

NEW JERSEY'S HOME & DESIGN MAGAZINE

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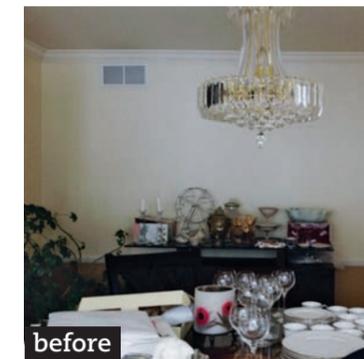
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INTERIOR DESIGNERS SARAH DOOLEY, ASSOCIATE ASID,  
AND STEPHANIE GALLER, ALLIED ASID, IIDA

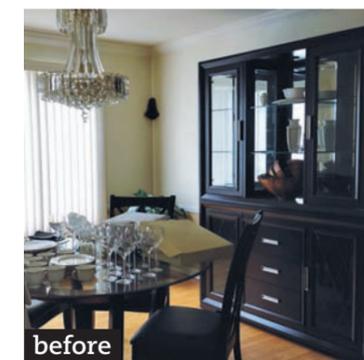


# Attitude Adjustment

Designers bring a modern edge to a 1980s dining room and study in Ocean



before



before

The homeowners requested a midcentury modern vibe and punches of orange in their dining room. Designers Sarah Dooley and Stephanie Galler of Leedy Interiors also oversaw the widening of the passage-way into the kitchen to open up the room and improve traffic flow. The eye-catching ceiling fixture mixes chrome, glass and faceted crystals for glamour and sparkle against the papered accent wall.

**BEFORE:** The owners wanted to reuse their china cabinet and hutch while increasing seating and updating the window treatment, lighting and flooring.

COURTESY OF LEEDY INTERIORS

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With help from Digital Realm Audio & Video, designers Sarah Dooley and Stephanie Galler hid many electronic components in built-ins below the television in the cozy study. A Buddha head sits on the shelf above (the homeowners asked that a Buddha figure be placed in each room). Artist Blakely Bering's three-panel *Titanium I*, a giclée on canvas, hangs above the sofa.

## Robert and Erica Lapid wanted their dining room and study to work more efficiently

and to align with their affinity for modern styling. So Erica began checking designers' online portfolios and client feedback as well as calling promising candidates.

She found a perfect fit in Leedy Interiors, and the feeling was mutual. "When she called us that first time, we really clicked," says Sarah Dooley, principal designer for the Tinton Falls-based firm. So Dooley, an associate member of the American Society of Interior Designers, and junior designer Stephanie Galler, an allied member of ASID and a member of the Interior Design Society, took up the challenge.

"Aesthetics are really important to us," Erica Lapid says. "I shared my Pinterest board and told



before

To warm up the gas fireplace and make the room seem cozier as the owners desired, the design team covered the gray brick with copper-glazed tiles.



The designers layered pictures on the table to heighten interest.

**BEFORE:** Before the redesign, deep built-ins lined two walls of the study and claimed too much floor space.

COURTESY OF LEEDY INTERIORS



before

them we wanted everything to tie in. We like earth tones but wanted each room to have a color pop — orange in the dining room and blue in the study.” Beyond simple updates to the 1987 home in Ocean, Monmouth County, the couple wanted to improve flow and maximize functional space. “We wanted to make our rooms inviting, to personalize our space and to make it feel like home [and] welcoming to our guests. We constantly entertain.

“We were pretty open-minded. I didn’t want anything too floral or too antique. I wanted everything to be modern and clean. We went for old glam in the dining room [with] mid-century pieces.”

#### DINING ROOM DETAILS

To enhance the dining room, the designers enlarged the passageway into the kitchen considerably. As Dooley explains, the Lapidis “had a built-in desk on that wall in the kitchen, but they said they weren’t going to use it,” so the decision was easy. The change creates better flow when entertaining and gives the impression of more space in the 190-square-foot room.

For touches of glitz, the room has a sparkling light fixture and papered accent wall. “That wall is one of the first things people see when they enter the home,” Galler says. “The other walls are interrupted [not lending themselves to wallpaper] with large openings on two and a window on the third.”

Under the table, Galler and Dooley opted for a bright rug. “We are strong believers in having a rug under the dining room table. It adds color and texture, and it grounds the space and makes it quieter.”

#### A STUDY IN BETTER FUNCTIONALITY

The 306-square-foot study — which is now used as a study, library and after-work retreat — was more problematic, Dooley says. “The room had two extremely large, extremely deep oversized built-ins on two walls and a fireplace on the third. That left

room to seat only three people. We removed the wall units and installed built-ins that use much less space. Erica and Robert are avid readers, so we had to accommodate their book storage and the TV that Robert wanted. [After remodeling,] you can seat 10 in there,” even though the floor space is only 269 square feet once the built-ins are subtracted.

Galler points out they painted the backs of the open cabinetry a few shades darker “to make them appear deeper. The built-ins were designed to make a statement, and we put sconces on them to highlight that.” The designers also bolstered the ceiling lighting in the once-dark room to make it more suitable for reading.

Dooley says the Lapidis “wanted the study to feel warm and cozy, and to us that means blues, brasses, copper, dark woods and plush velvet. As designers, these are what come to mind when Stephanie and I think of cozy.”

Erica Lapid agrees: “It’s so cozy in there. I’m a lover of books, so the floor-to-ceiling bookcase is a dream come true. I love sitting in there, having my cup of tea with the fire on and snuggled up to my dog.”

*Freelance writer Mary Vinnedge admires the spare, uncluttered look achieved by Leedy Interiors. Contact her through EditorForRent.com.*

**SOURCES Overall:** Leedy Interiors in Tinton Falls. **Dining room:** table and chairs, All+Modern in Boston; rug, The Rug Mall in Aberdeen; wallpaper, Graham & Brown in Monroe Township; light fixture, Maxim Lighting in City of Industry, California; mirror, Uttermost in Rocky Mount, Virginia; orange vases, Creative Displays in Tinton Falls. **Study:** audiovisual equipment/design, Digital Realm in Red Bank; sofa and blue chairs, Room & Board; wall tiles, Artistic Tile in Shrewsbury; blue armchair, Ballard Designs; floor lamp and wood chairs, Zuo Modern in San Leandro, California; console, CB2; sconces and chandelier, Rejuvenation; coffee table, Blu Dot in Minneapolis; side table, West Elm in Brooklyn, New York; rug, Nourison in Saddle Brook; built-ins, Leedy Interiors and Superior Custom Construction in Tinton Falls; fire screen, Horchow.

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