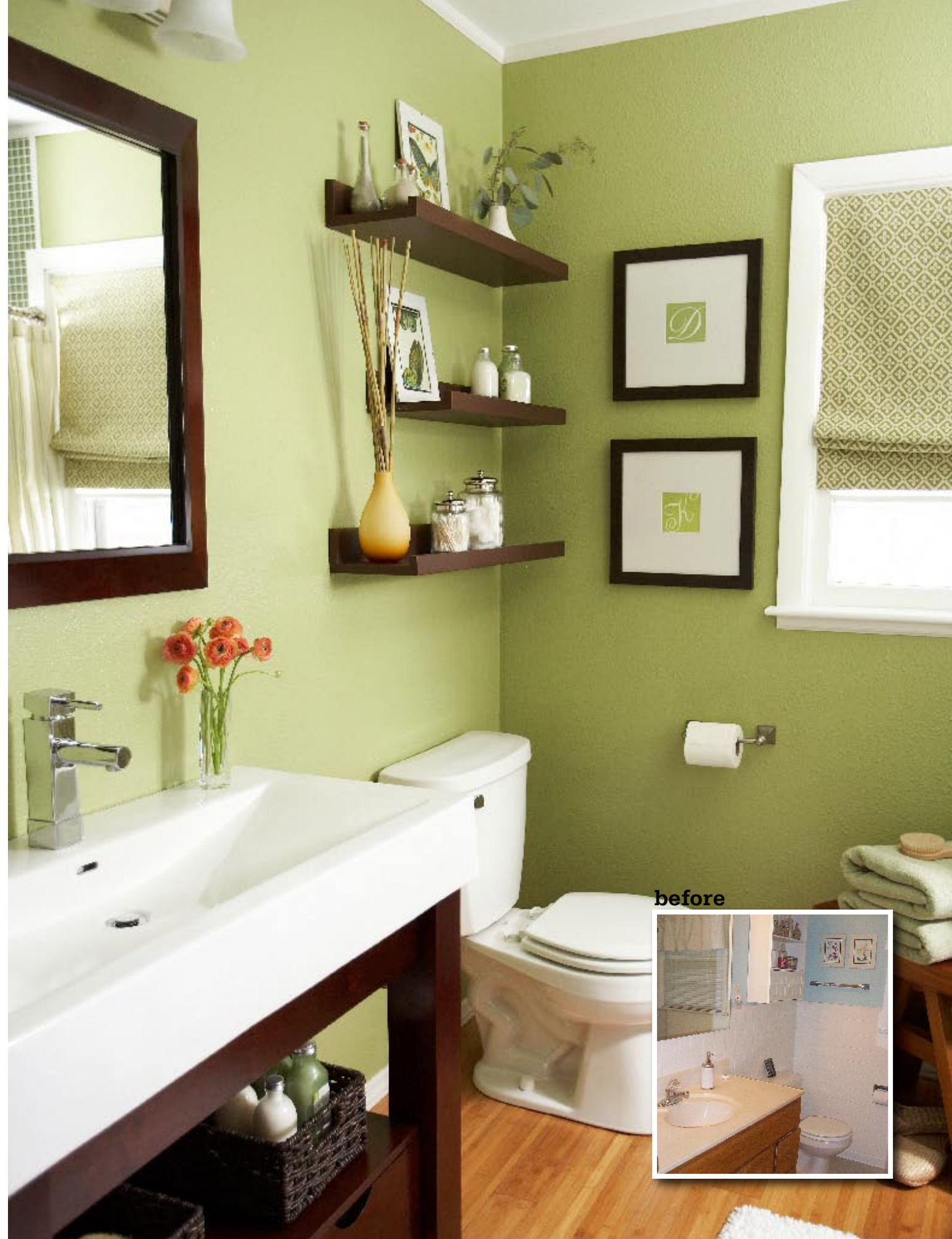


freshen up!

A bath stuck in the '80s gets a modern look thanks to smart shopping and a we-can-do-it attitude.

Writer: Heather Shoning Photographer: Jason Donnelly



before





Page 89: Warm wood tones and soft color make this small bathroom feel like a contemporary spa retreat. Running the grain of the bamboo floor the length of the room makes the space seem larger. **Left:** Get a designer look by skipping the standard-issue medicine cabinet. Opt for an oversize framed mirror instead. **Below Left:** Make the most of an open vanity by stowing baskets full of bath salts and sponges. The handy drawer holds wash cloths, hand towels, and soaps.

Kate and Dave Malo cut their remodeling teeth on the hall bath of their 1950s brick ranch home in Ankeny, Iowa. The bath, remodeled in the '80s needed an update. Kate, a graphic designer for *Kitchen and Bath Ideas*® magazine, spends her days surrounded by images of beautiful baths. She made mental notes and manila files of inspiration, teamed up with her handy hubby, and created a bathroom reflective of the couple's desire for a modern and elegant style.

With advice from both of their dads, the couple set out to create a contemporary space on a budget—doing all the work themselves. They bought nearly all of the fixtures needed to do the job at local home improvement stores. Opting to keep the original bathtub and window allowed them to spend more on things that mattered most to them: flooring, tile, vanity, and toilet.

Their work began with demolition. “The room was cut in half by faux-tile paneling. It needed to be one solid color to feel larger,” Kate says. They tore the paneling out along with the tub surround. “When we started tearing things down, I had a split-second thought wondering if

we could do this,” Kate says.

Committed, they installed sage-green mosaic glass tile around the tub. They retextured the rest of the walls and painted them in a coordinating green for a cohesive look.

Then the couple tested their mettle on flooring—another project new to them. They wanted wood to coordinate with the rest of their home, but ultimately chose bamboo for its durability and modern flair. The new vanity the couple installed defines the room's contemporary look with open design and sleek faucet. “The vanity is modern, but still warm because of the rich wood tone,” Kate says. That sleek styling, however, meant a decrease in storage capacity. To compensate, they used baskets to organize an existing closet. “We used the closet before, but without the organization we have now, it wasn't as functional,” Kate says.

Above: Inspired by shelves spotted at a posh retail store, the Malos had similar versions made out of pine at a budget-friendly price. To save more money, they painted—rather than stained—them a dark brown to match the dark wood in the room.



Get a custom look on a budget

- Shop home improvement stores like Kate and Dave Malo did. You can find high-style looks at affordable prices.
- Mix patterns. Kate chose an overall print for the Roman shade and a stripe for the shower curtain.
- Install a good-size mirror with a frame. The larger the mirror, the more light and color it reflects; frames add an upscale touch.
- Be bold with paint. Originally Kate and Dave had painted the bath a pale green. But the mellow hue didn't add the depth of color needed. So they repainted with a hue that links all the shades of green.
- Personalize with art. It doesn't have to be a pricey painting. Kate printed initials on her computer and then matted and framed them.

“We wanted to create a space that was casual but elegant and reflected our personal style.”

[Homeowner and designer Kate Malo]



Opposite: Various shades of green unify the look of the bath and make the small space seem larger. Remember: Mixing and matching fabric patterns creates visual appeal when you maintain a common element such as color. **Left:** Make the most of a closet by organizing it with bins or baskets. This eliminates clutter and keeps the items you need at your fingertips.

before



The increased organization also allowed them to ditch the medicine cabinet in favor of an oversized mirror framed in matching wood. A traditional light fixture mounted above it adds a note of contrast.

Continuing the contrast, Kate paired two patterned fabrics that work together because the colors coordinate: a traditional all-over diamond and floral pattern on the custom Roman shade and modern stripe on the shower curtain. The shower feels roomier because of the curtain rod curves.

Putting their official stamp on the room, Kate designed custom art with their initials to hang on the wall. “It’s ours,” she says. “We did it as a couple, and the biggest compliment we get is when people see it and say, ‘It looks just like you guys.’”

Resources begin on page 109.

To find more information on bathroom window ideas, look online at:
KitchenBathIdeas.com/bathmo2

budget breakdown

HARDWARE & LIGHTING	
■ Mirror	125
■ Vanity light	75
PLUMBING FIXTURES	
■ Sink	190
■ Sink faucet	150
■ Toilet	120
■ Vanity base	470
SURFACES	
■ Bamboo flooring	140
■ Tile	800

TOTAL	\$2,070