

Basement Design & Planning Guide

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BASEMENT DESIGN

Finishing your basement can be a very rewarding home improvement to invest in. Many basements go unused yet they often offer a significant amount of space that could be put to good use, whether it is an additional living area, another bedroom, a home office or an entertainment area. On the next page is a list of basement design questions that can help guide how to put that extra space to the best possible use for you and your family.

BASEMENT DESIGN QUESTIONS

What will I be using the basement for?

- Gym
- In-Law Suite
- Media room
- Office
- Game room
- Sports cave
- Master Bedroom Suite
- Family room
- Teen bedroom
- Craft room
- Bar
- Wine cellar

What areas do I want to finish?

- Walls
- Laundry area
- Ceilings
- Bathroom
- Floor
- HVAC area

What do I want to add to the basement that isn't already there?

- Bathroom
- Kitchenette
- Wet Bar
- Powder room
- Laundry room
- Fireplace
- Office area
- Wine cellar
- Snack center

If I am remodeling an existing basement bathroom do I need a new?

- Tub
- Vanity
- Floor
- Tile on walls
- Toilet
- Shower
- Tile around shower
- Tower
- Sink
- Faucet
- Tile around tub
- Fans

Do I have any moisture problems that need to be solved?

- Grading issues that cause water to pool near the walls
- Leaks in foundation that need sealed
- Flood prone areas may need a sump pump
- High humidity that would need a vapor barrier behind walls and under floor
- Condensation behind walls that could require water pipes to be insulated
- Mold which would require mold resistant drywall or paneling

Will the basement be used more for entertaining or for family?

Is the foundation of the basement solid?

How can I keep an access to my plumbing, electrical and duct work?

What kind of wall do I want?

- Plywood
- Paneling
- Drywall

What kind of ceiling do I want?

- Drop ceiling
- Acoustic tiles
- Drywall

Do I need to sound proof the ceiling?

Do I want to add any windows? If so, what kind of windows do I want to add?

- Single hung
- Slider
- Double hung
- Stationary
- Casement
- Bow

What kind of lighting do I want?

- Recessed lighting
- Flush mount lighting
- Track lighting
- Pendant lighting

What kind of doors do I want to add?

- Sliders
- Steel door
- Pocket
- French door

What kind of flooring do I want?

- Carpeting
- Tile
- Luxury vinyl
- Laminate

What kind of storage should I add?

- Wall shelving
- Regular closets
- Built in ceiling
- Ceiling height closets

What kind of heat do I need to add?

- Baseboard heat
- Radiant heat

Do I have radon?

Radon is an odorless gas that seeps into basements from surrounding soils. Uncontrolled, it can expose you and your family to the equivalent of 200 chest x-rays annually. Mitigation of radon may involve sealing cracks and surfaces or installing ventilation.

Do I want to add a safe room?

A safe room is a fortified room that provides a safe place if a break in or another similar threat occurs. The room usually contains some method of communication so authorities can be contacted.

What amenities do I need to add to make a media room?

- Surround sound
- Large screen TV

BASEMENT DESIGN IDEA GUIDE

GYM. Are you sick of driving to the gym? If you like to work out and don't have the time to drive to the gym, a home gym might be a good solution.





THEATER ROOM.

Fun space to share movie memories and a special place for the family to bond and have fun.

OFFICE NOOK. You work from home and need a quiet space to work. With the use of sound insulating products, creating an office in the basement can be a great way to get the peace and quiet area necessary to work from home.



SPORTS CAVE. With a nice wet bar and a large flat screen TV, there isn't a better space to hang out with your family and friends to watch a sporting event. Add surround sound audio system and it will feel like you're at the game.



GAME ROOM. Fun and games, no lack of activity in this basement.



WINE CELLAR. This wine cellar will certainly wow all of your guests.



TRADITIONAL BAR. Has the feeling of being at a really nice neighborhood bar but in the comfort of your own home.



COZY LAUNDRY. More often than not, the laundry room feels like an isolated space. Turn it into a welcoming checkpoint with shelving and cupboard space for organization





HOME SPA. After a long day there's nothing better for your body and mind than a spa visit. So, why not turn your basement into an At Home Spa where you can relax and de stress in your very own home.

FOCAL FIREPLACE. This beautiful fireplace is definitely the focal point of this great space.



TEEN BEDROOM. Teens make a lot of noise with musical instruments, listening to loud music, inviting over loud friends. A basement bedroom can be the answer to all of these problems and give the family some peace. Sound proofing also. Creating a cool hang out: a couch for seating, pool table for entertainment. Your teens room can become the new cool hangout for your teen and their friends. This can make you more comfortable since you'll always know where your teen is and what they are up to.



COLLEGE BEDROOM. As your teen gets older they may need this private bedroom as they go to college and after college before they get that great job. I hear it all the time from homeowners. I want to keep an eye on my kids in the house. From playing video games to shooting pool, basements make a great space for teenagers.





OVERNIGHT GUESTS. Having an extra bedroom and bathroom in your basement can become space for your out of town guests. Secondary master suites are also a great way to add value to your home.

TIPS FOR HIRING A HOME REMODELING CONTRACTOR

For most homeowners the hardest part of any home renovation project isn't the work itself, it is finding a competent and reliable home remodeler to do the job. There are steps you can take to find the right home remodeler.

QUESTIONS TO ASK HOME REMODELING CONTRACTORS

- How long have you been in business?
- How much liability insurance do you carry?
- Do you carry Worker's Compensation on all of your carpenters and laborers?
- Will I be getting Proof of Insurance?
- Are you a member in good standing with the Better Business Bureau?
- Do you use company paid employees to perform the work on my home or do you subcontract the work out?
- Do you have a company paid in-house design team or do you subcontract the design work out?

- Do you have a one stop full service kitchen and bath design center showroom or will I have to make many trips to different stores to pick out my selections?
- Do I receive a detailed bid from you or just a numerical price?
- Are you licensed with the state?
- Do you pull all of the necessary local and municipal permits?
- Will I receive a written contract with everything we agreed upon?
- Do you assign a specific Project Manager to my home remodel that is fully in charge of the project or do I get my information from just a carpenter?
- What is your process?

- How do we communicate with each other – email, phone, text or how?
- Do you give me a written warranty?
- Will you give me a list of references I can call?

RESEARCH HOME REMODELING CONTRACTORS

Check out each remodeler's:

- Online reviews
- Galleries of work
- Testimonials
- Awards
- Website
- Facebook page
- Houzz page
- Team page
- Showroom

QUESTIONS TO ASK REFERENCES

- Were they easy to work with?
- Were the employees respectful to your home?
- Do they communicate with you on a weekly basis as to how project was coming along?
- Did they keep job site clean?
- Were there any additional charges they did not make you aware of?
- Did you give them a five-star review?
- Would you use them again?

PRODUCT RESOURCE GUIDE

These are some of the manufacturers we use.

BACKSPLASH

- Daltile
- American Olean
- Interceramic
- Elements

CABINETS

- Wellborn

COUNTERTOPS

- Caesarstone
- Cambria
- Hahnstone

FAUCETS

- Kohler
- Moen
- Delta
- Blanco
- Pfister

REMODELING LINGO

If you are starting a home remodeling project and feel overwhelmed, below is a guide to all the jargon and lingo you need to know before you start.

Addition – any construction that increases a building's size by adding to its structure. For example, another room or an additional story,

Bid – an offer to perform a specified amount of work under certain conditions with cost estimates included.

Blueprints – mechanical drawings, prepared by an architect, that show precise detail of a building or space used during the planning and construction of a project.

Change Order – they are like addendums, except they are changes to the construction contract after work begins, it is an agreement between the owner and contractor to change the scope, price, schedule or similar term of the contract. Sometimes called “extras” or “add-ons.”

Construction Contract – legally binding, formal agreement between two parties recorded in document form. It outlines each party's responsibilities, cost estimates, project timing and conditions for changing the contract.

Contractors – combine managing, planning and designing all in one. All stages of a large project, estimating costs, drawing plans and getting building permits.

Designers – designers use their creativity to plan the look and aesthetics of your project, the layout of a space, location of fixtures, fabric types and color schemes.

Draw Schedule – a schedule of payments usually included in the contract that describes at what points the customer will pay the contractor. May include a deposit, periodic payments for materials, work performed and of course a final payment.

Estimating – the process of determining the cost of a project, typically results in a ballpark cost estimate and usually occurs prior to signing a final contract.

Fixture – a term which is used to describe many items within the home, typically in bathrooms and kitchens. Examples include sinks, faucets, bathtubs, almost anything exterior to the wall.

Floor Area – the square footage of a building or space

Hearth – the floor area in front of a fireplace, or the actual floor of the fireplace. The hearth is usually constructed of brick, stone or cement.

HVAC – Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning, all appliances of the system to condition the air within the home.

Insulation – material used to prevent heat loss in a structure; is usually placed within ceilings, and walls and sometimes floors. Quality home insulation can help to reduce heating or electricity bills.

Jamb – the molding around a window frame. The “side jamb” is vertical while the “head jamb” is horizontal.

Joint – any piece where two building materials come together and leave a gap or space.

Joist – parallel framing members installed horizontally to carry floor and ceiling loads.

Miter – a 45 degree cut, unlike a compound miter cut, the saw blade remains at 0 degrees.

Remodel – renovations are a facelift, a remodel would be considered plastic surgery for your home, transforming the structure and style of a space; changing the floor plan or layout of a room. For example, creating an open layout by removing a wall in your formal dining room to connect the kitchen would be considered a remodeling job. Adding an island counter top to your kitchen floor plan would also be a remodel.

Renovation – a facelift for your home. Common home renovations are replacing light fixtures, repainting, changing out cabinet hardware, installing new appliances, countertops and other similar project. No major plans to the room's layout are made, instead features of that room are updated to give the room a fresh new look.

Sconce – a light fixture attached to a wall.

Shim – a thin piece of wood used during installation to ensure that countertops are level.

Subfloor – boards or plywood mounted over joists on which the finish floor is laid.

Substrate – any surface to which a paint, stain or sealant is applied.

Tongue and Groove – a way of connecting materials, such as wood, in which the tongue of a board is placed into the groove of the other board.

Vanity – a storage cabinet for bathrooms that sits under the sink/counter.

Vessel – a style of sink that is not fully installed into the counter. It sits partially above the counter. This type of basin is often glass or porcelain and can be very colorful.

Walkthrough – the Designer, Project Manager Contractor and/or Subcontractors meet at the project site to evaluate the project and scope of work.



About Pittsburgh's Best Remodeling

Your Kitchen, Bathroom or Basement Remodel should reflect your personality and lifestyle. Through our knowledgeable and creative design team, skilled craftsman, competent Project Manager and One Stop Shop Design Center Showroom we can help you turn your unique vision for your home into a reality.

We specialize in:

- Home Design Consultation
- Kitchen Remodeling
- Bathroom Remodeling
- Basement Remodeling
- Home Additions
- Flooring

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