

in this makeover DINING NOOK ■■■ BEADED-BOARD WAINSCOTING

■■■ STAINLESS-STEEL APPLIANCES ■■■ BREAKFAST BAR ■■■ OPEN SHELVING

Science of STYLE

A pair of scientists convert a dull and dated kitchen into a contemporary space where form and function are fundamental.

WRITER LINDSAY SCARPELLO PHOTOGRAPHER BRYAN MCKAY STYLIST STACY KUNSTEL

THIS PHOTO An inexpensive oak countertop on the breakfast bar teams with upscale quartz-surfacing in the U-shape kitchen. Beaded-board paneling, also used in the mudroom and dining nook, clads the bar and the cabinet end panel.



THIS PHOTO The built-in breakfast bar visually separates the dining nook from the kitchen, while rich oak floors create a seamless flow between the two areas. **OPPOSITE** Open shelves and retro-style cup pulls are vintage touches that carry out the look of the 1880s home.



It was the year of change for Angela and Edward Pym DePace. The couple started new jobs, tied the knot, got pregnant, and bought a new house in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts—one with an eyesore for a kitchen. “When we bought it, the kitchen had a very ’70s style makeover that didn’t match the rest of the circa 1880s house; we wanted to make it look like it belonged,” Angela says. “The hardest part was taking on a project this big in our first home.”

For Angela and Edward, form and function are key. Because of their jobs—she works as an assistant biology professor and he as a neuroscientist—they favor a contemporary, efficient style similar to that of the labs they work in. “Lab spaces are very beautiful and functional,” Angela says. “Everything is where you need it.”

The busy couple wanted the same efficiency for their new kitchen, so with the assistance of numerous magazines, Google SketchUp, and a



MAXIMIZE SPACE WITH A MUDROOM

Mudrooms can be a home’s workhorse. Angela and Edward Pym DePace willingly sacrificed one of their two pantries to gain efficient entry. Here are three ways they customized the space to make it work for them.

KEEP IT SIMPLE.

Wall hooks for coats and bags are handier than hangers.

KEEP IT COHESIVE.

The beaded-board wainscoting that wraps the dining nook continues along the wall of the mudroom, making the small space seem larger. The partial wall that separates the spaces also contributes spaciousness. To add panache, pillows on the bench repeat the colors in the dining nook’s chandelier while lending softness.

KEEP IT PRACTICAL.

A bench with storage space underneath houses boots, umbrellas, mittens, and gloves. A rug by the back entry soaks up moisture and soil. Overhead can lights brighten the space, while windows high on the wall let in natural light but maintain wall space for storage.

helpful contractor, they created a layout that is clean and stylish. “Our aesthetic was blending a traditional look with a modern spin,” Angela says. “We wanted to come up with a design that was modern yet consistent with the rest of the house.”

To get the new look, the kitchen needed a major overhaul to capture space for a new U-shape layout. Metal stools inspired by the couple’s work spaces slide up to a breakfast bar on the sink peninsula. “The breakfast bar divides the dining nook and kitchen, so you’re not bothered by visual clutter. You have multiple work spaces,” Angela says.


Outdated tile was replaced with rich oak floors that contrast with off-white cabinets to create a clean, muted color scheme enhanced by the space’s abundant natural light.

Maximizing space while maintaining a fresh look was important to Angela and Edward and



made them even happier when it saved them money. The idea of open shelving worked well with the efficiency they were seeking. “We were surprised by how much cabinetry cost,” Angela says. “Using open storage instead of cabinets with doors was one of the ways we saved money.” The couple also cut costs by reusing some original base cabinets but giving them a new look with paint.

They added a sink in the adjacent butler’s pantry, and they splurged on new stainless-steel appliances, creating the look of a built-in refrigerator by adding to-the-ceiling cabinets.

In addition to the big changes, Angela and Edward worked in a few final creative accents, such as a chandelier over the eating nook with three hip, drum-style shades—a steal at only \$130. One of the notable finishing touches is the blue “Keep Calm and Carry On” poster—a reproduction vintage poster with a mantra that reflects the couple’s approach to their makeover. 

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 110.



“Using **OPEN STORAGE** instead of cabinets with doors was one of the ways we **SAVED MONEY.**”
 {HOMEOWNER Angela DePace}

THIS PHOTO A custom look was achieved by building cabinets around the refrigerator. Glass doors on the top cabinets reveal dishware. **OPPOSITE ABOVE** To further their kitchen’s relaxed vibe and to lower costs, the homeowners used custom open shelving—a stylish way to keep everything in easy reach. **OPPOSITE BELOW** In the adjacent butler’s pantry, an undermount beverage sink adds an upscale touch, and high-arc faucets carry out the vintage style.



{about this makeover}

THE FLOOR PLAN



- 1. BUILT AROUND FRIDGE**
New floor-to-ceiling cabinets around the refrigerator maximize storage and make the refrigerator appear built-in.
- 2. RAISED BREAKFAST BAR**
A breakfast bar is a handy place for snacks and defines the cooking and dining zones.
- 3. MADE A MUDROOM**
A partial wall separates the back-door drop zone from the dining nook.
- 4. OPENED SHELVING**
Custom shelves provide easy access to dishes and display for decorative items..

THE BUDGET

APPLIANCES

■ Dishwasher	1,154
■ Microwave	786
■ Range	4,199
■ Refrigerator	2,288
■ Vent/hood	965

CABINETRY

■ Cabinets	11,276
■ Glass	49
■ Hardware, cabinet	399
■ Hardware	128
■ Upper shelving, shelf brackets	965

PLUMBING

■ Faucet	622
■ Sink	429

SURFACES

■ Breakfast bar	205
■ Countertop	5,595
■ Flooring	3,495
■ Paint	90

MISCELLANEOUS

■ Chandelier over table	130
■ Pendant over peninsula	345
■ Recessed lights	320

TOTAL **\$33,440**



THE DETAILS

ABOVE LEFT Functional pieces, such as the sturdy, sleek chairs in the dining nook, contrast with the cottage feel of the beaded-board wainscoting. **ABOVE RIGHT** A pull-down, single-handle faucet and sink, complete with a shelf grid, keep food prep and cleanup quick. Because space was tight, the faucet was offset.