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KITCHENS & BATHS

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A kitchen
for family
and friends

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SUBSTITUTE A DESK FOR CABINETS

OFFICE NICHE

Key ingredient

Placing this desk on the refrigerator's hinge side keeps it close to the action but out of the way.

"We try to get the desk area away from the main circulation of traffic, but if you're going to use it, then you want it to be accessible when you come in," says architect Stephen Selin of Shelburne, Vt. The desk is incorporated into a display niche and storage hutch featuring glass-front doors, file drawers, and open cubbies. Low-voltage light fixtures tucked behind a valance and inside the display cabinets place light where it's needed. Outlets and switches are above the desk with a data-port below for Internet access and networking needs.



DOUBLE-WIDE DESK

Key ingredient

The wide seating area can fit two people, which is great for homework-help sessions or double viewing of the computer screen.

"A lot of times, as in this case, the office area is primarily for the kids," says Stuart Davis of CG&S Design/Build in Austin, Texas, "so that they can be doing homework or working on the computer in view of the parents." Open shelves above the desk provide display space, and doors, drawers, and a shallow-depth shelf hide work items below. Because you don't need the full 24 in. to fit your knees under a desk, adding open shelves is a great way to keep schoolbooks handy yet somewhat hidden. Also below the desk is a ventilated cabinet for the computer tower. "We sort of learned that lesson the hard way," Davis says. "When we built underventilated cabinets in the past, what we found was that the clients took the door off or left it open all the time."

