



HOME TOUR

# Making It Work

*The home office is made appealing with these chic renovations.*

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Photos by Robert Radifera for Stylish Productions





➔ **EVEN WITH FOLKS** returning to in-person work, the home office trend shows no sign of abating. Whether a niche in another room or a specifically designated space, homeowners are looking for ways to spruce up their workspaces.

### SERENE STUDY

When homeowner and empty nester Stacey Settle was redoing her Arlington home, she reached out to designer Erin Tripodi of Erin Tripodi Design to help her with the renovation.

“I began reviewing architectural plans in 2022,” says Tripodi, who collaborated on the redesign with architect Matt McDonald of MCD Studio. “One of the things on Stacey’s wish list was wanting her new main bedroom addition to double up as a home office.”

With its vaulted shiplap ceiling, the 250-square-foot rectangular space has two windows at one end and a custom designed built-in with bookshelves and plush seating at the other end. The sitting area flanks the fireplace.

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“It became a cozy space where Stacey can discuss family business matters and everyday life with her husband, while relaxing at night,” says Tripodi.

An adjacent desk doubles as a nightstand where Settle can use her laptop computer or do handwritten correspondence. The double-duty bedside lamp provides task lighting as needed.

**“Every window looks out to nature, and it truly feels like a retreat. It’s a lovely space for Stacey to use when she works at home.”**

— Erin Tripodi, Erin Tripodi Design

“We were able to create an efficient and beautiful home office by combining it with the main bedroom,” says Tripodi.

Design choices in the room flow with respect to its transitional style and its soft palette of teals, blushes, and aquas. Tripodi carefully selected the art to elevate the spatial experience and introduced fun pops of pattern in the pillow textiles.

“The addition is nestled in the woods on the northern border of Arlington,” adds Tripodi of the bedroom. “Every window looks out to nature, and it truly feels like a retreat. It’s a lovely space for Stacey to use when she works at home.”

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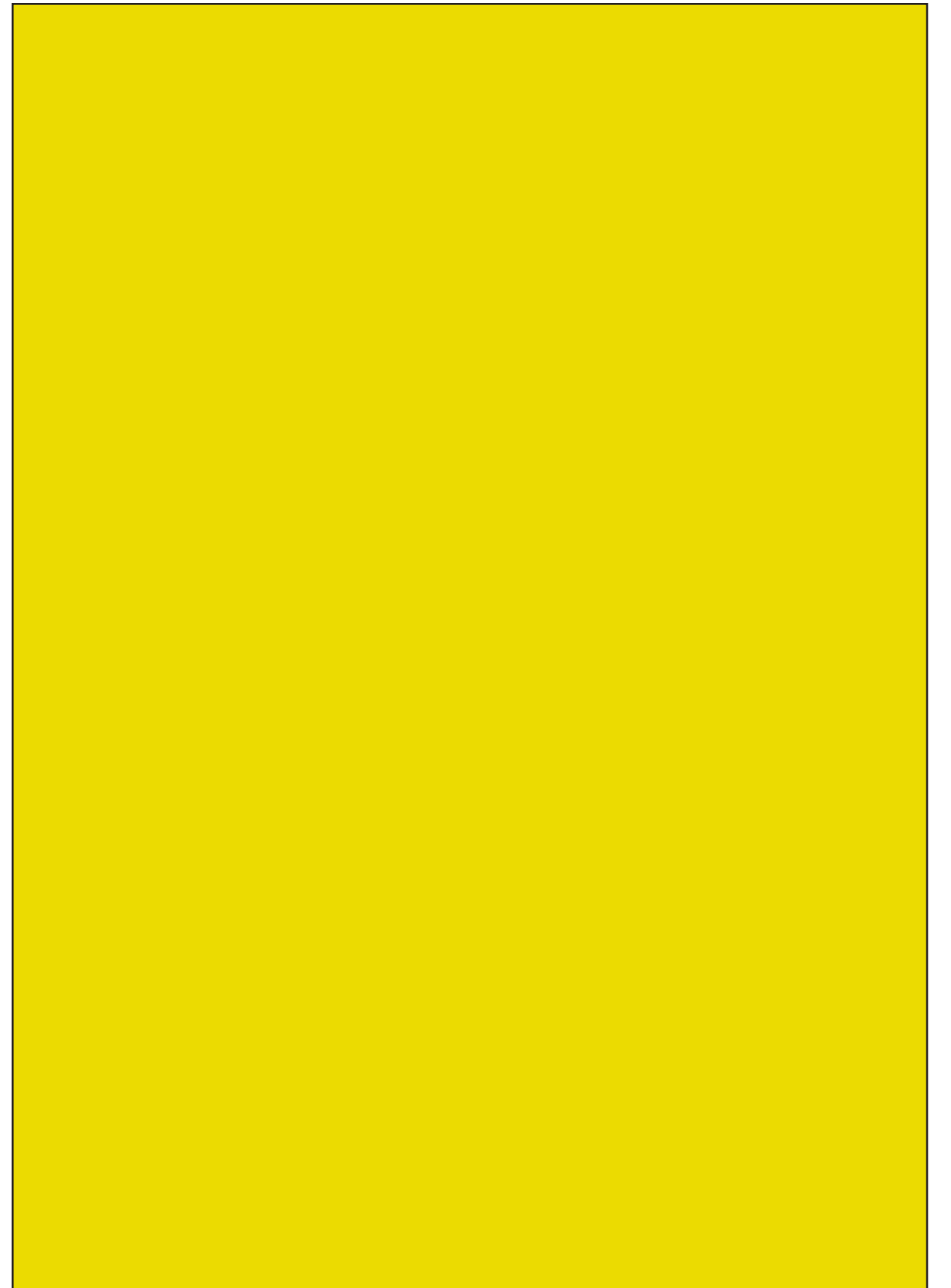


**LIVING THE DREAM**

This colonial-style house came with a 240-square-foot designated home office on its main floor plan. The formerly bland, white-walled room with dark wood

bookshelves was in need of an upgrade.

“My client’s husband, who is a radiologist, used the office most of the time during COVID, when he was working from home and not at the hospital,” says DMV interior designer Katy Anderson, who







was brought in to remodel the space as the pandemic eased. The client, who works for the federal government, “has taken over the space full-time since the redesign,” Anderson says.

“The homeowners wanted a vibrant palette that made the office feel alive and also created an inviting space, as the office is right off the foyer,” says Anderson. “There is also a set of glass French doors separating the room from the rest of the house, which meant the design needed to have the same level of sophistication as the adjacent rooms.”

Anderson went bold by enveloping the entire office — ceiling, shelves, and trim — in a rich glossy blue. Because plenty of natural light flowed into the space through the front windows and French doors, this moody choice made perfect sense.

“We also purchased a new desk, a wingback armchair, and an antique footstool, making the office feel comfortable and stylish, as well as functional,” she says.

Other touches include floral-patterned Roman shades to add femininity and warmth, and accessories and art.

“Layering these bookshelves took extra time, but the mix of vintage and new items throughout really complete the cozy, welcoming space we sought to create,” she says.

It is not uncommon for her client to be asked on Zoom: “Is your background real?” It’s almost too beautiful to be believed. Her client says that’s her favorite compliment; this room is her dream office.

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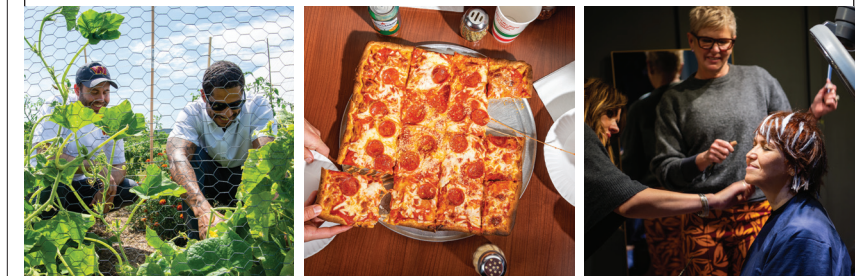
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## DESIGNER AT HOME

Interior designer Valerie Darden of Brexton Cole Interiors had a say when she built her semi-custom home in 2022 with RCI Builders.

“I wanted a home office on the main level because I work from home 50 percent of the time,” says Darden, who lives with her husband and their two boys, Brexton and Cole, her business namesakes. “I especially had to have a designated space to store clients’ paperwork and create mood boards on my computer program,” she says.

Darden had more need for a working home office than for a formal living room, so she opted to use one of the two bright, airy spaces at the front of the house’s center hall for this purpose. (The room directly across the hall is her dining room.)

“My firm is known for its traditional design style mixed with modern elements,” says Darden. “I wanted to reflect this style in my own home and office as well.”

The wall of built-ins, combining open and closed storage, is finished in a soft green paint that wraps around the adjacent walls. The shelves hold a collection of decorative objects and books. Meanwhile, an antique rug pairs seamlessly with a midcentury-modern desk.

Darden also added an architecturally salvaged mantel, lacquered black, as an unexpected decorating element. There are layers of lighting throughout, including overhead, integrated into the built-in element, and on either side of the mantel.

“The office works perfectly with my lifestyle,” she says, then quotes architect and designer Charles Eames Jr.: “The details are not the details. They make the design.” ■