



## Time for a Face-Lift

**A new facade transforms a 1920s home into a present-day palace** BY KATE ASHFORD

**IN REAL ESTATE, LOCATION IS EVERYTHING.** So when an outdated 1920s house in their desirable Charlotte, N.C. neighborhood posted a FOR SALE sign three years ago, the owners of a condo down the street scrambled for their checkbooks—and the help of Craig Cox, the architect who lived next door. The property was in a good school district and walking distance from a public park. Unfortunately, it also featured window air conditioners, aluminum siding and a screened-in porch that had seen

better days. Cox replaced the siding and enclosed the porch to make a sleek sunroom with large casement windows around the corner from a new brick patio. The renovation also bumped out the back of the house for a bigger kitchen and upstairs master suite, but stopped short of razing two towering oaks that can be seen from the front yard. “In Charlotte there’s been a trend to tear down and build new and big,” Cox says. “We didn’t overdo it, so the house is a good neighbor to the homes on either side.”



**AFTER**

**Extreme makeover** A shed roof (\$10,700) over the dormer windows helps to balance the house's proportions, while a new entryway (\$4,100) with substantial-looking plywood columns (\$3,300) gives the front a more majestic look. Synthetic HardiePlank siding (\$13,400) mimics the look of wood but holds up better to the elements, while giving the house a cottage feel. Cedar shake siding (\$2,400) on the dormer lends additional depth to the roof.



**BEFORE**

**Let the sunshine in** After two central air systems were installed to cool the house (\$14,800), the outdated window awnings that had provided shade could be removed. The owners then replaced all the windows with casement windows (\$27,100), using 66-inch ones in the front to let far more light into the first floor.

**THE NUMBERS**

BOUGHT IN 2004 FOR

**\$320K**

RENOVATION COSTS

**\$290K**

MARKET VALUE TODAY

**\$775K**

**WHERE DID IT GO?** Just over a quarter of the renovation costs went to redoing the facade, including the installation of new windows, siding, roofing, columns and door, and the addition of a sunroom and front porch. The rest was spent on enlarging the kitchen and master bedroom suite, plus some interior updates. In all the owners added almost 1,000 square feet of living space. "It's the most attractive house on the street," says area realtor Jo Ann Doyle. "And the area is very popular—in a couple more years they'll make a lot more money."

**DOS & DON'TS**  
Adding a New Facade

BY DUO DICKINSON

**DO** give pitch to a roof that is flat. A flat roof is a lot more prone to leak than one that is sloped.

**DON'T** remove the old roof framing. You'll save about \$5,000 by building over the existing roof.

**DO** add character by using color and texture on small elements like dormers and eaves.

**DON'T** use more than one color on the trim. Use the trim to tie all the elements together.

**DO** spend money on windows and doors that face the street to maximize curb appeal.

**DON'T** add front windows in a different style; your renovation will look half-finished.

**DO** ditch window ACs and install central air (\$15,000 or so), which looks better and is more energy-efficient.

**DON'T** forget to vent your roof at the ridge, which will lower air-conditioning costs by at least 10%.

**DO** remove ugly aluminum tack-on awnings and replace with interior shades. Cost: about \$2,000.

**DON'T** leave big windows unprotected from the sun. Add a porch, rooflet or extended eaves to prevent glare and sun damage.

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