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COLUINIE PERKY • Special to The Star Tribune

Sisters Sara, right, and Julia Rosenman hang their jackets in their new mudroom inspired by the style of the early 1900s Craftsman Minneapolis home.

EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE

• Thoughtfully designed, hardworking mudrooms make life easier and more organized.

By LYNN UNDERWOOD
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The once-lowly mudroom has earned a place among the big three of remodeling projects.

A space to ease the transition from outside to inside, to organize boots, mittens and scarves, and to keep grunge at bay is the most requested home improvement, after kitchens and bathrooms, say Twin Cities designers and contractors.

"Our clients tell us they love their home and neighborhood but they can't stand the mess of coats and backpacks and want help," said Ron Sonnek of Sicora Home Design in St. Louis Park.

But modern mudrooms are much more

than a couple of coat hooks and a storage cabinet. To be efficient, organized spaces, mudrooms are getting bigger and offering multiple functions: a "drop zone" for keys and groceries; storage for coats, boots and sports equipment; built-in benches to make taking shoes on and off easier, even stations to charge electronics. Many have heated floors and are designed to match the architectural style of the home.

Michael Rosenman recently put in a highly detailed, Arts and Crafts-inspired mudroom in his Minneapolis home. While he appreciates the look of the room, it's all about the function.

"No matter how you design the look and finishes," he said, "I think of how you use it every day — that's what matters."



Sara, left, and Julia Rosenman stow their hats and mittens in built-in cabinets accented by an Arts and Crafts style stained glass window.

To see four Twin Cities mudrooms, turn to page H6

EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE



Photos by COURTNEY PERRY - special to the Star Tribune

Owners Michael and Karla Rosenman converted a long hallway and butler's pantry into a multifunctional mudroom outfitted with amenities such as a heated floor, but it remains true to the Craftsman character of the home. Julia and Sara Rosenman know exactly where to hang their coats and backpacks.



STAYING IN CHARACTER

Starting point: Owners Michael and Karla Rosenman had extensively remodeled their Craftsman-style home, taking cues from its early 1900s architecture. But the couple and their young daughters still didn't have a place to take off their shoes and hang coats. Besides, said Michael, "we really wanted a heated floor."

Design/build team: Nathan Shanklin, Next Level Designers and Builders, Racine, www.nextlevelbuilders.com, and David Heide, David Heide Design Studio, www.dhdstudio.com.

What they did: Heide converted a butler's pantry inside a galley-style hallway into a mudroom. The space is outfitted with a large coat closet, shoe cubbies, kid-height drawers for mittens and hats and floor-to-ceiling storage cabinets. There's a drop zone, where the girls dump their backpacks and the family

charges their smartphones. Pull-out drawers hold the recycling. For entertaining, Heide designed a bar with a sink, wine cooler and dishwasher. "We always come in the back entrance and drop it all here," said Michael. "This room keeps everything organized."

Not so obvious: "It's basically an invisible mudroom that is concealed within the butler's pantry and back hallway," said Heide. "The coat closet is tucked under the stair. The charming window seat is also a place to put on your boots."

Nod to Arts and Crafts: The mudroom echoes the home's period style with looky elements such as brick-pattern slate floor, geometric stained glass window and red birch cabinets.

Home sweet home: "When we feel the heated floor, we know we're home," said Michael.

NEAT AND CLEAN

Starting point: Greg and Tracy Brinkmeyer tore down a small home and built a new one in St. Louis Park. "A mudroom in Minnesota is a must-have," said Greg. "It was a big part of the new home design."

Design/build team: Ron Sonnek, Sicora Design Build, St. Louis Park, www.sicora.com.

What they did: Sonnek designed a cost-efficient mudroom by the back door, which is equipped with open coat lockers and storage bins for shoes and gloves. There's also an enclosed closet for storing seasonal outerwear. The floor is made of durable, easy-to-clean vinyl composite tile. "The mudroom's clean-lined style matches the transitional look of the rest of the house," said Sonnek.

Bench smart: Sonnek extended the coat lockers out a few feet to create a bench.

Mini-office: On another wall (not pictured), Sonnek built a desk with drawers and cabinets to organize paperwork as well as a spot to toss mail. "It's just 2 feet by 2 feet," he said, "but it's the best money you'll spend on two feet in your house."

Bright idea: The couple covered part of the wall with magnetic chalkboard paint and framed it with wood.

Color coded: The cabinets are painted a charcoal gray, which repeats the color of the kitchen island. "We also wanted the gray in there because it's a mudroom and gray doesn't show the dirt," Greg said.



Provided photo

Storage lockers and a magnetic chalkboard help keep the family organized.