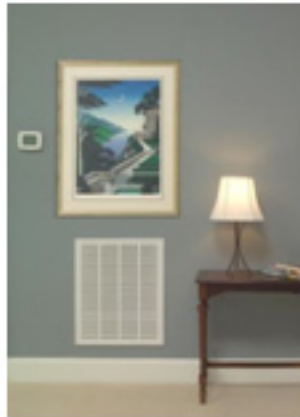




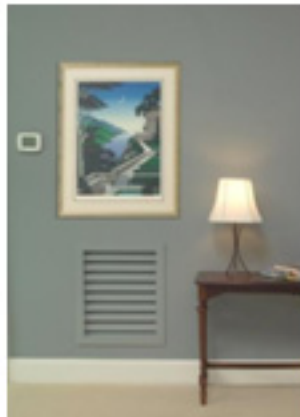
HOME ZONE / *Linda Pescatore*

## Don't let ugly grilles grate on you

*Before*



*After*



Have you got an ugly stamped-metal grille covering your air vents? Flimsy metal slats can get scraped and bent, sometimes bowing or drooping, and they are difficult to keep clean. And since they require central, unobstructed locations, those beat-up grilles are hard to miss. Metal grilles can easily be replaced with more stylish wooden ones that can be painted to match your wall or ceiling trim, and they will retain their finish just like any other trim in your house, according to manufacturer Worth Home Products.

And they work just as well, if not better, than standard metal grilles, the company says. In fact, because they are engineered and tested to ensure maximum airflow, the company's many standard sizes also perform better than site-built grilles, according to Worth. (Special orders are also available for hard-to-fit openings.)

The grilles have two parts: a 26-gauge metal frame that fits most duct openings and holds a standard 1-inch filter, and a New Zealand pine grille with a Baltic birch frame, both can be ordered primed and ready to paint. The pine is selected for its flexibility, to prevent the slats from breaking when bumped, and the birch is used for its strength, to keep the frame from warping.

The products use a proprietary design to hold the grille securely to the wall or ceiling without visible screws or latches. But that doesn't mean wooden grilles are tricky to install; the company lists only four steps. And the grilles open easily for cleaning, filter replacement or duct inspection.

Worth's grilles are the only wooden return air grilles accepted into the national parts programs of leading manufacturers, including Carrier, Rheem/Ruud and Amana/Goodman, according to spokeswoman Lori Machiorlette.

*Prices are \$57-\$119 for standard sizes.*

*For more information visit [www.worthhomeproducts.com](http://www.worthhomeproducts.com)*

*or call 866-384-9400.*

**Linda Pescatore**