

Emily Henderson Starts Fresh in a New-Old House

After a down-to-the-studs reno of her 1910 farmhouse in Oregon, the designer made the home her own using a few pieces she's had for years, lots of vintage treasures, and nearly every shade of blue that exists.

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Breakfast Nook

Most weeknight dinners and homework sessions happen at this table, situated just off the kitchen. One of Emily's loves? Her DIY café curtain made of Japanese boro patches, which she collected through Etsy. "It feels a little undone and not too serious," she says.

The Frances Trestle Table, from \$3,150; dinihaniandesign build.com Andy Stools in Midnight + Pool, \$529 each; schoolhouse.com Oregon-Grown & Manufactured White Oak Flooring, from \$12 per sq. ft.; zenaforest.com

Mudroom & Porch

Even though this back-door entryway is mostly about utility (hence the dog-size washtub, the slip-resistant clay tile, and all the storage), Emily made sure it was pretty too. For example, the white oak cabinets add a rustic touch, and the bluish green herringbone floor tiles have a simple but stunning border. On the other side of the house, the front porch feels fun and inviting, thanks mostly to the Scandi-inspired swing.

(Right) 2" x 8" Brownstone Brick Tiles in C330, \$65 per sq. ft.; prattandlarson.com for info
(Bottom) BK13 Swing, \$1,320; danishdesignstore.com



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AFTER 12 YEARS of big-city living in the Los Angeles area, Emily Henderson and her husband, Brian, a writer, were looking for a quieter life near family and friends, many of whom were settled in and around Portland, Oregon. They needed space for their two children, Charlie, 9, and Elliot, 7, and pair of fluffy Huskypoos, Oscar and Buttercup, and soon stumbled upon this 113-year-old farmhouse in the outskirts of town. Right away, Emily knew it was the one. It had plenty of issues—including but not limited to yikes-inducing laminate counters, cheap vinyl walls, and bad carpeting. But as an interior designer with nearly a million followers on Instagram and two books under her belt, she could see the potential.

They bought the property in October 2020 and got to work on the plans, calling in the pros from Arciform, a local design firm, to help with the architectural improvements. “The house was in extremely poor condition, and the original floor plan was so weird and cobbled together,” Emily says. “We had to completely reconfigure the first floor to work for our family.” The demo started in January 2021. Walls were torn down, windows were added, ceilings were raised, and layouts were relaid.

Eventually, it was time for the fun stuff—and that’s when Emily spun into a minor design crisis. Was she a modern farmhouse lady? She wasn’t sure! Many Pinterest boards later, she settled on her vision: Shaker Scandinavian farmhouse, leaning heavily on local makers. After all, she had already added the skylights (the Shakers believed in channeling the divine through daylight) and kept getting drawn to light oak flooring and cabinetry, hallmarks of Scandinavian design. Slowly but surely, everything came together. “We’re so excited to finally be living here,” says Emily, who invited us for a visit. As our team toured the house, we learned a lot, spotted some cool stuff, and yes, pet the dogs a bunch.





Kitchen

The star of this space: the 10-foot-long antique island (a store counter in a previous life), which Emily spent around eight months hunting for. She guesstimates it's about 150 years old. Note how the reddish wood doesn't clash with the white oak cabinetry. Emily's secret to mixing woods is to make sure some are vintage or antique.

*Carson Cord Pendant, from \$499; rejuvenation.com 2" x 6"
Portland Tiles in P146, \$50 per sq. ft.; prattandlarson.com for info
Oxbend Stools, from \$2,250; fernwehwoodworking.com*



Primary Suite

At one point, Emily was worried the paint color she'd picked (Debonair by Sherwin-Williams) was too intense for the main bedroom. But after bringing in a bunch of calming complements—like cream and dusty rose—things felt more balanced. (The bench at the foot of the bed has been a mainstay in her designs for years!) Oversize art, a giant paper pendant, and skylights help break up large expanses of blue too. The attached bathroom showcases a happy accident from Emily's famously casual design process: the larger-than-expected knobs on the vanity. "I'm notorious for not measuring some things, and two inches is a lot bigger than you think it is!" Emily says.

(Right) Hay Rice Paper Shade, from \$35; dwr.com Safari Bench, \$2,870; katyskelton.com Avena Table Lamp, \$219; crateandbarrel.com Toivo Pedestal, \$698; luluandgeorgia.com (Top left) Fairview Traditional Sconces, from \$299; rejuvenation.com 1" x 8" Portland Tiles in C36, \$50 per sq. ft.; prattandlarson.com for info (Top right) Ollie Round Side Table, \$574; luluandgeorgia.com



Family Room

More paint thoughts! “Rooms without a lot of natural light, like this one, need to have color on the walls, even a dark color,”

Emily says. “White paint in a room with no natural light just looks dead and flat.” She went with Still Water by Sherwin-Williams, then added a live-edge coffee table in a light tone (another centerpiece that’s been in Emily’s life for years), which helps brighten the room and maintain the warmth. Speaking of warmth, she smartly put the wood-burning stove on top of custom drawers—to boost the fire to eye level and create storage for board games and craft supplies.

Brendle 3-Arm Chandelier, \$1,299; rejuvenation.com
The Frame TV, from \$600; samsung.com *Stardance Direct Vent Gas Stove, \$3,008; vermontcastings.com*





Living Room & Sunroom

The living room was the hardest space to decorate, Emily says. "It needed to feel elevated, but it also had to be practical and comfortable." To keep it from looking busy, Emily picked a pair of matching sofas (in a performance fabric, because life!) and put a single bolster pillow on each. She also went for closed cabinets to hide "the kid junk" (her words!). The room leads to the European-inspired sunroom, where the porcelain checkerboard tiles really shine. "Sometimes you want a classic pattern to stare at every single day for decades," she says.



(Left) Fabienne Sofas, \$3,998 each, and Gwyneth Rug, \$8,209; luluandgeorgia.com (Below) Portland Tiles, from \$50 per sq. ft.; prattandlarson.com for info Ceremonie Dining Chairs, \$499 each; crateandbarrel.com Rose City Pendant, \$419; rejuvenation.com Mae Credenza, \$8,650; crumpandkwash.com

