



coming *of age*

*A mom of four
builds a home
resilient enough
for her lively family.*

opposite: Double-height ceilings give the breakfast room a grand feel. The wooden Windsor chairs punch up the farmhouse style, and they're much easier to clean than chairs with upholstered seats. The dual barn doors leading to the crafts/playroom and office stack when open. *this photo:* "You always want guests to have an experience the minute they open the front door," designer Kristin Peake says. Though the French oak plank flooring is new, it has dents and worn spots so it looks reclaimed.



When this young mom of four said mud pies were often

on the menu at her house, interior designer Kristin Peake didn't blink. She simply made a note to herself: Sink. Architect Patrick Zimmerman had the same idea, drawing up plans that included a crucial cleanup spot just inside the back door, a pragmatic addition to the sturdy farmhouse being built in McLean, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C.

"She knew exactly what she wanted," Peake says of her client, who, together with Peake and Zimmerman, masterminded a home that caters to the rough-and-tumble needs of raising a family while highlighting the home's wooded surroundings.

The main level's formal spaces (entry, dining room, family room, and kitchen) follow a classic four-square layout, but things get looser from there with the walls opening up or vanishing to allow unbroken sight lines from the kitchen to the playroom to the porch so Mom can keep an eye on the kids. Zimmerman alternated between crown molding in the formal spaces and rough-sawn poplar beams in the family spaces to delineate the two.

And the decor, well, it had to take any punch (or mud splatter) the kids might dole out. Peake started by wrapping the interior in whitewashed shiplap to keep the home bright and set the aesthetic. Black windows and lighting added depth and authenticity to each room. "It's quintessential farmhouse style," Peake says. Blue—her client's favorite color—rounded out the pared-down palette. Peake deployed the hue sparingly in most rooms, except the dining room, where she splashed it on liberally with foggy periwinkle blue walls and a graphic leaf fabric from Galbraith & Paul.

Contemporary touches like this are sprinkled throughout, making clear that though the look is historical, the family isn't tied to tradition. "Every place you turn, we tried to incorporate something fresh and new with the old feeling," Peake says. It's a mix with staying power, and that's a good thing: Peake's client told her this house is it; she doesn't ever plan to move.

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Mess-concealing, indestructible, and comfortable, the family room lives up to its name. With a navy sectional (great for hiding stray spots) dominating the room, Peake kept the other elements quiet, opting for white wooden furniture and understated patterns to accent.





above: The formal dining room sits just inside the front door, so Peake wanted it to make a statement. She added a wall color she calls “periwinkle, but not” and furnished it with traditional pieces, including a large china hutch to balance the proportions of the 10-foot-long table. *right:* The butler’s pantry is between the kitchen and dining room and visible from both. “We needed something sort of dramatic to tie those two together,” Peake says, “and I needed a departure from all the white.” *far right:* Poplar beams frame the kitchen. “You can never go wrong with all white, but to not contrast it with the island would have been a mistake,” Peake says. She chose oak finished slightly richer and warmer than the flooring, then capped the feet with metal.



*farm*made
modern

lesson
number

10

Leathered marble on kitchen countertops trades sheen for a texture that's almost soft to the touch. Bonus: It hides water marks and fingerprints more readily than polished stone.





Swinging seats make the screen porch a popular hangout for the kids (a brilliant idea the client had herself). Indoor/outdoor fabric makes white upholstery possible, providing a bright counterpoint to the flagstone floor and Old Charleston Random stone fireplace, sourced from a local quarry to lessen the home's environmental impact.

