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Volume 20, Issue 6

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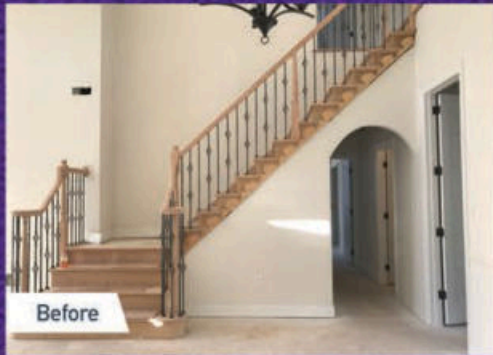
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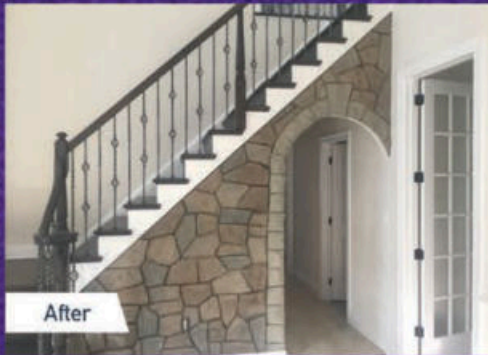
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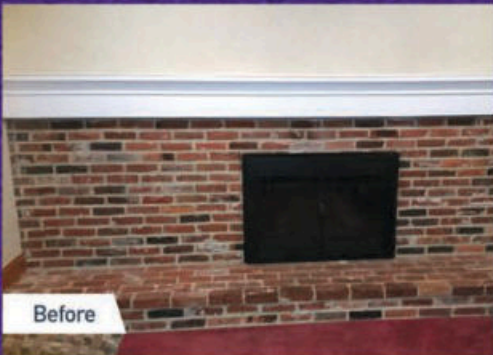
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On the cover:
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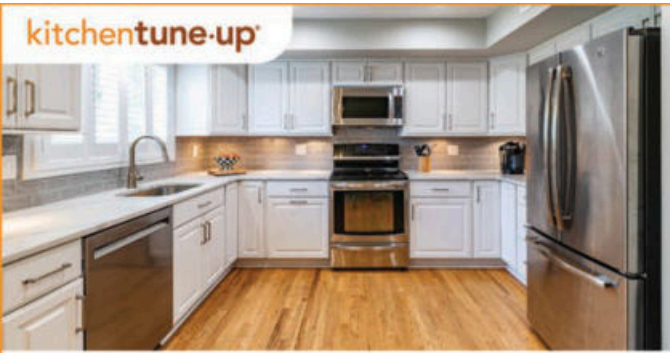
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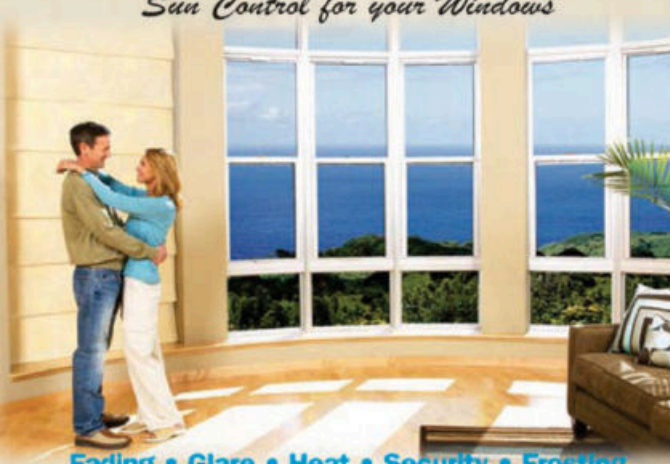
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How does it feel to be recognized among House & Home's Best of Winners?

I am very honored that all of the time and energy spent not only by myself but also my employees has been recognized.

What keeps you motivated every day to do the work you do?

Seventy percent of our crew is family, the other thirty percent is our extended family. I work every day in a pleasant atmosphere where everyone's goal is to keep The Cabinet Shop successful not only now, but also in the future.

What do you find most rewarding about this industry?

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It's quite a compliment to once again be recognized by the community and our clients as a Best of Winner. Most of our business comes from client referrals and repeat business so an award like this is greatly appreciated.

What do you find most rewarding about this industry?

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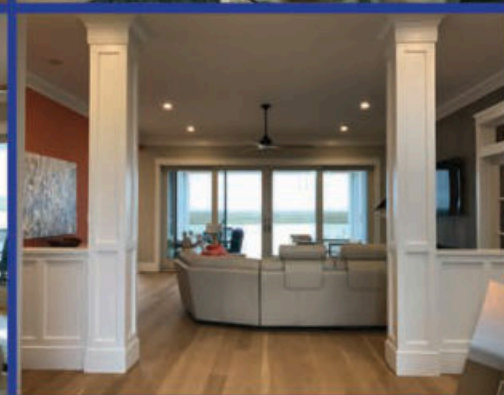
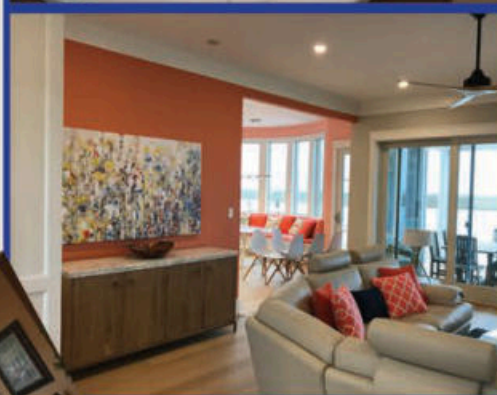
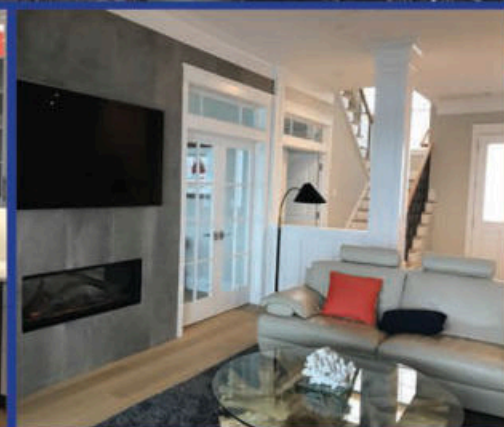
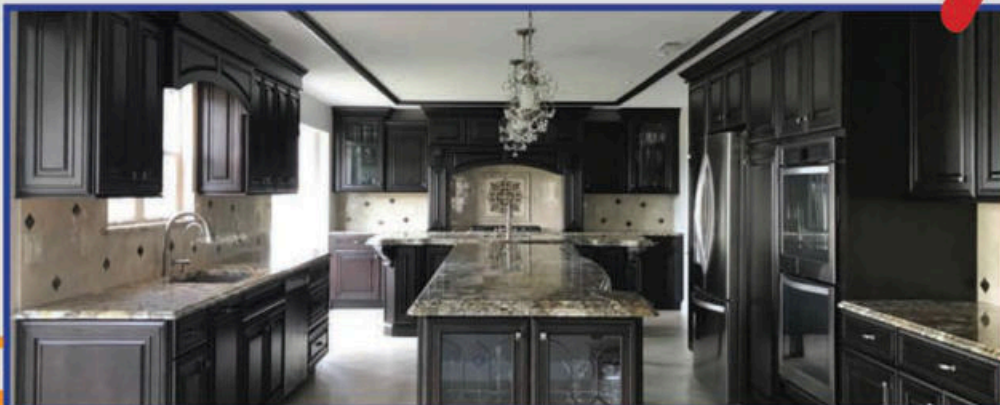
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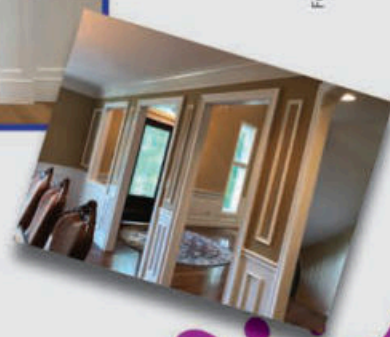


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From

Cluttered to Clean



Image courtesy of ABC Closets



Image courtesy of Garage Craft Interiors



How to get the most use out of the garage by organizing the space or even remodeling it into a livable area.

When it comes to a house, the garage is the biggest area where clutter and disorganization occurs and with most people, they tend to park their cars in the garage, creating a walkway full of clutter into the home.

“Over 90 percent of the people that I work with, they use the garage as the entryway into their house, maybe even 95 percent,” says Paul Greskovich, owner of Garage Craft Interiors.

Closets for Less of Bucks owner Aaron Lewis agrees with him, making it his goal to help his customers create a clean space that someone will enjoy walking through.

“Today most people enter and leave through their garages, not through their front door,” says Lewis. “And because of that, they want them neat and clean, so it doesn’t look like a garage because they are using it as their entrance way now.”

House & Home spoke with local experts on ways to transform your garage into an organized, functional space.

Saying goodbye

The first step to any garage makeover is to sort through the clutter, whether that is by making donation boxes or relocating it.

“The first thing is the hardest to do, which is pretty much empty the garage and make decisions on everything you touch whether it’s worth keeping or not worth keeping,” says Greskovich. “If you haven’t touched it in a year and a half to two years, throw it away, give it away, move on.”

If a person wants functionality out of their garage they need to clean it out, and although that sounds easy it can be extremely hard. That’s why Anthony Brinn, owner of ABC Closets, suggests doing it in multiple steps not only to help with the emotional attachment but to save money as well.

“We have found that quite a few customers start with just organizing one section of the garage at a time. This is not only cost effective but aids in figuring out what the storage needs actually are,” Brinn says.

By SYDNEY KERELLO



Image courtesy of Garage Craft Interiors



Image courtesy of Gehman Design Remodeling

Cluttered to Clean

“The process of doing the whole garage at once can be daunting to most, so scaling it down to one wall at a time or one section can be a great solution.”

Organizing the chaos

Every person has a different need when it comes to garage storage. Whether it's lawn equipment, kids toys, bikes or even shoes, there is a way to organize it all. Everything needs a place whether it's in a cabinet, overhead storage or on a slotwall. All of these organization methods help to lift everything off the floor creating more space for cars and walkways.

“We install cabinets and garage organizers for people who want to get their garage cleaned up and organized, and we provide a slotwall or mighty wall to hang items; it's a great way to add storage to your home and get everything organized,” says Reid Murray of Floorguard. “We measure out and fit the cabinets to the space to make sure the garage is well designed and the cabinets and slotwall work well together to meet the storage and organization needs of the family.”

Although it has various names, a slotwall (sometimes called slat-wall) or craft wall, is designed with grooves in it that attach to

brackets that are able to move throughout the grooves allowing for lawn tools, bikes and baskets to be placed on the wall.

The slotwall is a great way to organize items but it doesn't hide them from plain view. Which is why adding cabinets, workbenches and even a high lift in the garage makes the area appear cleaner.

A high lift or heavy lift is a 4-by-4 platform with an awning crank that allows you to bring it down to waist level so you can place boxes on it and then you can crank it back to the ceiling where it will be safely stored above.

Another storage option that people tend to use is installing cabinets into their garage. The cabinets can either be brand new or they can be part of a kitchen remodel where instead of getting rid of older cabinets they can be reinstalled in the garage.

“I would say that a lot of times the garage organization projects that we work on are the result of a kitchen project,” Dennis Gehman, MCR, owner of Gehman Design Remodeling, says. “So they now have a new kitchen and the cabinets they had in the kitchen are generally not worn out and so they get repurposed and installed in the garage.”

Considering the garage is one of the main entryways into the home, there can be clutter when it comes to shoe storage, and a lot of times regular cabinets don't create a clean storage for those items. Which is why installing a shoe pantry allows for easier organization in the garage.

“I do shoe pantries too so inside a 36-inch wide pantry, you can have at least 24-27 cubbies inside the pantry to hold your shoes so you don't have to take them into the house,” says Greskovich.

Making it livable

While organizing your garage creates a lot of space, sometimes it's not enough when you have a full house. Which is why transforming the garage into a mudroom, laundry room or even an in-law suite can be essential to your renovation.

When deciding to remodel the



“

There are times that we have finished the existing garage into a living space and then we make an addition or add a detached garage so that they still have garage space.”

— DENNIS GEHMAN, MCR, owner of Gehman Design Remodeling



garage, it is important to consider the amount of space that you would need, such as keeping some space for a car or just to transform the entire area.

“There are times that we have finished the existing garage into a living space and then we make an addition or add a detached garage so that they still have garage space,” says Gehman.

When renovating the garage into a living area, there is a lot to consider such as installation, dry-wall, flooring, running heat and air conditioning throughout the room and how to build a room when the garage door is in the way.

“Typically we take out [the garage door] and build the wall and then on the inside we frame across it and from the outside it just looks like it was a garage,” Gehman says. “But we certainly disable it so someone couldn't come along and open it.”

Sometimes you just need the space when guests are over. Adding small adjustments allows you to easily transform the space into a livable area and then back into a garage.

“I've made it into a man cave as well, where you put a big screen TV and fridges and ice makers, so that on game day, everyone is in the garage enjoying it,” Greskovich says. “Then you can clean it up and it's right back to being a garage. It works quite nicely.”

Flooring that wows

One of the biggest factors to consider when redoing your garage is the flooring.

“One of the things in garages, especially if they are going to be keeping vehicles in there but they want storage is creating a nice-looking floor,” says Gehman. “That can be as basic as giving the floor



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Cluttered to Clean

a good cleaning and then painting it, to putting some epoxy coating on.”

When it comes to flooring there is a lot of personality that can be displayed, either with parking pads, checkerboards or just a clean new shine with an epoxy or race deck finish.

“Epoxy is a polymer resin that is applied to concrete and it provides a hard durable clean surface for everyday use,” Murray says. “Concrete, it stains, it’s porous, it’s dirty and it creates dust of its own and it’s almost impossible to actually clean, so when you put an epoxy coating on that you get a waterproof, hard, durable, beautiful color finish on the floor so that the garage is clean and can stay clean.”

Epoxy flooring is offered in a variety of colors in imitation granite or stone. Race deck flooring is

made out of PVC plastic flooring that is interlocking with a flow grid underneath to allow for easier water and air flow for moisture to evaporate quickly. This type of flooring is more rugged looking and comes in checkered patterns or neutral tones.

“The real sizzle is when you do the floor because you can make it very laid back or you can put a lot of personality into it, you can do parking pads with checkerboards or you can do a very homogeneous look with epoxy floors so it’s very handsome but it’s a little more muted,” says Greskovich. “The nice thing about the floors is that it’s easy to clean and they last forever.”

The little things

After all of the major renovations and organization is over, the last step is making final touches that will make the room pop—whether that is adding a fresh coat of paint to the walls or adding new lighting.

“The surface mount LEDs that I do are 4-feet-by-1-foot wide, and

they have two rows of 50 watt LEDs and they really pop when you turn them on,” Greskovich says. “It’s a really nice addition when you add them to a space, typically a garage with real high ceilings.”

Another small addition that will increase your garage design is adding a wrap to the columns so your car doors won’t get damaged.

“Something so simple as putting a specialized wrap on the lally columns in the garage so when you open your car doors you are not going to damage your cars,” says Greskovich. “It’s a premium rubber with ripstop nylon, it’s a really nice product.”

But the best way to spruce up the garage is by simply adding a new garage door.

“People often talk about carriage house doors, put some windows in it and some hardware,” says Gehman. “Another thing is that a new door is going to give you better insulating values so that your garage is going to stay more comfortable.” **H&H**



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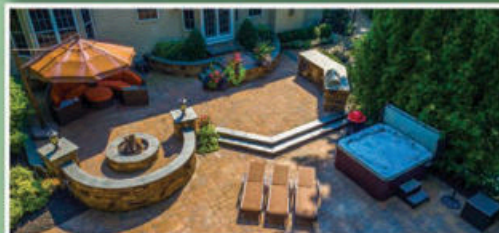
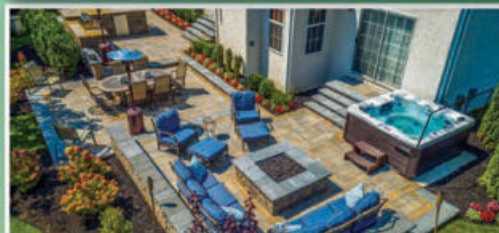
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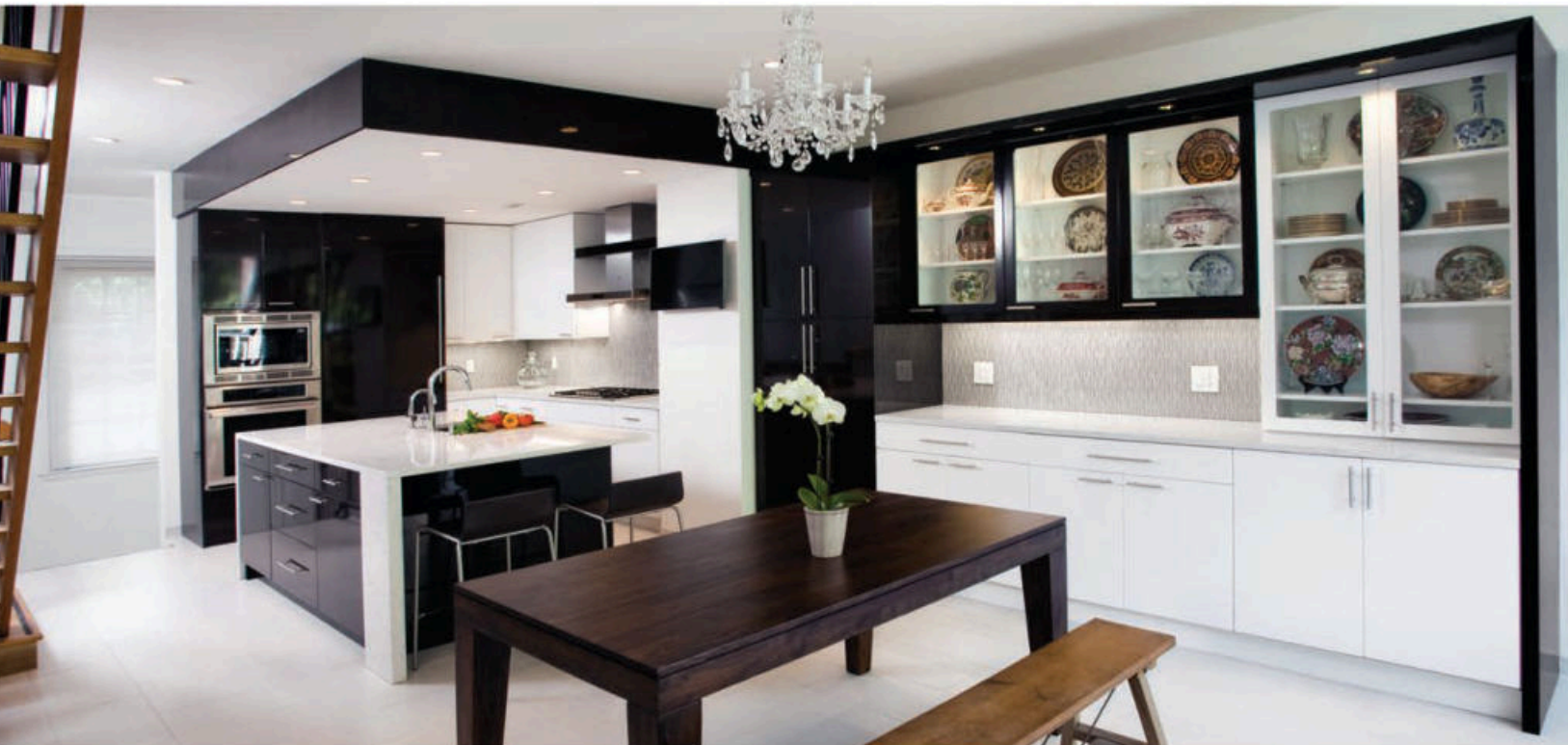
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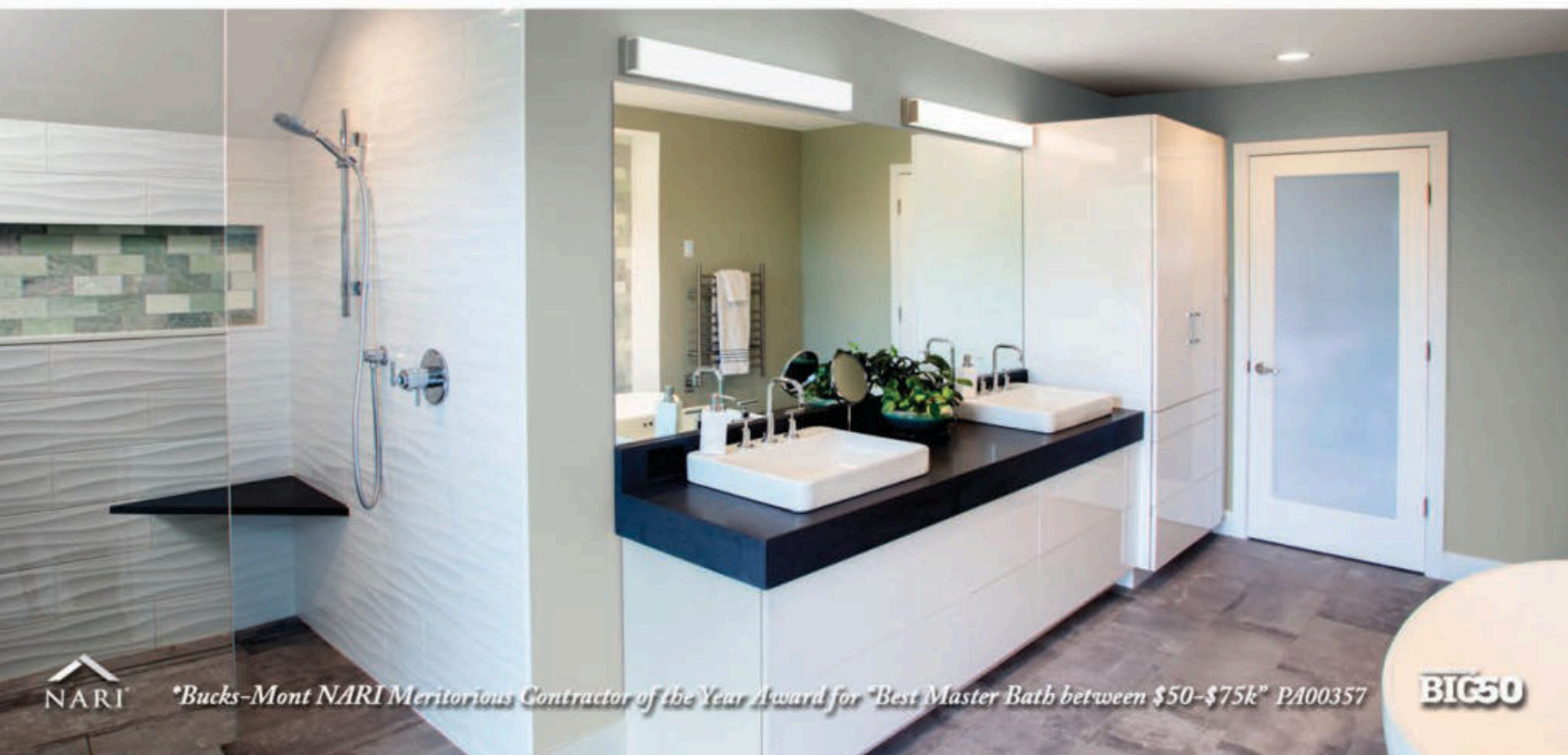
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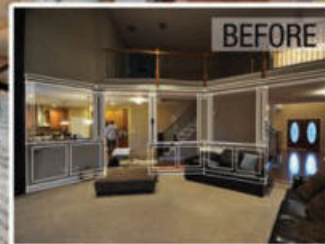
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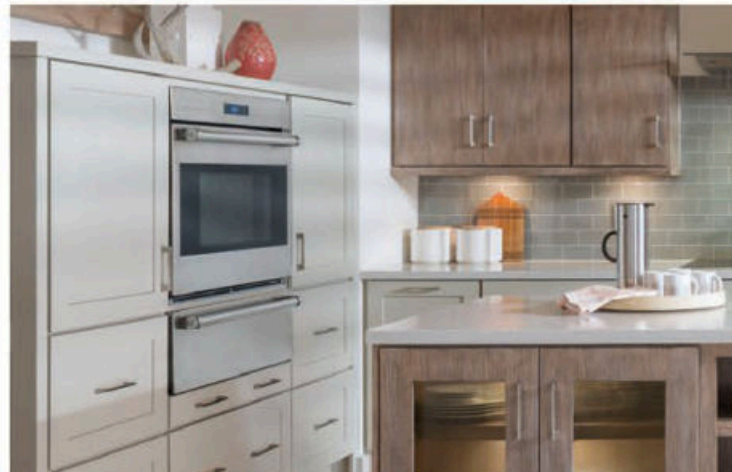
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TAKING THE PLUNGE

Before enjoying a new pool, homeowners have to plan it out.

by **Liz Hunter**

Last summer may feel like a distant memory now that it's winter, which can make it difficult to remember how badly you wished you had a pool in the backyard. But when those 90-plus-degree days hit and the kids were looking for a way to cool off—and so were you—that pool you've always dreamed about wasn't there. If you promised 2020 would be the year, then this is the time to make those calls and get the ball rolling in order to be ready for summer.

Before any holes are dug, a homeowner needs to talk to their family to find out what kind of pool works best for them and their swimming needs. Is the pool to entertain? Is it for exercise? Is it for the children to play in on hot summer days?

And don't forget the stuff that's not so fun—like township requirements, setback distance codes, engineering requirements and impervious cover percentages—all necessary for building a pool that is in compliance. All the more reason to make some calls in January and February.

"Zoning can be different in

each town, nothing is uniform when it comes to the permitting process for installing a pool," says Dominic DiCesare, general manager of Blue Haven Pools & Spas by Calvitti. "A topographical survey and stormwater plan may be necessary, and if we've had snowy weather, engineers can't get out to do that, which prolongs the process. If you want a pool by June, you can still get on the schedule for most companies, but they can't start building without a permit."

As you begin to research and make calls to local pool companies—don't forget to ask friends



and family for recommendations—be sure to ask about the project management aspect of the work, says John Fossett, project manager at Turpin Landscape Design/Build.

“You want to make sure you know who is handling everything—is it one company or do they have subcontractors?” he says. “We noticed a lot of [pool] companies were subbing out the work—from the pool shell to

the hardscaping and landscaping—and we pride ourselves on project management. This way the customer doesn’t need to deal with multiple people in the process.”

Be sure the company has trained pool designers who can create a plan that will incorporate the overall backyard, including existing or future landscaping. Experts say to steer clear of companies that offer a blanket price

for a pool, since there is no way of knowing what obstacles or scenarios could arise over the course of the project.

Adding a pool to the property is a sizable investment, and DiCesare says you get what you pay for. “It’s like car shopping—every car will get you where you need to go, but how do you want to get there?”

Most in-ground pools you see are fiberglass, concrete (gunite)

PROJECT TIP:

Be sure the company has trained pool designers who can create a plan that will incorporate the overall backyard, including existing or future landscaping. Experts say to steer clear of companies that offer a blanket price for a pool, since there is no way of knowing what obstacles or scenarios could arise over the course of the project.

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or vinyl liner. “Fiberglass and vinyl are less expensive, but you have fewer options for shapes and materials,” says Peter Fineberg, owner of Ted’s Pools. “Gunite pools are the most expensive and have more customization options and better ability to fit into any yard.”

Fiberglass can be installed quickly, with a basic pool done in two days, says Fossett. “A concrete pool on the other hand is about six weeks to install,” he says.

While digging a hole and dropping this type of pool into the ground is definitely easy construction-wise, DiCesare says all of those layers of fiberglass sit in the ground with moisture causing it to penetrate through the layers of fiberglass where it can get blistering. “Fiberglass is not a self-supporting structure, it has some mold to form but there is no real structure to it,” DiCesare adds. “You need to have water pressure and ground pressure that holds it together.

If for some reason the pool is empty for a period of time, it could implode and if the ground fails or gives out, it could explode. There are a lot of things that you need to hold that pool together in the ground.”

It’s also hard to add features to a fiberglass pool, and if it needs to be renovated, it would likely be ripped out completely. “In the long run, I think homeowners are better off with gunite, because in 15 or 20 years, it can be renovated and made to look brand new. The value will be there,” he says.

Vinyl pools are less expensive than gunite and can provide some variety in shapes. The inside is soft, which can be an advantage for kids using the pool, but they also have the thinnest barrier between the water and outside environment.

Other considerations to make regarding the pool include features and water quality. “There are features such as water purification systems that basically

Image courtesy of Blue Haven Pools & Spas by Calvitti




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give you the quality of bottled drinking water in your swimming pool,” DiCesare says. “We can also add a salt generator to that system so that you are basically swimming in the purest water possible. You’re looking to have the cleanest pool water possible because that’s what makes it refreshing; when it is sparkling and crystal clear and you don’t feel like you are swimming in a lot of chemicals.”

Fossett adds that it’s a common myth that saltwater pools don’t use chlorine—the salt is actually converted into chlorine.

Currently, saltwater is by far the sanitizer of choice, but Fineberg highlights other options such as ultra-violet (UV) purification systems, which destroy bacteria without chemical side effects; Ozone, another chemical-free alternative that is environmentally friendly; and bromine, which doesn’t have the strong smell of chlorine and is especially good for spas because of its stability in high water temperatures.



In the end it all comes down to personal preference.

All of the experts say to do your due diligence and investigate your township’s regulations. DiCesare says some townships are even regulating how much decking can go around a pool.

“Choose your pool builder

very carefully,” says Fineberg.

“It’s a large expense and if done incorrectly, you can have ongoing issues. We get numerous calls every year from homeowners who trusted a pool builder to build a dream pool for their family but it turned into a nightmare that requires thousands of dollars to fix.” **H&H**



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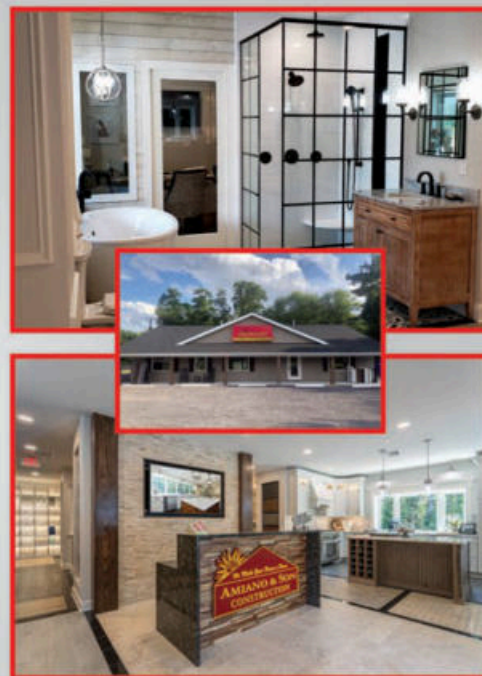
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CHOOSING YOUR



surface

The surface material for your outdoor living project can be a big decision.

AS YOU BEGIN THINKING AHEAD ABOUT THE SPRING 2020 SEASON, you might be starting to consider which surface material could work best for your outdoor living space. While you love the fact that you have options, you may have no idea how to narrow down the selection. How do the materials differ and what will work best for your space?

We spoke with some of the area's surface experts and asked them to fill us in on the different choices on the market today.

CONSIDERING HARDSCAPING

If it's a patio that you're considering, then you might be thinking about your different hardscaping options. In particular, you might be deciding between pavers or stamped concrete. Both can ultimately be good options for your home. But as with any choice, there are some pros and cons to consider.

We asked two professionals—one offering pavers and one offering stamped concrete—to weigh in on these options.

WHY PAVERS?

Pavers can be a creative choice for your hardscaping project. They are offered in a wide variety of colors and styles and can even be mixed on a job in order to give the finished project a much richer look, says John Leinen, hardscape manager for NJ Gravel & Sand.

Leinen says that pavers are also easier to deal with if a problem arises.

BY LINDSEY GETZ

Photo courtesy of Amazing Decks

CHOOSING YOUR surface

and replaced and you are back in business,” adds Leinen, who says that you don’t have such an easy “fix” with concrete.

“Poured or stamped concrete has expansion joints to allow for the freeze/thaw cycle,” explains Leinen. “These joints are either saw cut into the surface or a cushioned material is installed at the time of installation. These joints can be unsightly and often the surface cracks in areas other than where these joints are placed. Once the surface chips or cracks, it is there for the life of that surface.”

WHY STAMPED CONCRETE?

Stamped concrete has become increasingly popular due to its ability to mimic other hardscape materials like flagstone, block or brick, while being more cost effective. According to Chris McMahon, president and CEO of Architectural Concrete Design (ACD), it’s also “beautiful, durable and can come in any color or texture to complement the home.”

McMahon says that as much as people love materials like pavers or brick, they can lack in durability.

“They don’t build bridges out of paver or bricks,” he says. “Concrete is used in structures of all kinds for its durability and its ability to take on any form.”

As the material has become increasingly popular, there have been more companies offering it—but you need to be careful. If choosing a stamped concrete contractor, McMahon says to make sure that they are ACI (American Concrete Institute) certified and

STAMPED CONCRETE HAS THE EDGE IN DURABILITY OVER BRICKS AND PAVERS. THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT CONCRETE IS NORMALLY USED AS A STRUCTURAL MATERIAL.

have completed multiple projects that you can actually visit to see. In particular, says McMahon, commercial or public works jobs take a lot of knowledge to build so a company with this type of work under its belt is definitely going to be able to handle a residential job.

“Anybody can buy stamps on the internet but stamped concrete is a process that takes years to hone in and architects know this,” says McMahon. “They won’t allow inexperienced contractors to work on their projects.”

REPAIRING AN EXISTING PATIO

Sometimes homeowners have an existing patio and they’re just looking for repairs. This is an option as well. As Leinen mentions, pavers can easily be lifted up and replaced if they become cracked. But if you have a poured concrete patio or pool deck and it’s beginning to sink, you might be wondering what you can do.

“If the homeowner has a problem with their concrete sinking, they’ll know it—they’ll have puddles and water that’s not draining or maybe they’ll have trip and fall hazards,” says Brian Quinn, owner of BQ Basements & Concrete Repair. “Most of the time unlevel concrete, or sinking, is caused by erosion or bad backfill when the foundation was poured. But we have a clean, fast, easy and affordable solution to level sinking slabs.”

Quinn says that PolyLevel concrete lifting uses polyurethane

They can be easily repaired.

“If a problem should occur on a paving stone surface, the paving stone or stones can be removed

foam to lift the sinking slab back into place.

“The crews come out and drill 5/8-inch holes which they inject with the foam,” Quinn explains. “They are in and out in less than an hour and it is a fraction of the cost of replacing your hard surface. It’s a great option for anyone who is experiencing this problem but doesn’t want to go through the cost and the headache of jack-hammering it out and replacing it all.”

CHOOSING A DECK

Of course, it might not be a patio that you’re interested in but a deck, instead—or at least want to learn more about this option. This can be another great choice as an outdoor living space.

“My goal is to design the best outdoor living space that the homeowners’ budget allows,” says Sharon Shaw, outdoor living designer at Amazing Decks.

Shaw says that oftentimes, a combination of both a deck and a patio is the best possible option for homeowners.

“Deck space does a great job expanding the living space of the house by bringing the inside to the outdoors,” she says. “And a patio does a great job marrying the deck space to the landscaping of the backyard. So, in my opinion, the best option is to have a



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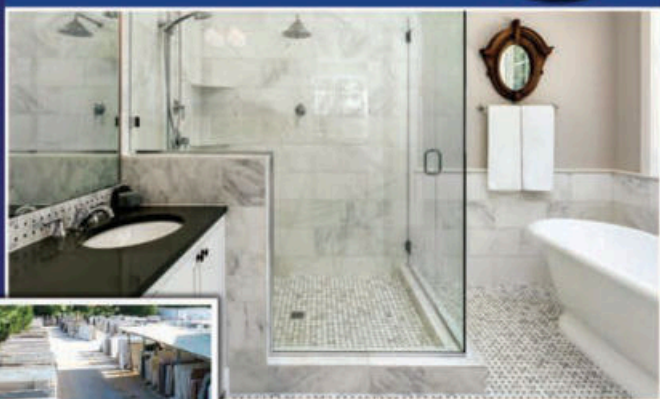
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combination of a deck and a patio.”

Shaw says that as a general rule of thumb, if the back patio door is less than 16 inches off the ground, a patio should be installed. Installing a deck with low clearance would require a portion of the framing lumber to be buried underground. This is not the best idea as the wood will eventually rot, Shaw explains.

“On the other hand, if your patio door is nine feet off the ground as part of a walkout basement, a larger deck is necessary,” she adds. “There is no good way to marry the deck to the ground level so the majority of your backyard living space will be on your deck.”

Shaw says that maintenance for a deck can be easy.

“Just wash it like you would wash your car,” she says. “It requires a bucket of water with a small squirt of dish soap and a scrub brush and you’re good to go. But a patio can be a little bit more difficult requiring power washing and sealing. This is usually best done by a professional.”

CHOOSING THE BEST

In the end, the choice is yours. But no matter which option you choose, you definitely want to make sure that you select a company that is qualified for the job and will get it done right.

“With outdoor living spaces becoming more popular, it is almost a necessity to have a

well-designed backyard,” says Shaw. “Just make sure you do it right the first time. Installing a patio requires the removal of six to eight inches of top soil and the installation of several tons of aggregate. If it is done wrong, all of that will have to be removed at great expense. In addition, decking and railing materials can be a significant investment. Choose products that have been time tested and backed by reputable companies. A backyard remodel can be very disruptive to a homeowner’s routine so make sure you choose the right company with qualified designers and installers.” **H&H**



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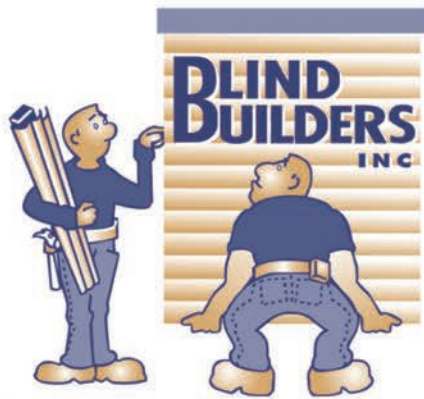
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Keep Up With the Times

LOCAL PROFESSIONALS SHARE THE TRENDS TO LOOK FOR IN KITCHEN AND BATH DESIGN IN 2020.

BY MATT COSENTINO

As we enter a new year—and a new decade to boot—now is the perfect time for many of us to seek a fresh start. Home décor is certainly a logical place to begin, and that usually means the kitchen or the bathroom, traditionally the two rooms that make up most remodeling projects. While some who embark on a renovation will have a clear idea in their heads, others need the guidance of a professional to help them determine which fads have come and gone and which have staying power. *House & Home* spoke to several experts to pick their brains about the trends to be on the lookout for in 2020 in kitchen and bath design.



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"We're seeing some natural wood elements integrated into islands for countertops. We're also seeing glass that might be used for countertop extensions or eating levels. Granite is still part of the offering, but granite is one subsection of the countertop market. There's a lot of softer natural stones out there and limestones that are not as busy as granite, and we're using more matte finishes on these stones as well. The matte finishes will tend to absorb light rather than reflect light. We see these matte finishes in cabinetry, paints or three-dimensional laminates, and we're seeing the same thing in countertops. It's basically a low-sheen finish on a lot of materials throughout a kitchen. ... Overall, it's a much simpler presentation; a lighter presentation. Nothing heavy, nothing antique. We see a very simple, clean, fresh, technology-based project in the end."

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"One of the biggest trends we're dealing with right now is the white countertops and white cabinetry, but what we're sensing and what we're getting a feel for is some of the warmer tones coming back into play. Grays are still in, but we're starting to notice more of the earthy tones being introduced back into the color palettes. A lot of things that would typically be considered dated, such as gold handles, are starting to come back with different kinds of gold—the pewter finishes and things like that. People are choosing that for their trimming and finishing items as well. [For countertops], quartz is still very popular, but being that we're seeing a little bit of an end to the trend in the whites, natural stones like marble are very hot right now, as well as some of the granites. [Marble] is not for every market, but in our market we have marble coming in and out of the yard like you wouldn't believe. Compared to engineered quartz, marble has a similar look. The quartz is going to offer a little more ease in care and maintenance, but with all of the progressions they've made with sealers and different finishes, there is a strength in the longevity of a marble kitchen. If you don't have heavy cooking tolerances or young children and the kitchen is going to be used more lightly, the beauty of the marble kitchen is a good direction to go in."

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"A lot of people are getting rid of their dining room and expanding their kitchen, and then creating huge islands for entertainment spaces as well as a breakfast area. Sometimes people just want an island but no seating; other times they want to incorporate a sitting area with an edge and bar stools underneath. A lot of people with kids find the breakfast area to be very useful during the mornings. As far as the trends with colors, gray has obviously been really popular the last couple of years; I read that gray was the color of the decade. But now it seems like black is coming back, and we've actually had a few clients who wanted to do black cabinetry. Two-tone cabinetry is also pretty big right now. For example, we recently did a project with cream-colored cabinetry with a dark chestnut [finish] for the island. It gives dimension to the kitchen and moves your eyes around to the different colors, making the cabinetry or the island pop a little more. Other standouts include the farmhouse sink, which everybody seems to be incorporating into their space because it gives them more room and it also adds a little bit of a pop, which you don't normally see with a sink."

"For the bathroom, the No. 1 trend is definitely taking out the garden tubs. Nobody really wants that anymore; everybody wants large showers with glass shower doors and tile. Everybody is looking for a luxurious feel in their bathroom, but at the same time they want it to be functional. [Multiple showerheads] and rain showerheads are very popular. Another trend for both bathrooms and kitchens that not a lot of people are aware of is the LVT flooring. We have had a bunch of clients who didn't want tile on the bathroom floor because of the maintenance with the grout. A good option is luxury vinyl tile, which is a laminate flooring that gives you the look of hardwood or tile with easy maintenance. You can just go over it with something like a Swiffer. That's been huge with our remodels."

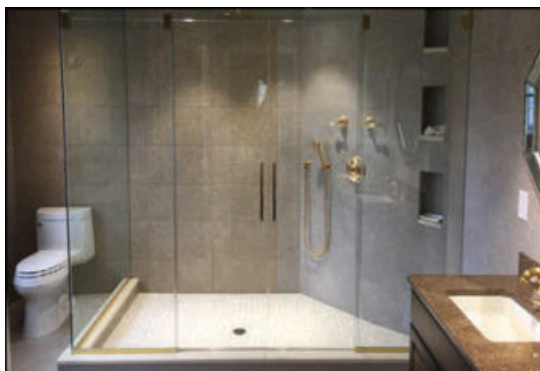
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"I do not see the white color trends slowing down in 2020. What I do expect are several color adjustments between white and gray or cream tones. We are still designing with white cabinets but have seen new colors coming that are less bright, more subtle tones to keep the light feel without being so stark in contrast to traditional colors. Countertops are going quartz ... due to the ability to make a quartz countertop any color versus granite, which is only made from minerals in the earth and that color palette has been maximized. The quartz companies are starting with a basic white background or a main color and changing the 'veining' inside the stone to various colors of gray, brown and blue, etc., to truly blend the counter with a floor or backsplash tile to bring cohesiveness to the space."

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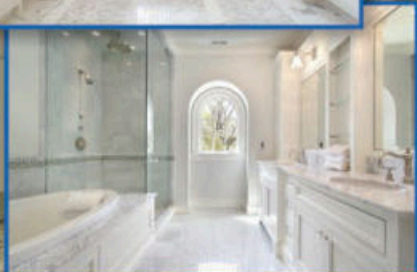


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And because guests would be frequenting the home, the second floor was designated as the immediate family's area, with a bedroom for each child plus master suite. On the lower level, the bunk room and guest room are perfect for families visiting with children. In anticipation of wet bathing suits making their way onto the furniture, all fabrics were treated to repel stains. The final result is an up-scale and updated take on coastal casual that will offer this family years of relaxation and enjoyment.



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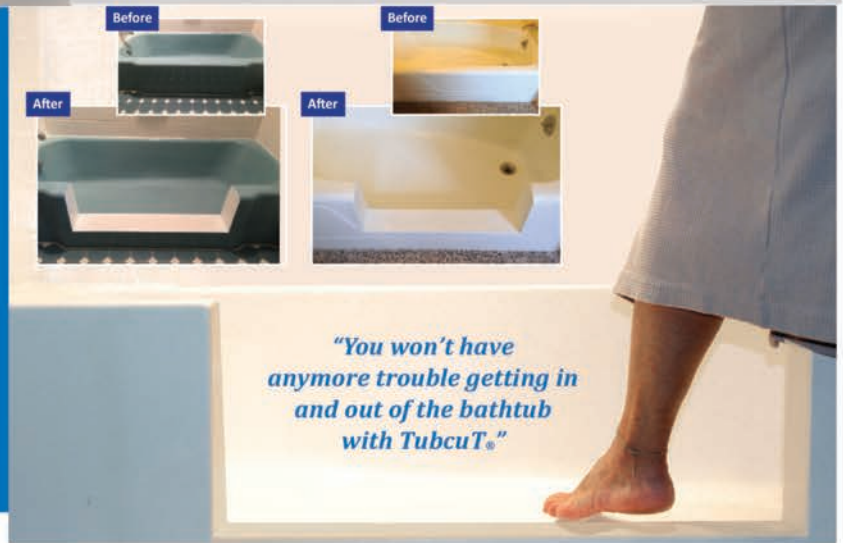
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