make sure that the posts are standing plumb (straight up and down) by checking them on two adjacent faces with a level. Then use shims where needed to hold the posts plumb. Once the posts are tight, just cut the shims off below the decking.

D



Reinstall the deck boards around the new posts. If you have to reposition any posts, you'll need to cut new notches in the decking. If your new post layout leaves you with exposed notches in the old deck boards, try to recut and reposition your existing deck boards if possible. If you can't, you'll need to replace those boards.

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STEP BY step

Clean the Boards to **Make Old Decking Look Like New**

A

Prepare to clean the old decking by covering the home's siding with plastic. This will prevent splashing that could bleach out the paint. Be sure to read the instructions on the deck cleaner for any other usage and safety precautions before you begin.

B

Apply the deck cleaner following the manufacturer's instructions. In most cases you'll dampen the decking first, and then pour or spray the cleaner on. Work in a fairly small so that you can get through the next steps before the cleaner dries.

C

Scrub the decking after applying the cleaner using a stiff-bristle brush on a long handle. This takes some effort, but the results are worth it. You'll soon see how much dirt deck boards can hold as a dingy slurry begins to form on top of the decking.

D

Rinse the deck cleaner off of the area you've just scrubbed using a garden hose to reveal the refreshed deck boards underneath. After rinsing, be sure to wet the grass and plants around the deck again in order to dilute any deck cleaner that gets on them.

E

Apply a fresh finish to the deck boards once they've been allowed to dry for 24 hours. You can choose a clear finish, one that's tinted, or a solid-color stain to get the look you want. Just be sure that the finish is designed for use on deck boards to withstand foot traffic.

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STEP BY step

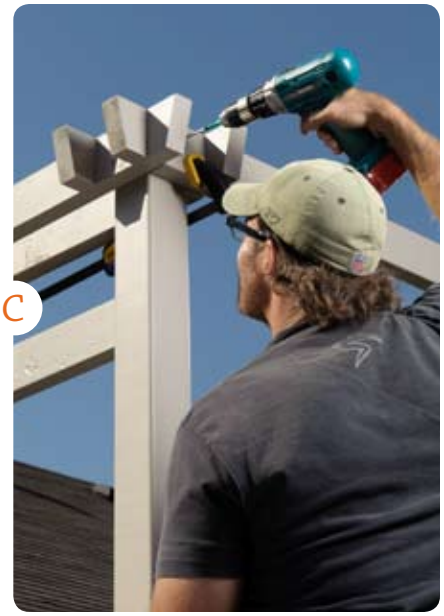
Complete the Look with a **Privacy Screen and Railings**

A

Begin building the privacy screen by installing lower rails. These will support the tall spindles that provide privacy. You can save a lot of time and effort by painting or staining all of the parts before installation. To keep spacing consistent, use small pieces of a 2x4 board as spacers between the decking and the rail.

B

Add an upper rail and then a pair of beams at the top to support the pergola slats. Like the rails, the beams are just cut from 2x4s. The beams get attached to opposite faces of the posts with screws. You can make it easier to install the long beams by using clamps to hold them in place while you drive in the screws.



C

Decorative "tails" at the ends of the pergola beams give the illusion that the beams are notched to that they lock together and pass through one another. Adding this detail is easy, though. Just cut short pieces of 2x4 so that their ends are angled like the real beams, and then screw the pieces to the beams.

D

Start the pergola at the corner by attaching slats to a long piece that sits at 45 degrees to the corner. The easiest way to do this is to assemble the corner pieces on the ground, and then lift it in place as a unit. After that, you can just screw the rest of the pergola slats in place.

E

Complete the privacy screen by attaching the tall slats. They get screwed to the lower and upper rails, and to a middle rail. This rail provides extra strength and holds the slats securely so they don't warp. To keep the distance between the slats consistent, use a cut-off piece of 2x4 as a spacer.

F

Complete the railing by reattaching the old deck rails. Then screw on the slats. On our deck we dressed up the rail further by adding a flat top rail. It's made from cedar deck boards and, for contrast against the painted railing components, gets the same clear finish as the decking.

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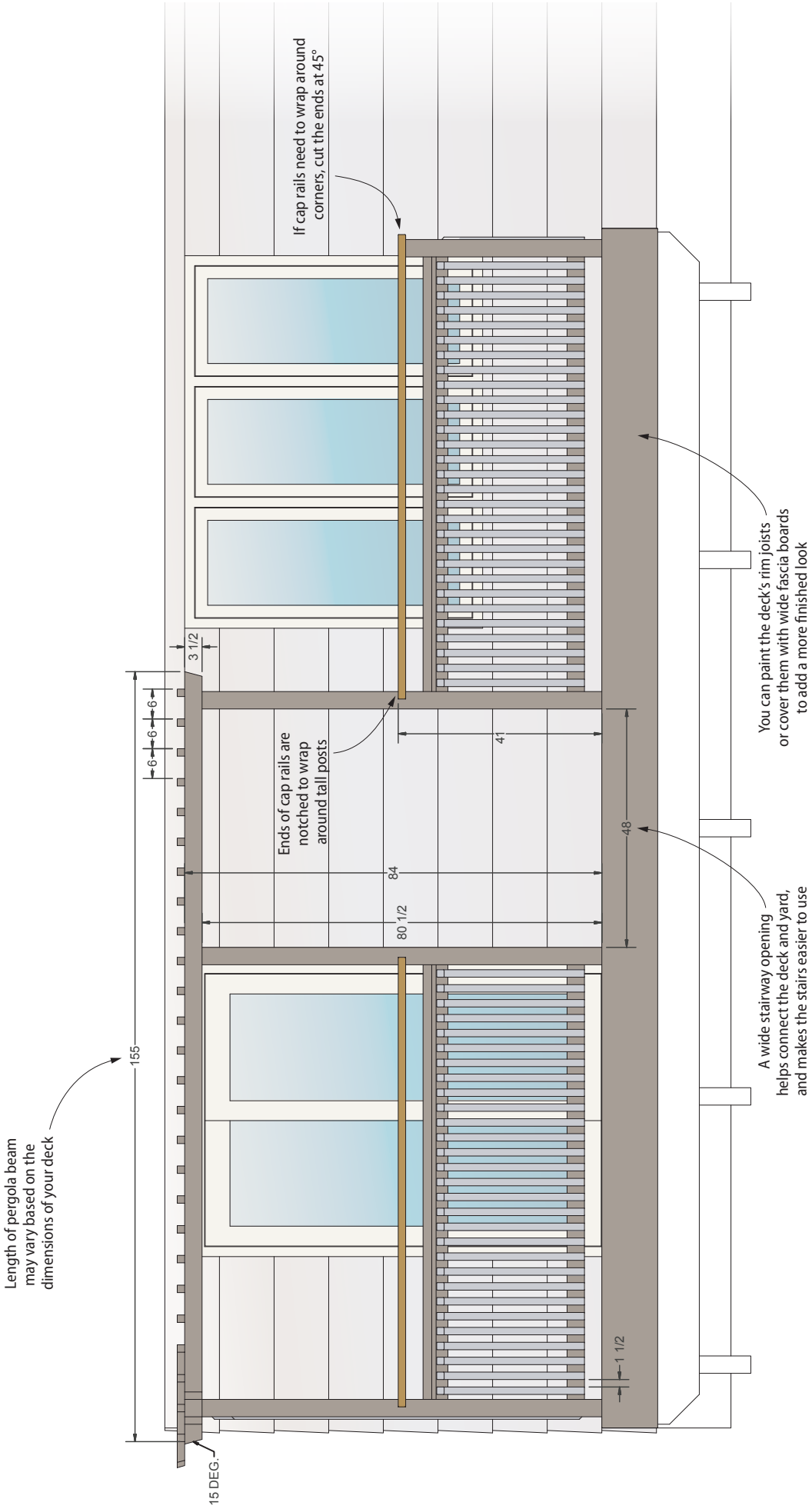

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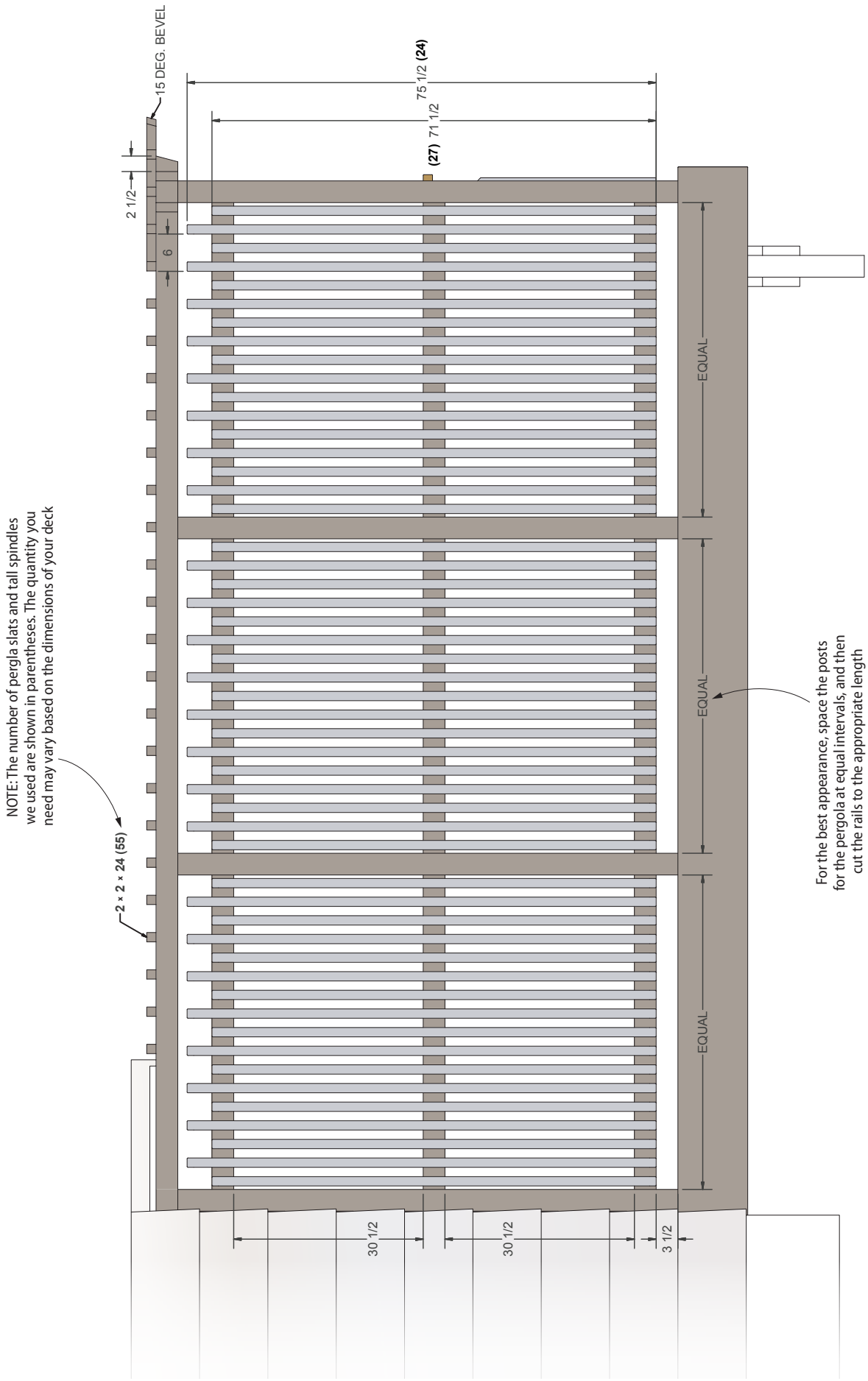

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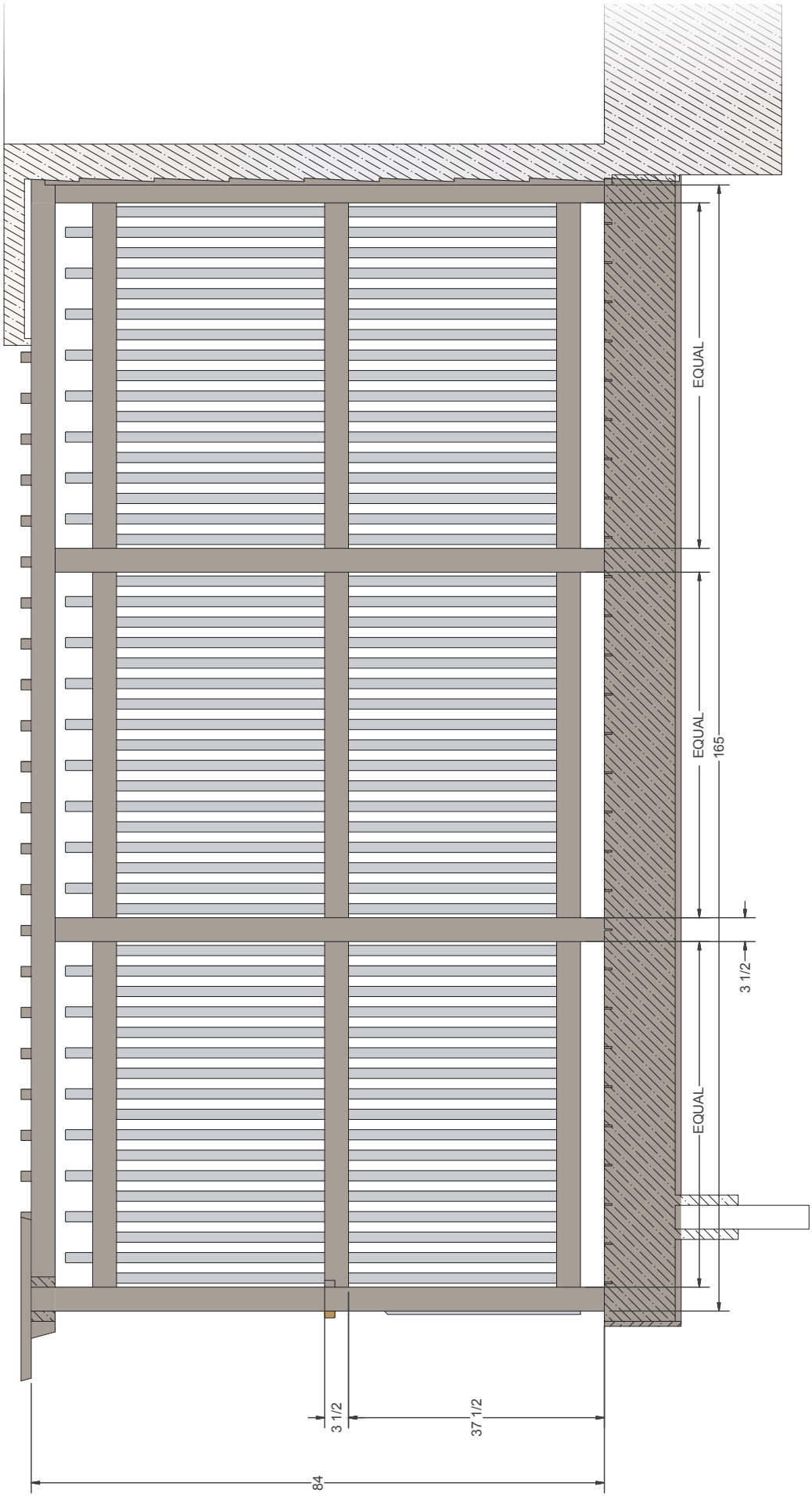

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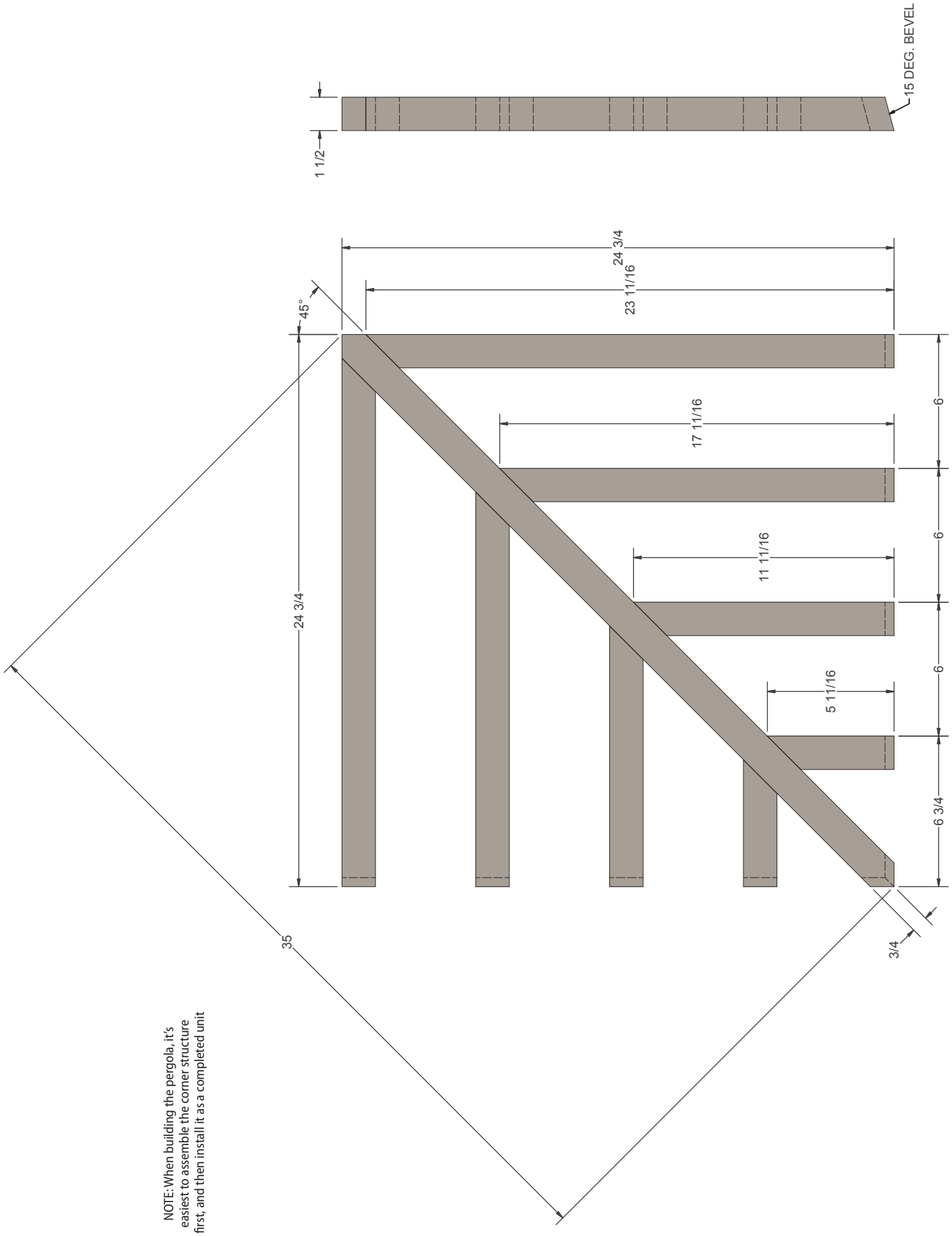

NOTE: When building the pergola, it's easiest to assemble the corner structure first, and then install it as a completed unit

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Easy **Painted Doormats**

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On the following pages, you'll find templates and step-by-step instructions to create these doormat projects for your home. For more information about these projects, see the May/June 2011 issue of *My Home My Style*.

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Make the Stencils & **Apply the Paint**

STEP BY step

1 **Adhere the printed pattern** to the sticky side of the contact paper, and then cut out the owl and the letters *(Inset Photo)*.

2 **Spray stencil adhesive** on the back of each letter and pattern piece, and press them onto the mat in the proper positions.

3 **After rolling on two coats** of paint, take off the outer eye circles. Then use a stencil brush to dab paint in those areas.

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Shown at 100% – (3" & 4" letters)

Resizing Guide

These letters will fit on a 2' x 3' doormat just as they are. For smaller or larger mats, just take these sheets to your local print center, and ask them to increase or decrease the size according to your needs. For example, a 3' x 5' doormat would need letters sized at about 133%.

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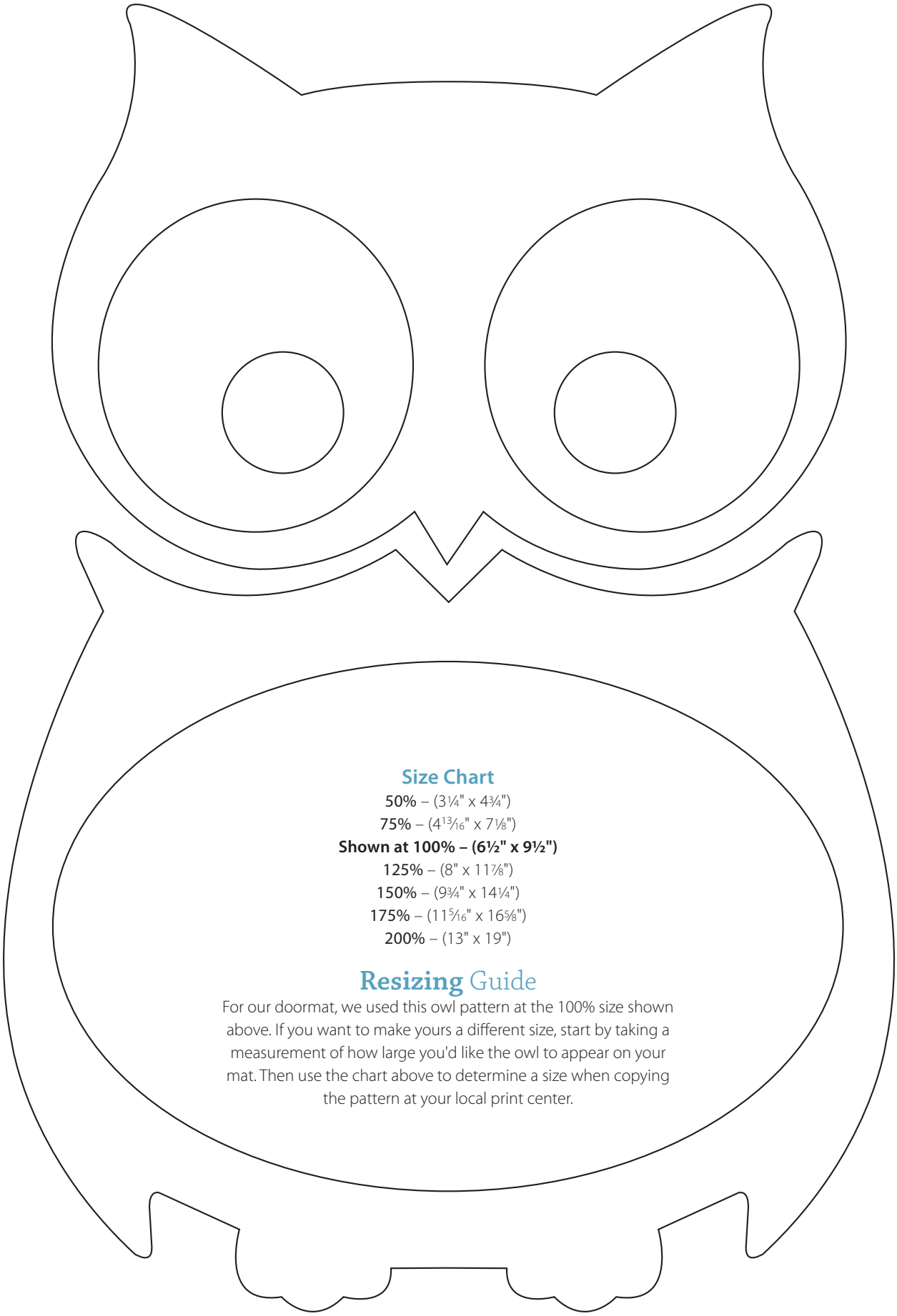

Size Chart

50% – (3¼" x 4¾")
75% – (4 13/16" x 7⅛")
Shown at 100% – (6½" x 9½")
125% – (8" x 11⅞")
150% – (9¾" x 14¼")
175% – (11 5/16" x 16⅝")
200% – (13" x 19")

Resizing Guide

For our doormat, we used this owl pattern at the 100% size shown above. If you want to make yours a different size, start by taking a measurement of how large you'd like the owl to appear on your mat. Then use the chart above to determine a size when copying the pattern at your local print center.

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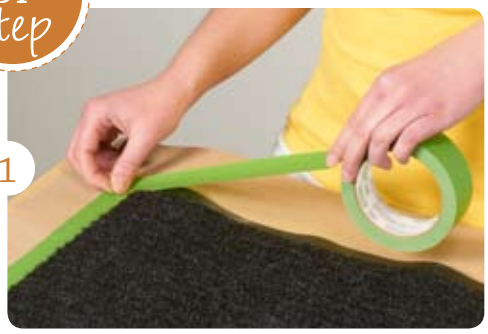
STEP BY step

Simple **Stripes**

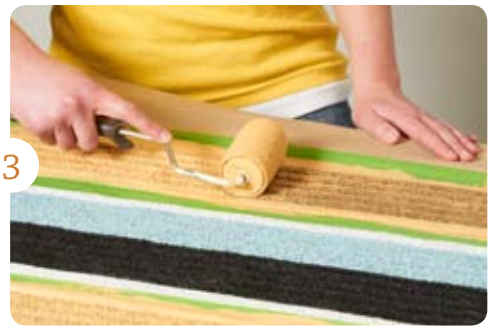


1

Protect the black edge around the doormat by covering it with painter's tape. Press the tape down firmly to make sure it adheres to the rubber.

2

Lay out your striped pattern with more strips of painter's tape. Use your fingers to press the tape into the ridges to help prevent paint seepage.



3

Roll two coats of exterior paint on each stripe, with the exception of the black stripes. These are created by simply leaving the area unpainted.

Design a **Striped Doormat**

Stripes are one of the simplest patterns to create on a doormat because the ribbed surface helps guide your tape placement. Start by taping off the mat's border so it will remain black *(Step 1)*. Then lay out a design that has several colors of stripes in random widths *(Step 2)*. Roll a light coat of paint on all stripes of the same color. Let it dry, then roll on a second coat for good coverage *(Step 3)*. Move on to the next color, retaping as necessary.

Design a **Leaf-Patterned Doormat**

For a fun look, try a mat with tropical leaves. It's easy using faux leaves from the craft store (or the stencil pattern on the next page). Just choose any generous-sized leaves that will fit on the doormat you're using (our leaves measured 24" long and 18" long). Then remove the "veins" from each leaf so it will be easier to paint over *(Step 1)*.

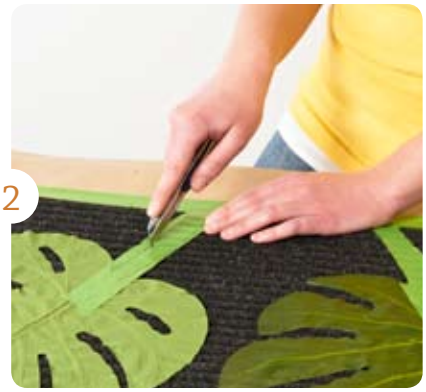
A light coat of spray adhesive will ensure that the leaves stick to the doormat and help keep paint from seeping underneath them. After you've glued the leaves to the mat, use painter's tape and a sharp knife to create natural-looking stems *(Step 2)*. Finally, apply paint over the entire mat, using light pressure and a lightly loaded roller *(Step 3)*. You can aim for full coverage with the second coat.

STEP BY step

Natural **Beauty**

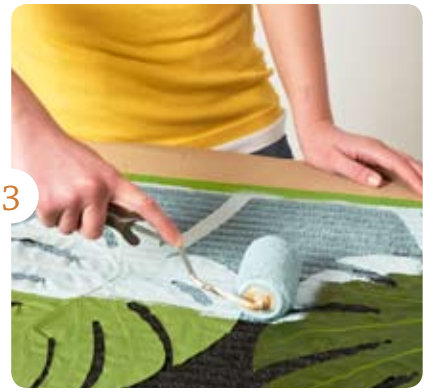
1

Gently pull the "veins" off of a synthetic leaf to make it easier to glue down. Then lightly spray the front of the leaf with adhesive, flip it over, and press it onto the doormat, making sure it's flat.



2

To create each leaf's stem, place a piece of painter's tape between the leaf and the border. To give the stem realistic look, use a sharp knife to cut gentle curves on both sides of the tape.



3

Apply a thin coat of paint all over the mat using a small roller. Be careful not to squeeze paint under the leaves as you work. When this coat is dry, roll on a second for best coverage.

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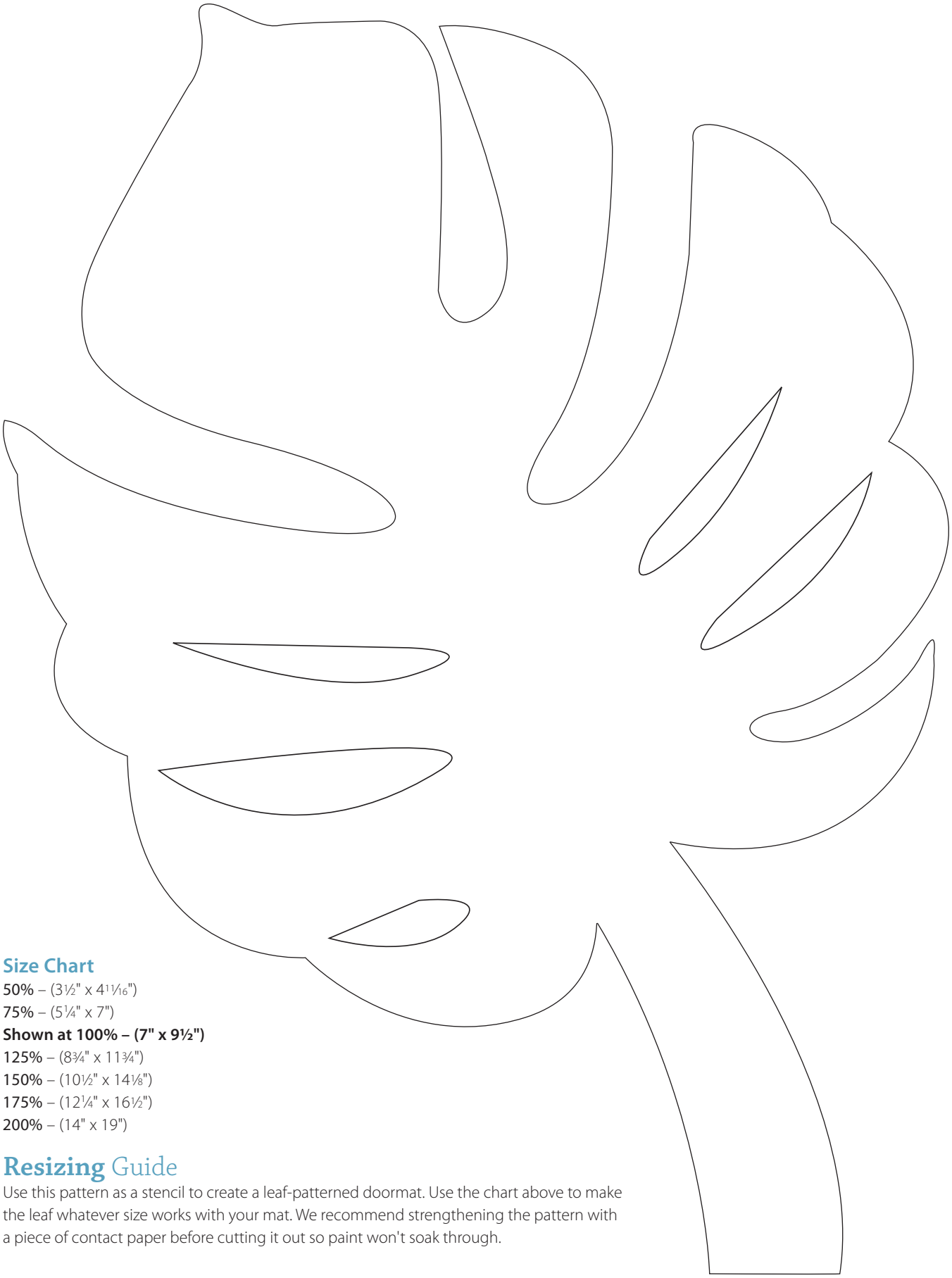

Size Chart

50% – (3½" x 4 11/16")
75% – (5¼" x 7")
Shown at 100% – (7" x 9½")
125% – (8¾" x 11¾")
150% – (10½" x 14⅛")
175% – (12¼" x 16½")
200% – (14" x 19")

Resizing Guide

Use this pattern as a stencil to create a leaf-patterned doormat. Use the chart above to make the leaf whatever size works with your mat. We recommend strengthening the pattern with a piece of contact paper before cutting it out so paint won't soak through.

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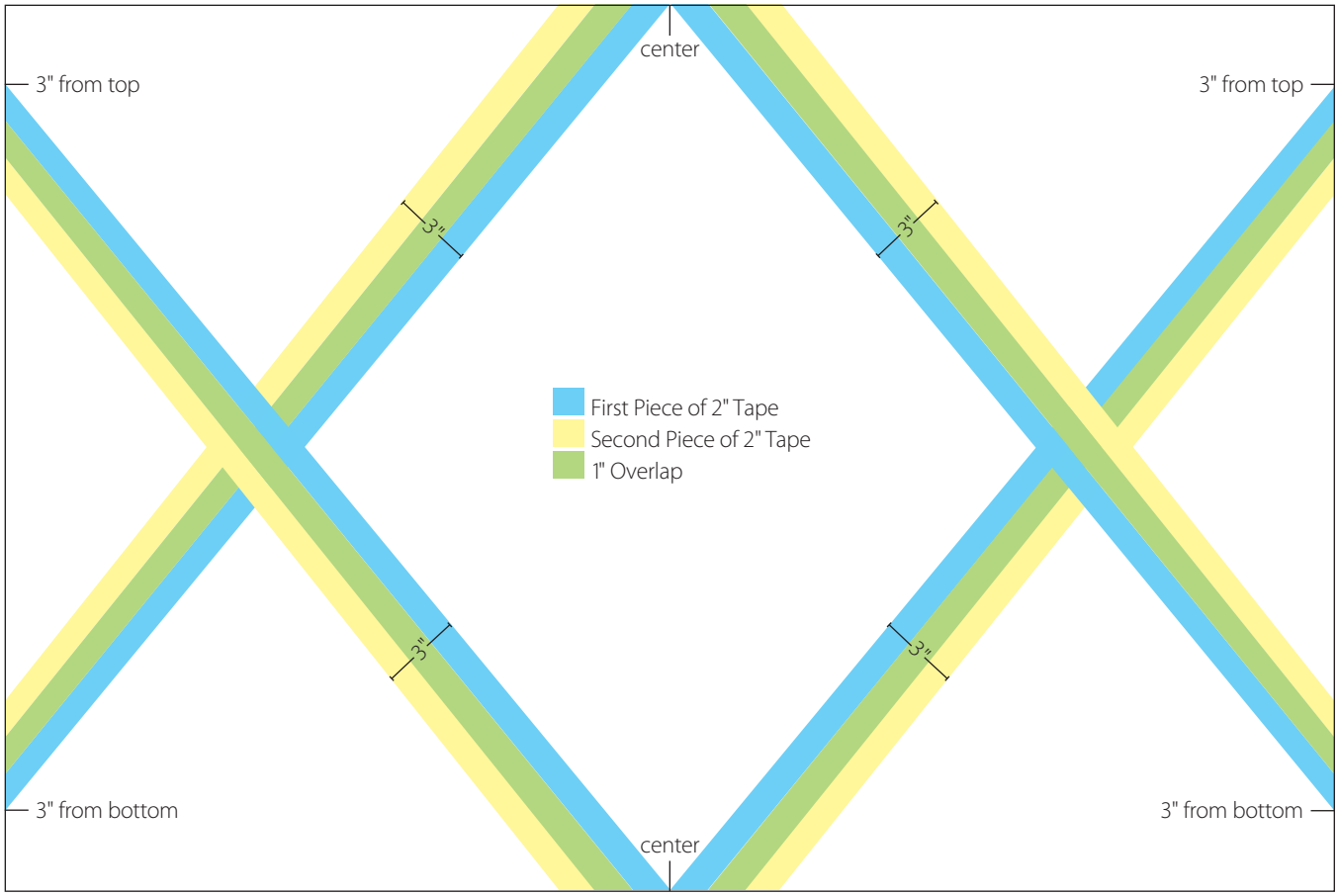

Create a Classic **Diamond Pattern**

This graphically clean pattern looks great in contemporary or traditional settings. You can easily customize the mat with your home address — just pick up vinyl numbers at the home center and cut them out.

Like our other designs, this pattern can be modified to work on doormats of various sizes. Just use the measurements shown in the diagram *above* when you lay out the pattern *(Step 1)*. We used 2"-wide painter's tape, but you could make the lines wider or narrower if you prefer.

To help keep the paint from seeping under the numbers, stick them down with spray adhesive. *(Step 2)*. They'll still be easy to remove when you're done. Let the first light coat of paint seal the edges of the tape and numbers *(Step 3)*.

STEP BY step

Lay Out Tape & **Apply the Paint**

1

To create the black stripes, lay strips of painter's tape on the mat according to the diagram above. Then firmly press the tape into the recesses of the ribbed surface to prevent seepage.

2

Spray stencil adhesive on the back of each vinyl house number, and then press them onto the doormat in the proper positions.

3

Use a small roller to apply paint lightly and evenly over the entire mat. After the first coat has dried, roll on a second light coat.

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No-Sew **Ottoman Cushion**

online extra!

On the following pages, you'll find step-by-step instructions and illustrations that will help you create this seat cushion. For more information about the ottoman project, see the May/June 2011 issue of *My Home My Style*.

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Having cushions custom-made can be expensive. However, making your own, as we did for this storage ottoman, will save you a considerable amount of money. And don't worry if you're not handy with a needle and thread—these simple assemblies of plywood, high-density foam, muslin, and upholstery fabric don't require a single stitch *(Illustration, right)*. Here's how to make yours:

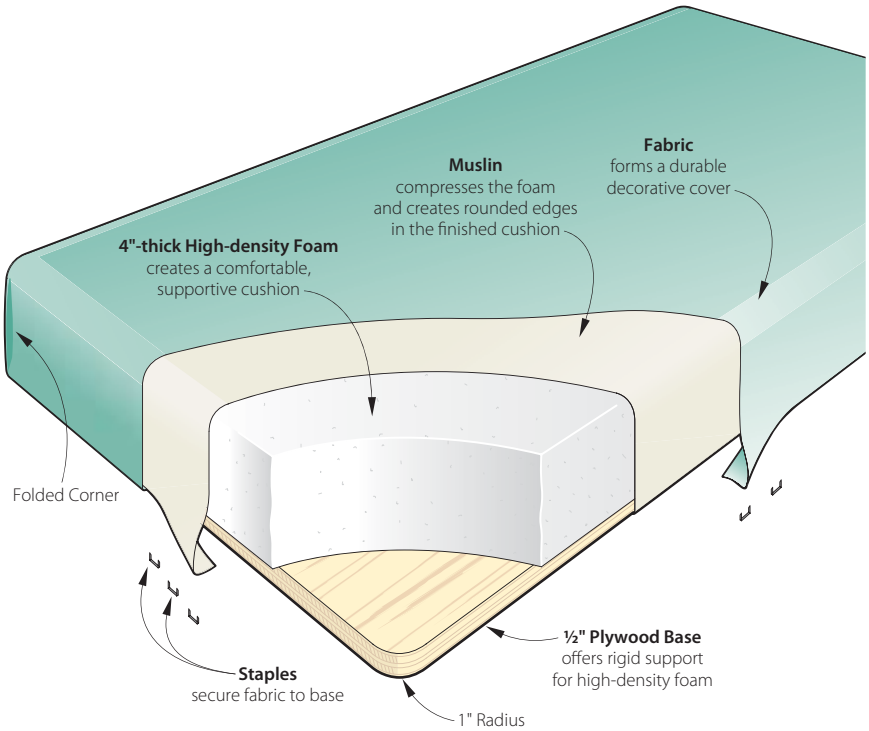
1] Determine what the dimensions of the finished cushion need to be, and have the foam cut to match.

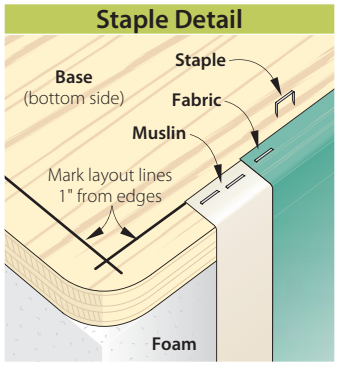
2] Subtract ½" from the length and width of the foam, and cut a plywood or MDF base to these dimensions. Use a jigsaw to cut round corners on the base.

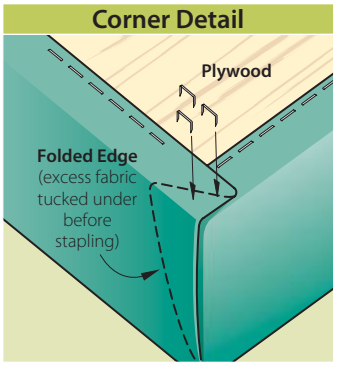
3] Mark layout lines on the base 1" in from each edge. These will be a reference when stretching the fabric over the foam and base.

4] To determine the length of the muslin (front to back of the cushion), pull a flexible tape measure snugly around the foam and base to compress the foam *(Fig. 1)*.

5] Transfer that dimension onto the muslin *(Fig. 2)*. To do that, measure from one end of the muslin, and draw a line. Now draw two more lines, one on each side of the first line, 1" away. These lines will come into play if you need to tighten or loosen the tension on the muslin as you attach it.







STEP BY step

Start with **Plywood, Foam, and Muslin**

1

To measure for the muslin, hold one end of a flexible tape on the layout line at one edge of the base, wrap it around the foam to the opposite line, and pull it taut.

2

After squaring the end of the fabric, transfer the measurement from Step One to the "muslin line" (the middle line). Then mark a guideline 1" on either side of the middle line.

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STEP BY step

Wrap and Staple to **Form the Cushion**

3

Line up the edge of the muslin with the pencil line on the base, and starting in the center, staple the material in place.

4

Fold excess muslin around a ruler, have a helper pull to apply tension, align a pencil line with the layout line, and staple.

5

Cut off some of the excess muslin to remove material that would create a bulge in the finished corners.

6

Staple the fabric to the front and back edges. Stop 4" short of the corners to allow room for the final corner folds.

7

Now continue stapling the fabric along both sides of the cushion. Here, you can go all the way into the corners.

8

Trim, fold, tuck, and staple the fabric in each corner. Make it so the seam in the fabric faces the side of the cushion.

6] Now measure 15" beyond the line furthest from the end of the muslin, and cut the material here. This extra length will make it easier to grip the muslin as you pull it.

7] Use your flexible tape once again to measure around the width (side to side on the cushion) of the foam and base. Just as before, pull the tape taut, slightly compressing the foam. Cut the muslin to this exact dimension.

8] Mark centerlines on all four edges of the muslin and base. These will help you center the foam and base on the muslin and avoid twisting the material as you pull it.

9] Staple the muslin in place along one edge of the plywood, making sure the staples sink in completely *(Fig. 3)*.

10] Now pull the muslin so the middle line on the fabric aligns with the layout line on the base. For a rounder edge, pull the muslin to the next guideline. For a crisper edge, ease tension off the muslin until the first guideline matches the line on the plywood base. Staple the muslin at the desired tension *(Fig. 4)*.

11] Repeat the process for the sides of the cushion, and then trim the excess muslin at each corner *(Fig. 5)*.

12] Cutting, marking, and applying the fabric is similar to the procedure used for the muslin. Two important differences are that you'll cut the fabric to exact dimensions (no extra for pulling), and you'll need to stop stapling short of the corners, so you can fold and tuck the material *(Figs. 6, 7, and 8)*.

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Simple Tips for **Cutting Sheet Goods**

online extra!

On the following page, you'll find tips and tricks for cutting sheet goods that will help you create this compact office. For more information about the project, see the May/June 2011 issue of *My Home My Style*.

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Create a Cutting Board

Rather than cutting sheets with a circular saw on sawhorses, simply lay a sheet of 2"-thick foam insulation on the ground, and then lay the sheet to be cut onto the foam. The foam supports the sheet and the cutoff as you make your cuts *(Photo, right)*. Set the saw so the blade cuts about ¼" into the foam. You can reuse the foam many times.

Use an Edge Guide

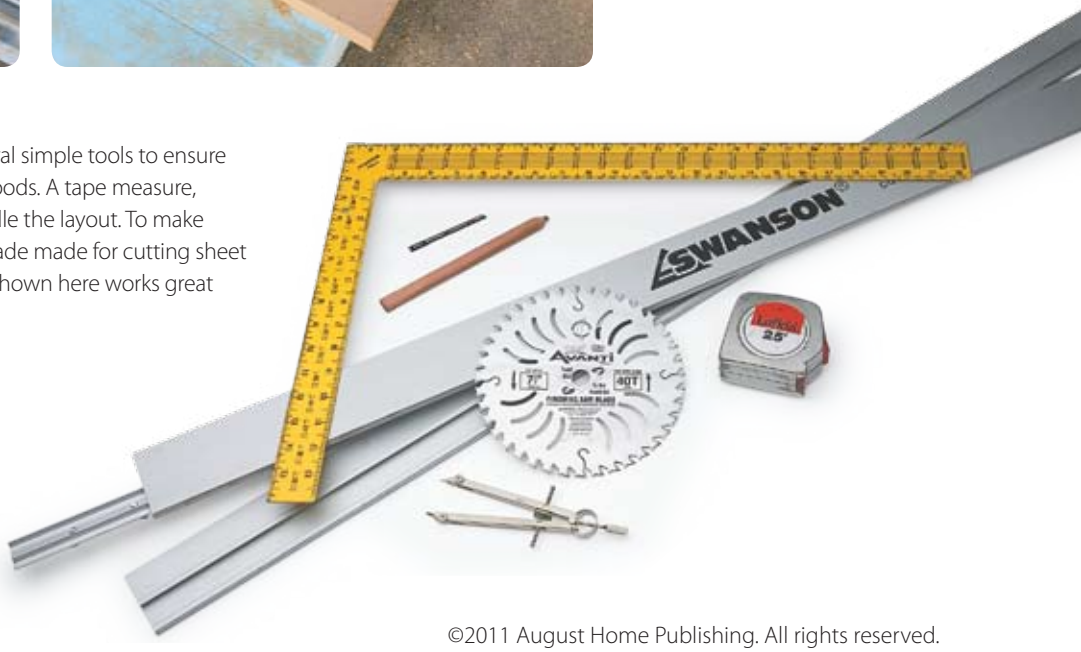
The easiest way to keep a circular saw tracking straight is to use an edge guide *(Photo, below)*. We bought this one, made by Swanson Tool Company, at Lowe's for less than $20. It has two 50"-long sections and comes with clamps. You can use each section alone when cutting across a sheet or join them to cut a sheet lengthwise.

Tag-Team Curves

If you need to make a cut that starts straight and then curves, use both a circular saw and a jigsaw. First, make the straight cut with the circular saw, stopping the saw before the curve *(Photo, far left)*. Let the saw stop, and then lift it off the sheet. Now lower the jig saw blade into the cut, and complete the curved portion *(Photo, near left)*.

Get the Right Gear

Along with a straightedge, you'll need several simple tools to ensure precise layouts and smooth cuts in sheet goods. A tape measure, framing square, compass, and a pencil handle the layout. To make sure the cut is smooth, use a circular saw blade made for cutting sheet goods. The 40-tooth carbide-tipped blade shown here works great and sells for less than $20.



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