



Creating a Home You Love: What to Expect When Building an Addition

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One of my firm beliefs is that everyone deserves a home they love. For some, that means moving or building a new home. But sometimes, it means enhancing your current home to better compliment the way you want to live.

Building an addition is a big commitment. Beyond remodeling or renovating, additions have a significant impact on the way you live in your home. But deciding whether to add on to your existing home or find a new home altogether can be tough. Here are some factors you should consider while you're making your choice.

How to know whether an addition is right for your home

Do you need more space for a specific purpose?

We all have special memories associated with our homes. Maybe your house is just right—except for a specific area where you could really use more living space.

When you are considering building an addition, the idea typically stems from a specific need—a Master Suite so that you can enjoy a larger private space; an expanded kitchen so that you can cook and entertain the way you really want; a play area for kids or teens that's out of the way but still safe.

Additions are great ways to add elements that truly have an impact on the way you live in your home. Beyond simply increasing space, an addition helps you create a home that aligns with your lifestyle. If you find yourself in a home that you know you *could* love if only a certain space was enhanced, then an addition may be right for you.

Will an addition add to the value of your home?

Finances always play a large role in the decision-making process—that's just a fact of life. Before you decide whether or not to take on a home addition, you need to ask yourself, "If we put \$100,000 into our house, will we love it? Is it really worth it for *this* home?" But keep in mind: *worth it* could mean a couple of things.

First, adding an addition to your home could positively impact the resale value—or not. If your home has not appreciated in value over time and you decide to build an addition, you could be sinking money into something that won't provide the ROI you were hoping for.

Ultimately, though, whether or not something is "worth it" is fairly subjective. You may decide that the cost of completing the addition is worth it if it means you don't have to deal with the pain and chaos of moving.

For many people, being able to stay in their current home is a big deal. For instance, age-in-place living is becoming increasingly popular, and people will often choose to build first-floor additions that will allow them to live comfortably on one floor of their home. For folks who would prefer to stay in their own homes as they age, this is an ideal solution.

Overall, while value can mean adding desirable features that will increase your home's selling price, it can also mean creating a living space that's valuable to *you*.

Do you love your current location?

School, work, friends, family—the value of being close to these things can't be underestimated. If the location of your current home is ideal for your family and lifestyle, that can be a significant factor in whether moving or building an addition is the right choice.

There's a tighter market for homes at the moment, and less of a selection available to you. It may be difficult to find the right home in the location you love. In that case, an addition may be the right way to go.

What to expect from the home addition process

Plan ahead to avoid chaos

There's no way to sugarcoat it: with any remodel, renovation, or addition project, things can get messy. Chances are that you'll still be living in your home while the addition is being built, and that can mean dealing with the noise, dust and debris of living in a construction zone. Basically, depending on where the addition is being built, there could be quite an interruption to your daily life. Building an addition is like getting a suit tailored while you're still wearing it. You and the tailor will both be in each other's way, and it can be a frustrating process.

To avoid some of the exasperation, be sure to stay informed throughout the entire addition-building process. Have an understanding of exactly *what* will be going on, and *when* it will be happening. Find out from your builder exactly what you can expect to be dealing with. And speaking of your builder...

Choose a team you'll love to work with

You can keep the frustration to a minimum by choosing a building team you love working with. The right team will help you plan far in advance and avoid unexpected surprises.

Building an addition follows many of the same processes as building an entire home. Your addition should be planned "on purpose on paper" before the first hammer is ever swung. That includes choosing all of your selections and finishes well ahead of time. The right building team can guide and advise you through this process, so that building an addition becomes stress and hassle-free.

Deciding whether to add on to your existing home or move to a new home requires a lot of careful thought. At the end of the day, what matters most is that you love the home you live in, and you love the way you live in it.