Converting a garage into an office doesn't necessarily need to cost a lot or involve major structural changes. Relatively simple steps transformed this garage into a satellite office for landscape designer Marcia Bloom.
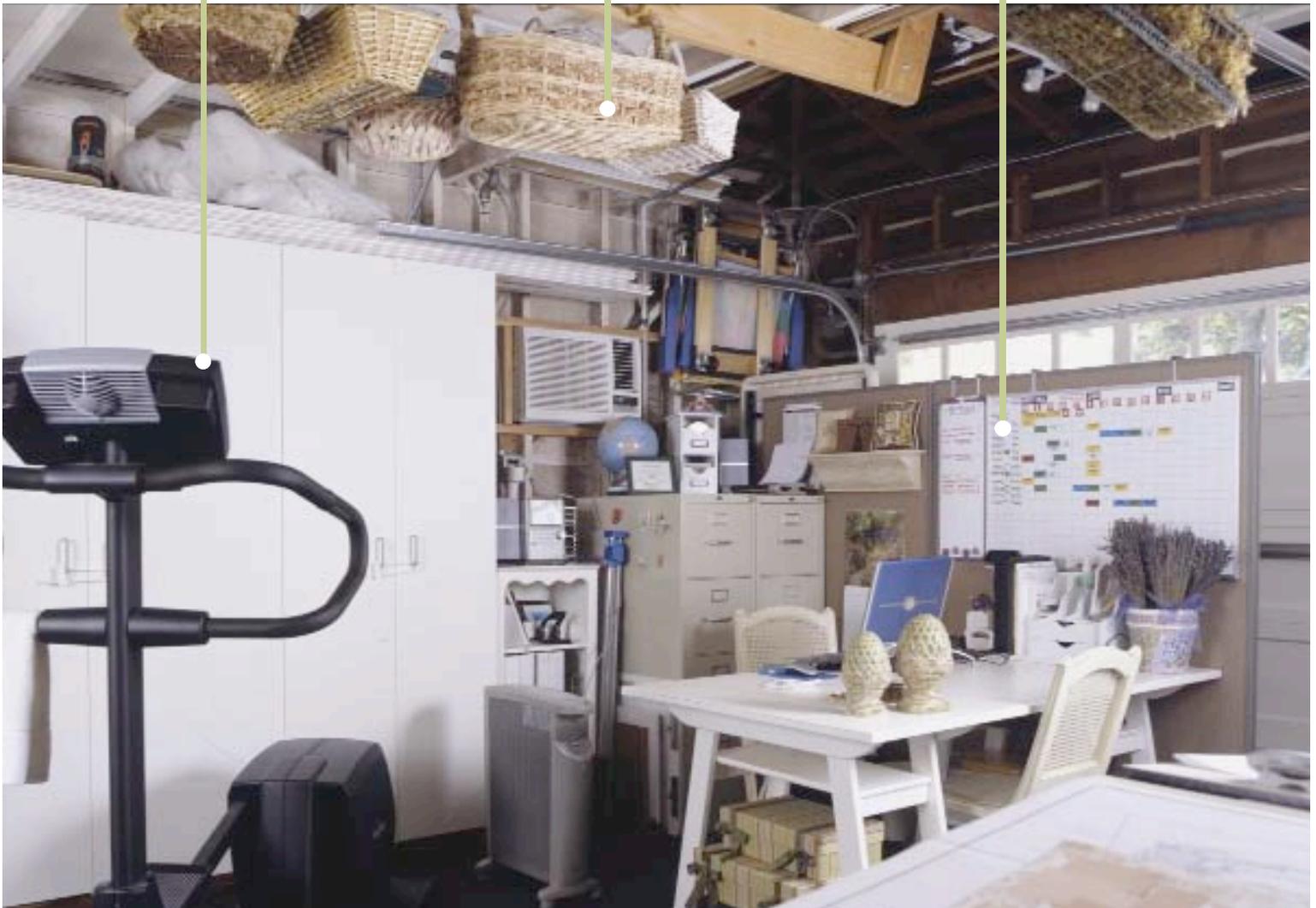
Storage and exercise

Before this garage became an office, it was a family storage area and exercise studio. The cabinets still store family items such as bulk food and extra lightbulbs. An elliptical trainer and a stationary bike remain in use.

Overhead storage

So that the garage could still hold all their general household items, Bloom and her husband added a loft that spans most of the garage, except near the ends, where the hip roof leaves little head room. A fold-down attic ladder provides easy access. Bloom hangs baskets and landscaping supplies from the beams that support the loft.

Organizer wall

Bloom wanted to look up from her desk and see something other than the inside of a garage door, so she bought room dividers at an office-supply store. On them, she mounted a lightweight shelf and a board where she keeps track of her projects.

Creative zone

Most of Bloom's computer work is done in her home office. She uses the garage space more as a creative zone to work out landscaping plans and confer with clients. She decided not to install a phone line in the garage to minimize distractions while working.

Good light

To bring natural light into the garage even when the door is down, Bloom replaced the top panel with glass panes *(opposite page)*. She paid extra for true divided lites, which have strips of wood framing individual panes rather than a grid pressed onto a large pane. Bloom also installed track lighting with halogen bulbs to give the space the feeling of an architect's or designer's office. She added task lights at the two drafting tables.

Welcoming entry

Clients often gather in the garage office, not the one inside the home. Two topiary trees, a pair of rabbit sculptures, and a mat placed in the space directly behind the big garage door create a welcoming entry for visitors when the door is open.