

# BEAUTY BY

A Connecticut bath exudes simple elegance





# THE BOOK

by following the basic principles of design.

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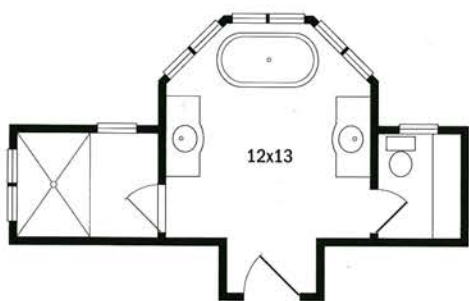
Bay windows evocative of the bow of a boat were the starting point for this bathroom's design.





## GOOD DESIGN ALWAYS

looks easy. Many savvy do-it-yourselfers have plunged confidently into a home improvement project only to discover midway through that perhaps there is more to “home design” than simply trying to re-create an image from magazine pages. This elegant bathroom, designed by Sabrina Foulke for the Gasvoda family of Darien, Connecticut, is a picture-perfect example for explaining the basic principles of good design.



**ABOVE LEFT:** Shapely faucet details have timeless appeal. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The dark finish on the vanities’ hardware and ball feet contrasts with the lighter finish on the rest of each piece. **OPPOSITE LEFT:** Water-resistant teak, finished with marine-grade shellac, frames a window in the shower. **OPPOSITE RIGHT:** A variety of tile sizes adds interest to the shower; the color provides a cohesive look.

**REPETITION** is the easiest design tenet to spot. “The circle is a common element found throughout our house,” homeowner Alison Gasvoda says. “Repeating it on the window mullions, floor tiles, and even with the circular shape of the tub is something I wouldn’t have thought of on my own, yet it gives the bathroom a finished look.”

**BALANCE** is another deceptively simple rule. “Because the bath is not square, we used proportion and symmetry to bring balance to the space,” Foulke says. The vanities are mirror images of each other, and molding fills the gaps above the windows, a trick that visually lowers the ceiling to make the room seem more intimate. “Our challenge was to take their requests—two separate sinks, a closet, tub, storage, and a shower—and lay it out like pieces of a puzzle so it fit proportionally,” Foulke says. “The result is a bathroom that feels warm and spacious.”





**CONTRAST** is also important to incorporate through color and texture. Using rich walnut for the cabinetry prevents the vanities from fading into a white background. A honed, natural finish on the floor tiles contrasts nicely with the shiny finish of the mirrors and the polished granite countertops. Touches of green in the accessories add pops of color to the room. “Architecture should always come first in the design process, followed by decor and accessories playing a complementary role,” Foulke says.

**THEME** is established by tying various design elements together. “The windows round out like the bow of a boat, so it seemed like an obvious theme to use,” Foulke says. “We bowed out the fronts of the vanities and chose a circular tub. We also borrowed a trick from boat designers—using water-resistant teak shellacked with marine-grade varnish to solve the design dilemma of a window in the shower.” Even the window mullions mimic a periscope view.

“Honestly, I love this room,” Alison says. “The design is beautiful and interesting at the same time, with such a clean look—it’s decorated without being cluttered.” With strong elements of basic design principles—repetition, balance, contrast, theme—the bath is a textbook example of style and elegance. **KBI**

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## Takeaways

- 1** Capitalize on a room’s architectural strengths, such as a bay window, for focal-point tub placement.
- 2** For a clean, open feel, avoid overaccessorizing and fussy window treatments.
- 3** Combine natural light, ceiling fixtures, and sconces for layers of ambient and task lighting.
- 4** Use color sparingly to add interest without distracting from the room’s design.
- 5** Place matching vanities on opposite sides of the room to create symmetry.