



TODAY'S EMPHASIS ON *Texture*

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Fine Details Make the Difference

Many traditional estate-style homes from the 80s and 90s boast high-ceilings and soaring windows, but other than that the rooms tend to be underwhelming. Our clients, the Links, dreamed of transforming the appearance of their home's first floor with fine architectural details that would convey elegance, such as premium molding and trim. They envisioned upgrading to include unique features that would create interesting focal points in each room. They also desired a floor plan that would make optimal use of the existing space.

Today as you enter the front door of the Link's home, the sweeping open staircase rising to the second floor catches your eye. It was upgraded with elegantly detailed balusters and refinished oak stairway treads that match the new dark wood flooring throughout the home.

To the right of the entrance, the original office has been transformed into a welcoming library with beautiful floor-

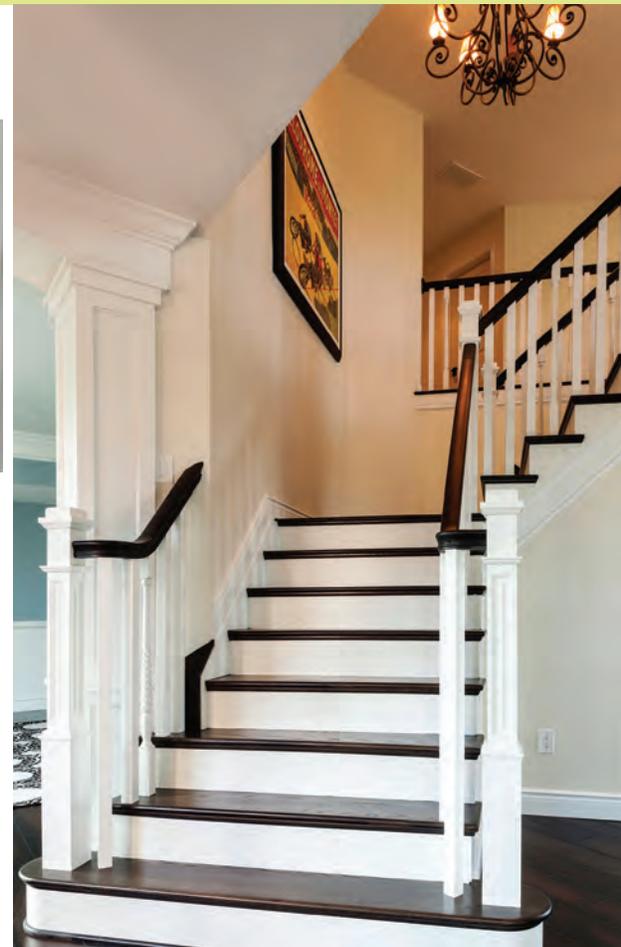


BEFORE

to-ceiling white bookcases. Our client requested that one of the bookcases be designed as a secret passage that opens into his new semi-isolated office. This gives him some privacy and sound control, as well as an engaging conversation piece.

Originally in the living room there were just a few unimpressive spindly columns. We incorporated a series of substantial columns and arches that create a rich look to the space.

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As the contemporary look for interiors has gained prominence in the US, our homes are being transformed by a cleaner, more streamlined design aesthetic. Unlike modern design that homeowners often feel is too cold and minimalistic, contemporary interiors are warm and inviting, without being cluttered. They offer a subtle elegance that is the here and now.

Contemporary interiors typically focus on space, color, shape and lots of natural light. Black, white and neutral colors, as well as geometric shapes, define the space. Accessories in bold colors—even a vase of flowers or a bowl of fresh fruit— can give punch to the room. And with contemporary design, the impact of bare spaces is often just as important as the decorative objects in a room.

Textures are used to bring warmth and interest into the contemporary home. Weaving natural textures into a smooth, sleek interior makes it feel more welcoming. Layering a variety of textures in a space is becoming increasingly popular. Some of the preferred materials selected for this purpose are metal, wood, stone, glass, concrete, leather, fabric and wallpaper, as well as live plants.

Brushed brass and matte black metal finishes are on trend in contemporary interiors, yet stainless steel continues to shine.

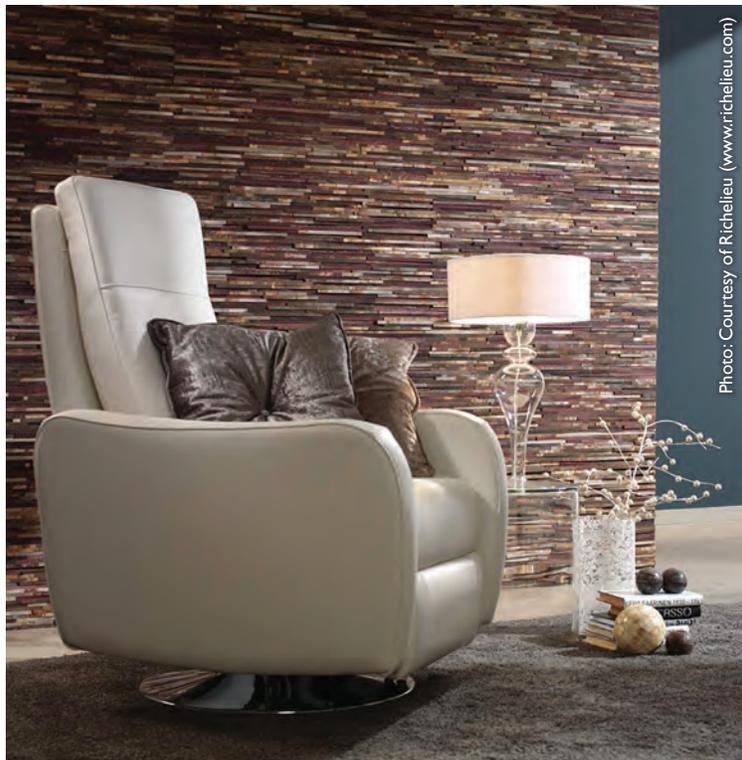


Photo: Courtesy of Richelieu (www.richelieu.com)

Interestingly, wallpaper is making a comeback, especially geometric prints and 3-D sculptural patterns. A living green wall, created from hundreds of live plants, not only offers the benefits of adding bold beautiful color to the home environment, it also provides healthy, clean oxygen.

Another aspect of Green texture that may be used in a contemporary interior involves eco-friendly recycling ideas enlivened with modern colors and innovations. Some of today's most impressive fashion trends emphasize turning recycled and eco-friendly materials into fresh interior design solutions.

On page one, the beautiful recycled leather in a Jumbo Croc pattern gives unique texture to the kitchen island. The leather is from EcoDomo, a company that specializes in sustainable creative applications of leather. EcoDomo also designs wall panels from repurposed leather belts that can be used as whimsical accents, such as the backsplash shown here. Richelieu's novel wood wall panels are made from recycled Oak wood wine barrels from Spain. The combination of the type of wine barrel and the length of aging gives each panel its own artistic flair and color. The walk-in shower by Kohler displays the softening effect that live plants give to rooms with hard surfaces.



Photo: Courtesy of KOHLER (www.kohler.com)



Photo: Courtesy of EcoDomo (www.ecodomo.com)

4 Tips for Open Concept Interiors

The open concept for home interiors has captured the imagination of homeowners across the country. Interior walls that once compartmentalized kitchens from dining and living rooms, making homes feel confining, are coming down everywhere. People appreciate the bright, expansive feeling that is created when natural light can more easily pass through their entire living space. The open concept allows you to blend your cooking, family time and socializing.

If you are planning to bring the open concept into your home, here are four ideas to consider:

1. Consult with a professional remodeler before you start a DIY project by tearing down your walls. Disasters have resulted from

homeowners who have unknowingly removed load-bearing walls. Also, non-load-bearing walls may have wiring, plumbing or HVAC running through them that will need to be rerouted. A professional has the expertise needed to achieve the beautiful and functional end results you desire for your new open space.

2. Removing interior kitchen walls will eliminate some wall space for installing cabinets. You still need to have storage space for your pots and pans, utensils and food items. Purchasing cabinets with built-in, high-quality organizational storage systems, as well as extra tall cabinets with more shelves, will allow you to store more items in less space. A larger island can also provide additional storage.

3. Consider how your lifestyle will interpret the design of your open kitchen. For example, if you have young children who will spend a lot of time with you in the kitchen/family room space, your needs will be different from that of an empty-nester who primarily entertains friends. Make a list of your priorities before the design process begins.

4. Open your living space to the outdoors. Removing an exterior wall and installing a wide expanse of sliding glass doors or folding glass doors that open to an outdoor deck or patio can actually expand your living space. You can make the outside seem like a natural extension of the inside by using the same or similar materials and finishes in both locations.



Photo: By James F. Wilson

Writable Surfaces

It isn't high-tech like an iPad or computer, but Formica's new Writable Surfaces Collection offers fun and functionality for a wide variety of locations in your home. It is available in chalkboard and markerboard options in six colors and designs. Each provides the chance to write a personal note or draw a picture on the surface, and then simply wipe it away when finished. For children (and adults) who've always wished they could draw on the walls at home and not get in trouble for it—this is the perfect answer.



Photos: Courtesy of Formica (www.formica.com)



Formica's Writable Surfaces may be used on vertical and horizontal surfaces, so it can function as a wall panel, desktop or countertop. Think about where you might want a surface like this in your home. In the kitchen it could be the place where family members add needed items to the grocery list, or make suggestions for your weekly meal plan. In the entryway or mudroom it could be a part of your family "command center" where the children are reminded to feed the dog or clean up their rooms. You might enjoy a surface like this in your craft room to help jump-start ideas. And if you really want to please the kids, give them a Writable Surfaces wall panel in their bedrooms where they can let their imaginations run wild!

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Writeable Surfaces



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are open bookcases that also enhance the aesthetics. The bookcases also designate the perfect spot to locate the living room sofa for a grand view of the fireplace.

A coffered ceiling treatment was added to the once bland 18-foot-high living room ceiling to provide more interest to the lofty room. One fascinating detail are the three belt-driven fans installed in the ceiling. They are replicas based on older antique designs.

At the back of the house there was a very tiny laundry room and a large sunroom with several windows. The Links wanted this area to become more functional for their family. This space has been transformed into a mudroom, a coat drop, a large laundry room, a powder room and a multi-purpose craft room. Easy care finishes, including the wood-look tile on the floor, were selected for this space which is accessed directly from the outside, as well as from the kitchen. This has become one of the most frequently used and greatly appreciated spaces in the Link's home.

The Links are very pleased with the work we accomplished on their home.

View more photos of this stunning project on Houzz: houzz.com/pro/twellisllc

