



Small, partitioned, single-use rooms (like those above) were once the norm. Today, many homeowners are opting for floor plans that are open, traffic friendly, and inviting. The following interior photos are from the same home after renovation and minus a few interior walls. Same amount of space—just repurposed!

RENOVATE WITHIN YOUR BOX!

by David Stokes, Owner, DM Stokes Home Renovations

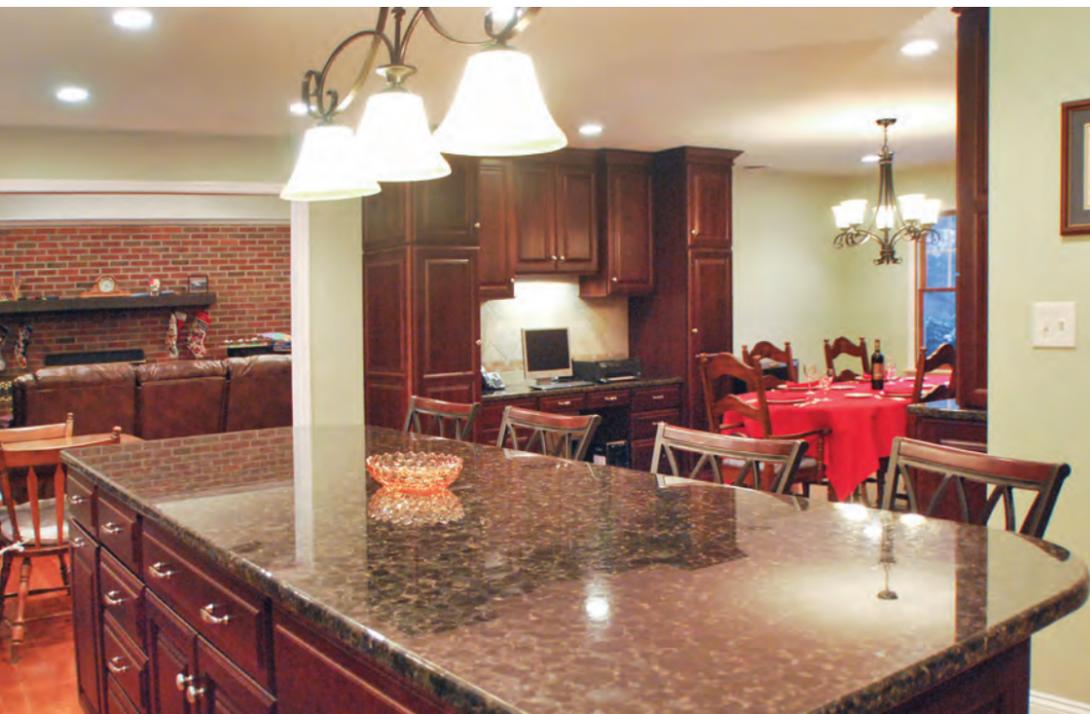


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As families grow and needs change, houses age and begin to show their wear. The home doesn't work as well as it once did. When this happens, homeowners often begin to explore their options. Cosmetic patch ups may make existing conditions look better but they will not change a space that is not functioning to maximum potential. A common desire for many homeowners is more space. More storage space, living space, garage space, office space or entertainment space, and the list goes on. Today's busy households and schedules are not being accommodated by dated housing floor plans. Many older floor plans were designed to have separate rooms each serving its own purpose. The kitchen was where you cooked and prepared food and you ate in the dining room. Remember when homes only had one TV in the family room or living room and Dad had the remote? Those extra rooms provided that needed privacy for the family's needs, like reading space for a book borrowed from the library or a fierce game of Parcheesi. The need for closet space and

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storage space wasn't great because we only had one coat for all occasions. Solving today's home challenges within the older homes is not as difficult as you might think.

One way to solve these problems is to consider a move to a newer home and neighborhood. However, it quickly becomes apparent that there are many factors to mull over with this decision as well. Many times the move to a new house is not financially feasible as you will be incurring fees and expenses in the buying and selling process that could be useful dollars if remodeling your existing home. If you like your neighborhood and your existing house, a renovation or addition to improve the function of your home may be your best bet and best return on your money invested.

Contemplating an addition on the existing home? This seems like the

perfect solution to a cramped and dated house. However, an addition does not always address the existing home's needs or problems. Whether you're expanding your house because it's too small or because it's missing something, don't assume an addition is the only way to do the job. For many owners, building an addition onto the existing home takes up most of their renovation budget. When that happens, product selections and needed upgrades in other areas of the home are sacrificed to construct the additional space. Unfortunately for some owners who pursue this avenue of building the addition, their finished product is a beautiful addition attached to a disfunctional, dated floor plan.

Instead of thinking outside the box of your house by building a home addition, the best way to stretch your dollar is to think "inside the box" or

within your existing home's walls. Renovate and repurpose your existing space to accomplish all of your needs and desires. You may be able to get everything you want by reconfiguring your existing square footage and slash your remodeling costs and avoid potential additional price hikes like fuel costs and additional property taxes incurred from making your home larger.

This is where an experienced designer and contractor can help. The goal is not to add additional square footage to your home, but add practical space that is usable for your family maximizing what you have in a smart way. With expert design advice and experience in this type of renovation, you will be amazed at the potential within the existing exterior walls of your home. Look carefully at your existing space, look at the potential. Even structural walls can

be reconfigured to help you achieve what is needed.

Employing an experienced designer or contractor to review your current space and come up with ideas and concepts that will meet your goals working within the space you have is the first step in establishing a plan that



Here, a seldom used porch was repurposed into a very practical and much needed mudroom.



will cure your existing home's space problems. A qualified contractor can help you redesign, repurpose,

and renovate your existing space. Review your existing problems and share your goals with your designer or contractor. A designer or contractor can help you take a good look at the rooms in your home and see how each is being utilized to determine if a remodel in your existing space makes sense for you. That area to store coats, shoes, backpacks prob-

ably isn't far away. That new open kitchen plan with gathering area is probably within your grasp along with the new laundry room, home office, or entertainment area. Your new home within the box of your old home is waiting for you to revive it and bring it alive again.

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To gain additional space, the homeowners converted an underutilized patio into a four-season family room.



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