

MJP Design Studio

ART IN HOME DESIGN

25 ESSENTIAL NEW HOME DESIGN ELEMENTS



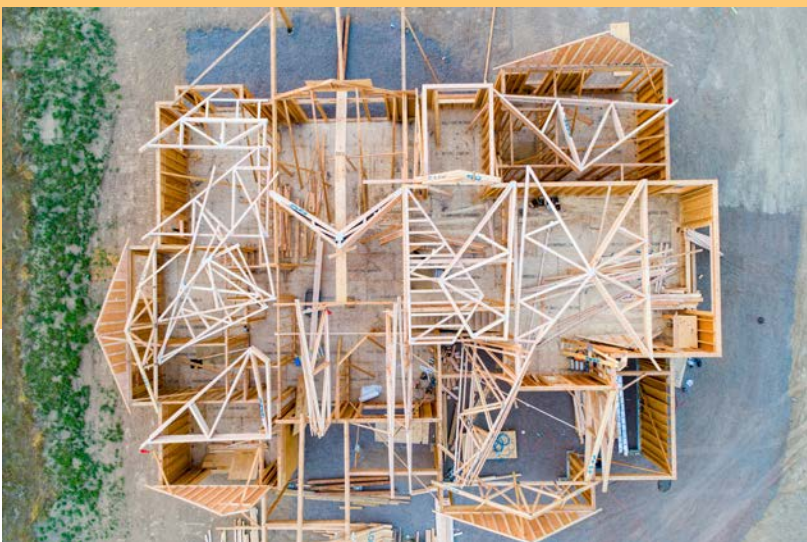
AN AID IN CREATING
AN **AMAZING DESIGN** FOR
BUILDING A **BEAUTIFUL HOME**

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So you are about to embark in designing your next home, a relaxing recreational property or an extensive renovation to your existing house. Where do you begin? What steps should you be thinking of? How does this all work? What are the pitfalls to avoid? Plus, a whole lot more to consider.



Designing your own custom home means getting ultimate control over exactly what you want, need and require. Whether your wish list is a mile long or you're looking to downsize, the design process should yield exactly what you want. You should be devoting some thought to design. MjP Design Studio is here to ensure your vision is illustrated properly on your dream home drawing.



Of course, if this is your first time designing a custom home, your enthusiasm can override experience and result in mistakes along the way. Since years of enjoyment and your investment are on the line, it's important that you don't get swept away in the excitement of designing your own home.

Being a homeowner is a dream. When a house is likely to impact your life significantly, there is no denying that

you want your home to be comfortable, inviting, and stylish, all at the same time. However, despite having all the right ideas, some tend to fall into common circumstances when designing their homes.

That is the reason we put together this short, however important list of elements to consider during your planning stage. Regardless if you want to start digging tomorrow or are doing your due diligence for months down the road, we are here to help you.



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1 Putting the PLAN before the Land

It's okay to look around and see what plans and layouts you like. We often come across clients that love a plan or two, however the site that they are working on will not work for whatever reason. If you have fallen in love with a showhome or model home, if it requires significant modifications which in term loses the "Spirit of the Design" you may not get what you had originally envisioned. Things like lot size, slope, view or overall placement could turn your plan upside-down, resulting in a complete redesign.



2 Utilize What Your Land Has to Offer



Your new home and your land should be harmonious together. Take full advantage of views, lighting or grade elements like a walk-out basement or sunshine basement. Is there a view that needs to be captured, like our beautiful mountains or lakes? Or avoided, like other buildings, roadways, or power poles to name a few. Of course, this would apply to those that have already acquired land.



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3 Consider Your Lifestyle



This is a big one, sometimes hard to define a lifestyle into simple terms. We will explore with you what factors should be considered in your design. Your new home must represent your habits and lifestyle, and each floor layout must represent your tastes and requirements. If you choose a single-story or multi-story home, it is better to have an open floor plan with wide open areas or proper boundaries between rooms, this is your choice. When we are designing a floor plan for your home, we will ensure that it includes all the critical elements and tiny details beneficial for your lifestyle.

4 Having a Basic Concept is Beneficial But Not Critical

Even the basics, single story, two story, estate home or lake side cabin is a start. After all, Rome was not built in a day. Often the greatest designs come from piecing together a few of your favorite pictures. Having a few pictures from sites like Houzz or Instagram are often better than having an actual floor plan. Visiting local showhomes, surfing the internet for something that is “close” we can focus on the visual aspects that you prefer. We are, after all, creating your home, your dreams.



5 Be Prepared to Make Decisions Throughout the Entire Process

From the very start of this process throughout your entire build, you will be making decisions. In the design process we work together in developing the basic layout as well as the exterior. That in itself is a lot. Then all the remaining selections, from what colors on the exterior to what the faucet will be in the powder room. Fortunately, we have created an in-depth “Custom Home Planning Guide” that we will assist you with in the beginning stages of design, so that you are not overwhelmed with decisions during the building process.





6 Have a Budget in Mind & Be Realistic



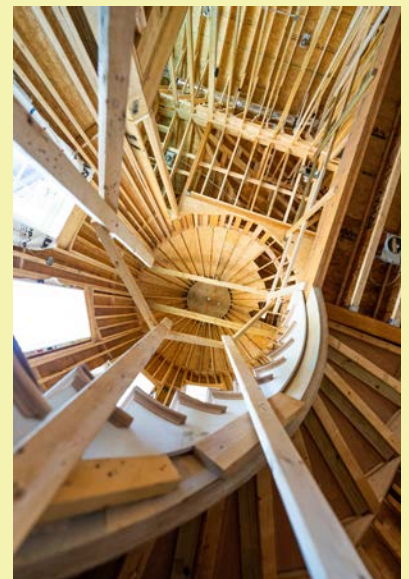
Unless you have an unlimited budget, you'll need to make some compromises as you work on the design of your home. From the beginning we would be able to determine if the plan or thought is in line with your budget. Not sure where to draw the line? Defining the difference between the absolute 'Must Have' with the 'Would be Nice to Have' and the 'Doesn't Matter' is critical in this process. Reminding yourself that it's okay to settle and compromise if it gives you the things you really want. This is typically the key to sticking to your budget and coming up with the perfect design.

7 Never Use 'Cost per Square Foot' to Price Your Home.... Never!!



This is a completely inaccurate method of estimating the cost of a new home. We design homes for many other factors including, overall layout, features like a unique set of stairs or special elements like ceiling heights, roof pitch, oversized windows to capture views for example, none of which are

calculated by the square foot. There are too many variables that can range in price drastically. Think of how much per pound you paid for your current vehicle, it too does not make sense to estimate overall cost this way. We will have a basic idea of the range your home should cost very early, however, this will become accurate pricing once the 'Tender Drawing' is issued and your builder or you are able to receive actual quoting.



8 Utilize Square Footage

Having designed hundreds of homes, MjP Design Studio understand that overall square footage doesn't matter as much as some might think. A well designed home will feel much larger than what square footage may suggest. A poor design will not allow the home to flow properly. Function, Flow and Form must align perfectly. This is not an easy task, you will utilize our experience to ensure that your design feels right and works together with all the other elements of your home.



9 Competing Architectural Styles

It's ok to like a variety of overall architectural styles, there are several to choose from. A common mistake is trying to piece multiple styles into one design. This is something that is discussed, among other things, very early in our conversations.



If there is a style that you prefer early on the process is considerably easier.



10 Room and Furniture Placement



Room placement is pretty much straight forward, and we will use the information that we have gathered from our earlier conversations. Door and window locations and sizes should also be taken into consideration early in the process. Within the rooms, who will be using them and how will they be used? For example, what are your dining requirements? Formal, informal or hang around the kitchen island? If a room is to have a crib in it today, the bed that will go into the room soon will take up a lot more space and should be designed to incorporate that future change.

11 Don't Forget About Storage and Utility Space



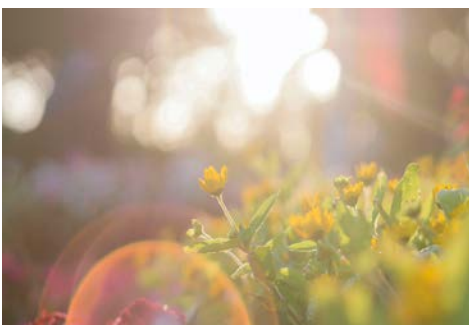
As we acquire more and more items in our lives, think of where you will be storing them. If you are downsizing, this is also of great importance. It's great to have a vacuum on the upper floor of your new home, unless you have to lug it up from the basement each and every time you need to use it. Do you have extra bedding on hand? It can fill a little closet quickly. Family entries (formally called the Mudroom) have become an essential part of our daily lives. They are getting bigger and more functional than ever. Charging stations, drop zones, individual lockers or sport storage might make sense.

12 Plan For the Future

Regardless if this is your forever home or not, always keep in mind the ability to sell it. You should always try to avoid designing something that is a little 'out there' and will not appeal to others in the future. It could be the perfect for you, however, be so strange that no one would consider buying it later in life. Life changes quickly and for many reasons, a new employment opportunity, the need to be closer to family, physical restrictions, the list is endless. You are in control of the design, we are here to help avoid a potential costly error.



13 Utilize Natural Lighting



Pay particular attention to the positioning and exposure of the windows in your new home. There are many different possible window types and energy efficiencies to choose from. The program used at MjP Design Studio to draw your home allows us to create a solar study for any day, time and location. You are able to see where the sun is located at that particular time and how shadows will look in a certain location. We can then focus on where to locate windows effectively.

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14 Think of Your Energy Usage



Building 'Green' and greatly reducing energy consumption is very much now a must do in new home

construction. Awareness is increasing quickly with heating, plumbing, air conditioning, lighting manufacturers and suppliers continuing to modify and upgrade their products to keep up to if not surpass local building codes. There are some amazing systems that not only save energy, but increase the overall comfort of your home. Hot water on demand? High efficiency heating and cooling? Led vs. incandescent lighting? Thinking about solar power? This can be discussed with professionals in the future but should be noted on your drawing.

15 Avoid Under Utilized Space

The addition of a playroom, game room or multipurpose room sounds enticing, but only plan to build a room that will actually get used. What good is a wasted home gym where the treadmill is not used?

Often an unused room becomes a dumping ground to place the items that never get used. If you plan on adding a spare room, make sure that it is a room that can transition well from one type to the next. A sewing room may never get used, but a sewing room or office that also doubles as a guest room could indeed get used often.



16 Combine Open Spaces as One On Occasion

Use two rooms as one on special occasions. The dining room table may not have all the leaves in it to accommodate a special dinner for 12, year round, and if you designed your dining room to accommodate this oversized table, it may look disproportionate when the leaves are removed the other 364 days of the year. Consider a location that can take advantage of using a small part of the great room for such occasions. Same could be considered for lower development such as family rooms and recreational space.



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17 Leaving Undefined Spaces



Everyone loves an open concept home, and why not? These houses are perfect for entertaining and just the right mix of bright and casual. But while you're designing an open-concept space, take care that you don't forget to define spaces altogether. When spaces are left undefined, it can seem useless and a waste of valuable square footage. Keep an open concept home airy and casual by using flooring, furniture and cabinetry to create distinctions between the kitchen, living areas and hallways. That way, you preserve the flow, making sure each room really shines.

18 Managing Your Time Effectively



This could also be considered moving too slow in some sense. During your selection process, try to make multiple selections simultaneously. When you are working with the cabinet supplier, also work with the flooring and countertop people if not all the selection companies required. This will aid in having uniform continuity through your home. Not saying do them all in one day, however you may want to work through the process with multiple suppliers at the same time, take a floor sample to the cabinet manufacturer to ensure they will work well together.

19 Rely on Your Designer

Take full advantage of the years of design knowledge, construction experience, expertise and creativity of your designer. This is why we are here for you. If there is anything that may not look right or that you may have a concern with, have a discussion with us to ensure that this is corrected. Use 3D models and renderings to get a realistic view of your home. In any given design there are multiple options, layouts or configurations that are possible and we will try to explore all of them.



20 Who Are You Listening To vs. Who is Listening To You?

During the design process you will encounter many that would love to have their input into 'Your' design. Although the intentions mean well, it may not be what you want or need. They can not see it from their living room, nor do they have to live with it. MjP Design Studio is listening to you, and you alone. We are fully involved in your perfect home design and look to making your vision a reality.



21 Communication With Your Designer



There will be plenty of emails, phone conversations and possibly a few live video conferences. This all helps in ensuring that we are giving you not only our best service, but ultimately a beautiful home. We do try to cover as much as possible in the early stages of the design utilizing our 'Custom Home Planning Guide'. Your input is critical through all aspects of this process.

22 Have Us Create a Specification For You

Before your new plans are issued for tender (one of the four types of issued drawings) have us create a specification specifically for you, this is extremely important when you are looking for a builder. It keeps the playing field even for all home builders that are going to provide you a quote for your dream home. Based on our original communications and by going through the 'Custom Home Planning Guide' we can create this for you. In addition to having all the builders tender the same plan, with the same specifications, it would give you the opportunity to work with multiple builders to see which builder you are most comfortable with and would like you to build your dream home.





23 Rushing the Design Process

While it can be extremely exciting waiting for your dream home design to come to life, it is critical not to overlook any part of your design. Often people try to convince themselves that something will work even if it isn't right. It's ok to take your time, there is a lot to consider and get right the first time before construction begins. Rushing this process can add to mistakes and plenty of costly delays during the construction process. After all, this is not a race.



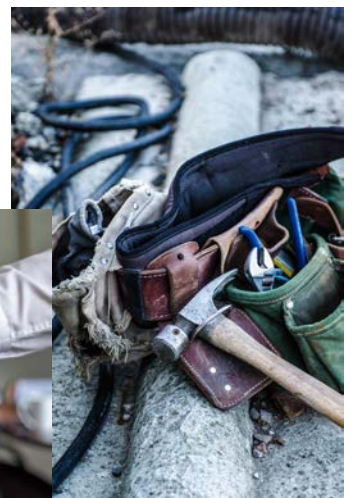
24 Now or Never Considerations

Often, we encounter a tradeoff with one item or the other. Even if it is on the 'Must Have' list, is it something that can be completed relatively inexpensively and without massive disruption in the future or not? Although we try to get as much as we can into your home, this sometimes will have to take place.



25 Choosing Your Builder

Choosing the right builder makes all the difference in the world. Your new home builder will be in charge of constructing your home, so make sure they're communicative, available, and excited about your project. Check references, read reviews, and look at their portfolio. You should feel confident that they will build the vision that we have created on your drawings. We may also have conversations with your builder during construction period, to ensure a smooth hassle free building experience for you.



MjP Design Studio

ART IN HOME DESIGN



MjP Design Studios is a full service architectural design firm located in Western Canada. We are dedicated to providing you with an innovative and collaborative design experience for your new home, renovation, multi-family or recreational home. We pride ourselves on customer satisfaction and look forward to creating a long term relationship with you based on this foundation.

Thank you for taking the time to view the “25 Essential New Home Design Elements” an aid in creating an amazing design for building a beautiful home.

We put ART in YOUR Custom Home Design!

Contact us to arrange for a FREE 60 minute design consultation!

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