
DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

When contemplating a new design or a renovation there are several key concepts that should be considered. A well planned space is successful in providing a comfortable environment that that looks great and that individuals enjoy being in. It has the added benefit of functioning properly as the result of good space planning and attention to detail.

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- **Climate & the Surrounding Environment** – One should try to situate utility spaces and garages so they shield the house from cold winter winds. In snowy climates, garage and house entries should be located on a sunny exposure to help melt snow. An inside corner facing southeast provides outdoor space sheltered from cold northwest winds.
 - **Creating Acoustically Separate Areas** - Especially important in smaller spaces, having acoustical isolation between rooms affords privacy and a sense of comfort.
 - **Establish Long Views** - Windows should be in line with doorways as one enters a room. Doors can also be arranged in such a way so one can see a long way diagonally across a plan. This helps enlarge a small space.
 - **Use Alternating Ceiling Planes** – Especially useful in smaller spaces, it is helpful to break up the pattern of continuous flat ceilings. This provides a sense of spatial extension and definition. The design should take advantage of breaks in the ceilings created by stairways and skylights.
 - **Utilize a Common Hallway** - A room that can only be reached through another room limits the use of both spaces. All rooms should be accessed off a common hallway to maximize the available square footage. Establishing an efficient circulation pattern is very useful when trying to maximize open spaces.
 - **Avoid Tunnel-Like Hallways** - Widening a central hall or stair landing or adding bookcases and a place to sit is good design practice. Bringing light into a corridor from above so it can serve as a gallery for artwork and photography is also something to consider. Running a stair alongside a corridor can also be done to create a more complex space with vertical extension.
 - **Layer Lighting** - Most spaces benefit from a combination of task and mood lighting. The main lights in living and kitchen spaces should be placed on dimmer switches. Bathrooms can benefit from a combination of base-level mood spotlights with task lighting around the basin as well as a main ceiling light. Southern exposure allows natural daylight to fill spaces even during cloudy days.
 - **Provide Adequate Storage** – Efficient and creative storage can transform a space. One should evaluate what they have and plan accordingly. Making use of areas under stairs and other “dead spaces” maximizes the potential of any space.
 - **Incorporate Pattern** - Used thoughtfully, pattern and texture can provide character and warmth to a space. Whether it be provided by construction or interior design elements their use can be easily overwhelming. For this reason one may choose to use this technique in rooms that may not be used that frequently.
 - **Use Natural Materials** – The use of natural materials in a space provides warmth and authenticity. Wood, slate and stone are good options. Properly used they can serve as the focal point of a room.
 - **Main Entry** - Creating a formal entry defines the façade of a building and should be located near the garage. This allows guests to enter through the front door and family through the garage, but all enter the same main entry hall. If space allows a mudroom should be a separate space adjacent to this entry hall where unsightly belongings can be stored.