

A-to-Z FIX-IT GUIDE: Troubleshooting for the Mechanically Challenged

# HOMESTYLE

AMERICAN

# & GARDENING

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## Instant Decorating

24 Spruce-Up Ideas That Can  
Save You Time + Money

**Dream Kitchen Comes True**  
Large, Light and Loads of Storage

Appetizers Made Easy  
With Martha Stewart

**Second-Story Additions**  
2 Houses and How They Grew

**Backyard Face-Lift**  
Make Your Old Deck Look New

Tradition  
With a Twist  
Mix+Match  
Fabrics



# homecoming

After 25 years of rentals on Martha's Vineyard,

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The new home's U-shaped plan encloses a small front garden. Below: Three generations of the Leibman family gather for their annual August reunion around a tabletop they painted by hand 10 years ago. OPPOSITE: Phoebe and Emma peek over the welcoming arbor-framed gate their grumpy, Leonard Leibman, designed.

a family builds a vacation home that celebrates togetherness



JEFF MCNAMARA (TOP)

“Though the house is big and open and airy, there are plenty of places for



everyone to hide away," says Bobby.



WINDOWS AND DOORS FROM MARVIN.

Although they are now in their 30s and 40s, with children of their own, and living in places as far-flung as California and Connecticut, the Leibman "kids" still make a pilgrimage to Martha's Vineyard, off the Massachusetts coast, each August to be together as a family—even if only for a week—just as they have for the past 25 years. The difference this year, however, is that they have a place of their own in which to gather. "We can finally leave a bag behind and say, 'This is home,'" says David of the house his parents built. "It's the kind of place that naturally brings everyone together," adds Leslie Allen, his older sister and an *American HomeStyle & Gardening* contributor.

After renting homes on the same pond for years, Leonard Leibman and his wife, Bobby, heard that a property they'd coveted was coming up for auction through the Federal Marshal's office. From such inauspicious beginnings was born the home of their dreams.

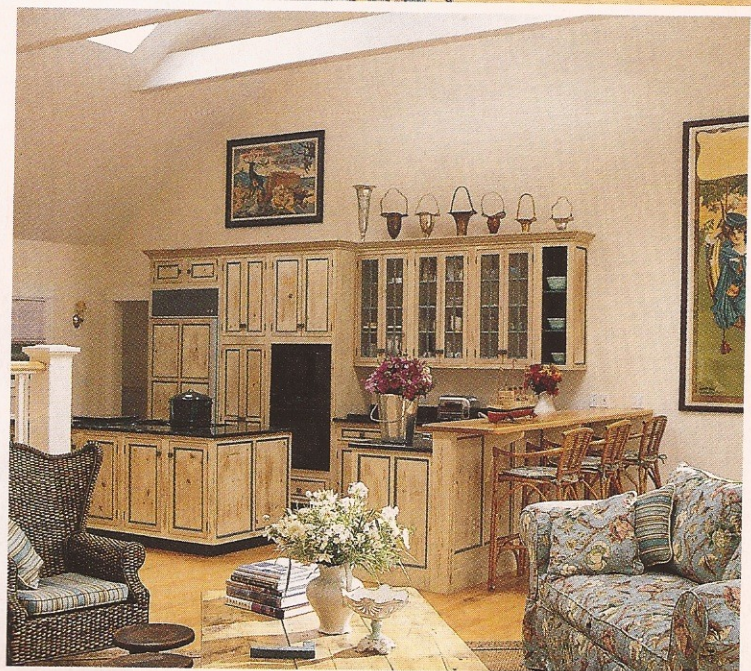
With three generations in mind and the experience gleaned from having stayed in a variety of houses, the Leibmans had clear ideas about planning their family retreat even before they consulted with architectural designer Lillian Wolfe. Bobby voted for a big, open kitchen and living room right in the center of the house "where everyone can hang out—because everyone always ends up in the kitchen anyway." Another must was a generous screen porch. "That was the one complaint wherever we rented," says Leslie. "The porch was never big enough to fit everyone." Just as welcome is a deck for sipping Seabreezes and watching the sun slip behind the water. Leonard relished being closely involved in the building of the house and wasn't afraid to change plans as it went along. For instance, when he realized the great room wouldn't be big enough to handle a dining table for all 11 family members, he came up with the idea of tucking in a pine-paneled dining room between the great room and the screen porch.

"We tried to build in the flexibility you need when you never know how many are arriving for

The coziness of the pine-paneled dining room gives way to the airiness of a 20 x 30-foot screen porch, courtesy of French doors topped by a transom. The porch is the place for doing puzzles, dining on seafood and watching birds skim across the pond in early morning. The rattan furniture, once "hideous yellow," was bought at a consignment shop, painted white by Leslie and her parents, and treated to new striped Sunbrella cushions.



A rustic rubble fireplace (above), modeled after the '20s Adirondack hearth in Leslie's home, is the cornerstone of the great room. Favorites from Leonard's collection of old *New Yorker* covers are framed in a large shadow box. Slipcovers, sewn by Viking, in floral-patterned Greeff fabrics make furniture (left and above) kid-friendly. RIGHT: Standard kitchen cabinets were given custom warmth with milk paint.



“The house is an embodiment of the importance my parents place on family,” says Deborah.

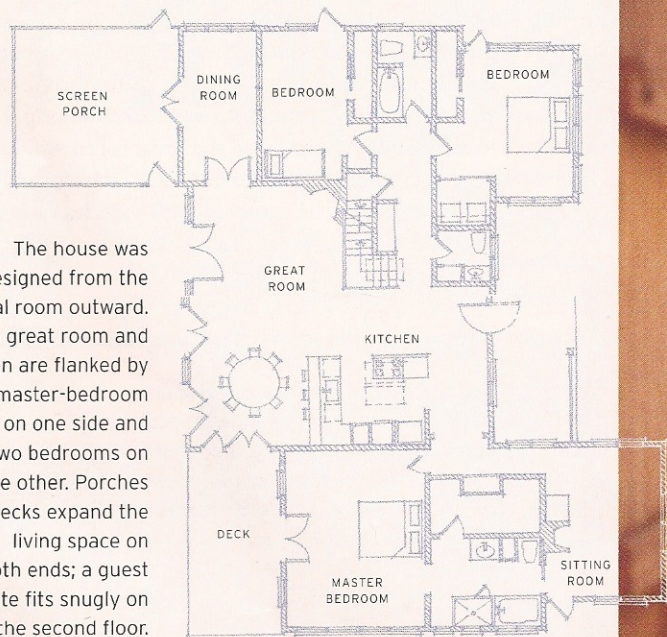
the weekend,” says Bobby. Accommodations include the master-bedroom suite on one side of the great room and two bedrooms on the other. (The grandchildren share one, and either Leslie and husband Lloyd or David and wife Julie stay in the second; a sleep sofa in the sitting room serves as the alternative bed.) Deborah, the eldest, and her husband, Jim, have laid claim to the upstairs guest-bedroom suite. And there are multiples of just about everything else: two additional sleep sofas, three baths, two outdoor showers, two dishwashers, two sets of washer/dryers, two freezers and three phone lines (one for the fax).

The Leibmans knew from experience to think practical. “Everything is slipcovered,” says Bobby, “and what can’t be washed can be hosed down. There are no rugs except sisal ones, and we put a million coats of polyurethane on the floors.” The finished basement contains ample play space for the kids and a large wood shop for Leonard, who doubles as the family handyman and has outfitted the house with bookshelves, tables and a magical playhouse for his grandkids.

Though the Leibmans thought of everything, there was one drawback to such thoroughness: the house got bigger with each change of plans. “We were worried that it would be too small and kept pushing it out,” says Leonard. “We started to build a summer house and ended up with a real home.”



The cedar-shingle-clad exterior (above) blends with the Vineyard vernacular. Affording front-row views of the pond are the screen porch and decks off the rear of the house. LEFT: The Leibmans' mini "armada" includes a sailboat, a small motorboat and a handsome cedar canoe, en route to being launched by (from right) Lloyd, Lloyd's son Sam and David. BELOW: The children's outdoor shower gets lots of use come warm weather; the adults enjoy one of their own.



The house was designed from the central room outward. The great room and kitchen are flanked by a master-bedroom suite on one side and two bedrooms on the other. Porches and decks expand the living space on both ends; a guest suite fits snugly on the second floor.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF MENAMARA (OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP AND BOTTOM RIGHT); FLOOR PLAN BY MARINA KIESER; SLIPCOVERS AND PILLOWS (OPPOSITE PAGE); SEWN BY VIKING HUSQVARNA

“There’s a lot of each of us in the house—it feels like it



### The Leibmans' wish list

- A big, open kitchen for hanging out
- Doubles of almost everything—dishwashers, refrigerators, washer/dryers—to keep up with a crowd
- A deck for sunning and sipping, and a screen porch for shade and bug-free dining
- A second-floor bedroom suite and small office, away from the fray
- A master suite with a gas fireplace and a TV (no TV in the living room!)
- A finished basement with a playroom and wood shop



Sam sneaks into the upstairs bedroom suite, a.k.a. Aunt Deborah and Uncle Jim's hideaway (above). A thrift-shop bed and Deborah's childhood furniture were given fresh faces in white. Greeff Teahouse wallpaper and matching fabric lend a cozy feel. **LEFT:** In the children's bath, having pegs and monogrammed robes minimizes confusion.



In the first-floor bedroom (above and opposite), where Leslie and Lloyd or David and Julie stay, an old enamel-topped kitchen table found at a flea market is recast as a dressing table. **LEFT:** Flexible sleeping arrangements for the third generation are provided by a set of bunk beds and a sofa bed.



DUVET AND PILLOWCASE FABRIC: CALICO CORNERS  
BEDDING: SEWN BY VIKING HUSOVARNA



like it

has a history built into it, even though it's new," says David.

As befits a beach house, the furnishings are more fun than fancy. Leslie joined twin old iron headboards to form a king-size bed and slipcovered them in a crisp lime cabana stripe.

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DUVET AND PILLOWCASE FABRIC: CALICO CORNERS  
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