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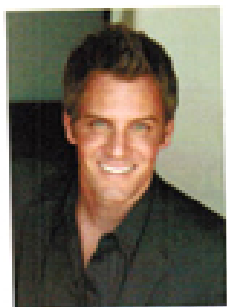
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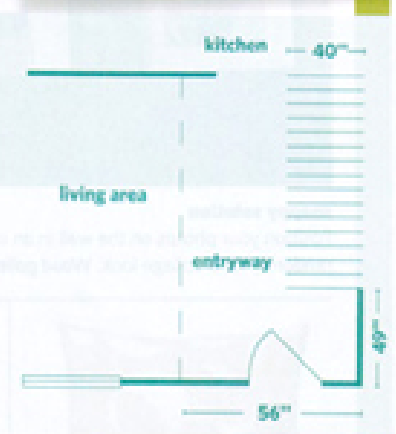
## home improvement

by Lindsey St. Clair



# First Impressions

Designer Ryan Brown of Bravo's *Flipping Out* takes an FC reader's entryway from dull to dynamite with paint and a few inviting items.



The floor plan shows how the tiled entryway opens into a living area with wood floors.



### THE CHALLENGE

"Ever since we bought the house about a year and a half ago, we've been stripping wallpaper, painting, updating lights and ripping up carpet," says Katie Gilson of Brookfield, Wisconsin. "We love our new home, but the entryway, with its miles of stairs and blank walls, has us stumped." Katie feels at a loss about how to make the area more welcoming and useful for her family—she and her husband, Dave, have two daughters ages 5 and 7—as well as guests.

"Please help us create an eye-popping entrance."

### THE STRATEGY

To add personality and tie the space together with the adjacent living area, Ryan recommends a sophisticated sand color for the walls. "One of the things I noticed about the space was the overwhelming expanse of wood," he says. To break it up, Ryan suggests painting the risers and balusters white. A small half-circular table, topped with a catchall for items, at the foot of

the stairs makes a smart addition. "It's practical but narrow enough not to be in the way," he says. "And with a bold mirror, it also becomes a point of interest."

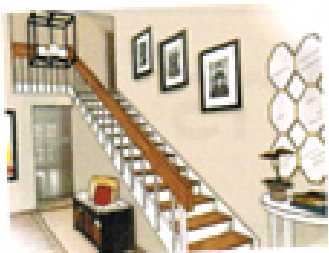
### FINISHING TOUCHES

"Emphasize the height of the room with a statement-making chandelier," says Brown. He suggests the Gilsons eventually replace the distracting track lighting on the landing with recessed lights. In the meantime, decorative flourishes can make a big difference. A gallery of

family photos on the stairwell wall lends personality and leads the eye up the stairs. "Black-and-white photos are always a timeless choice," he says. "Keep the matting and framing consistent, such as white matting and black frames." Brown added a cushioned bench, which fills the space under the stairs and offers a convenient spot to sit. Top it all off with a few extras such as throw pillows in coordinating colors.

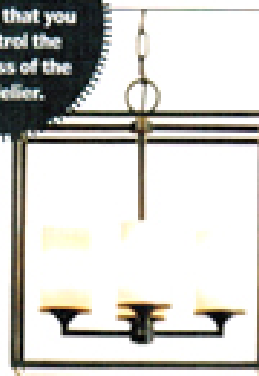


## home improvement



# Get the Goods

Create ambiance: Install a dimmer switch so that you can control the brightness of the chandelier.



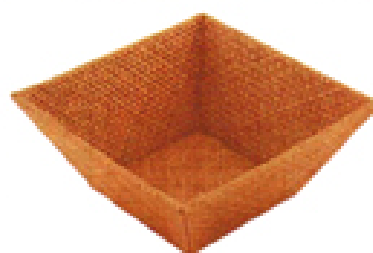
### guiding light

Get the look of classic candlelight in the entry with a wrought-iron chandelier. Monroe pillar chandelier, \$300, potterybarn.com



### snappy solution

Position your photos on the wall in an organized fashion, or let loose a little and hang frames more randomly for a collage look. Wood gallery frames, from \$16, westelm.com



### finders keepers

Place a basket or bowl on the table at the foot of the stairs to catch keys. Pandora container, Neotrix, \$15, organize.com



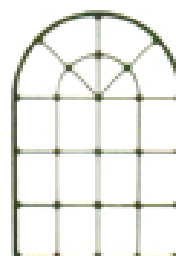
### pillow party

Perk up a plain seating area with a bright splash of color. Daisy pillow, \$25, cb2.com



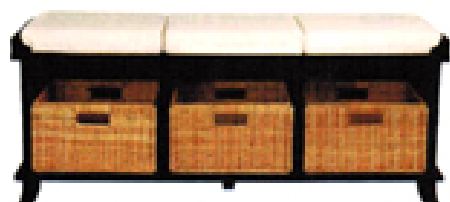
### slim pickings

In a small space, make every inch count with a narrow crescent-shaped table for dropping off mail. Colors demilune, \$200, ballordesigns.com



### mirror image

Add height, depth and texture with a large, geometric mirror. Mount it at eye level above a console table. Montclair mirror, \$200, zgallerie.com



### bench mark

The baskets underneath offer extra storage. Entryway bench, \$200, target.com



### soft landing

A rug with a vibrant design can mask muddy footprints and provide visual interest. Diamond pattern rug, \$110 for 2.5'x8', dashandalbert.com

**HAVE A DECORATING DILEMMA?** Tell us why your living room, entryway, breakfast nook or other small space is in desperate need of a makeover. Your submitted photo may be published in a future issue of *Family Circle*, along with free, customized advice and product suggestions from a design expert. See page 230 for full details.