

Room Planning— Living Area



Objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- Identify the rooms and areas that comprise the living area.
- Apply design principles to planning a living room.
- Integrate the furniture in a living room plan.
- Analyze a dining room using good design principles.
- Design a functional entry and foyer.
- Communicate the primary design considerations for a recreation room.
- Integrate patios, porches, and courts into the total floor plan of a dwelling.

Key Terms

Closed Plan
Courts
Decks
Foyer
Gazebo
Living Area
Main Entry
Open Plan

Patios
Porches
Service Entry
Special-Purpose
Entries
Special-Purpose
Rooms

The *living area* is the part of the house that most friends and guests see. This is the area that usually becomes the showplace. Comprising roughly one-third of the house, the living area serves a variety of functions. It is the location for family get-togethers and dining. It is also the area for recreation, entertaining, and just relaxing. The living area is not restricted to the interior of the structure. It includes patios, decks, and courts. The living area is designed for all activities that do not take place in the sleeping and service areas.

The living area is composed of a number of rooms. They include the living room, dining room, foyer, and recreation room. Special-purpose rooms, such as a sunroom or home office, are also included in the living area. Some of the “rooms” may not be rooms in the true sense; however, they serve the same purpose. The trend in design is to move away from many rooms toward a more open plan with fewer walls and doors. See Figure 8-1.



Figure 8-1. Note the openness of this bright, sunbathed living area. (The Oshkosh, WI private residence of Chancellor Richard H. Wells and family—formerly the Alberta Kimball Home)

Designing With CADD

The design of living spaces may be facilitated through the use of a CADD system. Time required to develop a suitable solution is greatly reduced through the manipulation of symbols to produce a variety of designs. In addition, computer-generated renderings can be used as presentation drawings to show clients how the space will look when complete.

Figure 8-2 shows the realism that can be presented with high-end CADD software.

Living Rooms

For many families, the living room is the center of activity. Depending on the specific occasion, it may be a play room for the children, a TV room, or a conversation place. Its size and arrangement will depend on the lifestyle of the members of the family who will ultimately use it. Figure 8-3 illustrates this point.



A



B

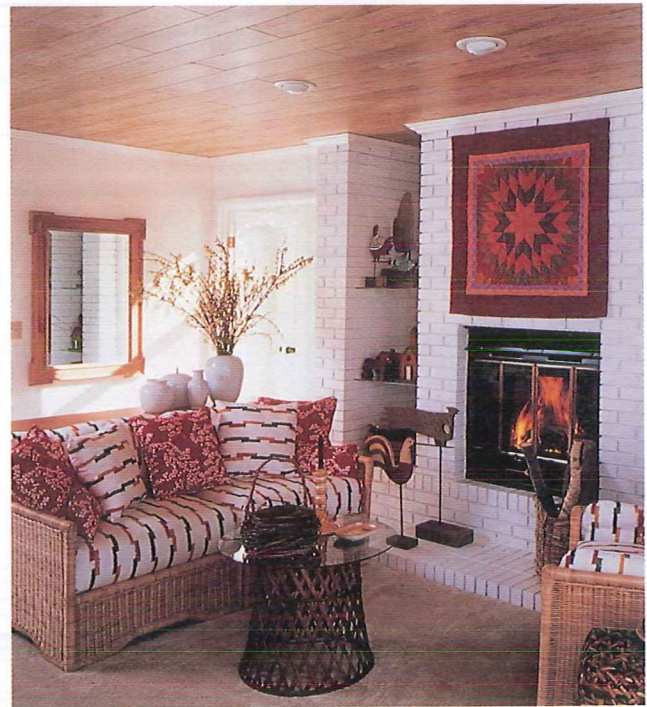
Figure 8-2. These computer-rendered illustrations present realistic representations of the final product. Notice the architectural details of the lanai and pool area. (Helmuth A. Geiser, member AIBD)



A



B



C

Figure 8-3. A—The feeling of warmth is expressed in the styling of this pleasant conversation area. B—Formality is emphasized in the design of this large living area. C—The modern lifestyle of the owners is expressed in the color and design of the living area. (Preway, Inc.)

The living room, like all other rooms in the house, should be used. It should not be planned just as a showplace. A properly designed living room can be a functional part of the house and, at the same time, a beautiful and charming area, Figure 8-4.

Size

Living rooms are of all sizes and shapes. A small living room may have as few as 150 square feet. An average-size living room may be around 250 square feet. A large living room may exceed 400 square feet. See Figure 8-5. The most important questions to ask regarding size and design of a living room are:

- (1) What furniture is planned for this particular room? See Figure 8-6.
- (2) How often will the room be used?
- (3) How many people are expected to use the room at any one time?

- (4) How many functions are combined in this one room? Is it a multipurpose room?
- (5) Is the living room size in proportion to the remainder of the house?



Figure 8-4. This is an attractive living room that is designed for entertaining and relaxing. Clearly, this is a room that will be used. (Manufactured Housing Institute)

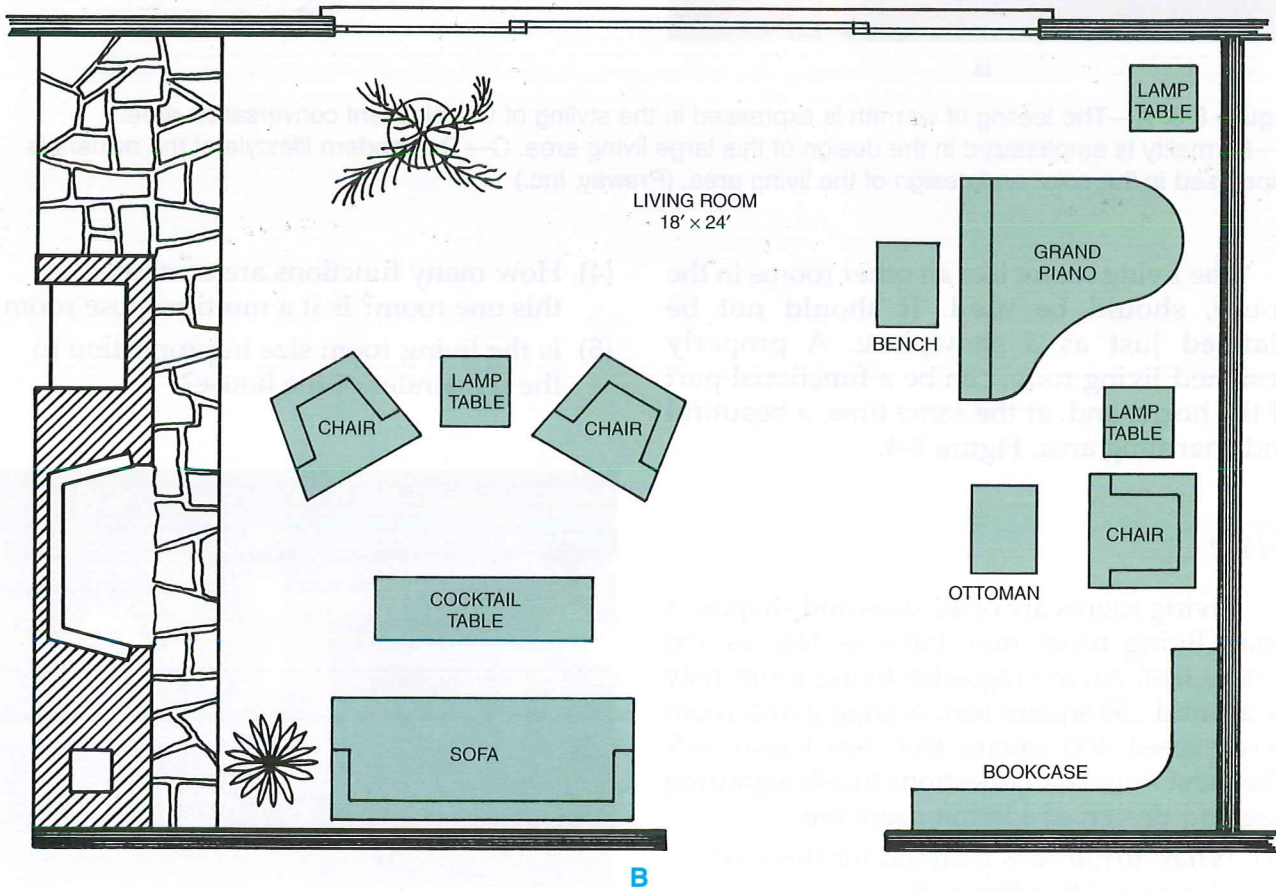
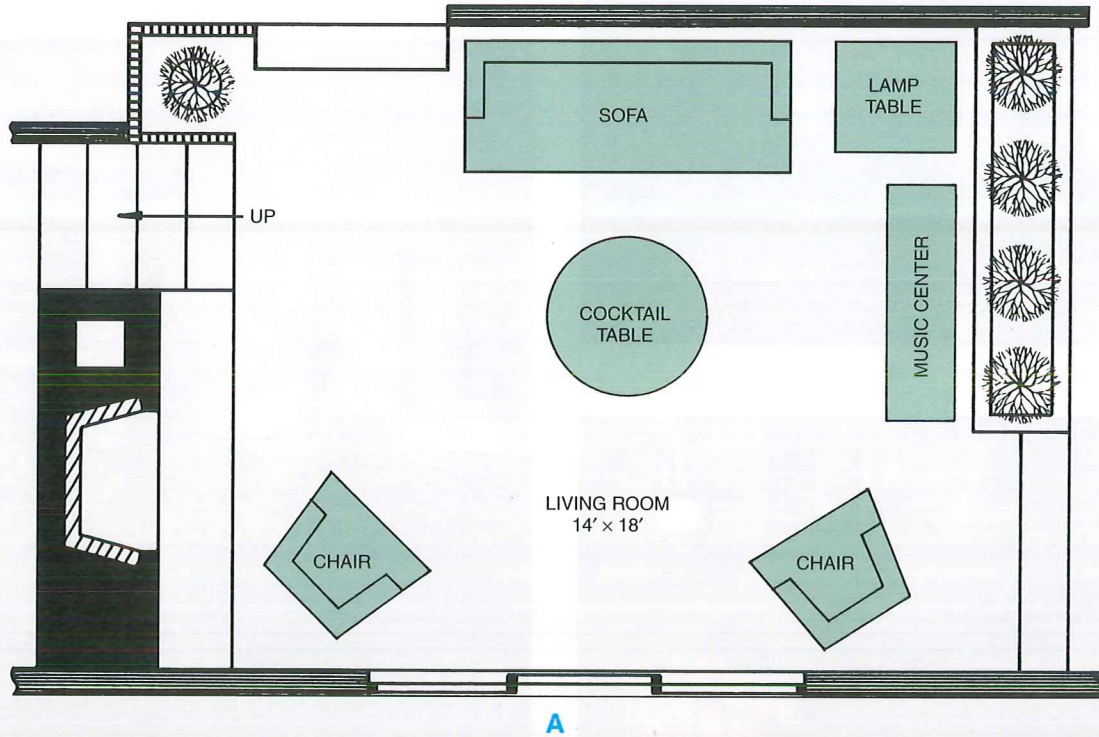


Figure 8-5. A—This sunken living room is an average size at about 250 square feet. B—A large living room with about 430 square feet.

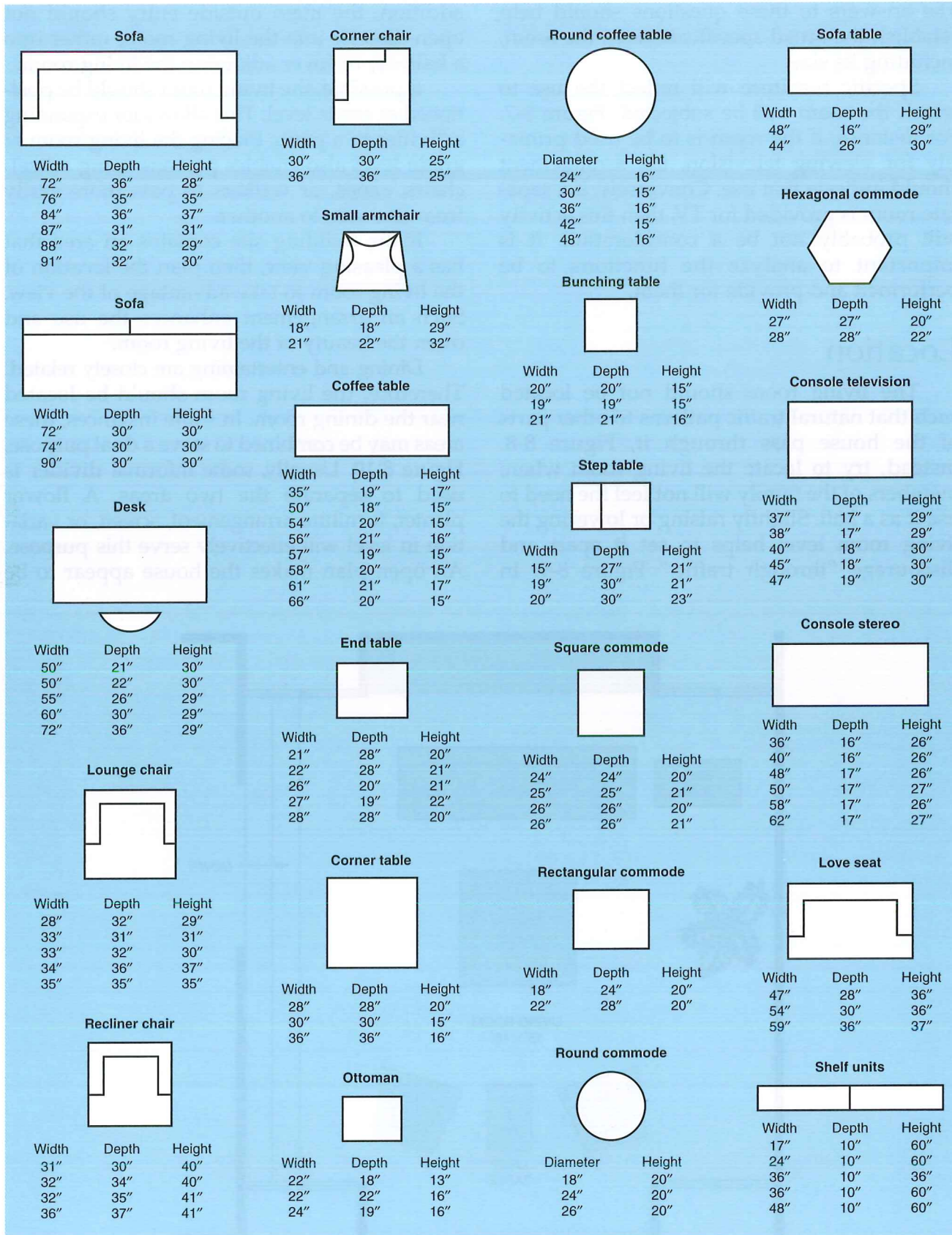


Figure 8-6. Standard sizes of typical living room furniture.

The answers to these questions should help establish the broad specifications of the room, including its size.

Specific furniture will reflect the use to which the room will be subjected, Figure 8-7. For instance, if the room is to be used primarily for viewing television, the arrangement should indicate that use. Conversely, if a separate room is provided for TV, then this activity will probably not be a consideration. It is important to analyze the functions to be performed and provide for them.

Location

The living room should not be located such that natural traffic patterns to other parts of the house pass through it, Figure 8-8. Instead, try to locate the living room where members of the family will not feel the need to use it as a hall. Slightly raising or lowering the living room level helps to set it apart and discourage “through traffic,” Figure 8-9. In

addition, the main outside entry should not open directly into the living room, rather into a hallway or foyer adjoining the living room.

If possible, the living room should be positioned at grade level. This allows for expanding activities to a patio. Placing the living room at grade level also enables persons using wheelchairs, canes, or walkers to pass more easily from one area to another.

If the building site contains an area that has a pleasing view, then plan the location of the living room to take advantage of the view. Such an arrangement enhances the use and often the beauty of the living room.

Dining and entertaining are closely related. Therefore, the living room should be located near the dining room. In some instances, these areas may be combined to serve a dual purpose, Figure 8-10. Usually, some informal divider is used to separate the two areas. A flower planter, furniture arrangement, screen, or variation in level will effectively serve this purpose. An open plan makes the house appear to be

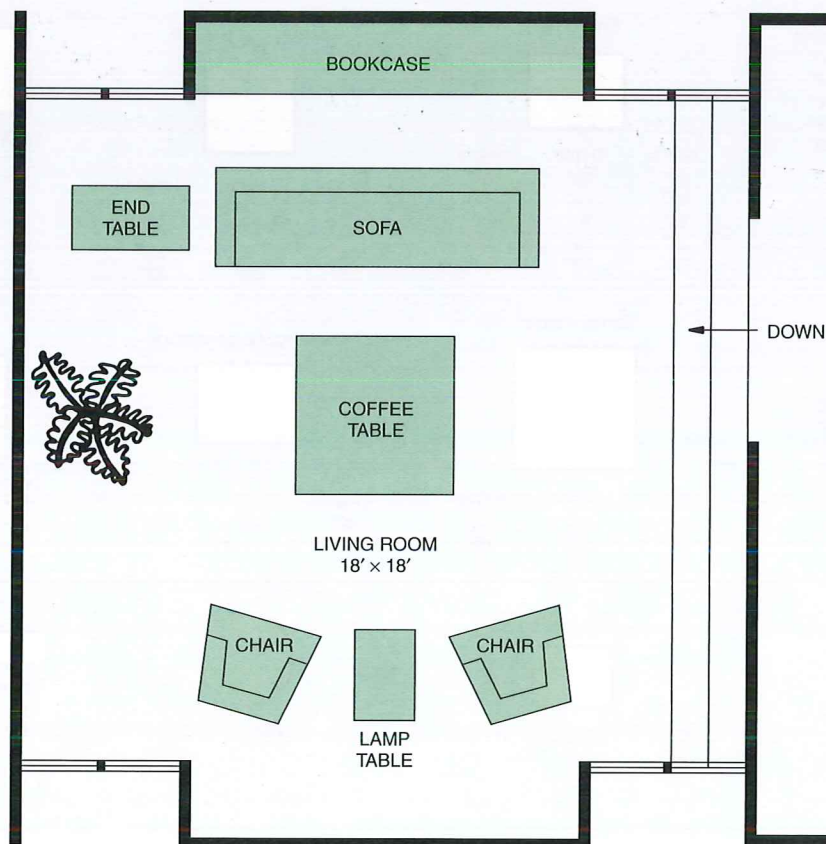


Figure 8-7. This living room is designed around a “conversation” concept.

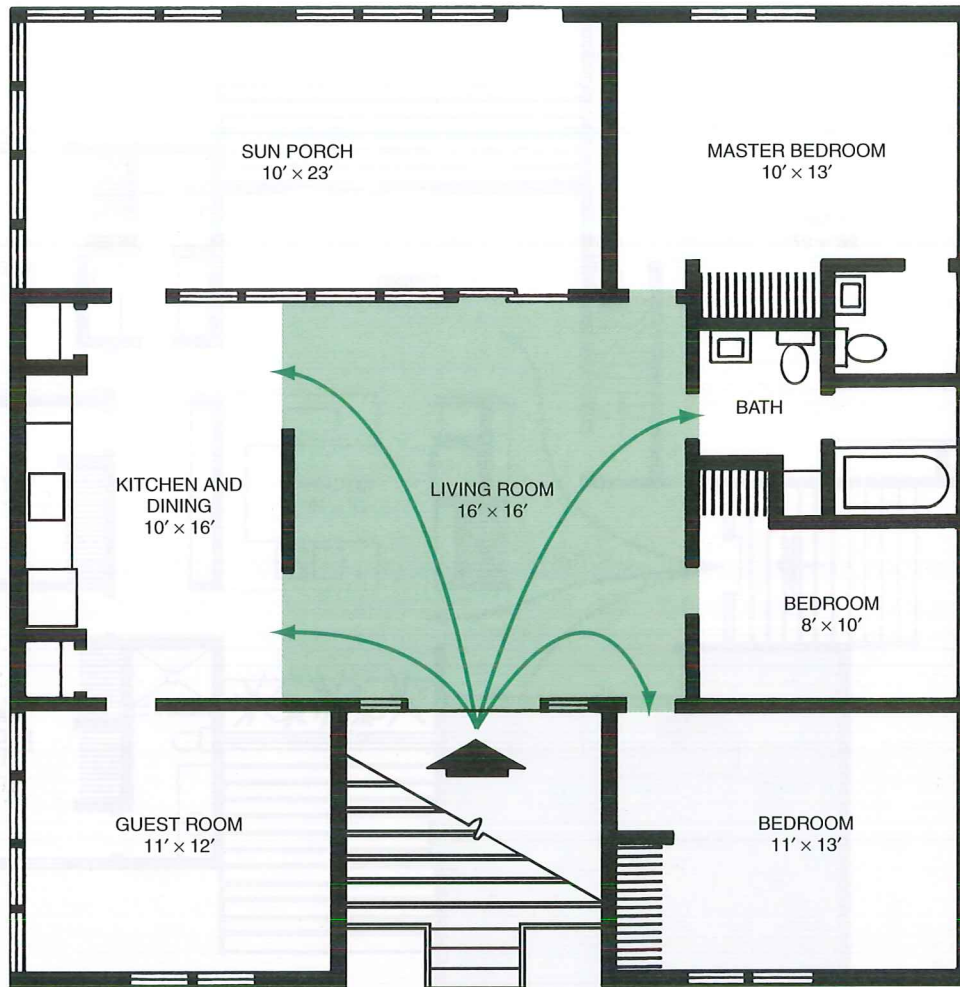


Figure 8-8. Notice how the traffic patterns from all of the surrounding rooms pass through this poorly located living room.

larger inside, while a closed plan tends to make the rooms look small.

Windows and Doors

Consider the orientation of the living room for maximum comfort and energy conservation. In warm climates, use a northern orientation to keep the living areas cool. The north side is usually shaded and cool, while the south side receives sun almost constantly. In cool climates, place the living room on the south side of the house to take advantage of winter sun.

Large windows or sliding doors further encourage the feeling of spaciousness and increases the enjoyment of the living room,

Figure 8-11. Exterior wall areas should not be broken with too many small windows and doors. Also, there needs to be adequate wall space for all of the required furniture.

Decor

Modern living rooms should be exciting, colorful, and inviting. Select bright, vivid colors that complement existing natural materials. Color, texture, and design may be used to emphasize the good points and minimize weak aspects of the room. See Figure 8-12.

The design of the living room should follow the exterior design. For example, the furnishings, wall and floor coverings, and window treatments of a Southern Colonial

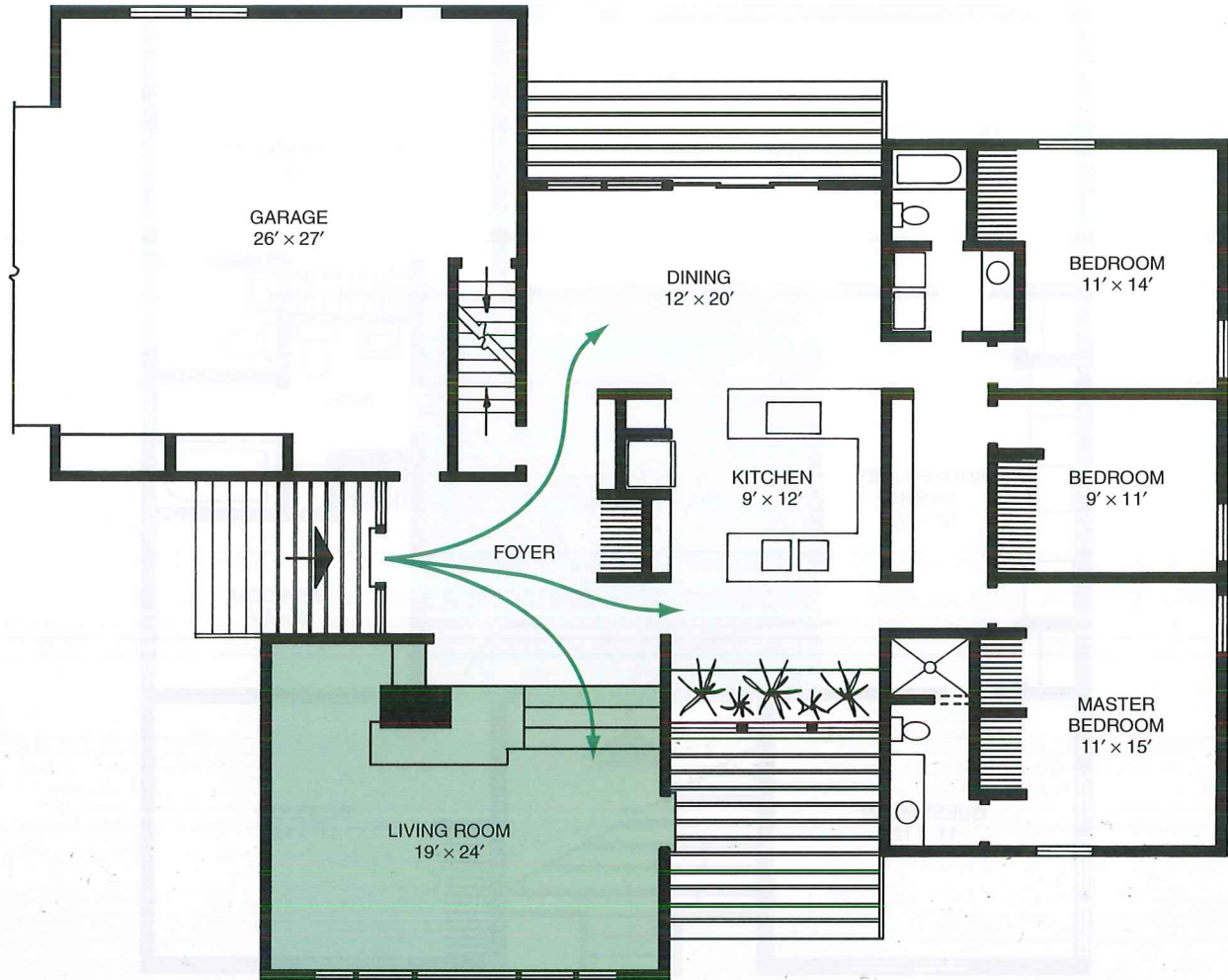


Figure 8-9. This living room is located near the kitchen and dining areas, yet no traffic patterns pass through it.



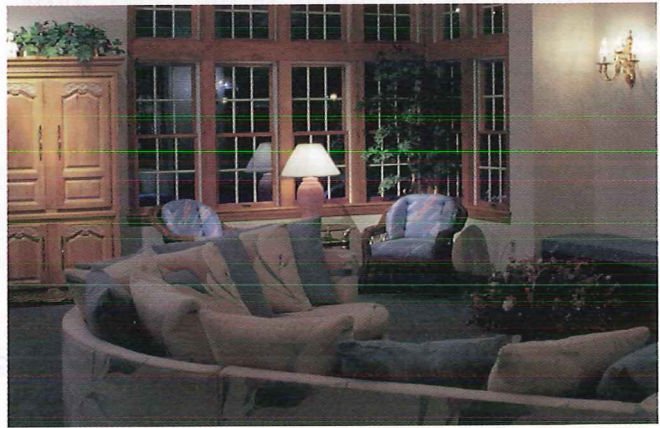
Figure 8-10. The living room and dining room are in close proximity to one another.



Figure 8-11. Large areas of glass add to the beauty and spaciousness of this living room.



A



B



C



D

Figure 8-12. Select bright colors that complement each other and the natural surroundings. The colors selected lend a mood or feel to the room. (Manufactured Housing Institute)

home should be traditional in design. On the other hand, contemporary furniture and decor are appropriate for a contemporary structure.

An average-size living room designed for conversation is shown in Figure 8-13. This layout lends itself to a corner location and restricts through traffic. Grade level placement permits access to a patio or porch. The fireplace is in an ideal spot for viewing from the conversation area.

Figure 8-14 shows a well-planned living room adjacent to the dining area. An area rug unifies the furniture arrangement and adds interest. The screen defines the living room boundary and at the same time makes it appear larger. Large windows provide an excellent viewing area.

Dining Rooms

Around the beginning of the 1900s, most new homes had a dining room. Then, shortly after World War II, fewer houses were being built with dining rooms. Now, the trend has changed again and dining rooms are popular. Most new homes today have a dining room. However, in each individual case, the determining factor of whether or not to include a dining room should be the lifestyle of those

who will live in the house, rather than fad or fancy.

The main function of a dining room is to provide a special place for eating. In some instances, such as informal meals, this activity is performed in the kitchen rather than in a separate room or area. Many modern homes provide eating facilities in the kitchen for informal meals and separate dining room for more formal gatherings, Figure 8-15.

Plan

When planning the dining room, a decision should be made early as to whether an "open" or "closed" plan will be the most desirable. A *closed plan* places the dining room in a cubicle with little chance for overflow into other rooms, Figure 8-16. The house appears smaller and less dramatic than in an open plan.

The function and efficiency of the rooms will be enhanced by using an *open plan* where the dining and living rooms are not closed off from each other, Figure 8-17. Flower planters, screens, dividers, and partial walls may be used effectively to divide the dining area from the living room or kitchen and, at the same time, make the rooms appear larger, Figure 8-18. In some instances, it may be best if the dining

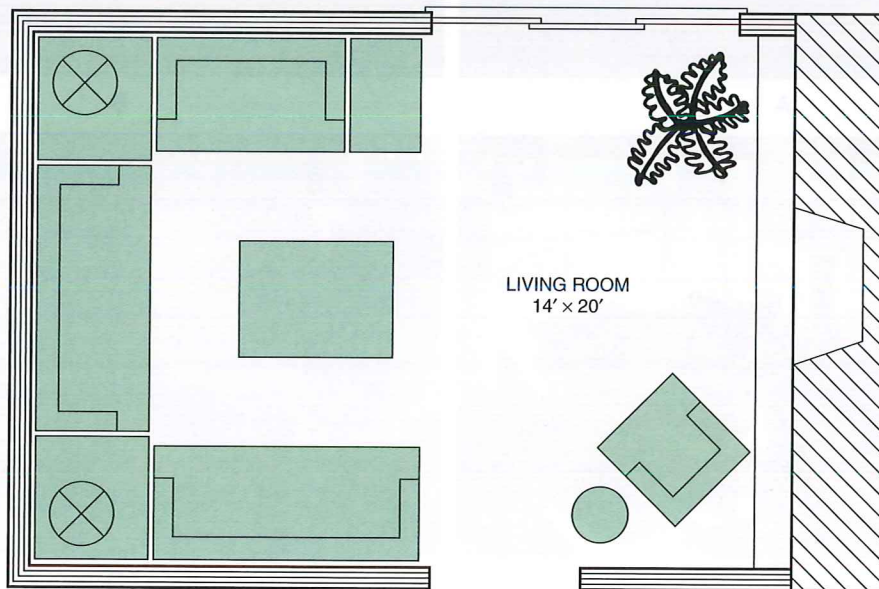


Figure 8-13. An average-size living room designed for conversation.

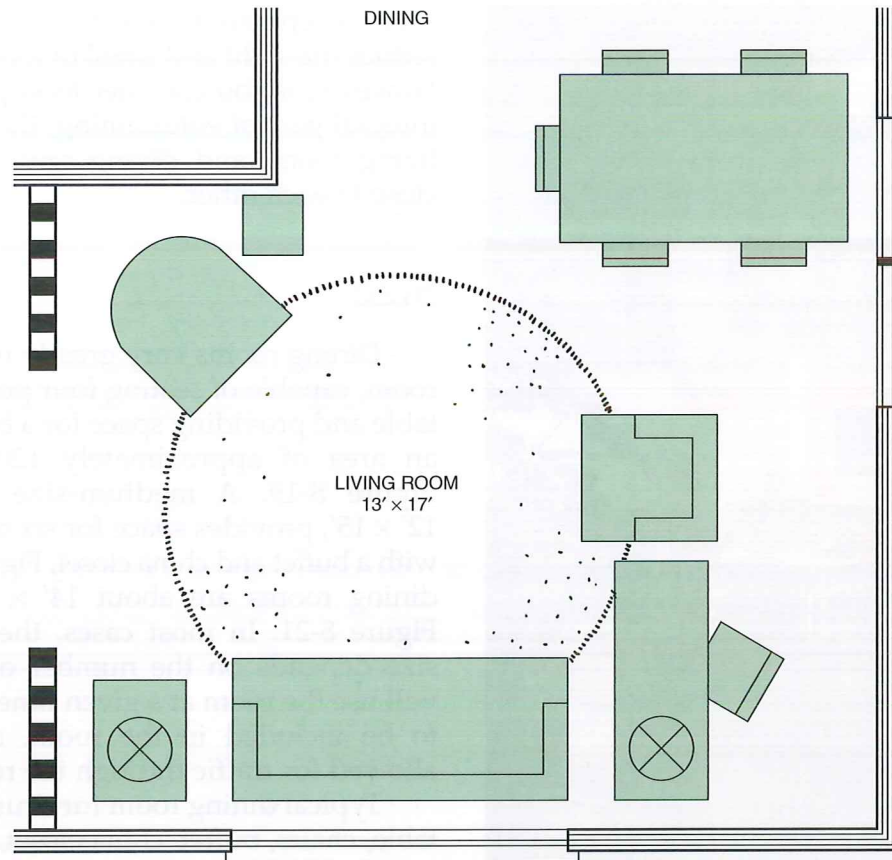


Figure 8-14. An open-style living room adjacent to the dining room.



Figure 8-15. This large dining room is designed for formal gatherings. (NMC/Focal Point)



Figure 8-16. A wall separates the living and dining rooms. This is a closed plan because there is little chance for overflow between the two rooms.



Figure 8-17. A delightfully planned open dining area with cheerful colors and extensive lighting. (Armstrong World Industries, Inc.)



Figure 8-18. A dwarf wall separates the dining room and living area in this open plan. (Manufactured Housing Institute)

room is separated from the kitchen in order to reduce the sight and smell of food preparation. However, if you consider food preparation an integral part of entertaining, then the kitchen, living room, and dining area should all be close to each other.

Size

Dining rooms vary greatly in size. A small room, capable of seating four people around a table and providing space for a buffet, requires an area of approximately 120 square feet, Figure 8-19. A medium-size room, about 12' x 15', provides space for six to eight people with a buffet and china closet, Figure 8-20. Large dining rooms are about 14' x 18' or larger, Figure 8-21. In most cases, the dining room size depends on the number of people who will use the room at a given time, the furniture to be included in the room, and clearance allowed for traffic through the room.

Typical dining room furniture includes the table, chairs, buffet, china closet, and server or cart, Figure 8-22. Arrangement and spacing depends on the layout of the room, a pleasant outdoor vantage point, or orientation to other rooms, Figure 8-23. At least 2'-3" should be

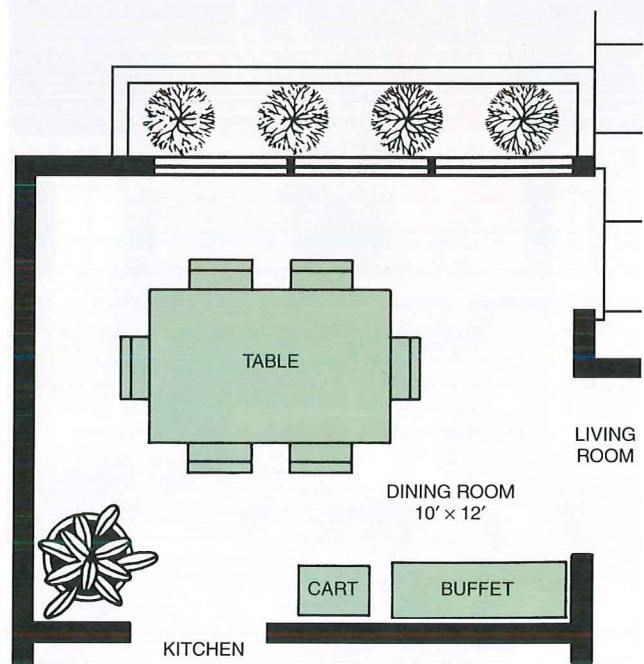


Figure 8-19. A floor plan of a small dining room that seats four to six people.

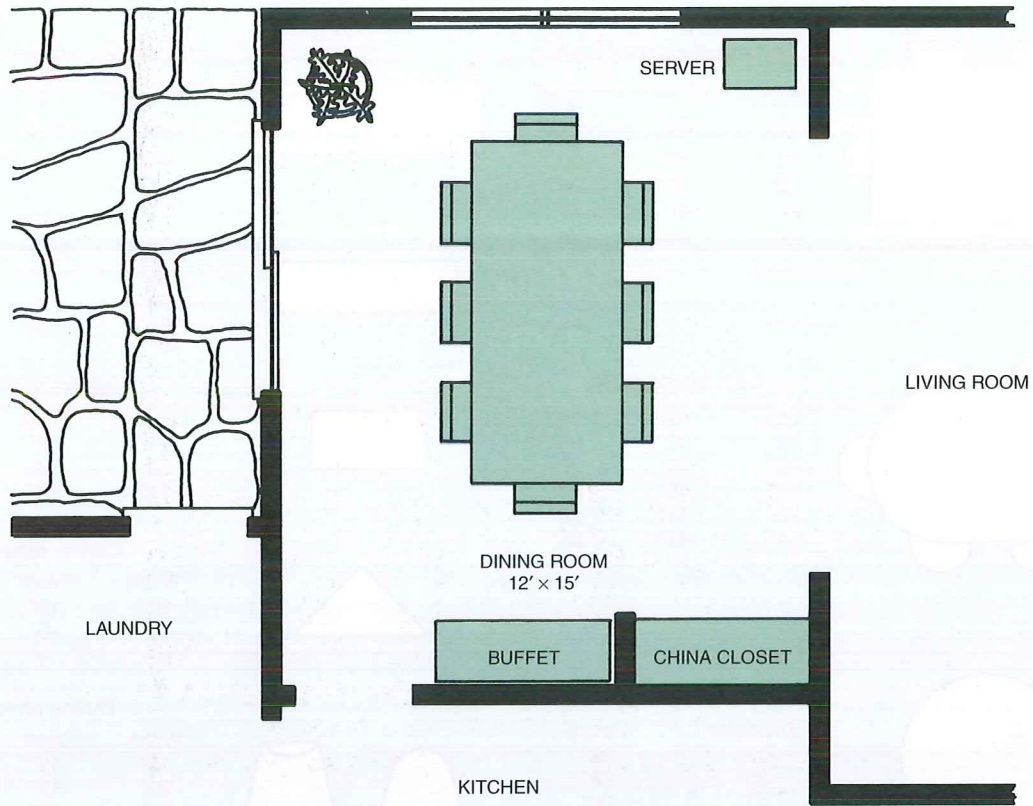


Figure 8-20. This is a medium-size dining room. It is arranged in respect to the other living areas.

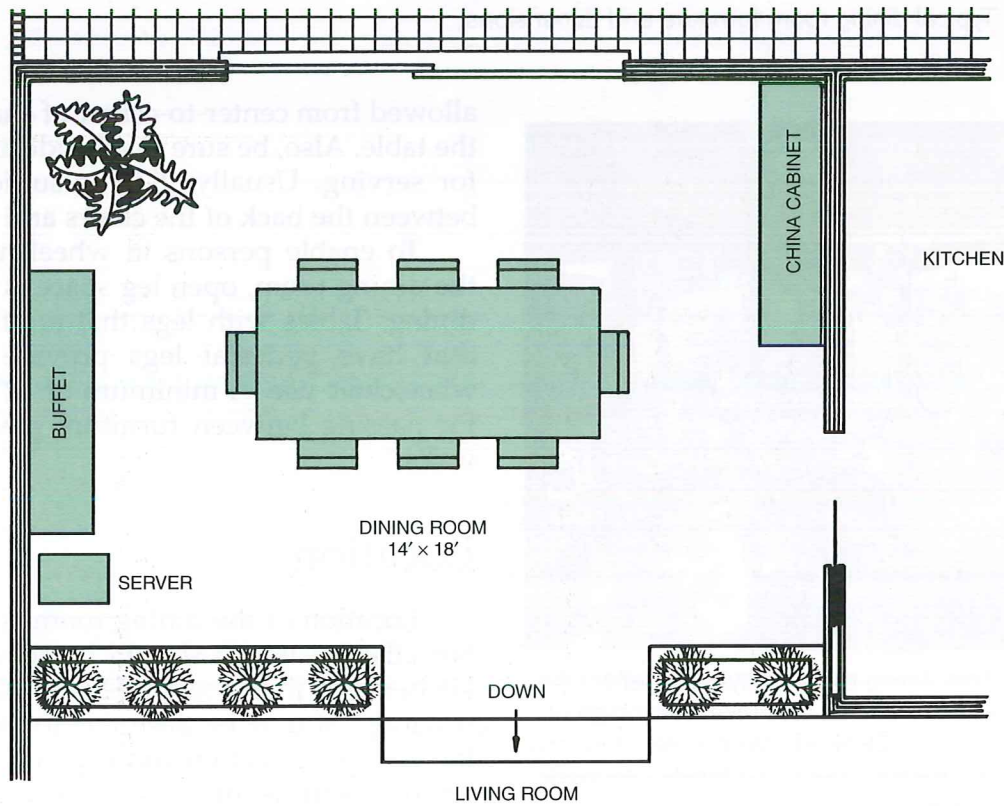


Figure 8-21. A large dining room seats eight or more people and is best suited for a large family or those who entertain frequently.

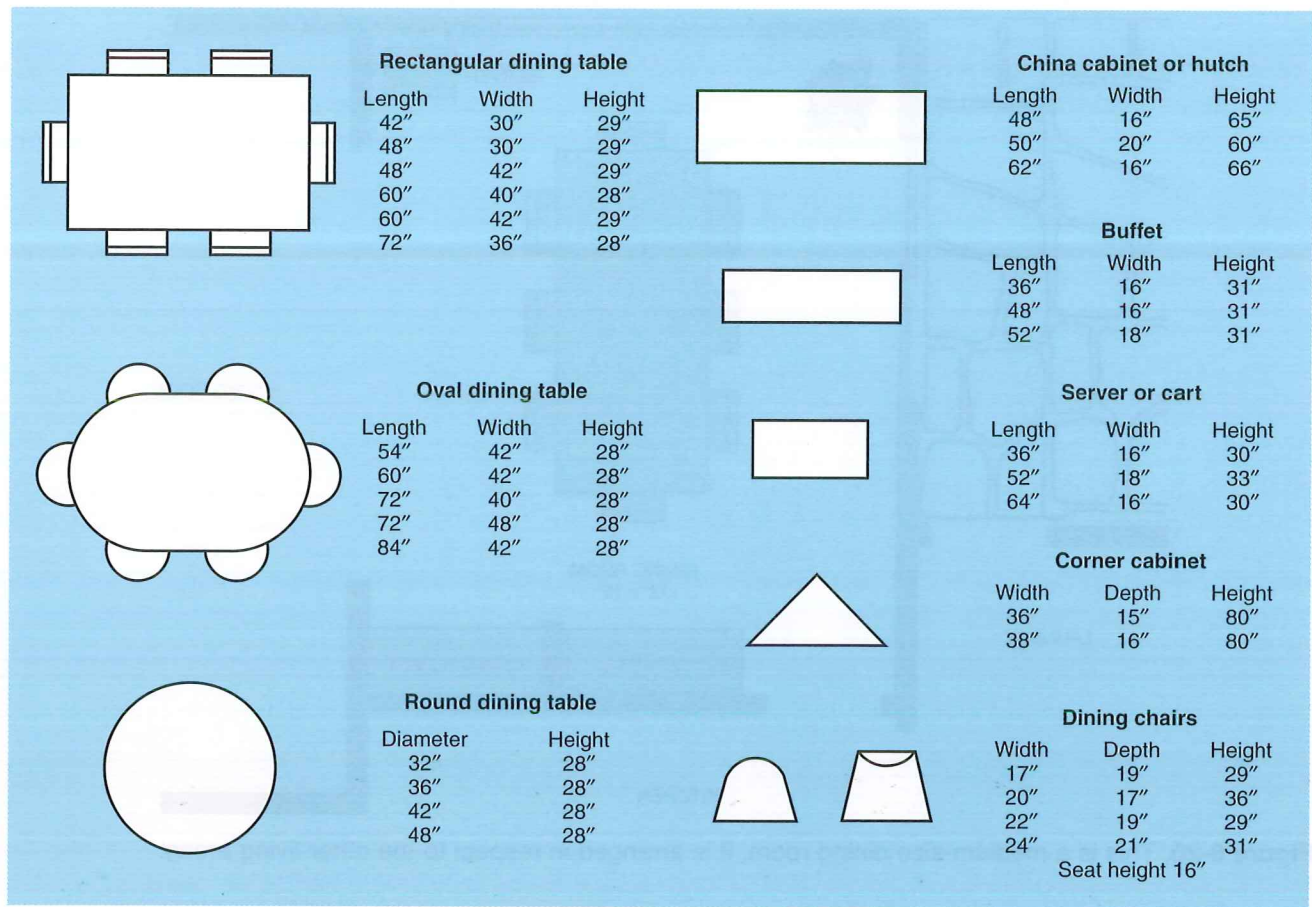


Figure 8-22. Typical dining room furniture and dimensions.



Figure 8-23. This dining room is styled to reflect the decor of the adjacent rooms and take advantage of the outside view. (The Oshkosh, WI private residence of Chancellor Richard H. Wells and family—formerly the Alberta Kimball Home.)

allowed from center-to-center of chairs around the table. Also, be sure to provide ample space for serving. Usually, 2'-0" is sufficient space between the back of the chairs and the wall.

To enable persons in wheelchairs to use the dining room, open leg space is needed for dining. Tables with legs that are far apart or that have pedestal legs provide space for wheelchair use. A minimum of 32" is needed for passing between furniture pieces and/or walls.



Location

Location of the dining room is important. For efficient use, it should be adjacent to the kitchen and living room, Figure 8-24. In some instances, it may be desirable to locate it near the family recreation room as well. An ideal arrangement is one that places the dining room between the living room and kitchen. This provides for natural movement of guests



Figure 8-24. The kitchen and living room surround two sides of the dining room on the right.

from living room to dining with minimum confusion. Furthermore, added space is available in the living room if needed. This is especially true in an open plan, as in Figure 8-25.

Decor

Dining is generally a happy conversation time. Hence, the decor and lighting are important factors, Figure 8-26. Controlled lighting is desirable and makes possible a variety of moods. The color scheme used in the dining room is often the same as the living room, since it will most likely be an extension of that area. A bright, warm, and cheerful atmosphere is the desired result, Figure 8-27. In dining areas that are used frequently, flooring should be durable to withstand daily wear. Nonslip, hard-surface floors or low-pile carpeting are good choices for wheelchair users.

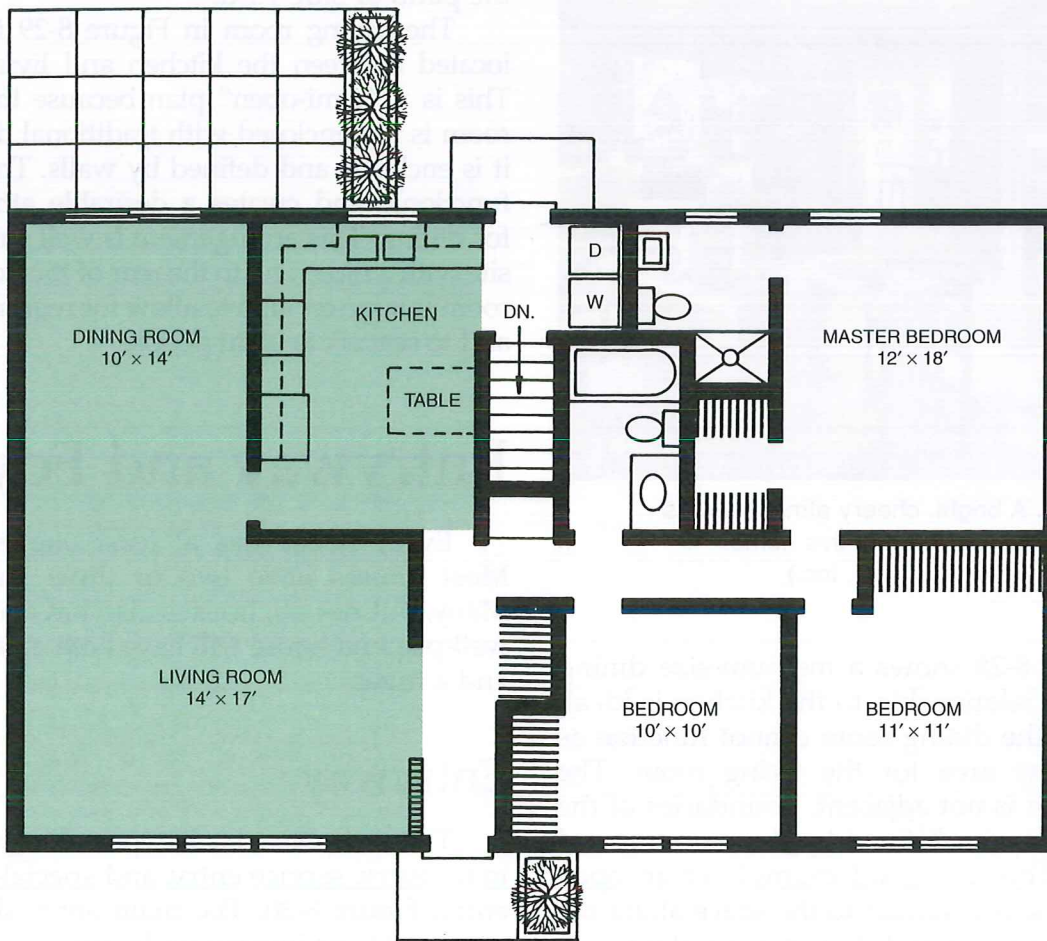


Figure 8-25. This open plan allows the living room to serve as overflow if an extra table or seating are required.



Figure 8-26. Graciousness is the theme of this dining room as evident in the lighting and decor. (Focal Point, Inc.)



Figure 8-27. A bright, cheery atmosphere is reflected in the open plan of this home. (Armstrong World Industries, Inc.)

Figure 8-28 shows a medium-size dining room. The relationship to the kitchen is ideal. However, the dining room cannot function as an overflow area for the living room. The living room is not adjacent. Boundaries of the dining room are defined by the area rug and the sofa. This is a good example of an open plan. Traffic is confined to the space along the edge of the room and does not interfere with activities in the kitchen or dining room. The

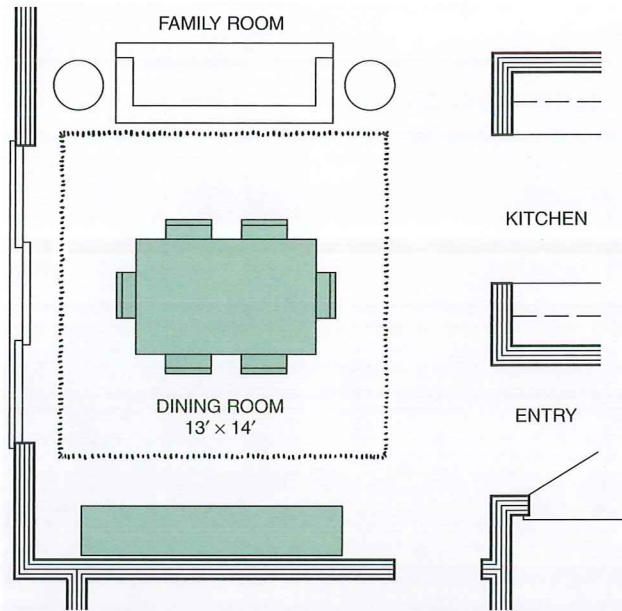


Figure 8-28. This is a good example of an open plan that is located close to the kitchen.

large sliding doors provide for a nice view of the patio or side yard.

The dining room in Figure 8-29 is ideally located between the kitchen and living room. This is a “semi-open” plan because the dining room is not enclosed with traditional doors, yet it is enclosed and defined by walls. The plan is functional and creates a desirable atmosphere for dining. This arrangement is well suited for a site with a nice view to the rear of the house. The room is large enough to allow for required traffic and to seat six to eight people.

Entryway and Foyer

Every house has at least one entryway. Most houses have two or three entryways. Many, but not all, houses also have a foyer. A well-planned house will have both an entryway and a foyer.

Entryway

There are three basic types of entryways—main entry, service entry, and special-purpose entry, Figure 8-30. The main entry should be designed to be impressive because it is the first part of the house that guests see when they

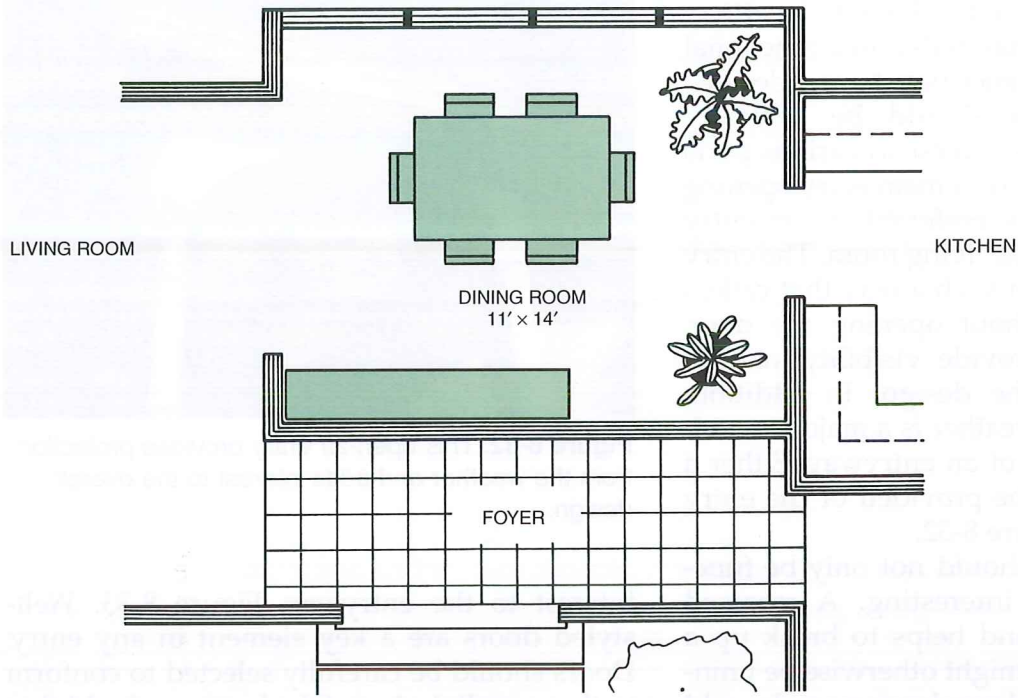


Figure 8-29. This dining room is located in an ideal position between the kitchen and living room.

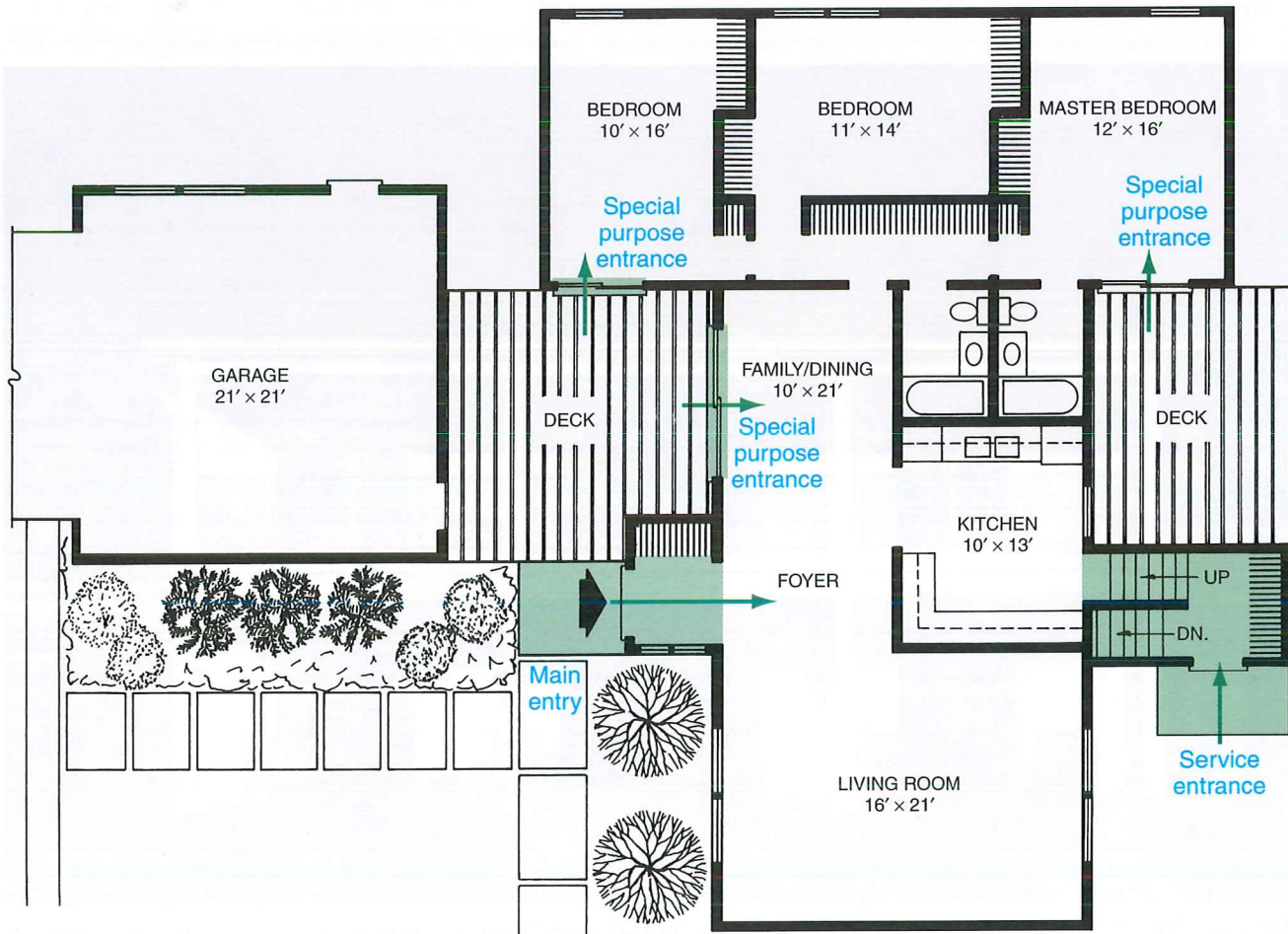


Figure 8-30. This floor plan illustrates a variety of entryways. Note the main entry and foyer.

arrive. An entry need not be large to be attractive. Creative use of materials and a functional arrangement will enhance beauty and design.

The *main entry* should be centrally located to provide easy access to various parts of the house, Figure 8-31. A main entry opening into a foyer is usually preferable to an entry leading directly into the living room. The entry should be designed in such a way that callers may be viewed without opening the door. Glass side panels provide visibility, natural light, and add to the design. In addition, protection from the weather is a major consideration in the design of an entryway. Either a large overhang may be provided or the entry may be recessed, Figure 8-32.

The main entry should not only be functional, but visually interesting. A recessed entry is impressive and helps to break up a long, plain front that might otherwise be uninteresting. An extended overhang may also add design and interest to a plain roof. An extra-tall door and ornate scrollwork can add visual



Figure 8-32. This open-air entry provides protection from the weather and adds interest to the overall design.

interest to the entryway, Figure 8-33. Well-styled doors are a key element in any entry. Doors should be carefully selected to conform to the overall design of the house and add that special touch of creative design. Added emphasis may be obtained by using two doors



Figure 8-31. This main entry is clearly defined and centrally located to ensure easy access to the different areas of the house. (Photo Courtesy of James Hardie® Siding Products)



Figure 8-33. Notice how this entry carries through the same theme of styling as the rest of the house. An extra tall door adds visual interest to the entry.

instead of one. This technique places more emphasis on the entry and also increases its function, Figure 8-34. Regardless of the technique used, the style of the entry should be compatible with the remainder of the house. The use of totally different materials or a drastic change in proportion usually will not produce desirable results.

The size of the entry will depend somewhat on the size and design of the house. However, sufficient space should be provided to accommodate several people at any given time. To be handicapped accessible, the entry should be large enough to permit the door to open a full 90 degrees. There should also be 12" to 18" of space on the doorknob side of the entry and the foyer to allow for proper positioning of a wheelchair.

The typical size for an entry door is 3'-0" wide, 6'-8" high, and 1-3/4" thick. In wheelchair-accessible homes, the entry door should have a 34" clearing around it. This clearance provides space for the wheelchair plus room for the arms and hands to turn the wheels.

The *service entry* is usually connected to the kitchen. The overall design may be improved by placing a mudroom or utility room between the kitchen and service entry. *Special-purpose entries* are those providing access to patios, decks, and courts. Sliding doors are often used for this type of entry. Service and special-purpose entries are not intended to be as striking as the main entry, Figure 8-35.



Figure 8-34. These double doors add a spacious appearance to the entry and increase its function.



Figure 8-35. This service door to the rear of the house is designed to match the house style. However, overall the entry is fairly "plain." (Therma-Tru, Division of LST Corporation.)



Foyer

The *foyer* functions as a place to greet guests and, in colder climates, remove overcoats and boots. Consequently, the floor covering material must be unaffected by water or dirt. It should also be easy to clean. Materials such as slate, terrazzo, ceramic or asphalt tile, or linoleum are generally used for foyer floors, Figure 8-36.

The foyer must have a coat closet. The minimum size required by FHA is 2' × 3' inside dimensions. A more desirable size would be 2'-6" deep by 4'-0" wide. The floor covering in the closet should also withstand mud and water.

Frequently, the foyer provides access to other rooms of the house through halls. Hall space should be kept to a minimum, since any area wasted in halls reduces the useful space available for other rooms of the house. The FHA recommends a minimum hall width of 3'-0". A width of 3'-6" or 4'-0" is more desirable.



Figure 8-36. The flooring in a foyer must be able to withstand water and dirt. It should be easy to clean.

Decor

Decor of the foyer will most likely reflect the color scheme and materials used in the living room or other adjacent rooms. Yet, the foyer is an extension of the entry. If possible, the foyer should capitalize on the design aspects of the entry, Figure 8-37. For example, a two-story entry may be extended to include the foyer. This technique creates a unity between the inside and outside and can result in a very pleasing effect. Planters or potted plants may be used in the same way. They may also serve as informal dividers between the foyer and other rooms.

Foyers with an open feeling are more desirable than those that are small and closed, Figure 8-38. Using mirrors and windows helps create an open feeling. Lighting is an effective design tool that should not be overlooked. Plan the lighting for maximum effect both inside and outside the entry. The lighting of outside walks and entries should be carefully considered.

Size

The size of the foyer depends on several factors:

- The size of the house.
- Cost of the house.
- Location.
- Personal preference.

A minimum size for a foyer is about 6' × 6', Figure 8-39. An average size is 8' × 10'. Anything larger than 8' × 10' is considered a large foyer, Figure 8-40.

Applications

The foyer shown in Figure 8-39 is well designed and functional. It is just slightly larger than a minimum-size foyer, but is well proportioned. The coat closet is easily accessible and the floor covering is durable tile or brick. This is a simple, functional design.

Figure 8-41 shows a split-entry with a main and a lower foyer. The main foyer is small, but adequate. The closet is convenient. The floor covering in both the main foyer and lower foyer is water- and soil-resistant slate. Even though the plan is complex with many walls and corners, this is a functional arrangement.

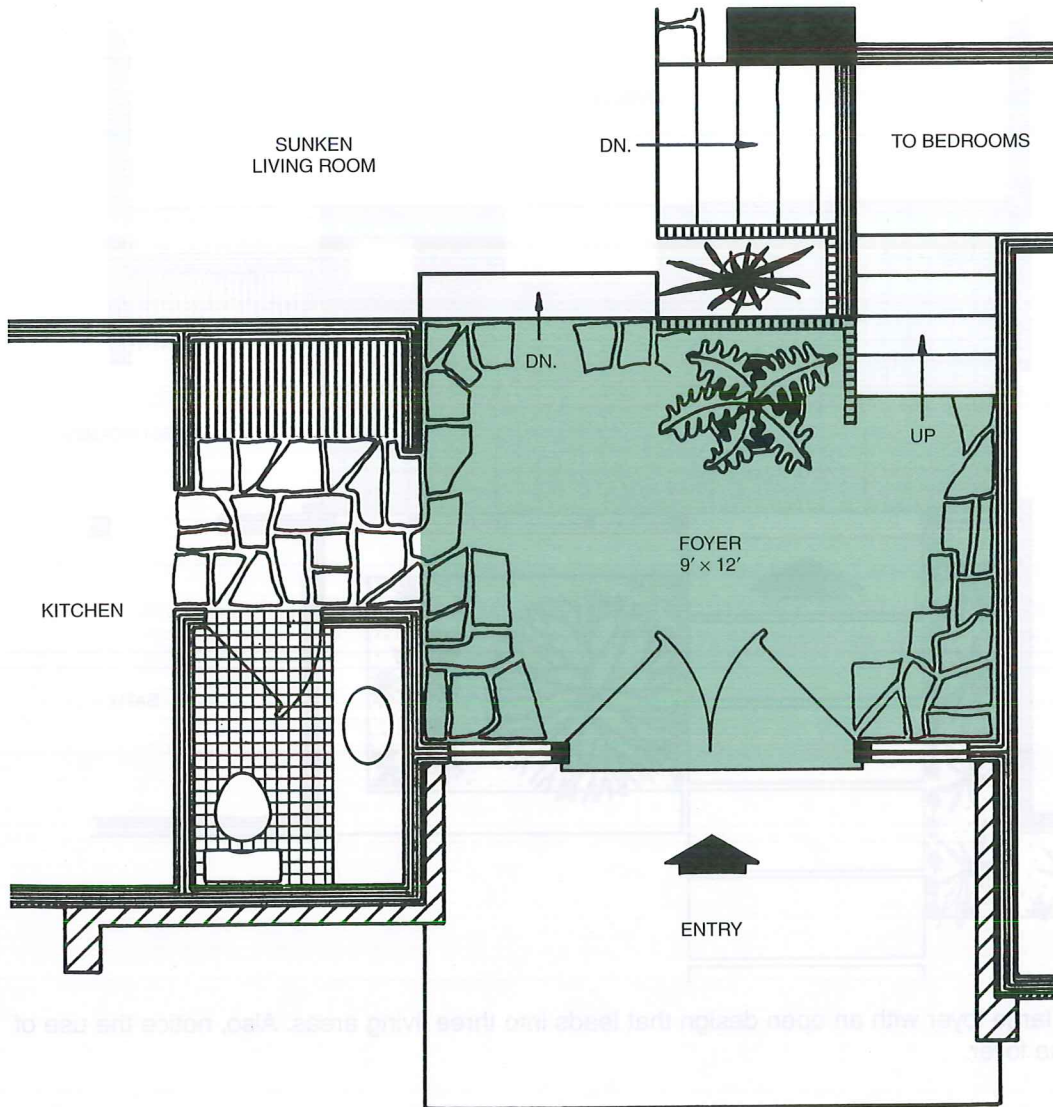


Figure 8-37. By having the foyer the same width as the entry, it becomes an extension of the entry.

Family Recreation Room

In new homes, there is a trend toward providing a specially designed room called a recreation room, family room, music room, hobby room, or rumpus room, Figure 8-42. These rooms can be generically called recreation rooms or “rec” rooms. The basic purpose of a recreation room is to provide a place where the family can play or pursue hobbies, Figure 8-43. A large house may have a number of recreation rooms, each planned for a specific activity. Design the room so that it is functional and easily maintained.

If located near the dining or living room, the recreation room can provide overflow space when needed. It may also be placed between the kitchen and garage since this provides an ideal location for pursuing hobbies, Figure 8-44. In some cases, it may be wise to locate the recreation room adjacent to a patio to take advantage of swimming pools, indoor-outdoor picnics, or sunbathing. Some designers favor placing the recreation room in the basement, Figure 8-45. This location takes advantage of a large area, separates noise from other living areas, contains the necessary structural details, and is easy to decorate and keep clean. Wherever the room is located it should be convenient to those who use it.

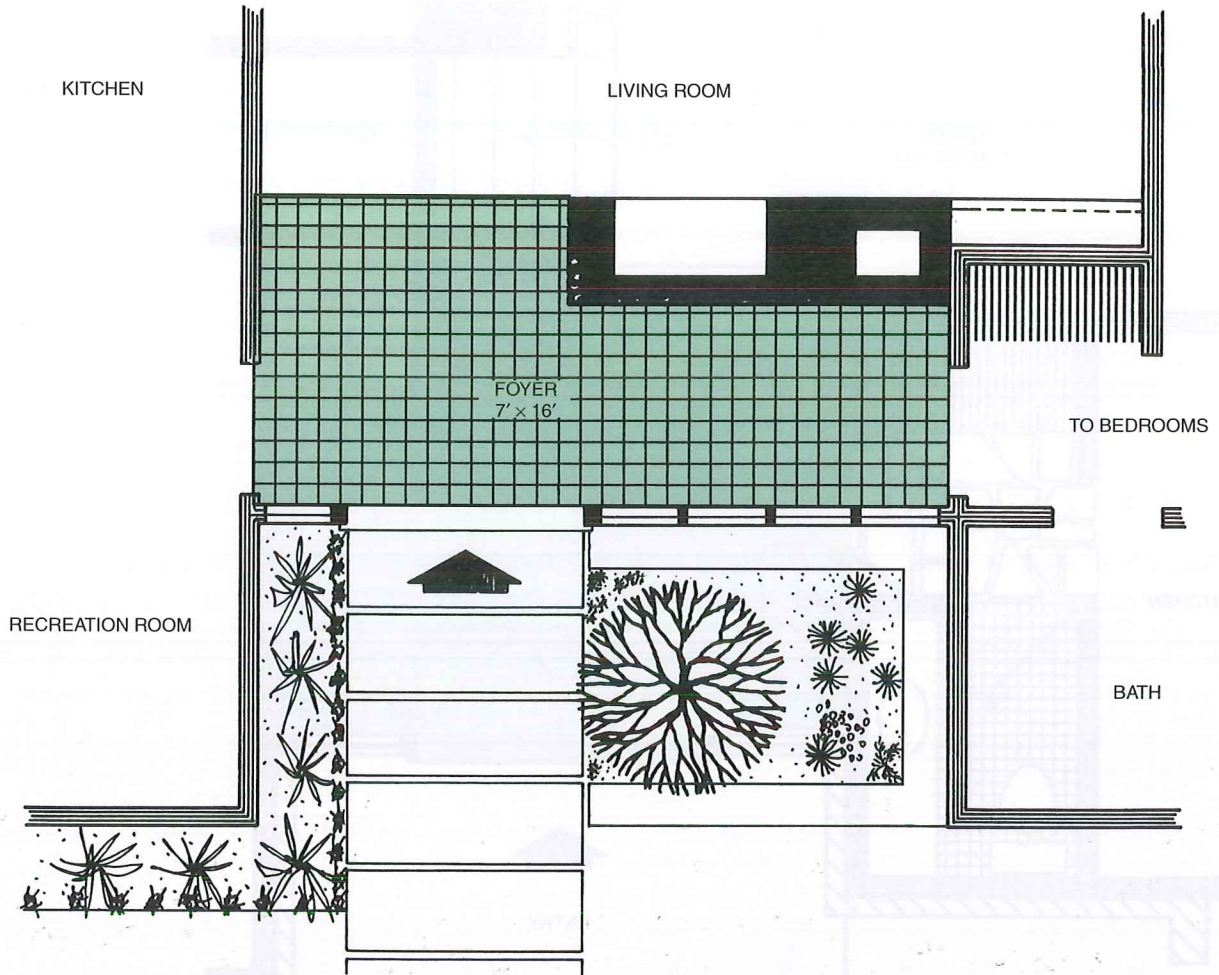


Figure 8-38. This is a large foyer with an open design that leads into three living areas. Also, notice the use of glass on the front of the foyer.

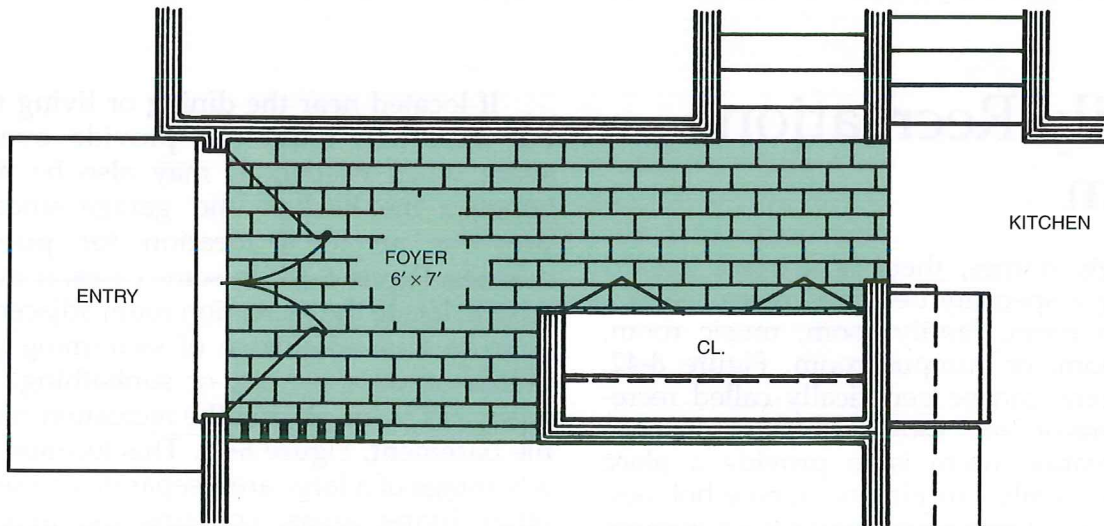


Figure 8-39. A well-designed small foyer.

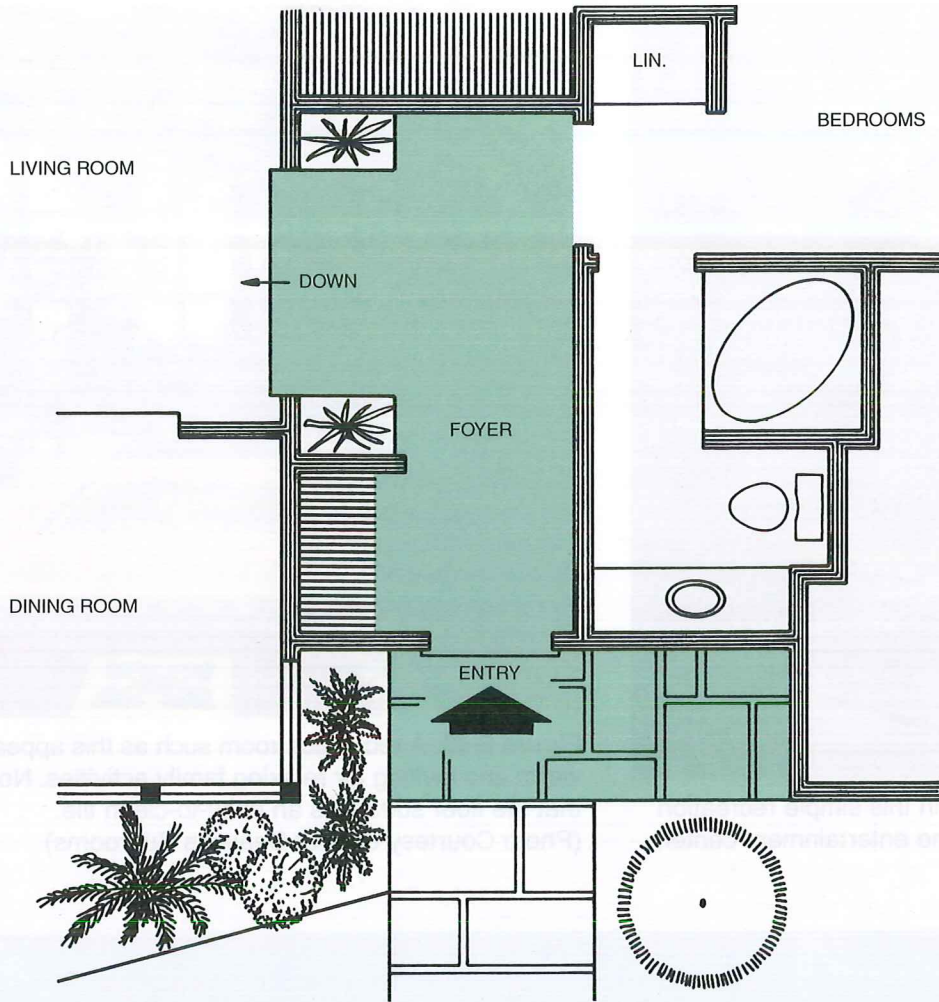


Figure 8-40. This is an attractive, nicely landscaped entry and complementary large foyer.

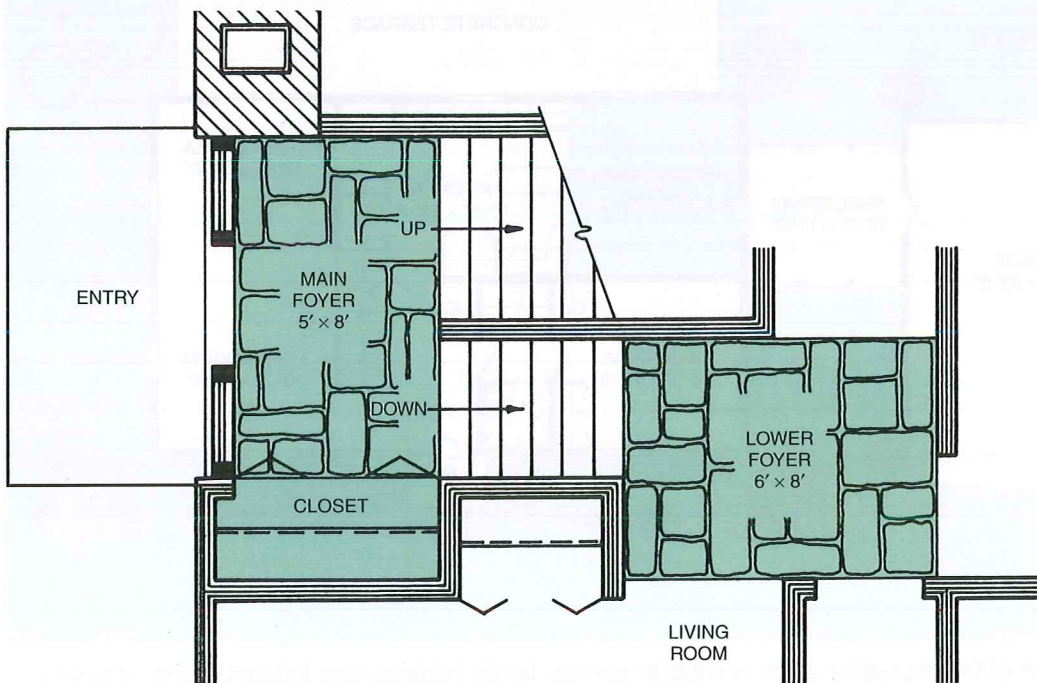


Figure 8-41. This split-entry is functional and convenient.



Figure 8-42. The activities in this simple recreation room are focused around the entertainment center.



Figure 8-43. A recreation room such as this appears warm and inviting for relaxing family activities. Notice that the floor surface is an easy-to-clean tile. (Photo Courtesy of Four Seasons Sunrooms)

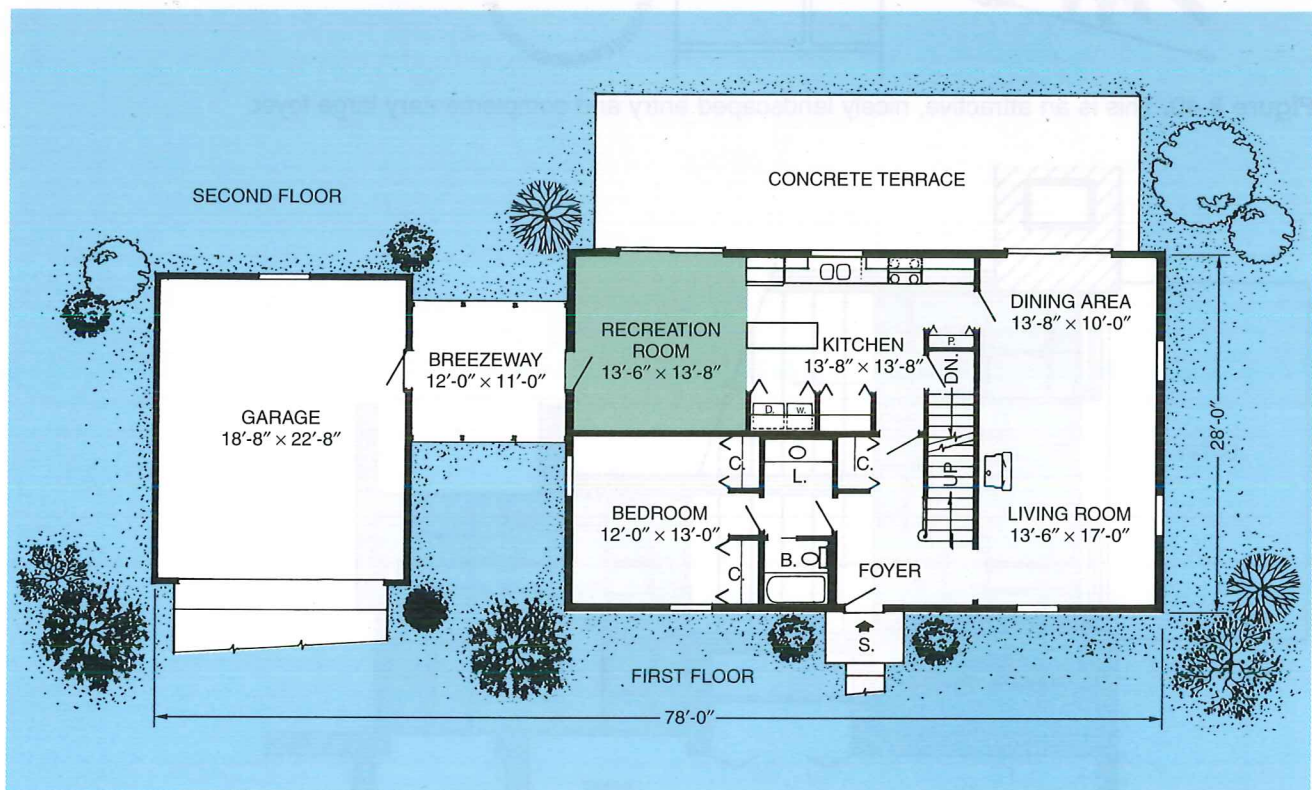


Figure 8-44. The location of this recreation room is ideal for games, family hobbies, and indoor-outdoor activities. (The Garlinghouse Company)



Figure 8-45. This basement recreation room is set up so it can function as a home office or be used for family activities. (Formica Corporation)

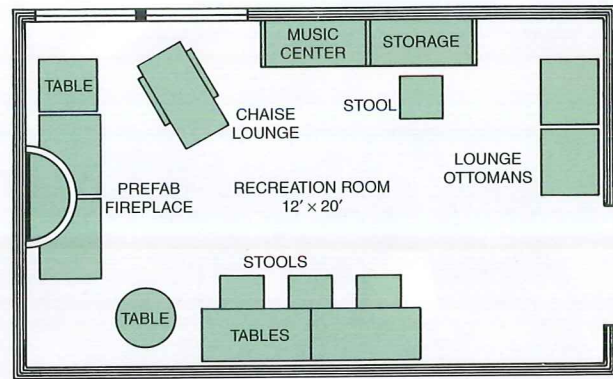
Size

Recreation rooms vary greatly in size. The number of people planning to use the room and the types of activities in which the family members will be engaged are important considerations in determining the size, Figure 8-46. A common size is 12' x 20'. Furniture selection for the room is very important and depends on the anticipated activities, Figure 8-47. The recreation room typically receives a great deal of use. Therefore, choose furniture that is serviceable and resistant to wear.

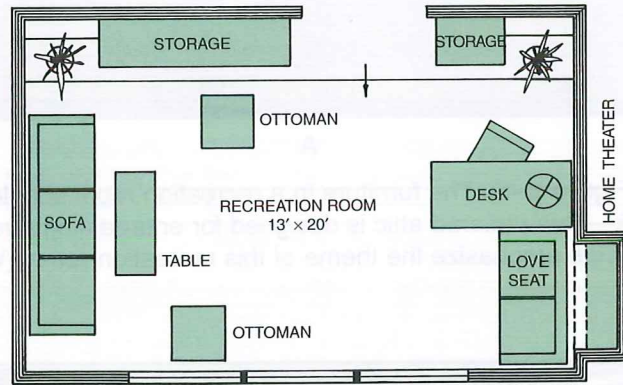


To accommodate a person using a wheelchair, a space of 4' to 5' wide should be provided around furniture. To enable easy transfer to a sofa or chair, the seat should be the same height as the wheelchair seat and cushions should be firm. Power-operated elevating chairs are available that help a person get to a standing position.

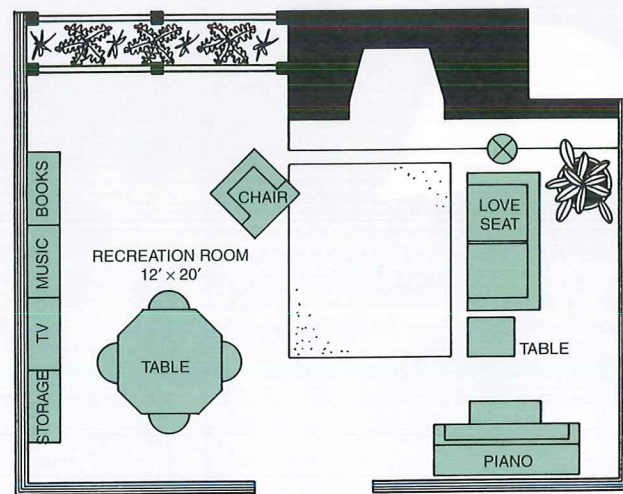
The recreation room should include storage space for games and hobbies, Figure 8-48. Lighting must be good for those activities that require sensitive viewing, such as needlepoint or model building. Many recreation rooms are brightly lighted with fluorescent light to provide light for activities such as table tennis or other games.



A



B



C

Figure 8-46. A—This recreation room is designed primarily for relaxation, writing, and reading. Note the furniture arrangement and lack of TV. B—This recreation room illustrates an arrangement for hobbies or work and includes a home theater center. C—Styled for board games, singing, or a fireside chat, this design suggests further activity ideas.



A



B

Figure 8-47. The furniture in a recreation room should be selected for the anticipated use of the space. A—This restored attic is designed for entertaining guests. (Georgia-Pacific Corporation) B—The furniture helps emphasize the theme of this recreation room. (Wilsonart International)

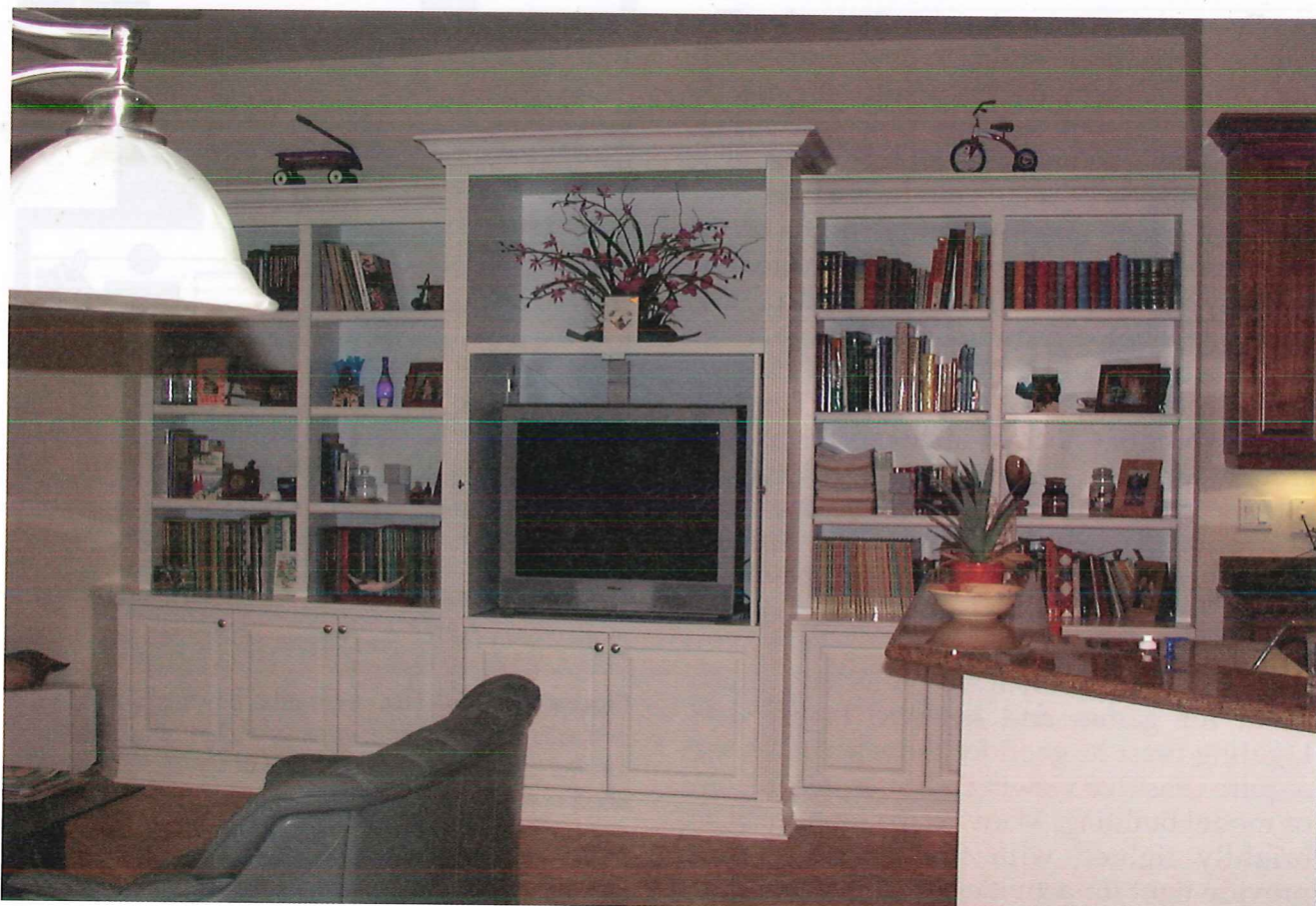


Figure 8-48. Well-planned storage for toys, games, and other recreational equipment keeps the room tidy and easy to clean.

Decor

The recreation room is a good place to try out decorating ideas. Exercise your creative talents to develop individual and personal designs, Figure 8-49. The recreation room should feature floors that are easy to clean, suitable for a variety of activities, resistant to wear, and not slippery. Linoleum, ceramic tile, and vinyl tile are commonly used for recreation room floors. Deep pile carpeting should be avoided when persons in wheelchairs will be using the room. It is wise to select materials that are washable and mar resistant. Bright materials that are “alive with color” are desirable. Remember, this is a fun room!

Applications

Figure 8-50 shows a compact recreation room designed for conversation, reading, and relaxing. Large sliding glass doors opening onto the patio are an added attraction. This arrangement is quite functional for a “quiet” room. More vigorous activities may be performed on the patio, weather permitting.

The recreation room shown in Figure 8-51 is truly an “action” room. It is designed especially for young adults. The built-in conversation area is the focal point, but the raised dance area is a close second. This room would be popular in most any home with teenagers or young adults.

Special-Purpose Rooms

After the primary rooms of the living area have been planned, consider special-purpose rooms. *Special-purpose rooms* may include a dedicated home office, sunroom or atrium, greenhouse, ham radio room, and so on.

Some special-purpose areas may be placed in the corner of another room, like the home office shown in Figure 8-52. Other special-purpose rooms such as a music room or sunroom may be located to the side or rear of the house, Figure 8-53. Rooms that require a great deal of privacy, such as a dark room or



Figure 8-49. Creative decorating gives this recreation room life and excitement. You can try designs that you would not use in other, more formal areas of the house. (Formica Corporation)

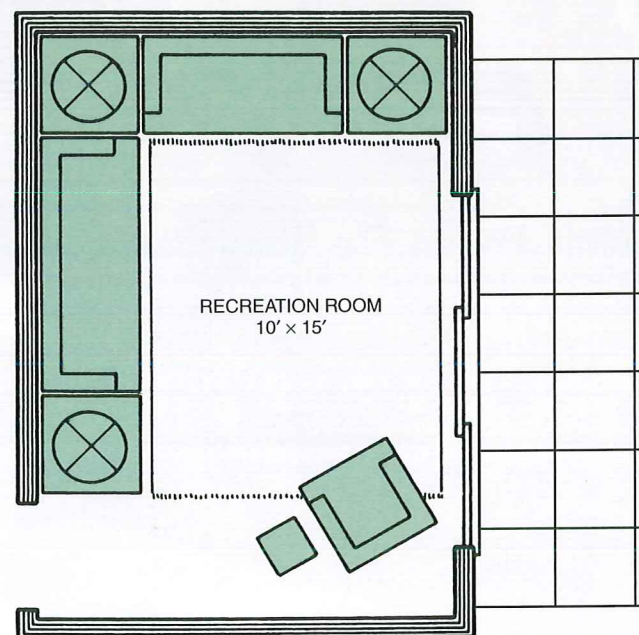


Figure 8-50. This compact recreation room is designed for reading, conversation, or relaxing.

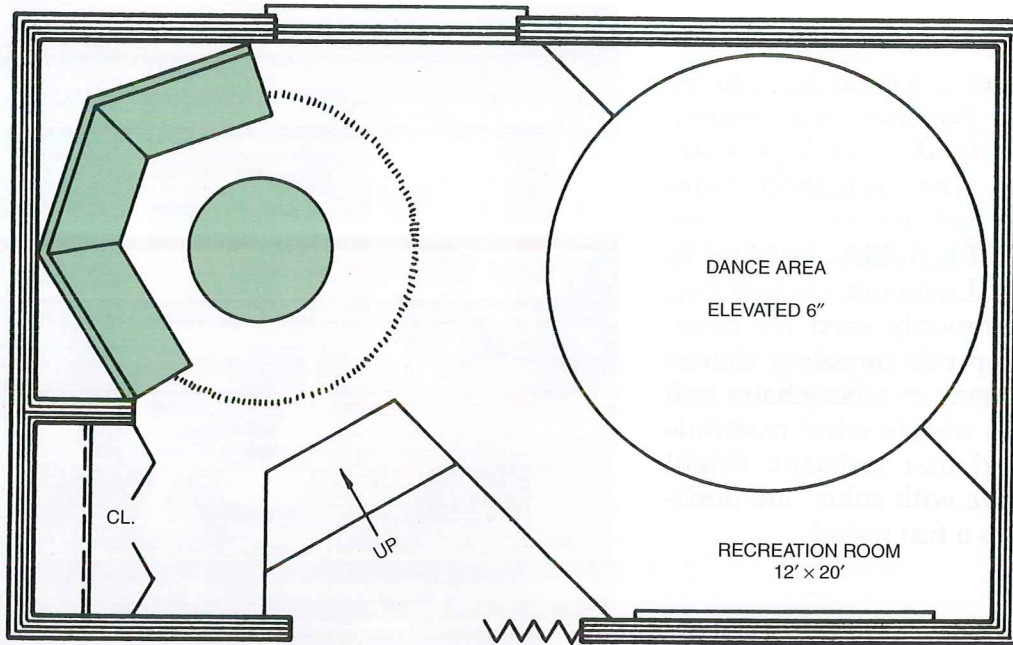


Figure 8-51. This recreation room is truly an “action” room designed for teenagers or young adults.



Figure 8-52. This home office is located in the corner of a larger room. (Sauder Woodworking Co.)

Jacuzzi™, should be placed in a remote area of the home.

In addition to location, many special-purpose rooms have unique requirements that should receive attention in the design process. These requirements may include storage, lighting, ventilation, plumbing, and electrical facilities, Figure 8-54.

Patios, Porches, Courts, and Gazebos

A well-designed house will extend its living facilities beyond its walls, as shown in Figure 8-55A. Patios, porches or decks, courts, and gazebos can effectively enlarge the area and function of a house. In addition, many people simply enjoy outdoor living. These activities should be planned for, Figure 8-55B.

Lighting is an important feature of any patio, porch, court, or gazebo. Without proper lighting, use after dark may be limited. In addition, much of the dramatic effect of the



Figure 8-54. Storage is a primary consideration in this special-purpose room. (Summitville Tile)



A



B

Figure 8-53. A—This formal music room can complement other functional areas of the home. (NMC/Focal Point)
B—Located off the back of the house, this sunroom is an ideal place to enjoy a quiet activity such as reading. (Four Seasons Sunrooms)



A



B

Figure 8-55. A—This house has a deck that provides a large “living area” beyond the walls of the house. (Trex Co.)
B—An attractive and functional deck such as this complements the house and provides extended outdoor living. (Thermal Industries, Inc.)



Figure 8-56. An extension of the dining room, this patio adds beauty and function to the house. Notice how it is at grade level.

feature will be lost. Lighting should be used as a design tool to assist in accomplishing an atmosphere and extend the usefulness of the structure. Lighting also adds safety and security.

Patios

Patios are usually near the house but not structurally connected to it. These are ordinarily located at ground level and are constructed for durability. Concrete, brick, stone, redwood, pressure-treated wood, and synthetic decking are commonly used construction materials. The floor of the patio shown in Figure 8-56 is textured concrete and an example of how a well-designed patio can add to the overall function of a house.

Patios are used for relaxing, playing, entertaining, and living, Figure 8-57. Each function

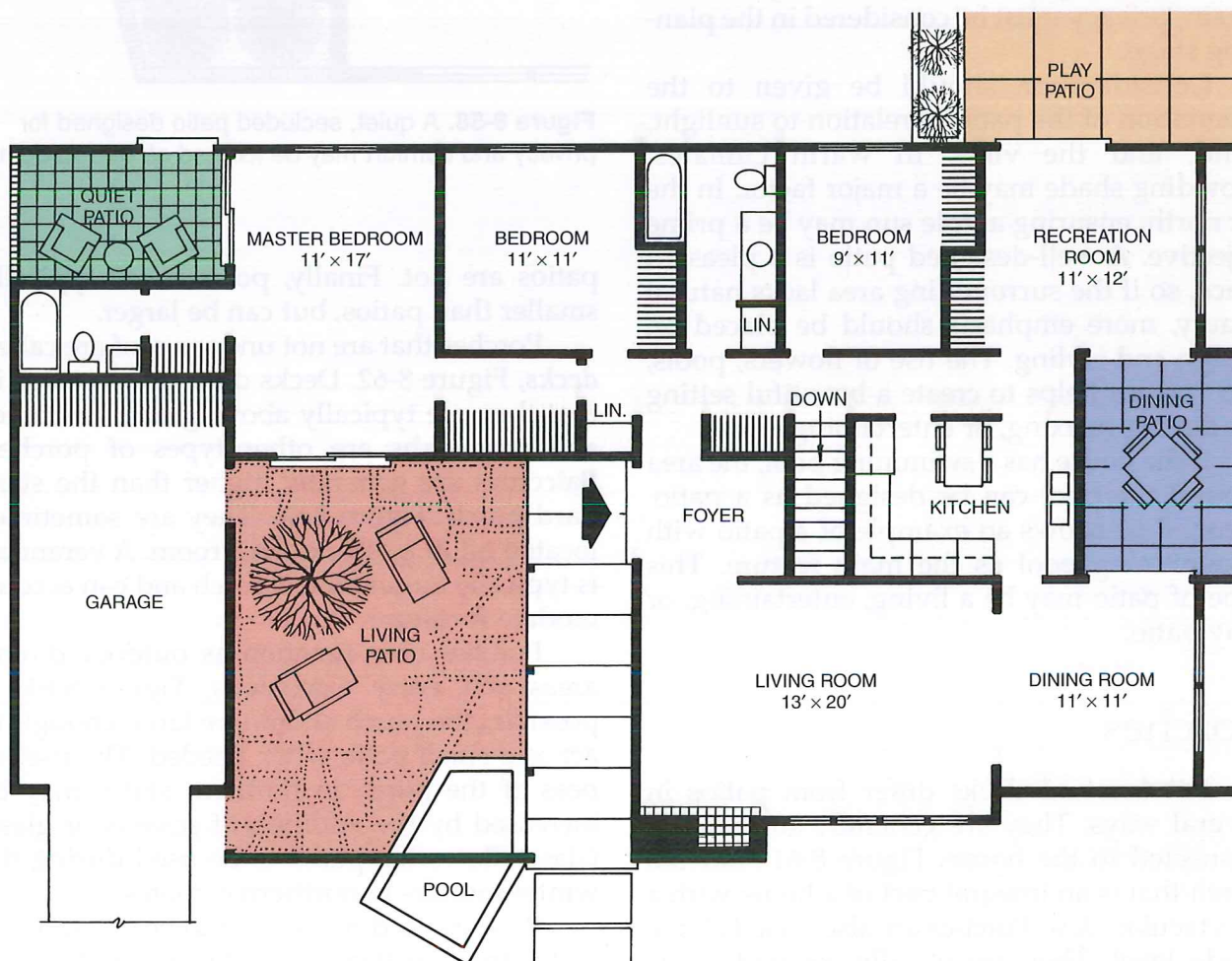


Figure 8-57. This floor plan has four patios designed for different types of activities. Notice their locations in relation to the rest of the house.

requires special consideration as to location, size, and design. Try to locate patios designed for relaxing on a quiet side of the house near the bedrooms where there is privacy, Figure 8-58. Privacy may be achieved through the use of screens, walls, or plants. A patio designed for entertaining and playing will most likely be large and located off of the living room, dining room, or recreation room. Play patios are usually less encumbered with furniture, planters, and screens. The play patio is usually designed for use by children and by adults for physical activities that require open space. The entry on a play patio sometimes doubles as a service entry.

A 10' × 14' patio is considered small, while a 20' × 30' patio is considered large. Design the patio to be proportional to the size of the house. A living or entertaining patio will most likely be located on the back side of the house where more space is available, Figure 8-59. Again, privacy must be considered in the planning stage.

Consideration should be given to the orientation of the patio in relation to sunlight, wind, and the view. In warm climates, providing shade may be a major factor. In the far north, ensuring ample sun may be a prime objective. A well-designed patio is a pleasant place, so if the surrounding area lacks natural beauty, more emphasis should be placed on design and styling. The use of flowers, pools, and screens helps to create a beautiful setting for dining, relaxing, or entertaining.

If the house has a swimming pool, the area around the pool can be designed as a patio. Figure 8-60 shows an example of a patio with a swimming pool as the main feature. This type of patio may be a living, entertaining, or play patio.

Porches

Porches and decks differ from patios in several ways. They are generally structurally connected to the house. Figure 8-61 shows a porch that is an integral part of a home with a spectacular view. Porches are also raised above grade level. They are usually covered while

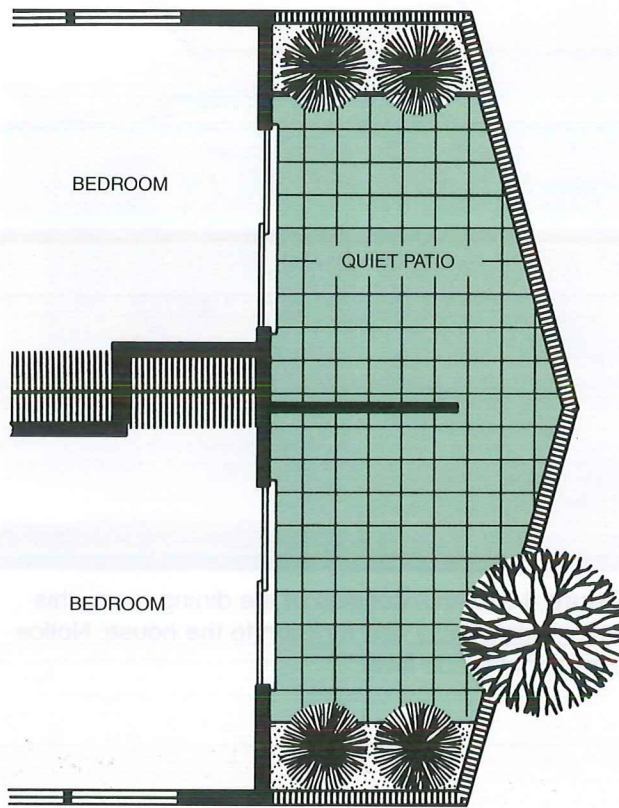


Figure 8-58. A quiet, secluded patio designed for privacy and comfort may be located off of bedrooms.

patios are not. Finally, porches are typically smaller than patios, but can be larger.

Porches that are not under a roof are called *decks*, Figure 8-62. Decks differ from patios in that they are typically above grade. Balconies and verandahs are other types of porches. Balconies are generally higher than the standard porch, Figure 8-63. They are sometimes located off of a second floor room. A verandah is typically larger than a porch and can accommodate furniture.

Porches may function as outdoor dining areas and entry extensions, Figure 8-64. If possible, the porch should be large enough to act as a small patio when needed. The usefulness of the porch in northern states may be increased by the addition of screens or glass. Glass allows the porch to be used during the winter months in northern climates.

Porches need not appear to be “tacked-on” to the structure. It is worth adding well-designed

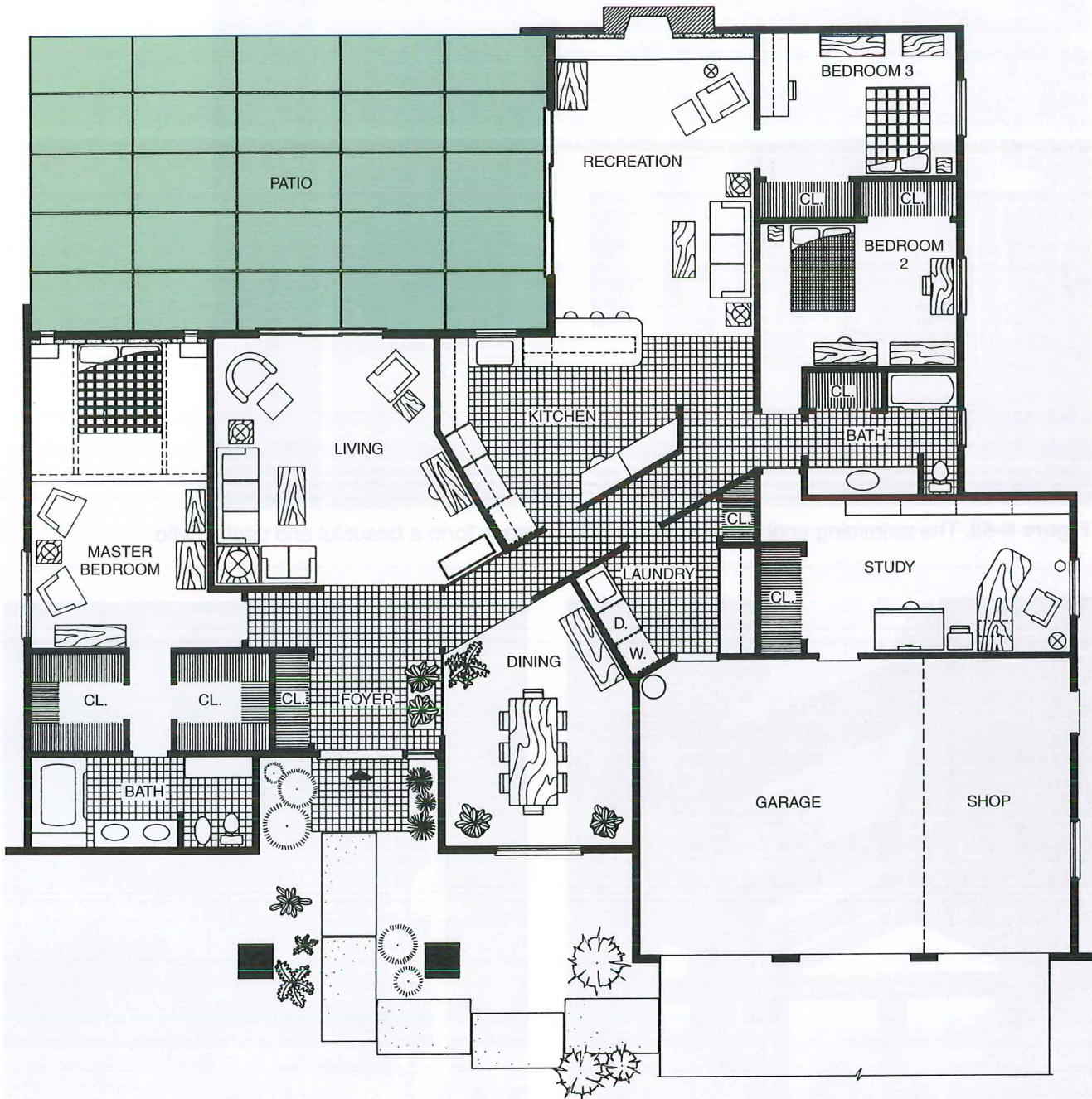


Figure 8-59. A living or entertaining patio is often located off the back of the house. Access to this patio is from the recreation room and living room.



Figure 8-60. The swimming pool surroundings can be used to form a beautiful and useful patio.

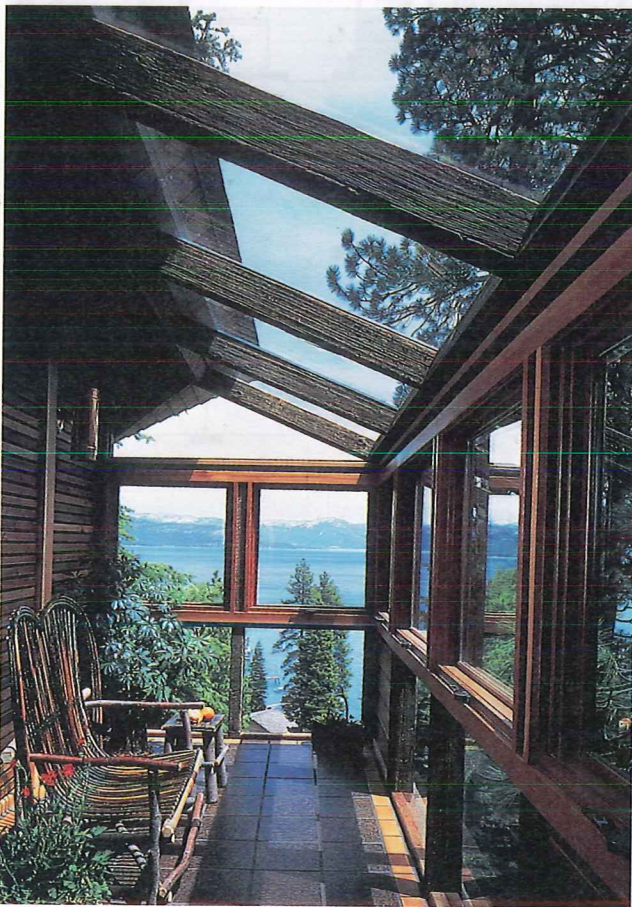


Figure 8-61. This enclosed porch is an excellent place to relax and enjoy a beautiful view. (Marvin Windows)



Figure 8-62. This multilevel deck enhances the architectural design of this home. (Trex Co.)



Figure 8-63. The second level verandah expands the living space of this home and enhances the architectural design. (Photo Courtesy of James Hardie® Siding Products)

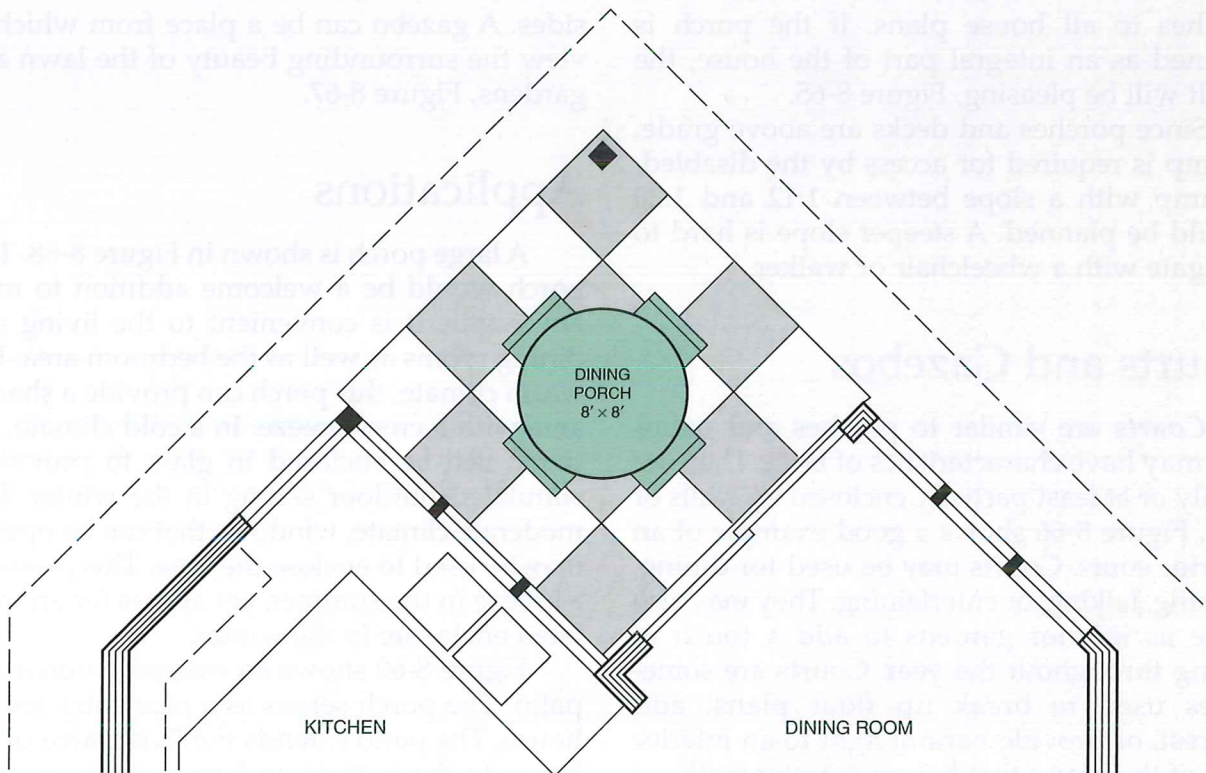


Figure 8-64. This small, covered dining porch is located adjacent to the dining room and kitchen.



Figure 8-65. This front porch is an integral part of the house. It does not appear “tacked-on” to the house. (Photo Courtesy of James Hardie® Siding Products)

porches to all house plans. If the porch is planned as an integral part of the house, the result will be pleasing, Figure 8-65.



Since porches and decks are above grade, a ramp is required for access by the disabled. A ramp with a slope between 1:12 and 1:20 should be planned. A steeper slope is hard to navigate with a wheelchair or walker.

Courts and Gazebos

Courts are similar to porches and patios and may have characteristics of both. They are totally or at least partially enclosed by walls or roof. Figure 8-66 shows a good example of an interior court. Courts may be used for dining, relaxing, talking, or entertaining. They may also serve as interior gardens to add a touch of spring throughout the year. Courts are sometimes used to break up floor plans, add interest, or provide natural light to an interior part of the house that has no exterior wall.

A beautiful gazebo or garden structure can provide an architectural focal point. A *gazebo* is a roofed structure, similar to a porch, that is detached from the house. It typically has open

sides. A gazebo can be a place from which to view the surrounding beauty of the lawn and gardens, Figure 8-67.

Applications

A large porch is shown in Figure 8-68. This porch would be a welcome addition to most any home. It is convenient to the living and dining rooms as well as the bedroom area. In a warm climate, this porch can provide a shaded area with a cross breeze. In a cold climate, the porch can be enclosed in glass to provide a simulated outdoor setting in the winter. In a moderate climate, windows that can be opened may be used to enclose the area. This provides a breeze in the summer, yet allows for an insulated enclosure in the winter.

Figure 8-69 shows an extensive porch and patio. The porch serves as a nice entry for the house. The patio extends the living area of the house to the outside and encourages outdoor living. It is partially enclosed with a fence to increase privacy and define its boundaries. The patio also provides a nice view from the living room.

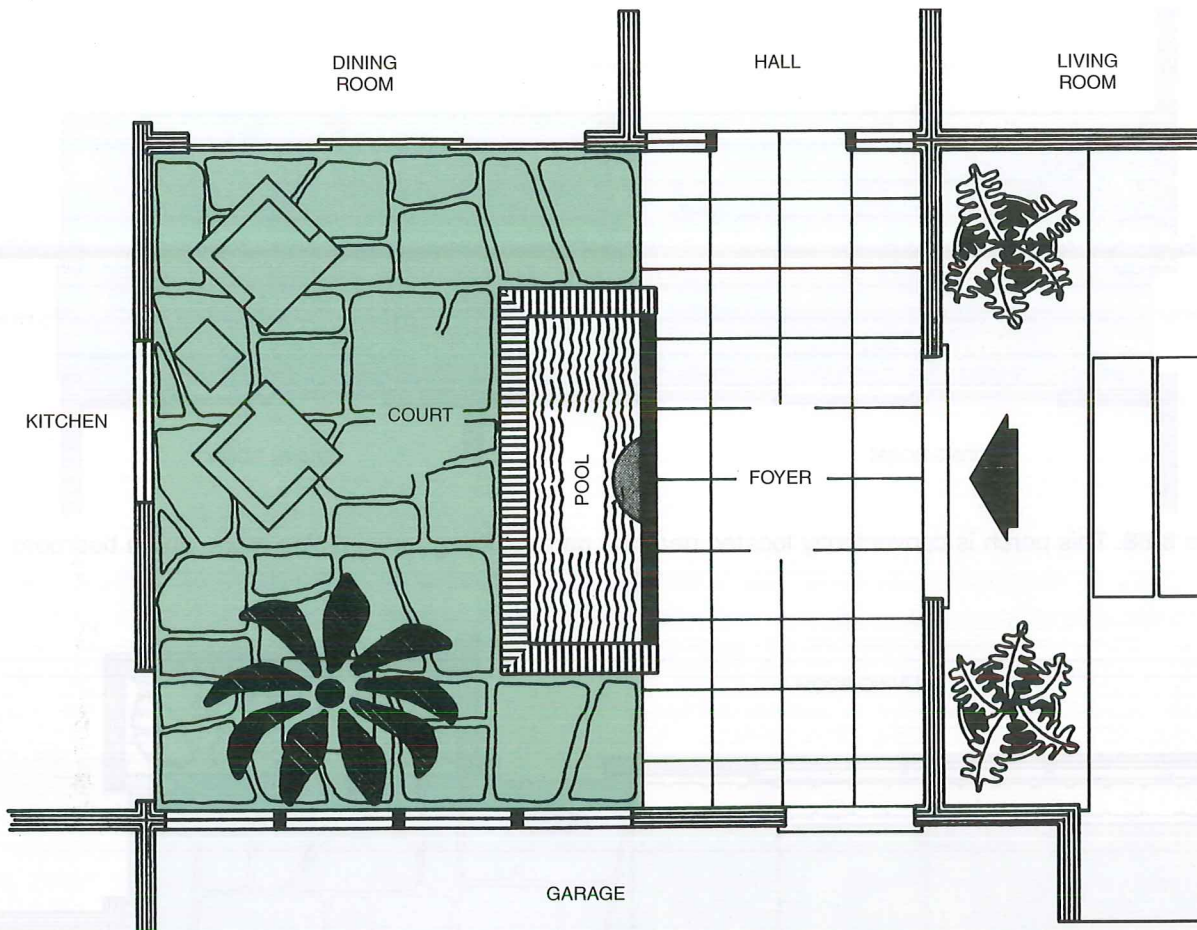


Figure 8-66. This approach to a romantic, Spanish-style courtyard is a good example of an interior court.



Figure 8-67. A gazebo is similar to a porch, but not attached to the house.

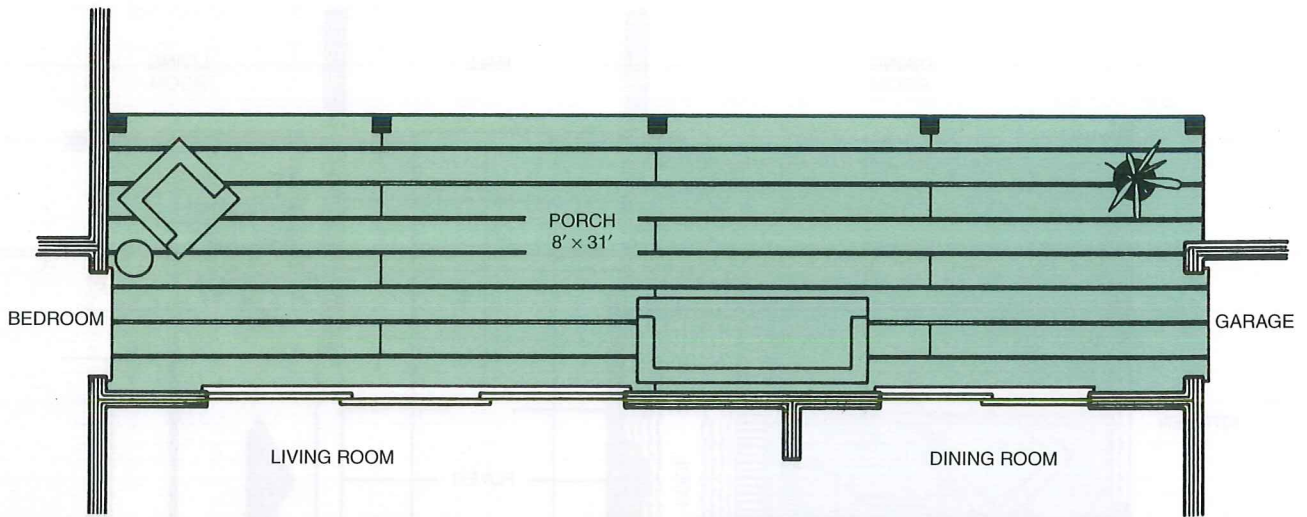


Figure 8-68. This porch is conveniently located near the garage, living room, dining room, and a bedroom.

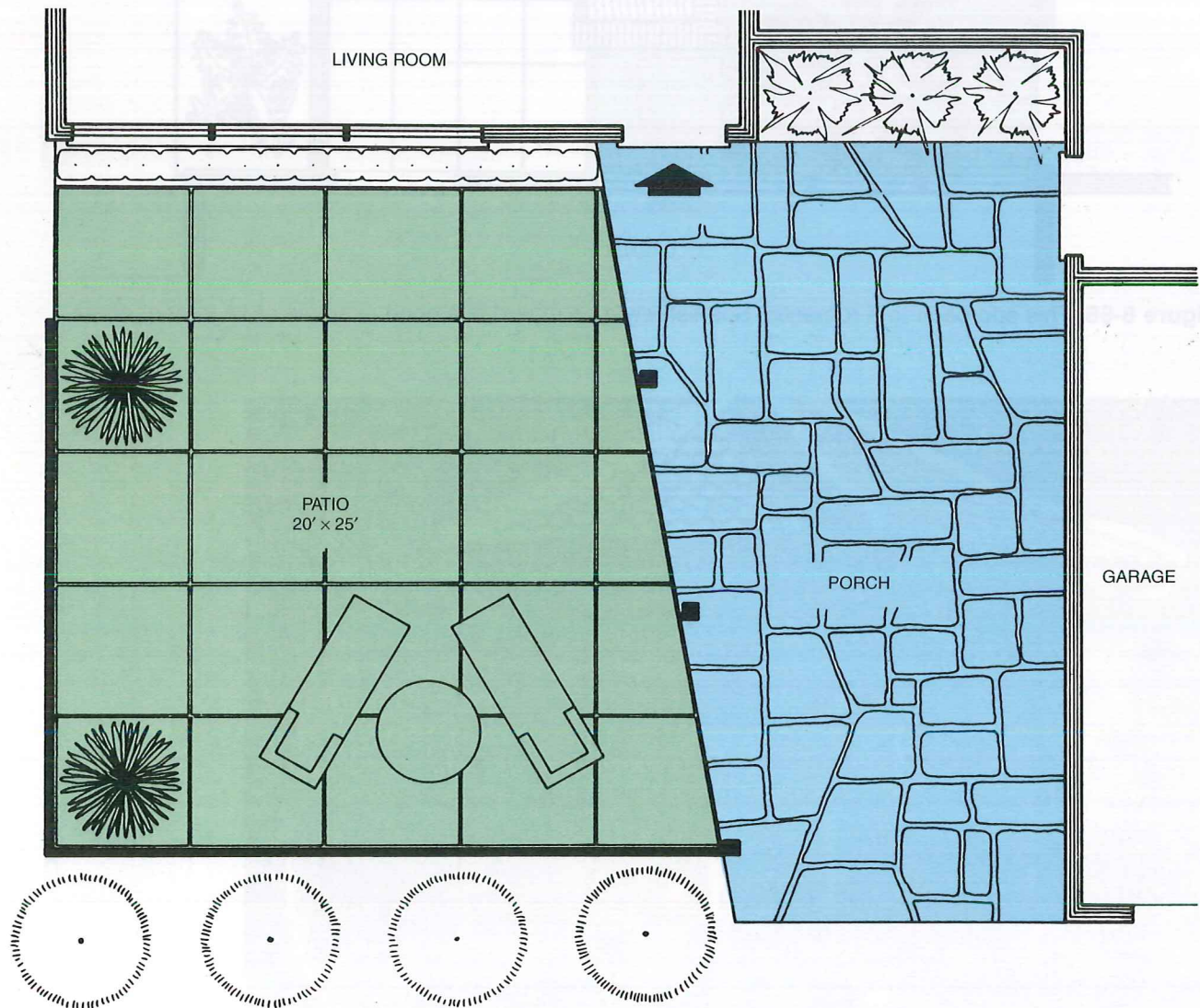


Figure 8-69. This house features a large porch that serves as an entry. In addition, a large patio off of the porch increases the living area of the house.

Internet Resources

- www.archdigest.com
Architectural Digest
- www.armstrong.com
Armstrong World Industries, Inc.
- www.bhg.com
Better Homes and Gardens Magazine
- www.congoleum.com
Congoleum Corporation, a supplier of flooring products
- www.hartcoflooring.com
Hartco Flooring, An Armstrong Company
- www.homecrestcab.com
HomeCrest Cabinetry
- www.marvin.com
Marvin Windows and Doors
- www.nationalgypsum.com
National Gypsum Company
- www.schultestorage.com
Schulte Corporation, a manufacturer of storage solutions
- www.sweets.com
Sweets Catalog File

Review Questions – Chapter 8

Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Do not write in this book.

- The normal width of an entry door is ____.
- What is the purpose of the foyer?
- A dining room measuring 16' × 20' would be considered a ____-size dining room.
- List at least four ways in which the dining area may be separated from the living room without using a full-height wall.
- List five questions that should be answered when determining the size and design of a living room.
- The living area of a residential structure comprises about ____ of the total area of a house.
- How does a porch differ from a patio?
- List the three basic types of entryways.
- Standard interior and exterior door height is ____.
- List the rooms that typically comprise the living area.
- Identify three special-purpose rooms that may be in the living area.
- A porch without a roof is called a(n) ____.

Suggested Activities

- Plan a medium-size living room with furniture. Present your plan in color for a bulletin board display. Prepare a short description of the intended use.
- Draw the plans for a dining room that is designed to accommodate six people. Show the furniture. Use manual or CADD drafting.
- Prepare a bulletin board display of different entryways. Use color copies of pictures, magazines, or color printouts from the Internet. Try to represent a broad range of designs.
- Using CADD, design a recreation room for a specific hobby or activity. Describe the features of your design and how they relate to the activity.
- Find a plan for a house that has no patio. Using CADD, plan a porch or patio. Print or plot the patio on vellum or film. Then, present the patio design as an overlay on the house plan.
- Using CADD, plan a special-purpose room. Specify the equipment and furniture required. Explain the special requirements that must be met in the room.
- Using CADD, draw symbols for furniture and other items that are found in the living area. Add these symbols to your symbols library for future use.

