



WORK ZONE AHEAD

Clutter-taming tricks make this room an all-work, all-play family studio.

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hen I walked into my office, the clutter was all I could see," says Tina Blanck, a greeting card artist who works at home. It was time to tame the chaos.

"The space had great light. It was just visually overwhelming," Susan Andrews, an interior designer and Tina's makeover buddy, says of the former porch. The two reshuffled the space, creating distinct areas for working, reading, and kids' activities. They scoured hardware stores and flea markets for supplies and planned a color scheme with Tina's favorite hues: turquoise, crimson red, and chartreuse. And that was just the beginning.

Color Cues

Tina and Andrews used a color-block approach to visually separate the activity areas. To give Tina more space and light, they moved her desk to the long wall of windows and painted the window frames bright yellow. To the right of her workstation



Make your whole wall magnetic!

KIDS' ZONE

- 1. Storage-cube stool on wheels
- 2. Photo-adorned wall pockets
- 3. Paper-wrapped cigar boxes (the feet are shot glasses!)
- 4. Paper-and-paint collage
- 5. Magnetic-paint wall

sits a console, which they punched up with red oil-base paint. The opposite wall—painted chartreuse—is the kids' space. Tina took down the cumbersome bulletin board and painted the wall with four coats of magnetic primer topped with the green paint. Now the entire wall can display notes and artwork. The green hue extends to the cabinet doors in the reading corner. Tina and Andrews pried the molding off the existing doors and then primed and painted them. They drilled finger pulls and covered the edges with large washers.

Clutter Cover-Ups

The built-in shelves overflowed with books, files, and knickknacks. They also weren't symmetrical. "It was visual overload," Andrews says. She and Tina solved this problem by

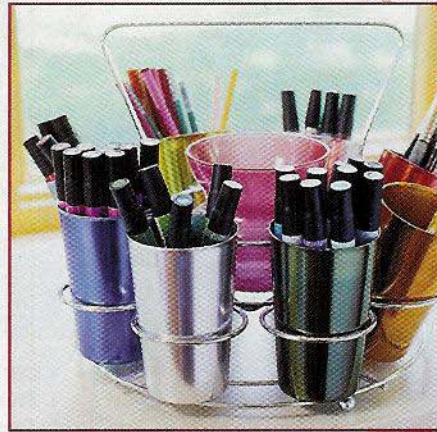
adding clutter-concealing doors to some shelves. They taped paper over openings to figure out whether the new doors should open to the top, bottom, left, or right. For the door inserts, they used red plexiglass and extruded metal. The inserts fit in wood frames, which attach to the shelves with European hinges. They made knobs for some doors by layering washers, large wing nuts, and large hex screws—each knob cost a thrifty \$1.

Retro Revival

A mix of old and new furnishings gives the room a relaxed air—and was easy on the budget. Tina removed the old fabric from two 1940s reading chairs, sanded them, and applied a paste wax for protection. She had one chair reupholstered in a solid turquoise and its ottoman re-covered in a red circle-print



1. CHIC SHADE
A sheet of pierced aluminum is bent and glued around a duct cap; the seam is laced with wire. Washers, marbles, and prisms dangle below.



2. CREATIVE CONTAINERS
A 1950s aluminum tumbler set corrals art supplies.

Paint just the drawers

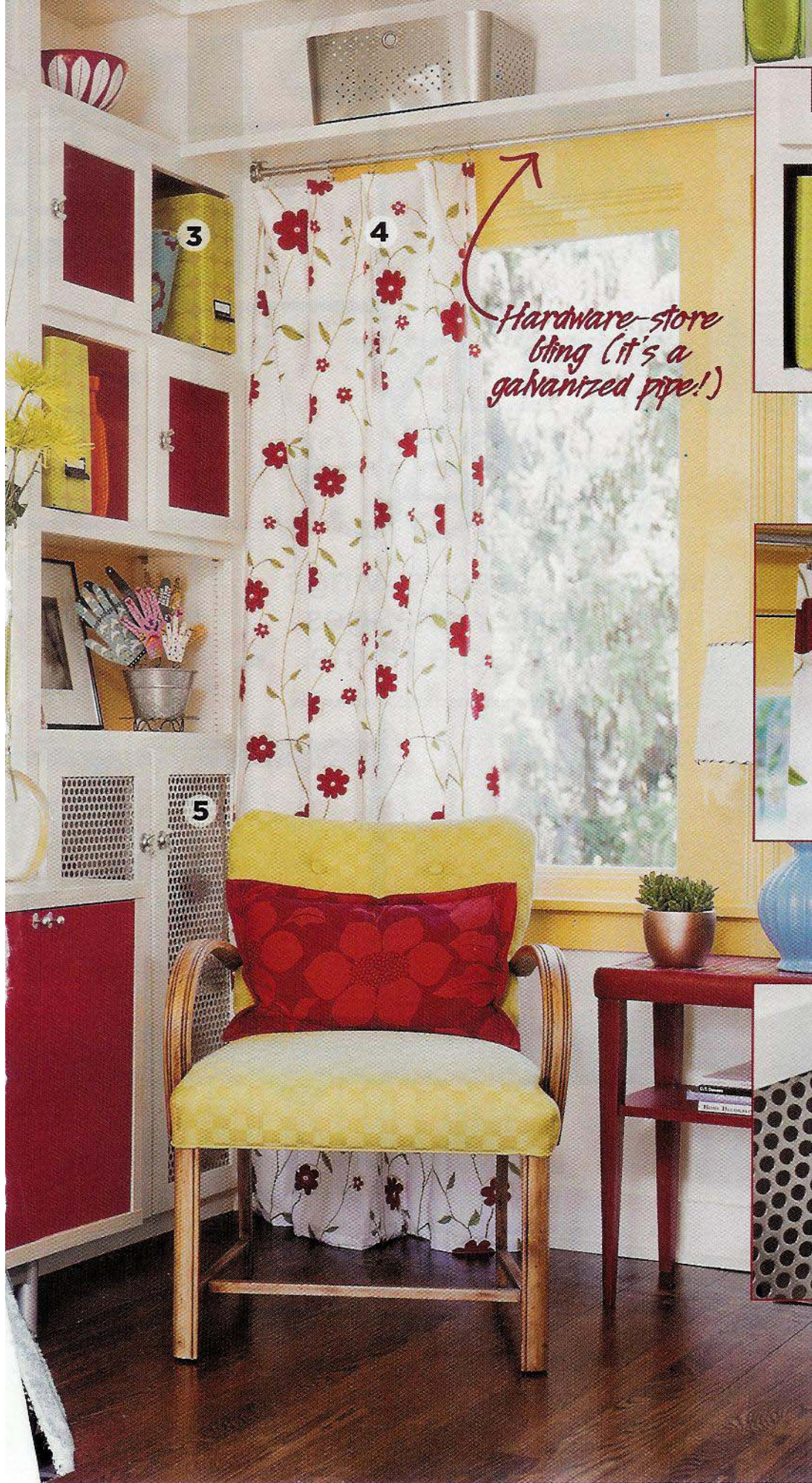


fabric. She chose yellow for the other reading chair. The retro office chair was a \$7 flea-market bargain. Tina unscrewed the back and seat, hot-glued new fabric onto them, then reattached the parts.

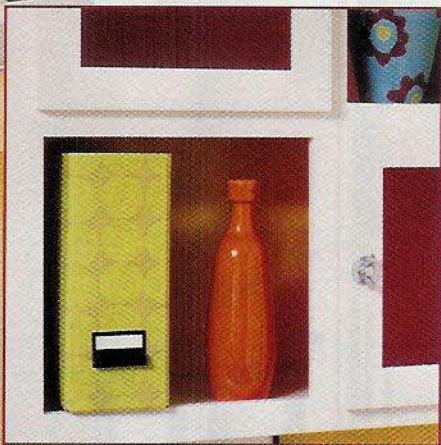
Resourceful Accents

To outfit the room, the pair customized plain storage containers, made pendant lampshades, and splashed the shelves with Tina's colorful pottery and art collections. They restyled sheets for curtains, fashioned cloth napkins and table runners into pillows, and searched hardware aisles to put together knobs and curtain rods. The personal touches lend a playful air to this seriously fun work space for the entire family.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 95.



Hardware-store bling (it's a galvanized pipe!)



3. MAGAZINE CADDIES
DO IT: Punch circles from contact paper and apply to a caddy painted pale green. Go over it with a darker shade, let dry, and peel off the circles.



4. BARGAIN CURTAINS
Each window required one queen-size sheet, split lengthwise and hemmed. Curtain clips attach the panels to the galvanized pipe.



5. HANDSOME HARDWARE
Washers, wing nuts, and hex screws make bold door pulls. These door inserts are extruded metal.



After its makeover, the narrow office in Tina and Mark Blanck's home has three activity zones: Tina's drafting table; the kids' area, opposite Tina's space; and the reading area, defined by a turquoise chair.



BEFORE