

DIY NETWORK

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DIY WOMEN: AMY DEVERS

DIY host Amy Devers is up for a variety of challenges. As host of the new DIY series [Freeform Furniture](#), Amy shows off her design acumen by building custom contemporary furniture. As co-host of [DIY to the Rescue](#), she helps homeowners in distress tackle and repair home projects that have gone awry. And as co-host of [DIY Inside: The Builders Show](#), she had the chance to discover and share the latest and greatest in tools and materials. But it was Amy's off-camera experience that led her to a new career as a how-to host. Here, Amy shares the details of her background with *DIY Women*.

[Amy's complete interview appears below.](#)



Q: Not only are you a talented furniture designer, but you also worked as a machine shop foreman. What was that experience like?

It was great because I learned so much about manufacturing and industrial design. Until then, my experience was primarily with fine woodworking and building one-of-a-kind art works. It was quite an empowering experience as well. It was a tough job at times and I worked really hard to prove myself daily. I felt I had to make sure that no one ever had a reason to regret hiring a female to do what was typically considered a man's job.

Q: Were you always one to build and create growing up? What put you on the path to design school?

I've definitely always been creative. As a teenager, much to my mother's dismay, I expressed my creativity primarily through outlandish fashion, wild hair, and a supremely decked out room. Then I moved to New York City for college. Even though I was enrolled as a business student in an art school, I was much more interested in doing my art major friends' homework. I went to school for furniture design after a prolonged period of frustration -- I was visualizing pieces of art and furniture and I needed to know how to make them. Thus began my love affair with art, design, and power tools.



Amy Devers

Media

[See Amy in action in this Freeform Furniture preview!](#)

Q: What's your favorite home improvement or repair project to date?

They're all my favorites! There's so much to learn from each project. Working with *DIY to the Rescue* has been exceptionally rewarding for me because I get to teach and interact with the people we're helping. It's very different from doing a commission or being a carpenter for hire. I love getting to know the homeowners, and leaving them with new skills they can use after I'm gone. It's incredibly satisfying!

Q: From where do you take your design inspiration?

I get inspiration from the most unexpected places: a slice of life, a memory of riding the subway or a feeling in the atmosphere of an old warehouse. I'm particularly fascinated in human interaction -- and to that end, furniture's involvement in human interaction. When I'm designing a piece of furniture, I love to imagine the role it will assume in people's daily lives now and years down the line. I'm inspired by the idea of designing something that won't be thrown away in a few years.

Q: You have the opportunity to try out the latest tools and gadgets. Name a few of your toolbox essentials.

I have a cordless drill with an interchangeable chuck system that's indispensable. I'm crazy about my auto darkening

welding helmet. I can't work without music, so my mp3 player is essential. And of course, I'm a big fan of the left-tilting table saw, but I guess that doesn't fit in my toolbox.

Q: Did you ever dream you'd become a DIY television host? Did it seem like a natural evolution of your career? Or was it an opportunity of which you'd never dreamed?

Never dreamed of it, but it does feel like a very natural evolution of my career, and there's no place I'd rather be.

Q: You seem to have so much fun on your shows -- while educating homeowners and viewers. More importantly, you make projects seem accessible and doable. What advice do you have for other women who want to tackle new projects?

Tackling new projects has nothing to do with gender. It has everything to do with planning, preparation, practice, and patience. Women tend to be excellent at all of these. If you don't have the benefit of experience, then do a little research and practice a bit on scraps before beginning the project. If something's very heavy, use leverage, not brute force. If a particular tool intimidates you, just do a little reading on the safety and operation of that tool and then practice a bit until you really get the feel for it. But that's what I tell everyone -- not just women.

Q: You represent a new generation of hip, confident do-it-yourselfers. Have you ever faced challenges in your field because of your gender? Or do you feel that it's really a non-issue in today's society?

Oh yeah, there have been challenges, but it's not as much of an issue for me as I'm sure it was for the generation of women before me. Occasionally there'll be a guy at a lumberyard who'll ask me, 'What's your husband going to do with all this wood, honey?' And I'll say, 'He's going to stare at it in amazement as I whip it up into a credenza.'

Q: What's on the horizon for you?

I'm going metric, and then I will take over the world.