

DOWN THE STAIRS

By Joan Kaufman

Basements aren't the first part of the house you notice, but they can definitely be the most enjoyable part! We love home gyms, media areas with large sectionals, home offices, craft rooms, wrapping centers, wine storage and tasting areas, laundry rooms, game areas with a pool table, private hot tub get away and, of course, the added space and storage.

Design tips for basement build outs:

Start with “good bones”

Assess your basement with a critical eye to evaluate the appearance and function of windows, doors, and stairs and to identify foundation leaks, cracks, and moisture. Replace old windows and doors or unsightly items. Remediate any cracks. Seal your concrete walls with a concrete sealer. Purchase a dehumidifier. Determine if the size of your electric panel is adequate for the lighting and other items you would like to include.

Accentuate natural light when possible

Clean window wells and put clean rocks at the base. If you have large window wells, you could also add murals, faux stone, or other features to create a pleasant view. Dress up windows with wood blinds, sheer blinds, or woven wood shades.



Basement 2nd living room

Hire professionals to assist

Assemble a team that will aid you throughout the project. Hiring a space planner or professional designer goes a long way to aid you in the planning and selection process. Selecting a qualified contractor will help you determine pricing and final scope of work early in the process. They will also identify essential components of your HVAC system and pipes that cannot be moved and work around those in a logical manner while incorporating your wish list into the space.

Select appliances early in the process

If you will be incorporating a bar area or kitchenette, select and buy your appliances early. You will need to have your appliances

selected prior to designing these areas. Electrical and plumbing requirements will be determined as well as sizing and ideal placement.

Keep goals in mind when selecting finishes

Keep your lifestyle top of mind while selecting your finishes. Do you have children? Pets? Durability will be more important if you do. Keep your focus on your end look and choose within the budget but don't compromise quality so as to keep your basement looking its best for years to come. Ways people are “dialing up” their basements these days are coffered ceilings, wine cellars, kitchenettes, and modern lighting.



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Joan is passionate about improving lives through good design. Joan and her team at Interior Planning & Design Inc have been designing beautiful interiors for over 30 years.



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Grotto



Wine room
Ceramic tile floor

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