

# APP-TITUDE FOR DESIGN

BY JENNIFER SERGENT

SOCIAL MEDIA AND HANDY APPS ARE CHANGING THE WAY HOMEOWNERS APPROACH DECORATING



For the design-obsessed home-related, there's no shortage of social-media sites and smartphone apps for getting inspired and organizing projects. The key is knowing which site is best for what, and how to use one with another. To find out, we asked some web-savvy moms and designers how they navigate design online.

Siobhan Mueller says she's not sure how she and her husband could have renovated their new weekend house near Warrenton without social media. Using a combination of Houzz, Pinterest, and a construction-management app called Co-construct, Mueller and her husband, Sander, could virtually commute to the job site from their Arlington home, working in real time with architect Dwight McNeill and builder Jonathan Caron on every product choice and design decision.

"The whole point is to make a very difficult process easier," Mueller says. She looked first to Houzz, with its thousands of polished, professional photographs, for inspiration. Then she pinned images from that site and others to Pinterest boards dedicated to each space in the new house. Through Co-construct, Caron and McNeill posted

pictures from the job site, along with a bevy of questions and comments about the progress. "It looks like a Facebook message board," Mueller says, adding that plans and payment schedules were also attached. "It's our own little password-protected website."

Pinterest is universally the top choice among designers and clients when it comes to planning a project. "It's just being able to organize my thoughts visually, in a really simple way," says Leah Moss, a former writer for Apartment Therapy who transitioned into design. Houzz is notable for its reviews and information. "Everyone on Houzz is design-minded, so I trust the discussions," she says.

Bethesda designer Samantha Friedman uses Pinterest almost exclusively, creating boards for each client. "It's a game-changer," she says. "We don't even keep client binders anymore—everything is on Pinterest." She also loves Benjamin Moore's Color Capture app. She can take a picture of a client's room and then touch a part of the photo—the sofa, say, or the rug—and the app will instantly suggest a paint color to match. "Within one or two shades, it's really dead-on." **M**



## 8 WEBSITES AND APPS FOR DESIGN-LOVERS



### BENJAMIN MOORE'S COLOR CAPTURE

This app lets you take a picture to get a paint match.



### iHANDY LEVEL

Need help hanging pictures? This app turns your phone into a level, so all your art will be perfectly placed.



### CO-CONSTRUCT

For any construction project, the software and app allow the builder, design team, and client to collaborate on a cloud-based platform.



### PHOTO MEASURES LITE

This app lets you upload a picture of the room you're decorating, and overlay its dimensions on the floors and walls.



### DECORPAD.COM

Browse inspiration photos by room or paint color. The site's best feature is "look 4 less," a review of high-end products—and similar (if not identical) ones on sale for much less.



### PINTEREST.COM

Pin photos from all over the web—or your own computer—onto boards organized by category, or create secret boards or boards that multiple users can pin to.



### HOZZ.COM

A curated website with professional images from designers, architects, and builders. Users can ask professionals questions, or contribute to forums.



### POLYVORE.COM

A site for those who want to create mood boards using products from across the web. Virtually, create a room design and the site will link back to where each product is sold.