

Better Homes and Gardens Special Interest Publications.

before & after

53 Real-Life Room Makeovers

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Before pictures with every project!



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Display until January 14
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Welcoming Front-Door Updates p. 10

BH&G SIP Red Checkout



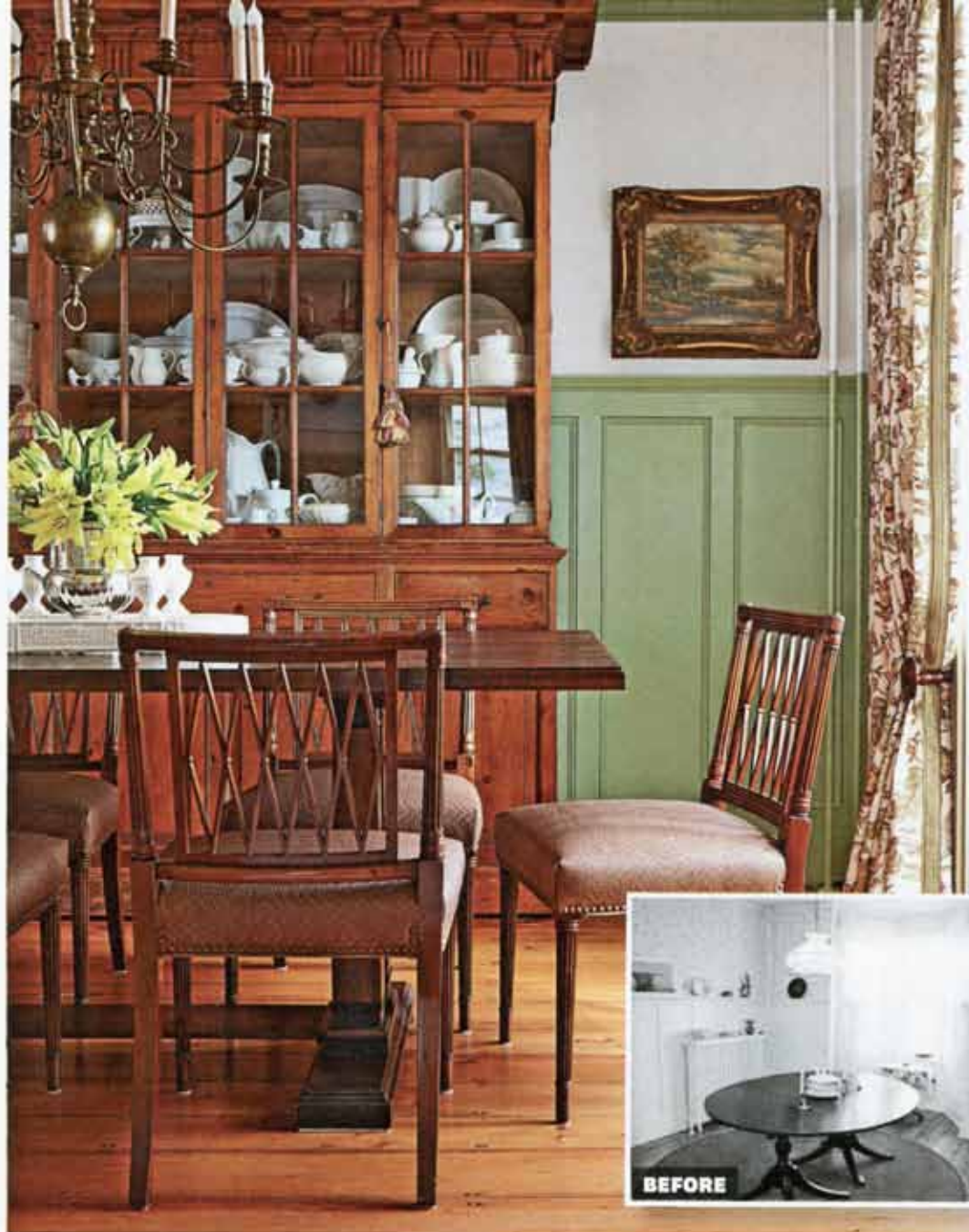
BEFORE

exterior

OPPOSITE: Gray-blue paint and cream-color trim offer a sophisticated palette for the Gothic Revival-style home. Owners Philip Mitchell and Mark Narsansky cleaned and restored the existing wood siding wherever possible and added matching siding to the rest of the home. A pediment and brackets lend architectural presence to the front door, while new benches and planters enhance the home's welcoming atmosphere.

dining room

RIGHT: Wainscoting in the dining room was painted moss green to match the cabinetry in the adjacent kitchen. A doorway between the two rooms was expanded to improve traffic flow and ease entertaining. Furnishings offer authentic charm and a touch of formal elegance. The impressive 19th-century breakfront was crafted from pine, and the trestle table was custom-made by a local artisan.



village charmer

OWNERS OF AN 1875 COTTAGE LOOK BACK IN TIME TO RESTORE DIGNITY AND DETAILS TO THEIR NOVA SCOTIA HOME.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STACEY BRANDFORD PRODUCED BY JACK MURPHY AND MARK NARSANSKY



Surrounded by rose-filled lanes, historical architecture, and picturesque harbors, this vacation cottage in Chester, Nova Scotia, has enjoyed scenic views since 1875—but along the way, the house itself lost some of its charm. When Philip Mitchell and Mark Narsansky discovered the structure, its original period details had been derailed by 1960- and 1990-era renovations. The intrepid pair could see the home's potential, though, in its classic room proportions and scenic setting.

After buying the property, Philip and Mark examined historic photographs of the town's harbor to find clues about the home's original exterior, and they researched architectural details and construction methods used in the area in the late 1800s. Throughout the house, new windows, paneling, trim, and doors replicate original versions, and some of the wide-plank floorboards were preserved—their beauty unearthed as Philip and Mark removed layers of paint and stain.

With the home's historical pedigree always in mind, the couple discreetly added modern updates that enhance comfort and livability. The extended floor plan now boasts a powder room, a mudroom, and an inviting screen porch, while the kitchen hides high-tech appliances behind vintage-style cabinet doors. "Our aim was to make this house fit with the rest of the village and to look as though it was always here, just like this," Philip says.

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living room

ABOVE LEFT: The fireplace serves as the living room's central focal point. Philip and Mark added reproduction iron sconces to enhance its period look. Paneling on the walls lends formal elegance. LEFT: A game table and linen-upholstered chairs with embroidered backs nestle into the bay window at the front of the house. OPPOSITE: Cozy seating areas bring warmth and flexibility to the long, narrow living room. At the far end of the space, a woven sofa dressed in mohair and a sisal rug edged in suede form a chic yet cozy conversation area. French doors lead to a new screen porch that overlooks the backyard.

Install reproduction light fixtures above built-in shelving to add instant vintage style.

Use area rugs to define intimate conversation areas within a large living room.





Want the elegance of marble without breaking the bank? Install it on the island and go with more-affordable laminate or quartz surfacing on the perimeter.

Tuck cookbook storage on one end of the island for easy access to favorite recipes.





kitchen

OPPOSITE: Philip and Mark updated the kitchen's layout, adding an island and hiding high-tech appliances behind cabinetry with period details. A carved-wood range hood is painted to mimic forged iron, and the refrigerator is tucked behind cane-panel doors that resemble an antique armoire. ABOVE: A beaded-board backsplash and traditional farmhouse-style sink honor the kitchen's vintage origins, while the clever mix of moss green perimeter cabinets and a stained wood island adds to the room's remodeled-over-time appearance. RIGHT AND ABOVE RIGHT: Molding throughout the kitchen was milled to match the home's original trimwork.



easy ways to add character

Whether you have a new house or a historic property, architectural details can move your rooms from bland to beautiful. Here are a few simple ways to introduce vintage charm throughout your house.

Install molding. Detailed crown molding, wide baseboards, and other trim add sophistication to any room. Layer moldings for a custom look, or research period-appropriate profiles to mimic original trim.

Choose period-style fixtures. Apron-front sinks and bridge faucets can add vintage appeal to the kitchen, while claw-foot tubs and floor-mount fixtures bring classic style to the bath.

Use reproduction hardware. Select styles and finishes in keeping with your home's era, or opt for charming glass knobs or other vintage looks that appeal to you.

Update kitchen cabinets. Consider adding antique-glass inserts to a few cabinet doors for vintage flair, or chicken-wire inserts for country-chic appeal.

Lay salvaged flooring. Whether you reuse original wood flooring from your home or find old planks at a local salvage shop, authentic wood floors add instant charm—and a little distressing enhances the wood's character.

Update light fixtures with custom shades for a personalized look. Repeat fabric from window treatments to unify the space.

Design vanity storage around plumbing lines to make the most of space under the sink.



upper level

OPPOSITE: A cramped hall bath is now a roomy master bath with charming beaded-board paneling, exposed storage, and period fixtures. BELOW: The bed in one of the guest rooms sits off-center, making the best use of available headroom under the home's steeply angled walls. RIGHT: Philip and Mark updated a window seat at the top of the stairs, adding book storage, paneling, and sconces. BELOW RIGHT: Pointed-arch windows in the home's dormers add character inside and out.



screen porch

RIGHT: Added to the back of the house, a screen porch expands the main-level living space and offers a bright and airy retreat on warm days. Its design was determined by the architectural style of an existing breezeway. The white-painted walls and ceiling, as well as comfortable furnishings, give the porch the feel of an indoor room.

garden

BELOW: Landscaping extends the home's vintage look. The owners repaired original dry-laid stone retaining walls and added brick terracing and a traditional-style brick herb garden in keeping with the home's age. A picket fence and an arbor complement landscaping elements found throughout the village of Chester, Nova Scotia.

SMART PORCH ADDITIONS

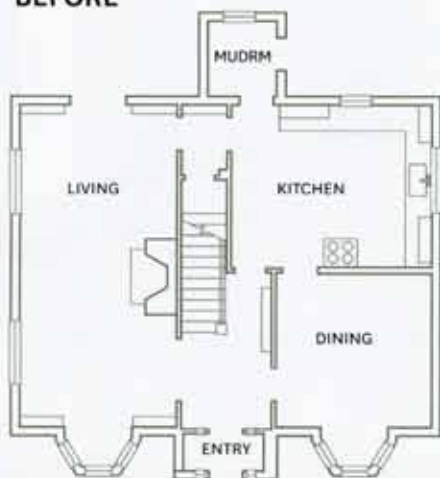
Inviting porches pair architectural charm and cozy furniture. Visit BHG.com/PorchDesign to gather design tips and inspiration.



before and after

Philip Mitchell and Mark Narsansky renovated an 1875 cottage in Nova Scotia, meticulously re-creating the home's original charm. The pair extended the layout slightly to accommodate modern living and entertaining needs, but they retained the rooms' original proportions and traditional details.

BEFORE

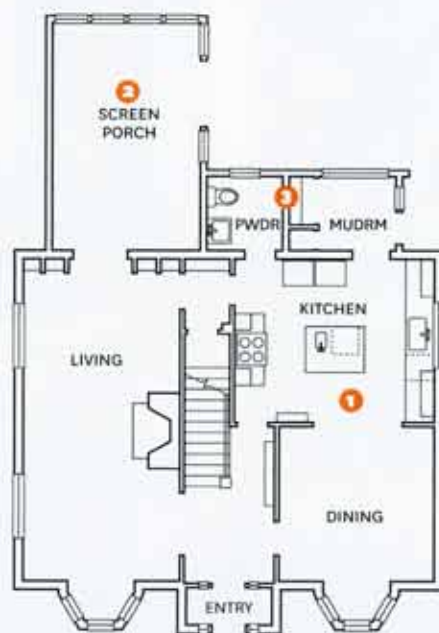


MAIN



UPPER

AFTER



MAIN



UPPER

what they did

1 The original kitchen was inefficient and cut off from surrounding rooms. Philip and Mark streamlined the layout by repositioning the range and adding an island. They also expanded a doorway between the kitchen and dining room to enhance flow and ease entertaining.

2 A generous screen porch was added at the back of the house. It opens to the living room and offers a bridge between indoors and out.

3 The owners converted the home's original mudroom into a much-needed powder room and built a new, larger mudroom adjacent to it.

4 The bedrooms upstairs retained their footprints, but both of the original baths were remodeled.

5 A door now links the master bedroom and the adjacent bath, creating an inviting suite. New access to the master suite at the top of the stairs allowed the owners to remove a redundant hall door and gain wall space in the master bedroom.

6 A new bathroom was added near the top of the stairs to accommodate guests staying in the center bedroom.