



2 outdated rooms + **54** college women
+ **63** power tools + **12+** hours =

SORORITY MAKEOVER!

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timeline

The women of Gamma Phi Beta at Iowa State University get handy with power tools and transform their house in (about) 12 hours.

The rooms were prepped, with furniture removed and woodwork masked, the previous evening, so the morning crew (no a.m. classes for these gals) fuels up for the workday with coffee and scones. **TIP: Remove furniture and switchplates, mask floors and woodwork, and set out supplies the day before a makeover.**

8:00 a.m.



8:30 a.m. How-to coaches Heidi Baker, Eden Jarrin, and Brooke Coe of Be Jane, Inc., surprise the crew with hot-pink tool belts. The Janes tie up their hair and launch into demos of Ryobi power tools. The Gamma Phis get comfortable with drills, jigsaws, sanders, miter saws, laser levels, and reciprocating saws.

9:30 a.m. Let there be paint! The colors (a pale green for the library, a cool blue for the meeting room) are instant room brighteners. Meanwhile, the demolition crew removes shelves from the mirror niche in the library, patches holes, and sands drawers. **TIP: For a painting party, use carpet mask (thick cling film with an adhesive back) to shield the floor.**

11:00 a.m.

Amid shipping boxes, packing material, and packages of screws, the furniture-assembly team puts together storage shelves, chairs, and trophy cases. Instruction manuals—you *should* read 'em. “You make more work for yourself when you don’t follow directions,” Coe says with a smile. Fortunately those cordless drills back out screws fast!



12:00 p.m. Just enough time for pizza, then it’s back to second coats of paint, more sanding, and additional furniture assembly. We glue a plywood panel over the mirror in the niche to make a focal point. In the meeting room, painters add sections of magnetic primer and red paint to the walls.

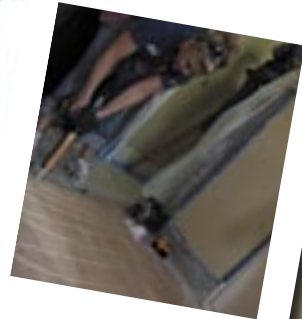
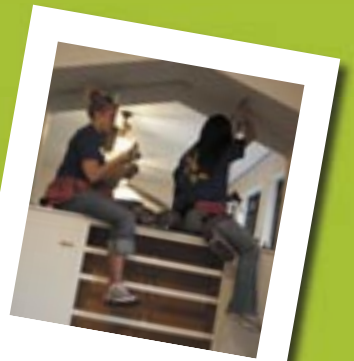
“After today, I think I’ll be doing a lot of things like this!”

—CORTNEY SMITH



“When we made mistakes we learned how to fix them.”

—SARAH FEELY



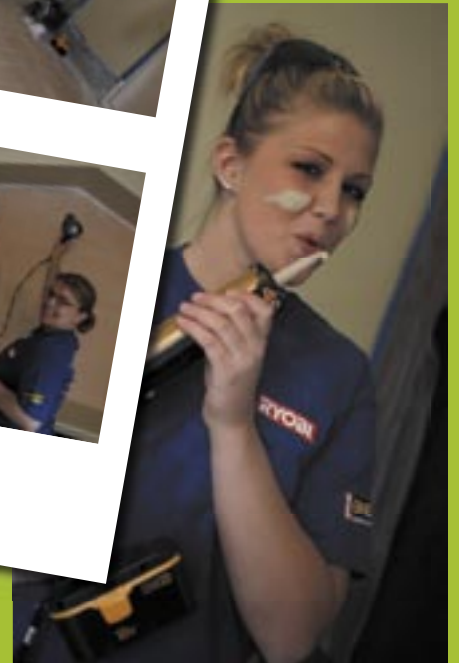
Facelift for the niche



TIP

Don't wear lipgloss while sanding (the dust sticks).

The library before its new look





1:00 p.m. The curtain panels are out of the packaging and being steamed to remove wrinkles. We start installing the shelf units in the meeting room.

2:00 p.m. The paint on the built-in drawers is dry and it's time for new pulls. Crew members drill holes for the new hardware.

3:00 p.m.

The power miter saw comes in handy for cutting molding to frame the calendar and photo displays in the meeting room. Spray paint is a quick way to turn black picture frames brown to coordinate with the palette. **TIP: Use magnetic primer to paint your own magnetic board right on a wall. Top the dark primer with your choice of latex paint.**



4:00 p.m. In the library, we install floating display shelves and curtain hardware; we use a hammer drill to penetrate the plaster walls. The team comes up with a clever fix when the curtain-rod brackets won't extend past exposed pipes: mounting blocks cut from scrap wood and painted to match the wall.

5:00 p.m. We finish installing the storage units in the meeting room, move in the file cabinets and table, and arrange the colorful new storage containers. We also screw on new outlet covers. The room is ready for furniture and accessories!

6:00 p.m.

Heidi, Eden, and Brooke show us it's easier than you think to install ceiling fans (the assembly is tougher than wiring the fixture). They use an electricity tester to make sure the power is off before completing the simple wiring job.



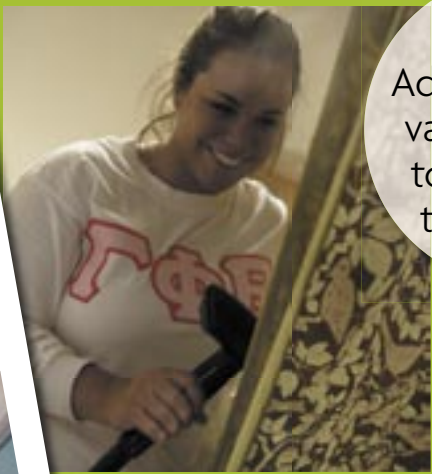
7:00 p.m. There are a few tasks we'll finish another day: scribing molding to fit around the niche, touching up some paint, arranging new furniture and decorative objects, and taking the "after" photos. The sorority governing board decides to pull up the carpet and refinish the wood floor. In just a day, the Omega chapter house of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority feels more like home.



"I can't believe we've gotten so much done today!"

—STACEY GOODMAN

TIP
Add a capful of vanilla extract to your paint to cut odor.



Group Dynamics

Many hands make light work, but they also make messes. Here's how to cope:

- Mask every surface not due a coat of paint. Protect the floor with carpet mask (someone's bound to drip).
- Divide the crew into work teams with specific tasks. Make sure they have the instructions, tools, and materials needed to complete their assignments.
- Don't panic! There are fixes for almost every home improvement mistake. (We had to fill, sand, and paint incorrectly spaced holes for hardware, but no biggie!)

Painting pros



The day was controlled chaos!

ta-dah!

Classy fan

Streamlined shelves

Focal-point niche



TIP
Use an area rug to define a cozy seating zone.

*New curtains
and shades*



The library, where Gamma Phis meet to chat and study, wears a layered look. Pillows from home furnishing stores and exotic accents from import stores enrich the room.



TIP

Hang curtain panels near the ceiling—elegant!

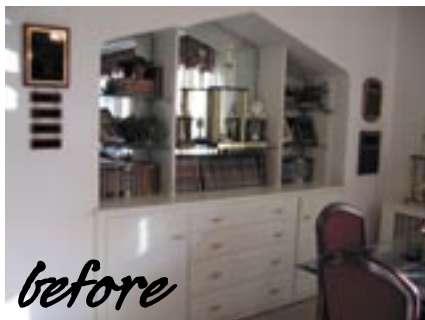
“It’s cool to think we really did this.”

—JENNA SUDMAN

“I’ve never touched a power tool until today. I think this would be a fun hobby.”

—MAGGIE ALLEN

Pattern draws attention to the windows



The library, including the niche, *above*, has a look anyone would welcome home: a sophisticated color scheme that pairs mossy green with dramatic red. We avoided matchy-matchy decor: The furniture features black or brown finishes, and the metal accents range from dark bronze to wrought iron.



Heidi, Eden, & Brooke—our how-to coaches!

*Magnetic
calendars stick
to the wall!*



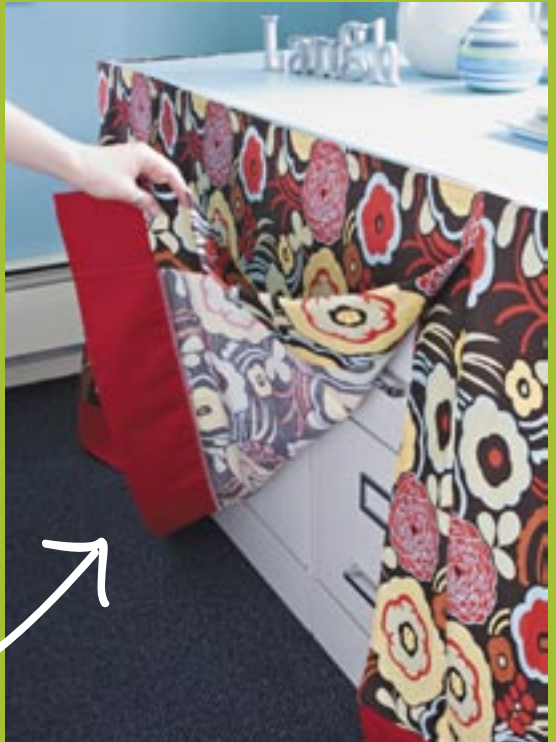
“Spackle and paint will make it what it ain’t!”

—HEIDI BAKER, BE JANE, INC.

TIP

Consolidate storage on one side to open up a room.

The meeting room before—too much clutter



This flirty skirt hides 6 file cabinets!



*A full wall
of storage*

Key clutter busters we installed in the meeting room include a ready-to-assemble closet storage system with open shelves and drawers. The nearby “credenza” (shown on the previous page) is simply a piece of medium-density fiberboard cut to size, finished with edge molding, and set on top of file cabinets. The skirt attaches with hook-and-loop tape.



before



A place for pics

SPONSOR: Ryobi Tools. CONTRIBUTORS: Materials, supplies, and Behr paint: The Home Depot. Upholstered furniture and library tables: Broyhill Furniture. Ceiling fans: Hampton Bay. Shades and curtain rods: Levolor. Meeting room storage containers: The Container Store. HOW-TO COACHES: Be Jane, Inc., www.bejane.com.

*We worked
(and played)
hard!*

TIP
Frame wall displays with molding for a tidy look.

12 hours later we're exhausted but

we did it!