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Fresh Start

A home's interior gets an all-new look of casual sophistication

Steve and Lynne Gibson's twin daughters were mere newborns when the couple moved into their house a few years back. Fast-forward and those babies were toddlers on the move. A little house-tweaking was in order.

"We bought the house as people with no children... and then life happened," quips Lynne of their 3-year-olds. "They got so mobile so quickly and then we're noticing all the things that we should have thought about in buying a house. For one thing, you couldn't do a thing in the kitchen and still watch the girls. It was closed off from the living space. And you couldn't expect them to be in the kitchen all the time. That was a huge problem."





PREVIOUS PAGES: This house overlooking the golf course received an interior makeover to match its curbside charm. | Scene from a winter day: Drinks on the back porch with a nice fire behind. | The entryway received a total makeover in stunning wallpaper from Schumacher. A German silver hammered cabinet from Arteriors fits the space well.

THESE PAGES: Blues and neutrals combine for a sophisticated, eclectic look in the living room. Accessories from the couple's travels add to the mix. A wall was removed, opening up the kitchen to the living space. A majority of fabrics are from Mary McDonald for Schumacher. | The breakfast room takes in a marvelous view of the backyard and golf course beyond. | A bright, functional kitchen now looks out to the living room, thanks to removal of a wall. New pantry space, backsplash, countertop granite and other updated features make this space shine. | Fun rustic modern barstools contrast nicely with stark white cabinets in the kitchen.



They consulted with Laran Cone Décor who solved the problem by tearing down that kitchen wall, opening it up to the grand room. It vastly improved the home's look and function. Suddenly life became easier for this family of four. Kitchen, breakfast room and the living room were now an open sanctuary, each room boasting unobstructed views of the backyard and golf course beyond.

Melanie King Designs chimed in with a fresh sweep of textures, fabrics and furnishings to make the place really sing. Lynne and Steve can now enjoy their home without worry that it can't keep pace with two delightfully rambunctious girls.

"We really like the transformation," says Lynne, who has traveled the world with her husband as contractors for ExxonMobil. Originally from Scotland, the Gibsons love to go back and visit family as well. But it's always nice to return to this dwelling.

"It's not cookie-cutter at all," says Steve of the house that has main floor living—entry, study, dining room,



THESE PAGES: Warm walls with a darker ceiling color add drama in the dining room. The table and chairs are from Restoration Hardware; the chandelier is from Arteriors. An unexpected surprise comes in the form of the two art pieces on the wall that are actually sconces. (also Arteriors) | Simple, elegant table settings adorn the dining room table. | A large cabinet by Brownstone, purchased from James Craig Furnishings, holds a collection of accessories the couple has acquired from world travels.

living room, kitchen, breakfast and master bedroom suite — on the second level. The effect is charming, like a home in the trees.

And the downstairs is special too with a playroom outfitted with colorful rubber mat flooring where the twins can play to their delight. When they outgrow the space, the floor is simply packed up, revealing beautiful travertine underneath, also done by Laran Cone's crew. The crew also built a wall of cabinets and a massive storage area cleverly obscured behind the millwork.

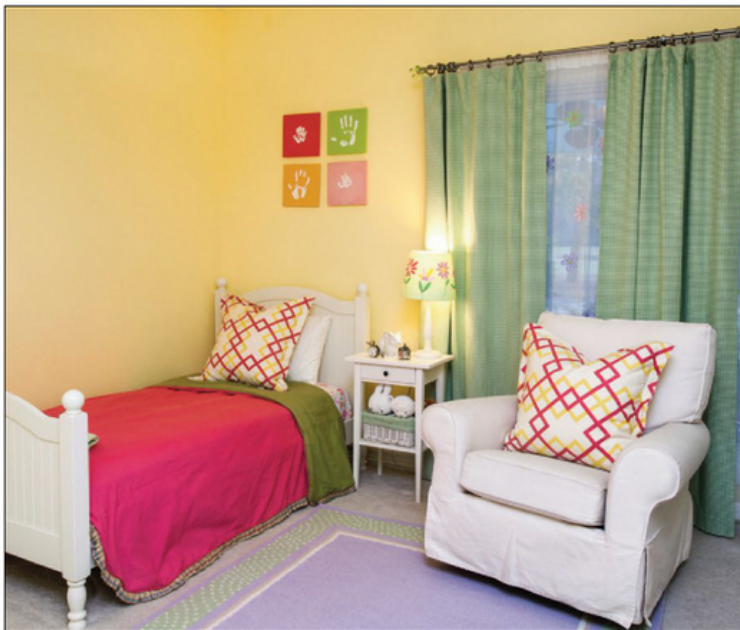
"We love that they have that area to play in," says Lynne, who put the rubber matting all through the downstairs hallway leading to the girls' bedrooms. "For now, it just makes sense. I mean, our girls are on the move, upstairs and downstairs."

And speaking of upstairs, King had to adhere to a certain design creed before taking on interior details.

"The girls run in a huge circle around the living room all the time. Whatever we decided to do in this space, we had to maintain their running circle," Lynne explains, laughing as one of her daughters does laps around the room. "We told Melanie she couldn't disrupt their circle!"

So with that in mind, King worked her magic, using a blue





sectional sofa the couple had as her starting point. That sofa now shares space with a couple of chairs from Kravet and a favorite comfy piece, a neutral chaise from Vanguard that the entire family can sink into for television viewing. A large Brownstone cabinet with glass front from James Craig Furnishings is the perfect vessel for displaying accessories the couple have collected during their travels.

Textiles and draperies incorporate Mary McDonald for Schumacher fabrics that mix a slightly modern vibe with traditional. The result is a warm, casual, yet sophisticated retreat that invites lingering.

"We love the change. And especially love that this whole area is open now where we can see the girls from the kitchen," says Steve. "It didn't make much sense for it to be closed off."

When the Gibsons moved in the kitchen was in great shape, but they took the opportunity to tweak its decor a bit after wall deconstruction. Laran Cone took on this job as well, changing out countertop granite, the sink and backsplash among other features. The new brown granite reveals flecks of blue when the sun shines through. The new kitchen countertops complement the overall color scheme of the adjoining living space that is adorned in blue walls and an overall mix of neutrals and blue fabrics.

At the far end of the kitchen, the breakfast room overlooks the backyard and golf course as well, the perfect space for morning coffee.





THESE PAGES: This bedroom says "all girl" in its bright, fun colors and prints. The twins find plenty to keep them busy in their fun playroom downstairs. Twin 3-year-old girls keep this house humming. Here, mementoes from babyhood grace a bedroom wall. A cleanlined Restoration Hardware bed swathed in bedding from Serena & Lily makes a sophisticated, yet casual statement in the master bedroom.

The entry to this home is quite dramatic with feeder stairs on either side meeting up with a wrought-iron sided staircase that leads to the front door. Once inside, attention is immediately drawn to the foyer and then dining room to the left.

The foyer boasts quite the change, going from yellow painted walls to an updated Schumacher wallpaper print. A German silver hammered cabinet from Arteriors adds to this update.

And the dining room is a real showstopper with warm light cocoa walls and a darker ceiling that add drama to the space. Rustic modern is the theme here, a look the Gibsons enjoy. A table and chairs from Restoration Hardware mingle here with an eclectic chandelier from Arteriors hanging overhead. Two unusual pieces of artwork are deceptive in

purpose. They are actually sconces that put out a subtle light perfect for this space.

A study located across the hall from the dining room is convenient for the couple on occasions when they work from home. Also rounding out the upstairs is the master bedroom, outfitted in a linen Restoration Hardware bed and Serena & Lily bedding. Two Lee Jofa ottomans sit pretty at the foot of the bed.

Especially enjoyable is the large patio that runs the length of the back of the house. "This view is what sold us," Steve says. Also, a porch on the ground floor is a great place for unwinding and enjoying the pool and scenery.

"It turns out it's a pretty good house for us, I think," says Lynne. "The change has been good." ●

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