



Photo by Jeff Herr Photography

Whole-Home Overhauls

For some, home transformations should happen the same way you pull off a Band-Aid—as quickly and painlessly as possible, all at once. Whether you purchased a fixer-upper that needs to be revamped before you can move in or you've finally come around to redecorating once you've learned your needs, let these restored spaces provide you with inspirational ideas. Learn how to save big on your budget by doing some of the updates yourself and get tips from the pros to make the entire process as smooth as possible.



Before

After

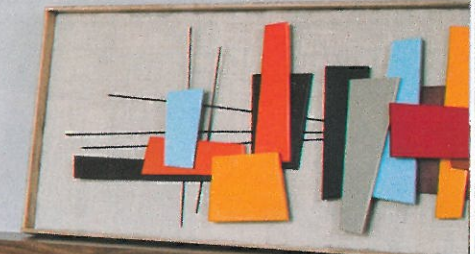
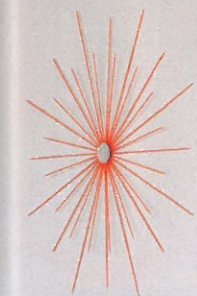
Tip:

REDEFINING YOUR SPACES DOESN'T MEAN MOVING ROOMS AROUND. HERE, THE DIFFERING CEILING HEIGHTS IN THE KITCHEN AND DINING ROOMS HELPED DEFINE EACH SPACE.

MIDCENTURY Masterpiece

A 1960s home gets a fresh update with bright accents, modern fixtures and vintage pizzazz.

BY LYNNETTE WOO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF HERR PHOTOGRAPHY



EXPANSIVE SPACES
Open spaces are the hallmark of a Midcentury-Modern home, and over the course of this renovation, the original crossbeams in the living room were removed and a ridge beam was added to support the new open floor plan, connecting the foyer, kitchen and living room.



WHEN HER CLIENTS APPROACHED RENEWAL DESIGN-BUILD ABOUT RENOVATING THEIR DRUID HILLS HOME IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA, CONSULTANT HEATHER SHUSTER SAYS, “THEY REALLY WANTED TO CHANGE THE FRONT FAÇADE OF THE HOUSE” AND TO OPEN UP THEIR LIVING ROOM.

With those marching orders, Heather and designer Brent Potter started with the front exterior of the house, replacing the brick with natural stone. “Having the natural stone is what might be described as naturalistic or organic architecture, where you’re taking [natural materials] from what might be found around the house and incorporating it into the outside,” Brent says.

Discover how Heather and Brent worked together to redesign this home for a fresh take on midcentury style.

Go for “strong bursts of color: **oranges, deep blues, yellows and strong reds.**”



NATURAL DELIGHT

Integration with nature is one of the main features of Midcentury Modern design, along with clean geometric lines and patterns. Heather and Brent added a modern front door with a geometric glass pattern and expansive windows.

“They had a good front yard for that,” Brent says. “There’s a lot of tree coverage, and they were back from the street a ways ... so that let us bring the outdoors in, without having to deal with glaring sun or bad views.”

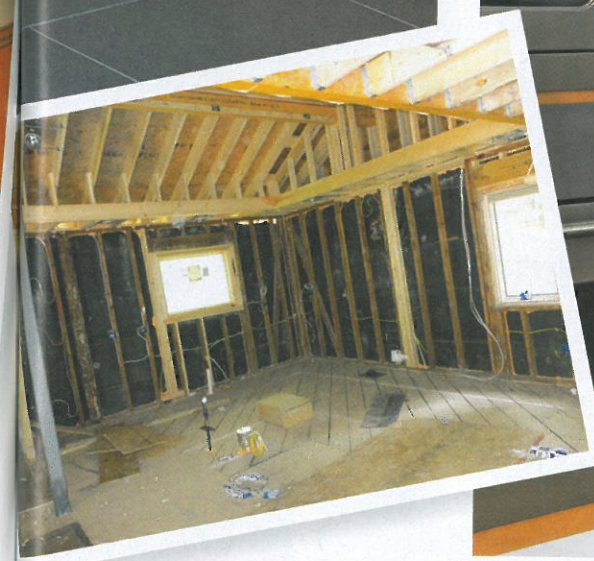
The front windows let a lot more natural light in, and once the wall enclosing the kitchen was removed, it shared its large panes with both the kitchen and dining rooms. Prior to the renovation, a pair of small doors led out to the home’s inner courtyard just off the dining and living room. They replaced these doors with wide, three-panel sliding glass doors—an element common in Midcentury Modern houses. This is “a great way to get natural light, connectivity to the outdoors and [a space] for entertaining,” Heather says.



After

UPDATED AMENITIES

The designers incorporated more contemporary colors and finishes for the kitchen counters and cabinets and added new stainless-steel appliances. "A kitchen in the '60s, in a home of this size, would never have been as big as this kitchen. It would never have had an island as big as this one does," Heather says. "Understanding how we live today and how we entertain today influences the details of the design."



KEEP IT SIMPLE

Two pros give their top tips for a Midcentury Modern makeover.

- **Pare down.** "A Midcentury Modern [house] is a clean space; it's not going to have as much embellishment," Heather says. "If you've got walls treated like a gallery full of images, scale that back."
- **Avoid oversized furniture.** Opt for a minimalist look with clean lines and "less fussy and more streamlined" light fixtures and artwork, Brent says.
- **Remove window treatments.** "There's no heavy drapes on any of the windows," he says. The large front windows, however, have blinds that can be lowered for privacy (but still filter in natural light) or folded into a pocket on the window bar. "That wasn't available [before]. It's a modern feature ... to have these blinds that don't take up a lot of room and don't feel heavy."
- **Stained wood is common** in midcentury homes. "Where you have an opportunity to bring in stained furniture or to change some of the finishes in the house, do it," Heather says. In this home, accents like the stained walnut fireplace surround and kitchen cabinets make all the difference.
- **Brighten your interior** by painting the walls a lighter color. "If not white, then very close to it," Heather says. For accessories, go for "strong bursts of color: oranges, deep blues, yellows, and strong reds."



COLLECTED OVER TIME

"The homeowners are avid travelers and collectors," Heather says. "In the family room, very few pieces of the furniture are from your standard furniture store. The [Broyhill Brasilia] credenza is a vintage piece and the chairs are vintage."

Much of the furniture and artwork was discovered during their travels, purchased at garage sales, found online or passed down to them—like their grandparents' vintage dining set—and already fit the midcentury style they wanted.

"[The homeowners] really had defined their aesthetic, what they liked, and shared with us what they hoped to put into the space," Heather says, "and then we created a space that really embraced it."

See Sources, page 128.

STYLE FILE

- **Insider Secret:** Take advantage of current materials, too. "You can't argue that the architecture [of the house] follows the 1960s inspiration," Brent says, "but the finishes are a more modern color, texture and design. The countertops weren't available 40 years ago; those are quartz and that pattern wasn't available." Even with contemporary accents, the house displays the clean lines and functional ethos of a midcentury space.
- **Budget Basics:** To save money, Brent suggests working within the existing floor plan, adding extra square footage only where necessary. "The overall layout was okay in this house," he says, "it just needed refreshing and opening up. We even kept the kitchen sink in the same place, so we didn't have to reroute plumbing."
- **Easy Idea, Big Impact:** Replacing the front door is a simple and relatively inexpensive place to start—and will improve your curb appeal. But be warned: "If you're going to move on to a larger remodeling project later on, you don't know if that door's going to stay in the same spot," he says.

Tip:

WORKING WITH A BUILD COMPANY ALLOWS YOU DESIGN TO A CONSTRUCTION BUDGET, "NOT JUST TO AN IDEA OF WHAT THINGS MIGHT COST," HEATHER SAYS. "IT SAVES YOU FROM GETTING THINGS DESIGNED THAT YOU CAN'T AFFORD."



STUNNING STAIRWAY

Prior to the renovation, the homeowners had to walk outside, down an exterior staircase and through a separate door to get to their basement. Heather and Brent went to work with their team, creating an entry that provided the clients access both to their living room—with a new oak and steel staircase—and to their basement, all within the same interior space.



Tip:

USE FROSTED GLASS FOR BATHROOM WINDOWS TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY, WITHOUT NEEDING WINDOW TREATMENTS.

Before

After



TRANQUIL RETREAT

The hallway bathroom was an isolated space within the house and departed from a midcentury look to a cleaner, sleeker contemporary style. A new shower with glass walls and lighter tiles replaced the old curtained bathtub and, along with the floating minimalist vanity and cabinet, makes the room feel bigger, brighter and less fussy.



1960S STYLE

"[The homeowners] had to go up a pretty significant staircase to get to the front door," Heather says. So, the exterior brick staircase and landing were removed, the entire façade overhauled and a new front cable constructed, with the front column supporting a beam that runs from the front of the house into the living room. This gave the exterior of the house the midcentury vibe they wanted, and supported the new open floor design inside.

Tip:

"IF YOU LOVE MIDCENTURY, PURCHASE A HOME FROM THAT TIME PERIOD," HEATHER SAYS, "OR ONE THAT REFERENCES IT WELL. THIS ONE WAS BUILT IN THE '50S OR '60S AND ALREADY HAD A CENTRAL COURTYARD."

