PREP FOR A LASTING PAINT JOB

OUR GUIDE TO EXTERIOR COLOR!
by house style, region—and what you like!

HOW TO
PAINT A WINDOW RIGHT
DECORATE STAIR RISERS
REPAIR BEADBOARD

VISIT A VICTORIAN GARDEN

9 SHORTCUTS TO A TIMELESS KITCHEN | gentle rescue of a HOUSE WELL LOVED
TO KEEP IT GREEN
MAKING GOOD LONG-TERM CHOICES DURING RENOVATION

Reusing an old house is inherently "green," as the structure is embodied energy—its long-ago materials and labor still in service. Demolition and replacement is much less efficient. Renovating goes both ways. To keep energy consumption low—and maintain the old-house vibe—choose building components, finishes, and furnishings that conserve resources, like those made of sustainable or reclaimed wood, organic textiles, zero-VOC paints and sealers, and lighting and appliances both period-friendly and tops in energy efficiency. One caveat: newly built sustainable products, including those eligible for LEED credits from the U.S. Green Building Council, are often more expensive than standard ones, some significantly so. By Mary Ellen Polson

TEXTILES Use organic natural fiber fabrics for upholstery, drapery, and household linens. (Many synthetic fibers, including faux leathers, are petroleum-based.) Ulster Linen recently introduced upholstery-weight organic linens in a dozen neutral colors; organic bedding in wool, cotton, and silk is going mainstream yet traditional with brands including Coyuchi, coyuchi.com.

ABOVE: Ulster Linen’s upholstery-weight linen, ulsterlinen.com

PAINT Thanks to changes in consumer demand and environmental regulations, options for paint finishes include low- and zero-VOC latex, earth pigments, and that early American staple, milk paint. The formula for interior milk paint is natural: casein, or milk protein, mixed with lime, earth pigments, and clay fillers.

ABOVE: Ulster Linen’s upholstery-weight linen, ulsterlinen.com

APPLIANCES Look for the highest Energy Star ratings you can find, but think outside the box, too: Blomberg’s new Ventless Heat Pump Dryer, for example, not only fits into the tight spaces typical of many older homes, but also uses 50 percent less energy than other compact dryers.

HEATING & COOLING Old houses often were built to conserve heat in winter and stay cool in summer with techniques ranging from massive central chimneys in cold climates to high ceilings and cross-ventilation in warm ones. Whenever possible, use similar ideas: A new central masonry heater, for example, will keep the house warm longer in winter because heat is stored in the stone or brick mass. In hot weather, the masonry also heats up more slowly, reducing the need for air conditioning. Other old-house and eco-friendly options include geothermal systems, passive solar energy, and well-placed ceiling fans.

FIXTURES Salvaged ceramic or porcelain sinks lend a period note to kitchens and baths. Buying new? Consider copper sinks made with recycled content, like those from Native Trails.

ABOVE: Artisan-made sinks like the Gaetana from Native Trails contain a high percentage of recycled copper, nativetrails.net