Curtains carried up to the cornice line create the impression that the window also extends to the ceiling. Bridges hid the telltale gap with a pelmet and exchanged a busy floral for a bright vertical stripe, which also elongates the room.

Bridges's 18th-century Swedish Mora clock wound up where another stood previously, but it strikes a lighter note.

Heavy curtains on every window can make a room feel claustrophobic. Bridges broke the uniformity with simple roman shades on the two windows flanking the fireplace and introduced another pattern—closely related but not exactly the same.

Removing a door freed 20 square feet. There's actually more furniture in the room now, but it seems to take up less space because Bridges's arrangement takes advantage of the corners.

A bookcase jutting into the middle of the space made no sense. Bridges got rid of it and built a fireplace.

Never turn your back on the view. Bridges oriented her furniture to bask in the river light.

Bridges peeled back the mousy wall-to-wall carpeting and found wide-plank pine floors. A sisal rug brings even more warmth and texture.

Light upholstery colors make the room feel airy. Mix patterns and solids for more interest.

(julymakeover)
Quick-Change Artist

When Sheila Bridges first laid eyes on her 1880s house in New York's Hudson River Valley, the living room looked ready for its last rites. But the designer knew exactly how to revive it

tips *Bridges's Trump Cards*

● *Don't assume that you have to use exactly the same window treatment on every window in a room.* ● *If you choose a big, bold stripe for your window treatment, keep the style a little conservative so it doesn't become overwhelming.* ● *Be careful when covering your shades with a plaid. Unless the grid is completely square, it can make your shades look off-kilter.* ● *In a modern house, stick with simple scrims or shades that don't compete with the room's clean lines.* ● *Tie the colors of your window treatments to something else in the room.* ● *Don't use the same pattern on the window treatments that you've used on the furniture or the walls.* ● *An ottoman is more versatile than a coffee table, and you don't have to worry about children getting hurt on sharp edges.* ● *A folding screen is a great way to introduce more pattern and color— and it can also hide a TV.* ● *Take risks with smaller items. Try an unusual lamp.* ● *Paint walls with an eggshell finish so you can sponge off fingerprints and smudges.*

AFTER: WILLIAM WALDRON

Writer Christine Pittel

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