

# Bathroom



# Reborn

BY DAVE MULDER

How one bathroom was transformed from a dark afterthought to a bright, smart space, without changing the footprint

A few years ago, I completed the remodel of a bathroom that was part of a larger renovation of a kitchen (see “A Galley Kitchen Improves Circulation,” *FHB* #215, pp. 50-51).

Both rooms were products of their age and of benign neglect, but the dim clutter and the bad design in the bathroom were more concentrated and harder to live with than the problems in the kitchen. In addition to its other sins, the bath had an awkward fixture arrangement. Worst of all, the room’s only window was hidden in the linen closet, which took up nearly a quarter of the floor space.



**Chaotic and dark.** The window at the end of the room was hampered by the linen closet and louvered doors that were built directly in front of it.

After gutting the space, I moved one end wall about 18 in., then closed off the doorway that opened to the living room and created a new doorway to the kitchen. The closet became the new shower stall, and I replaced the old window with a smaller casement unit that I pushed up near the ceiling for privacy. I also added a skylight over the vanity, which really brightens the room.

As in the kitchen, I built all the cabinets from bamboo plywood that I finished with water-based Enduro satin poly from General Finishes. The room has electric-radiant heat that I installed beneath the tile.

## Learning from our experiences

Rick, the homeowner, has lived in the remodel for three years now and has provided me with valuable feedback. To create more lighting options, I added dimmers to all three light fixtures. I also installed a timer for the ceiling fan, which is so quiet that it’s tough to remember to turn it off. I found that it’s important to mount the wall-hung sink faucet exactly level, because the mirror magnifies any deviation. Also, I’ve had to add another coat of polyurethane to the counter. All in all, these details are fairly minor issues for a much better bath. □

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## Notable elements

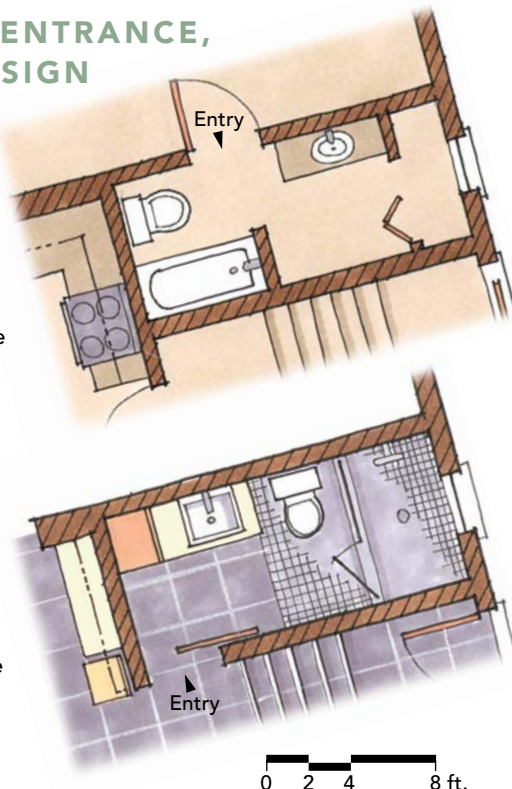
**Shower, sink faucets:** Grohe.com • **Tile:** Neutra line, CasaDolceCasa.com • **Sliding-door hardware:** Straightaway 50, Coburn.co.uk

**Sink:** Square ceramic vessel, ZetaKitchenandBath.com • **Ceiling fan:** Panasonic.com

## MOVE THE ENTRANCE, THEN REDESIGN

**Before:** The toilet and bathtub were right in front of the door, which opened to the living room. To get to the linen closet, you had to squeeze between the vanity and the tub.

**After:** After closing off the living-room entrance, the author moved the bath entrance to the kitchen side. The shower was relocated to the end of the room, with the toilet between the sink and the shower.



**Space-saving door.** Rather than take up valuable real estate with a swinging door, the author applied bamboo veneer to a 1½-in. slab of MDF and hung it from heavy-duty track hardware. The dense slab not only matches the cabinets, but it also keeps noise to a minimum.