



# Home Office Haven

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**A LIGHT-FILLED FORMER BASEMENT BEDROOM BECOMES A MULTIPURPOSE SPACE THANKS TO CUSTOM AND VINTAGE ELEMENTS**

(ABOVE) HOMEOWNER AND INTERIOR DESIGNER ELIN WALTERS FELL IN LOVE WITH THIS GRAPHIC AND MOD ROBIN'S EGG-BLUE WALLPAPER AND KEPT A SAMPLE ON HER DESK FOR YEARS, WAITING FOR JUST THE RIGHT PROJECT. "I WAS HOPING IT WOULDN'T GO OUT OF STOCK. I PURPOSELY DIDN'T PUT IT IN ANY OF MY CLIENT PROJECTS SO IT WOULD FEEL LIKE A FRESH NEW SPACE WHEN I COULD FINALLY USE IT," SAYS ELIN. THE VINTAGE DESK LAMP (HER MOTHER'S) AND RETRO-LOOK BLUETOOTH SPEAKER CONTRAST NICELY WITH THE ULTRA-MODERN COMPUTER.

In her 1958 Ann Arbor, Michigan, home, Elin Walters had been running her successful design business from an office the size of a closet. That former office was tucked into an actual closet, though thoughtfully and carefully repurposed (see *Atomic Ranch* Fall 2020 issue).

With a growing workload and a lot more time at home because of the pandemic, Elin knew it was time to expand. "I'm married with two teenage children and two cats. It's a very busy house," she notes. "My work is really expanding, and I needed more space to store samples for my interior design business. So I decided to move into a basement bedroom."

## FINDING MORE SPACE

With a frequent need to spread out legions of samples and blueprints, Elin had a large desk at the top of her wish list. She began researching desks with a Mid Century Modern look, and when it came time to design one to fit her space, she turned to her stepfather, a restoration expert who loves home building projects. Despite being 90 years old, he was eager to take on Elin's vintage-inspired desk.

(ABOVE, RIGHT) THE HOME OFFICE ECHOES THE WATERY BLUE HUES AND BIRCH PLYWOOD FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THE HOUSE. THE ROOM WAS CREATED A FEW YEARS AGO WHEN A MUCH LARGER SPACE WAS DIVVIED UP TO MAKE EXTRA BEDROOMS AND NEW STORAGE AREAS. THE SPACE WAS ELIN'S SON'S ROOM UNTIL THIS YEAR WHEN HE MOVED INTO A ROOM ON THE MAIN FLOOR.



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(TOP) THE MID CENTURY-STYLED DESK WAS MADE OF SEPARATE PIECES AND ASSEMBLED IN THE SPACE. NEW CORK FLOORING REPLACED OLD TILE IN THE HOME OFFICE TO ADD WARMTH.

(ABOVE) THE HOME OFFICE SUCCESSFULLY BLENDS VINTAGE FINDS AND NEW, MODERN PIECES LIKE THE STORAGE CUBES FROM IKEA. ELIN SAYS, "I'M THAT KIND OF DESIGNER. I LIKE TO MIX VINTAGE AND MODERN TO MAXIMIZE PRACTICALITY." THE PAINTING OVER THE BED WAS DONE BY ELIN'S GRANDMOTHER.

The long desk was crafted from birch plywood with maple veneer, and a mid mod boomerang swoop underneath was created as a fabulous design touch that's also a necessary support for the long span. The real creativity—and some construction magic—came with the angled drawers.

"He'd been trying to make those drawers from scratch and it was becoming a really big project. So he went to a resale store and found an old filing cabinet; then he worked backwards and built these beautiful drawers around the vintage filing cabinet as a base. I just love how it turned out!"

## A WALLPAPER OBSESSION

In keeping with Elin's desire for a mid century aesthetic, some retro-styled graphic wallpaper that she'd had her eye on for years was added to the walls. But not before some prep work that quickly became overwhelming. "The drywall needed to be retaped and repaired, and I thought I could do it myself. I'm a perfectionist and I tried so hard to be perfect, but I clearly didn't know what I was doing." In the midst of the pandemic, Elin found a trusted neighbor who had the experience to help repair her well-intentioned drywall DIY.

## CREATING WARMTH AND PERSONALITY

With the overall design finally coming together, Elin brought in the final pieces of her home office: some vintage art, simple IKEA wall storage and a bed for guests. "The mix of natural light combined with my favorite geometric wallpaper of all time, the abstract art and the gigantic desk from which to work just makes me want to be in the space and be productive!" she says. 🧘