

# It Works for Me!

Home offices get the job done for five Austin professionals

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYANN FORD

A great home office is the ideal convergence of the practical and the spontaneous—it's easy to access and it's always there when you need it. Here are five home offices that are clearly more useful to their owners than just as a tax write-off. Each one has a special feature that makes it the perfect setting for inspiration—see for yourself how you can make someone else's bright idea get to work for you, too.

## GOOD IDEA!

The pièce de résistance in Renner's office is the wall (left) behind the conference table that she uses during weekly meetings with her construction crew and in between for notes to herself. The wall is made from green chalkboards, cut to fit and fastened with bolts.



## Kimberly Renner

CONTRACTOR, DESIGNER, LANDSCAPER, INTERIOR DESIGNER

A few years ago, the ball of energy who is Kimberly Renner vowed to integrate home, work and school life. "I made a really strong commitment," she says. The mother of two young boys, Renner and her family live in Aldridge Place, the same neighborhood as her sons' school. Proof of her commitment: Renner won't take a construction job if it isn't within walking distance of her house.

When the crew needs something in the afternoon, they know they'll find Renner at home with her boys, and if she needs to go to a job site, the boys tag along. "Fortunately, they really like construction," she says.

Having a home office is an integral part of her game plan. "I have a strong form-follows-function philosophy," she says. "I follow it strictly."

The main table where her crew meets is an old green science-lab table. The bulbs overhead are bare, with exposed filaments and wiring. Renner says she likes to expose the functionality of an object. A concrete wall divides the big room into two parts, making a separate space for Renner's team on the other side.

The house is located across the backyard from her house ... well, her future house. Renner specializes in renovating older homes, and not surprisingly, she is renovating her own home at the moment.

In her office, she's clipped a page from a magazine and tacked it to the wall. It has a photo of a clothespin and a quotation attributed to Dana Jenkins: "Utility and simplicity, shape and structure, dictated by a purpose." That's Renner's philosophy, made manifest in her work space.