



Before & After: Bath

Same space, fresh look

Easy-access drawers and eye-level cabinet shelves, plus new fixtures and surfaces, add up to a bath that suits users of all ages

BY SUZANNE ZENKEL

It's not easy to please everyone, even in the same family. But that's exactly what designer Katie Davis and pro organizer Meg Markland were looking to do when remodeling the hall bath in the Houston ranch that Meg shares with her husband, Matt, and son, Harry. Located between the 6-year-old's bedroom and a guest room, the bath needed to appeal to a young boy as well as overnight visitors—often Harry's grandparents. But the space was drab and short on amenities.

So to start, Davis added storage and convenience by replacing a nearly 9-foot-wide vanity cabinet with a narrower one packed with drawers and topped with easy-care quartz, then fit in a ceiling-high linen cabinet. She overhauled the tub/shower with updated fixtures, fittings, and features, including a handshower and a soap niche. For the walls, Davis suggested a subtle but lively wallpaper, and shower tile in Harry's favorite color, forest green. "I wanted a fun bathroom that Harry can grow into and that would be adult enough for guests," Meg says.

Mission accomplished.



BEFORE The vanity took up an entire wall; searching its cabinets meant a lot of bending and reaching. Finishes were bland.

↑ Reducing the span of the new white oak vanity allows for a linen cabinet above a pull-out hamper. Refreshing blue-and-white wallpaper and elongated hex tile on the floor add a bright, updated look.

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Viewed in one of the mirrors, the new tub/shower is lined with dark-green tile that has a handmade look. The tiled niche's shelf was cut from the vanity top's slab.



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Wallpaper wraps the room in a soft blue-and-white pattern. A white oak display shelf and a woven blind add texture.



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The new 78-inch vanity holds two rectangular sinks spaced 20 inches apart—Davis likes double vanities to be at least 6 feet, with at least a foot of space between basins. The white quartz top was a remnant found at a stone yard.

after		FLOOR PLAN	
7' 5"		<p>Shifting the sinks allowed for vertical storage, and opting for all-new finishes makes the 67-square-foot shared bath more appealing to everyone who uses it.</p> <p>1. Installed a narrower, 78-inch vanity with two sinks and eight working drawers, plus a pair of articulating sconces above the mirrors.</p>	<p>2. Added a 30-inch-wide cabinet with shelves for towels and a lazy Susan for bottles and jars, and a pull-out hamper underneath.</p> <p>3. Refreshed the floor with white ceramic tile in an elongated hex shape.</p> <p>4. Replaced louvered shutters with a light-filtering shade made of natural fibers, and put in two recessed</p>
9'		<p>lights between the tub and vanity.</p> <p>5. Built in a custom wood display shelf above the toilet.</p> <p>6. Overhauled the tub/shower alcove with a more modern soaker, upgraded tile, a custom niche, and fittings that now include a handshower wand.</p>	<p>FLOOR PLAN: IAN WORPOLE</p>

SPEND-SMARTER TIPS FOR BATHS

“You want to invest in good plumbing fixtures that won’t break down the line, but you can add a lot of pop with other elements for not a lot of money,” says designer Davis. Here, a few of her budget-savvy secrets

LOOK FOR LIGHT FIXTURES WITH FLAIR.

“Unexpected choices can add interest, like the articulating sconces used here. Brass finishes can also punch up a simple white bath, and light fixtures are a great way to introduce them. There’s no need to sacrifice style for savings, because there are lots of options at all price points.”

A WELL-PRICED CERAMIC TILE CAN WORK WONDERS.

“We love a basic subway tile, and there are so many great new color options and shapes to spice it up. In this bath, we used a white floor tile with an elongated hex shape that created a fun pattern on its own, so we didn’t have to splurge on an intricate custom design.”

HARDWARE IS ANOTHER GOOD PLACE TO SAVE.

“Hardware doesn’t have to be pricey—and it’s easy to change out later if you decide you want to upgrade. My go-to sources are Top Knobs (topknobsdecor.com) and Emtek (emtek.com). You can also save by sticking to knobs only, as they are generally less expensive than pulls.”



↑ The white oak display shelf in the toilet alcove sits on a cleat made of 1/4-inch wood strips. Potted plants are a low-cost way to soften a bath’s hard surfaces and invite the outdoors in.

GET THE LOOK

Want to upgrade your bath without getting soaked? Here are some off-the-shelf design finds inspired by these pages

1. Library-style light / MATTEO LIGHTING

The Blink articulating wall sconce adds unexpected style in a bath, directing light right where you want it. In white (or black), \$227; lightology.com

2. Textured green tile / PORTMORE

With variegated tones and an undulating glazed surface, these 3-by-8-inch ceramic tiles have a handcrafted appeal. \$5.95 per square foot; tilebar.com

3. Printed wallpaper / HYGGE & WEST

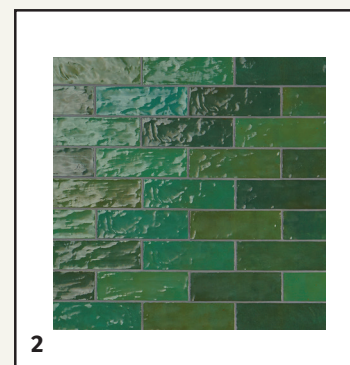
Limited wall space makes a bath ideal for a splurge wall covering, like this soft blue geometric. Just make sure it can stand up to a humid environment, as this coated paper can. \$175 per roll; hyggeandwest.com

4. Wood vanity / POTTERY BARN

This 68-inch-wide double vanity, with a gray-wash finish, offers ample interior and shelf storage. It comes with a Carrara marble countertop and two rectangular sinks; complete it with your choice of faucets and knobs. \$3,599; potterybarn.com 🏠



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Extra Photos for the Web



Of the above-the-toilet white oak shelf, storage-minded Meg says, “Originally I thought we could put some cute storage baskets up there, but once I saw it with plants, I liked that much better. So we just use it as a pretty design feature.” Wallpaper: Hygge & West



Sleek white oak drawers with integrated handholds have a matte finish that protects the wood without obscuring its lively grain. The top drawer fronts are fixed to conceal plumbing pipes, but eight deep drawers below offer plenty of storage space. Adjustable sconces provide targeted task light, without casting unflattering shadows. Sconces: Cedar & Moss

[Directory]

BEFORE & AFTER: BATH Same space, fresh look (*pp.* 00–00) Designer: Katie Davis Design, Houston; katedavisdesign.com. Professional organizer: Meg Markland; neatbymeg.com. Contractor and cabinetmaker: Hugo Berrios, HB Contracting, Houston; 713-689-0147. Vanity: custom. Paint (trim, linen cabinet, and ceiling): Simply White; benjaminmoore.com. Wallpaper: Palma in Pacific; hyggeandwest.com. Sinks: Verticyl, Kohler; us.kohler.com. Sink faucets: brizo.com. Mirrors: westelm.com. Linen cabinet hardware: Atlas Homewares; build.com. Tub: Underscore; us.kohler.com. Tub-surround tile: bedrosians.com. Showerhead, wand, tub faucet, and fittings: Trinsic; deltafaucet.com. Floor tile: White Picket, and shower-niche tile; flooranddecor.com. Sconces: cedarandmoss.com. Window treatment: theshadestore.com.