

Analyze Plans Before Remodeling House

Roof Overhang Helps Keep House Cool by Shading Window Walls



OVERHANGING EAVES to keep the summer sun from heating a house through large window areas have become even more important with the spread of air conditioning. As shown here, floor-to-ceiling window walls can be completely in the shade at midday in summer. When the sun is lower in the sky in winter it can shine in the windows. Such overhangs are carefully planned. They have to be wider in Minneapolis than in Dallas.

No Substitutes For Large Rooms

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A house plan should be judged on two fundamentals, room sizes and room arrangement. All other details are of secondary importance. Picture windows, window walls, sliding glass doors, fireplaces and built-in can openers will not compensate for skimpy rooms grouped with no regard for convenience.

Building costs tend to have a restrictive influence on room sizes. After the market became glutted with two-bedroom houses and growing families were checked by limited budgets, many home buyers made the mistake of compromising on smaller rooms in order to have a greater number of rooms. This has resulted in constant annoyances with cluttered homes and serious impairment of investments in such homes.

Appraisers have recognized this problem and have worked out some minimum requirements for the guidance of mortgage investors. But like most minimums, these have tended to become maximums under competition. It seems that the best policy for the man who wants a liveable house of sound value is to allow as much of a margin as possible above minimum requirements.

The Living Room
How big should a living room be? The minimum size can be figured out on the basis of usable space needed around each piece of furniture.

Sit in an easy chair placed against one wall and put a book on the floor in front of your feet. Stretch out your legs to a comfortable posture for relaxing, pushing

sofa is crowded when occupied by more than two persons. A television set needs not only wall space, but comfortable grouping of furniture toward it. Ditto for a fireplace. A piano calls for even more space. Windows, radiators and registers limit furniture placement. Tables and table lamps, reading lamps will be needed.

So 20 feet often seems modest in the length of a living room.

Sizes for Bedrooms
Wall space is especially important in bedrooms. Heads of beds, dressers, dressing tables, bureaus or other chests of drawers need wall space, cannot block windows or closet doors. A bedside table for lamp and clock has become almost a must in every bedroom. Twin beds need about 12 feet, 2 inches of wall space to allow for walking space around the beds and a table between them.

A double bed needs 8 feet, 3 inches of unbroken wall space. Sides of beds should be at least 2 to 3 feet from walls or other furniture. Stuffed toes in the dark are the penalty for violating this rule.

The creation of extra wall space in bedrooms by using shoulder-high strip windows has not worked out as anticipated. People sleeping under such windows found it impossible to open them above their heads because of the cold and insurance companies frowned on mortgages when no easy escape from fire was available with high windows.

Sliding closet doors have tended to increase usable floor space in bedrooms, but they call for more wall space than a swinging door. Each bedroom with a closet needs two doors, one for the closet and one for entrance. Each bedroom

with cross ventilation needs a window on each of two walls.

Houses with three bedrooms need more than one bathroom. "The additional cost of a powder room is far less than the loss of marketability of a house without it," says the Review of the Society of Residential Appraisers. Two full bathrooms are preferable for a house of three or four bedrooms and a four-bedroom house usually needs a minimum of 2 1/2 baths. A divided, split or compartmented bathroom often solves the problem of duplicating this expensive room to build and equip. Two lavatories often ease the morning rush to prepare for work or school.

A Family Dining Room
A honeymoon cottage or two-bedroom retirement house can get along with a minimum dining area of 80 square feet—8 by 10, for instance. But the minimum dining space that is specified today for a three-bedroom house is 110 square feet. This means that a dining room 10 by 11 feet is regarded as the smallest tolerable for a family house.

Even in this space you may find it crowded with a buffet or sideboard against the wall and six persons seated around the dining table. Experts say that dining room furniture calls for a minimum of 8 feet in width a room in which some space is allowed for circulation. More space is needed for entertaining.

The Modern Kitchen
Additional eating accommodations for six persons are recommended for the modern kitchen of a three or four-bedroom house. The breakfast nook or snack bar may become the most used dining area in the house.

Family living habits have sounded the knell for the kitchenette. For years there was a trend away from the big and comfortable kitchen of Grandma's house, (where there was room even for a rocking chair). Perhaps modern equipment—the dishwasher, the electric sink, refrigerator and food freezer, built-in wall oven—had something to do with reversing that trend. Nonetheless, today people

insist on kitchens big enough to fit a cat.

Usable cabinet space should be counted only when it is within 6 feet from the floor. Space you can't reach out of bounds. Cabinets above a range or refrigerator are extra and not counted in minimum reachable storage space.

For a three-bedroom house, 24 linear feet of kitchen cabinet space is considered a minimum. Counter space of 6 to 8 linear feet is a minimum for a house of any size.

Most people prefer the kitchen sink to be placed under a window to allow a view of outdoor play areas for children and to admit a maximum of daylight for kitchen chores.

An outside door from the kitchen to the service yard is important for convenience. A lavatory near this door and adjacent to the kitchen is provided in the best plans. A cellar entrance should be provided off this service vestibule, or in homes without basements, this is the place for the laundry.

Provision for exhaust fans has become standard in new kitchen planning, where kitchens are because of the trend toward open to living areas and the housewife can enjoy the party or TV.

BRUSHING TECHNIQUE
Painting with the edge of a brush will cause it to "finger" or divide into clumps. If it is necessary to use a wide brush edgewise, as in a corner, remove the finishing at once by giving the brush several strokes broadside. "Fingers" left in a brush overnight will become permanent and ruin the brush.

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