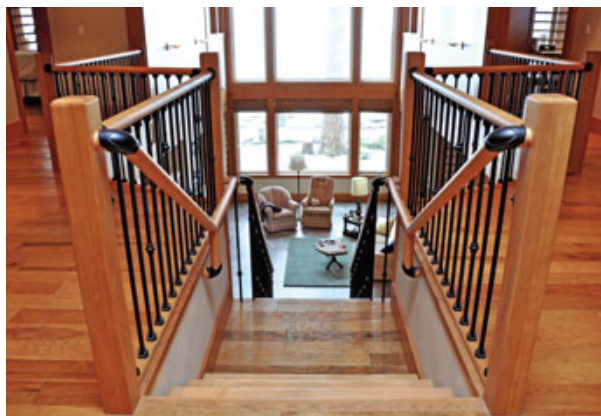


Products | by Tom O'Brien

Idiot-Proof Railings. The *Stair Simple Axxys Railing System* uses unique pivoting connectors to join the stair rail to the newel post and the balusters to the rail, eliminating any need for complex miter cuts. These parts are available individually or as part of a kit that includes everything needed to complete an 8-foot railing section. Rails are predrilled; installing one section takes about an hour, says the maker. The kit costs \$215.

BW Creative Wood Industries, 800/667-8247, stairsimple.com.



Green Trim. Outwater says its *100% Recycled Cornice and Crown Mouldings* are made entirely from reclaimed polystyrene but match the quality



of mouldings made from virgin polymers. The lineup includes more than 100 varieties of straight trim and corner details. Although suited to traditional cornice or crown applications, these mouldings are specially designed

to house indirect lighting fixtures. Most of the offerings are available only in 8-foot lengths. Prices range from \$4.40 to \$10.80 per piece.

Outwater Plastics Industries, 800/631-8375, outwater.com.



No-Fuss Drain.

All of American Standard's bathroom faucets feature the easy-to-install *Speed Connect Drain*. Unlike most sink-drain kits — which include 14 loose pieces — this one has only four, including a pre-assembled stopper and a one-piece control cable that never needs adjusting. Installation involves making two connections and tightening them by hand, with no tools, caulk, or putty required. The drain is not available for retrofits. Faucet prices range from \$50 to more than \$500.

American Standard Brands, 800/442-1902, americanstandard-us.com.



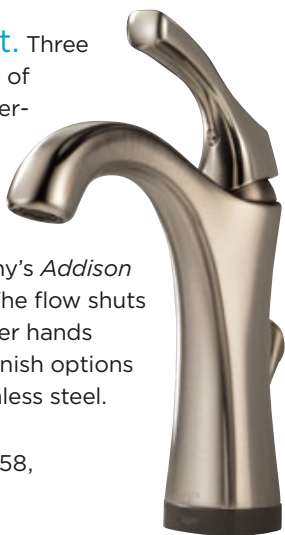
Secret Passage. Hiding the entrance to a utility room behind a moveable bookcase is a terrific idea until you try to find hardware that's up to the challenge. *Hidden Door Bookcases* are supported by a concealed steel frame that rides on a heavy-duty ball-bearing hinge. According to the maker, the 10-inch-deep bookcase can hold 500 pounds yet swings open with the touch of a finger. Prices start at \$1,965 for a 2-foot 8-inch bookcase.

Hidden Doors by Design, 866/530-0003, hiddendoorsbydesign.com.

Products

Hands-Free Bath Faucet. Three years ago, Delta introduced a line of kitchen faucets with a battery-operated sensor that made it possible to turn on the taps without touching them. Now this option — called Touch2O Technology — is also available for the company's *Addison* and *Lahara* lavatory collections. The flow shuts off automatically five seconds after hands move out of the sensing range. Finish options include bronze, chrome, and stainless steel. Prices range from \$435 to \$520.

Delta Faucet Co., 800/345-3358, deltafaucet.com.



Easy-Going Foam.

TriggerFoam Pro Window & Door Foam will not disfigure window and door frames when it expands, says the maker. Designed to be applied with a standard foam gun, the low-pressure polyurethane foam sealant contains no CFCs, PCBs, or urea formaldehyde and adheres to wood, metal, masonry and concrete, the company says. A 29-ounce can costs \$15.

Powers Fasteners, 914/235-6300, powers.com.



Mahogany Doors. If you're looking to create a dramatic entryway but can't find the right door, consider a custom mahogany unit from Borano. The company claims that all of its products are made from Honduran mahogany harvested from certified sustainable forests. Borano sells factory-direct to the customer; lead-time is approximately 10 to 12 weeks. Prices for a single door range from \$4,000 to more than \$20,000.

Borano, 561/939-3368, borano.com.

See-Through Shutters. According to its maker, the *Armor Screen Fabric Hurricane Protection System* defends windows from flying debris as effectively as plywood but installs and packs away much more easily. Plus it's transparent, so the owners won't feel like they're riding out the storm in a cave. The basic kit — which secures with buckles and straps — costs about \$8 per square foot. Sliding and electric or manual roll-up systems are also available; installed costs for them range from \$25 to \$60 per square foot.

Armor Screen Corp., 561/841-8890, armorscreen.com.



Products

Snap-Together Subfloor. *Barricade SubFloor Tiles* combine a high-performance OSB top surface with an XPS rigid insulation base layer.



The 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick 2-foot-by-2-foot T&G panels install without nails or glue and have an R-3.2 insulation value. Channels in their bottoms direct moisture to a floor drain. Compatible with vinyl, carpet, laminate, and engineered hardwood flooring, the tiles sell

for \$7 to \$8.50 each. The company makes similar panels for finishing basement walls.

Ovr Manufacturing, 866/544-6879, ovrx.com.

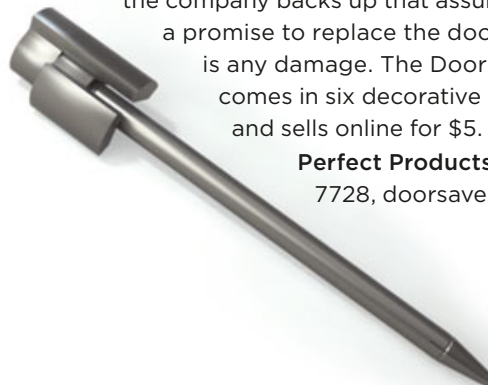
Less-Costly LEDs. *ViriBright LED Light Bulbs* offer the efficiency, durability, and dimmability of LEDs at a price closer to what you'd expect to pay for high-quality compact fluorescents. They come in tubes, downlights, spots, and various lamp bulbs. A 5-watt A-line lamp (comparable to a 7-watt CFL or a 40-watt incandescent) costs about \$13. A 20-watt 4-foot T8 tube (the equivalent of a 40-watt T8 fluorescent tube) costs about \$33.

Matrix Lighting, 877/847-4276, viribright.com.



Inconspicuous Doorstop. The *DoorSaver II* is a replacement hinge pin with an adjustable mechanism that uses the exposed portion of the hinge leaf (rather than the soft face of the door or casing) as a stop. The desired range of motion can be adjusted in increments of 11 degrees. The maker says these devices will not mar the surface of a door — and the company backs up that assurance with a promise to replace the door if there is any damage. The DoorSaver II comes in six decorative finishes and sells online for \$5.

Perfect Products, 877/366-7728, doorsaver.com.



Premium Gutters. The *5N1 Gutter System* is intended to be installed when the house is built. It mounts by means of an integral drip-edge and soft-fit channel, eliminating any need for exposed screws. (The assembly also includes an integral leaf guard.) According to the manufacturer, the heavy-duty recycled aluminum product can be powder-coated to match any color, or to look like copper or steel. Installed costs range from \$17 to \$22 per foot.

MarPec, 319/540-6795, 5n1.com.

