



Unfinished Attics are Remodeling Opportunities

Need more living space or storage room? If the answer is yes, look up! If you have an unfinished attic, your problem may be well on the way to being solved. Attic space already has a floor, walls, and roof, so it is an opportunity waiting to be used.

To be a good candidate for remodeling, attic space needs three important ingredients:

- appropriate headroom
- easy access
- adequate floor joist support.

Headroom is of primary importance. Building codes require at least 7 1/2 feet of headroom between the peak of the roof and the floor. If you don't have this space, you can also raise the roof (which is a project for an entirely different column—and budget.)

Another important factor is how the attic space can be accessed. Will you have to carve the space for a stairway from an existing room? Or might your best choice be a pull-down staircase? (Building codes don't allow the use of a pull-down stair for main access) Think about the traffic patterns that will develop to and from the converted attic space.

One of the most important aspects of using your attic is the strength of the floor joists. Most ceilings are not designed with joists that can withstand the weight that a floor must handle. This means that the ceiling joists must be reinforced, which could be a complex process.

Before you begin, let's talk about the options. While you might be able to tackle some remodeling projects yourself, attic remodeling requires greater expertise. An attic conversion can provide your home with a uniquely designed space to serve a range of functions— an extra bedroom/bath suite, guest room, office, family room, exercise room, or hobby room. Look up and you'll never look back!