## home-garden - Wednesday, January 25, 2006 - Section

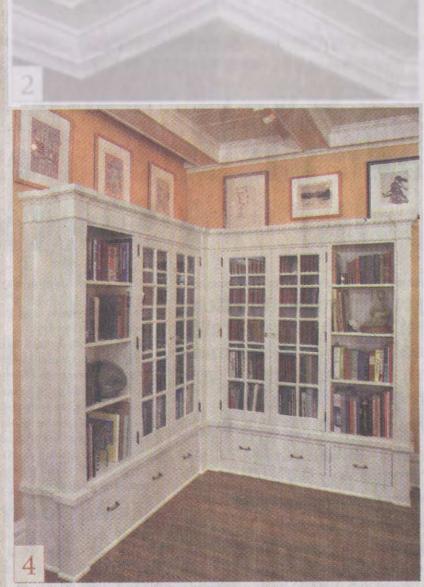
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## A CHARACTER-RICH BOOK IS A PAGE-TURNER. A CHARACTER-RICH HOME TURNS HEADS.

• Architectural details, from simple crown molding to grand Corinthian columns, can impart a stylish modern edge or Old World charm, and evoke a sense of quality and warmth. • Here are five character-builders that don't require knocking down walls or altering the structure of a room. But remember that added architectural details should flow with the style and scale of your home. • "Don't add character for character sake," said Jim Noble of Noble Interiors. "You have to have a plan and it has to make sense."







Ceiling beams Ceiling beams dress up the "fifth wall" with texture and contrast. Today's applications are more sophisticated and intricately constructed than the rough-hewn cedar cobweb catchers of the 1980s, said Craig Plekkenpol, owner of Plekkenpol Builders. Simple crisscross or elaborate patterns in a range of materials and finishes can mimic the look of a lodge to a high-rise urban loft.

Interior trim Install a chair rail or frame a ceiling, doorway or existing built-in with slender or wide molding for high design impact. Crown molding can make a low ceiling appear higher and a vaulted room feel cozier. Available in a range of hardwoods and fabricated stone looks. "It feels more established and settled," said Noble. "Crown molding on a ceiling can make a room feel like a cocoon."

High design wood floors Wood inlays and medallions turn a humdrum hardwood floor into a work of art. Use inlay borders to define a dining room or around a kitchen center island and introduce different wood tones or metal. Available in a wide range of designs — from French knot to Art Nouveau — and woods — from leopard to Bubinga. On a budget? Try painting a border.

Built-ins The well-crafted built-in can marry style and function and become an architectural centerpiece.
This L-shape bookcase echoes cottage style trim throughout the house. "It adds a richness and layer of detail," said interior designer David Heide of David Heide Design Studio. "A bookcase is also a subtle way to communicate to visitors who you are and what you value."

Columns You don't have to have a Greek Revival style home to incorporate interior columns, the latest design trend in new construction and remodels. Use columns to define a space, break up an open floor plan or divide rooms with elegance and grace. Available in a huge range of styles, in heavy stone to lightweight fiberglass, and sold even at big-box home improvement stores.

Wood inlay floor photo, No. 3, provided by Oshkosh Floor Design

How to install these character-adding details, H6