



Make an Addition to Your Family

Homeowners never fail to be impressed by the difference major space changes can make in the quality of a family's life. You love your home, but it isn't working well for you. You don't want to leave your neighborhood, neighbors, and schools, but something must be done to refit your house to your lifestyle.

Not to worry. Adding a room, wing, or floor to your existing home might be a major undertaking, but it can also be a fulfilling experience—especially if the addition is well designed. Excellent design is critical since the project can either enhance or detract from your existing structure. The one thing you don't want is an addition that clashes with your home or sticks out like a sore thumb.

Begin by evaluating the style of your home. Is it contemporary or traditional? Is it a Victorian bungalow, rambler, split-level, or colonial? Each home style has specific architectural lines and details that can be echoed in your addition's design.

Take a look at your home's style. Pay special attention to the:

- pitch of the roof;
- style of windows and doors;
- architectural details such as shutters, moldings, and porches;
- materials used—type of shingles, siding, stone, brick, and stucco.

Think about which architectural details you want to repeat in your addition's design. Repeating design elements is an excellent method of creating additions that look as though they had always been there. For example, your addition could include a dormer that mirrors another elsewhere on your home. And it should include a complementary window style to that of the original.

Next, think in terms of scale. A common design mistake is an addition that overshadows the original home or is much too small and insignificant to add to the overall architectural style. Cut out pictures of homes that you appreciate. This "homework" will help you zero in on your particular tastes.

The design of the interior offers more flexibility since it's not viewed in its entirety as the exterior is. Even so, you'll still want to strive for a comfortable transition from existing space to new. Ceiling style and height can make a big difference in the tone of a room. A steeply pitched roof on the exterior can make way for a dramatic cathedral ceiling on the interior. This can add drama to a contemporary or traditionally designed space in a living room, kitchen, bathroom, or family room.

Little is more satisfying than living in a house that's been beautifully remodeled with a new addition. If you've taken the time to plan carefully and pay attention to the details that make it part of your home, you'll love your new space more with each passing day.