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Things to Consider With Your House Design

These questions are intended to cause thought and consideration during the design process. The proposed sizes of rooms, their function, and the needs and activities of the occupants will determine the layout and dimensions of your house. Your answers to the questions below will help to determine design priorities, as well as identify any extras.

List possible occupants (family members, relatives, etc.)

List pets, livestock, etc.

Buildings for vehicles, construction equipment, farm equipment, etc.

Approximate total square footage of required living areas.

List any circumstances particular to you or your family that may affect design (physically challenged people, medical needs, noise considerations, lighting, air quality, temperature control etc.)

Should expansion flexibility be a consideration?

Do you know what rooms will need to be added and how large they might be?

List activities and amount of time to be spent in rooms/spaces below, and approximate space required.

Reference to and measurement of the spaces in which you now live may be helpful.

Keep in mind furniture, equipment, storage requirements, etc.

Common Rooms

1. Family
2. Kitchen
3. Dining
4. Sunspace
5. Baths
6. Utility/Laundry
7. Pantry/Storage

8. Bedroom 1 Bedroom 2 Bedroom 3 Bedroom 4, guest
9. Study/Library/Den
10. Project Room
11. Basement
12. Garage/Shop
13. Other

The following suggests other possible rooms and spaces to consider:

1. Closets
2. Greenhouse
3. Mudroom
4. Darkroom
5. Powder Room
6. Broom Closet
7. Linen Closet
8. Dressing Room
9. Playroom
10. Breakfast Nook
11. Porch
12. Patio
13. Hot tub
14. Pool
15. Sauna
16. Exterior Wood Storage

This group of questions is intended to help you pinpoint how you would like your life and your living space to interact. Try to consider how things feel as well as how they look, and remember the flow of people, things and food through the environment.

1. Indicate the things that you find disturbing and the things that have a relaxing effect.
2. Do you like to wake up in a bright and/or sunlit room?
3. Do you like to be able to look outside while lying in bed?
4. What are the privacy requirements of the bedroom from the outside and from the rest of the house?
5. What are your storage requirements?
6. Give size and general description of items.
7. Do you like a separate dressing area?
8. Does the bedroom also need to function as a study, TV room, sitting room, etc.?
9. What sleeping accommodations will be necessary for other family members or in the future?
10. Would you feel comfortable if the bedroom had a cathedral area or would you prefer a flat ceiling?

Bathroom:

1. What are the special qualities you like in a bathroom?
2. Does it need to be especially bright or roomy?
3. Should there be a bathroom attached to one or more bedrooms?
4. How private should the bathroom be from the rest of the house and from the outside?
5. Do you need a bathroom easily accessible from the outside?
6. Do you prefer fans or windows for ventilation?
7. Do you like to be able to see out a window while showering, washing or using the toilet?
8. Do you use the bathroom in a hurried or a leisurely manner?
9. Do you prefer showers or baths?
10. Do you bathe with others?
11. When you take a shower or bath, do you use the bathroom to dress or undress?
12. Do you have a preference for a particular brand of fixtures?
13. What requirements do you have for mirrors?
14. What are your storage requirements?
14. Bathing accommodations for other family members now or in the future?

Kitchen

1. What times of day and to what extent do you use the kitchen?
2. How many people should be able to use the kitchen at the same time?
3. Will the kitchen be used for eating as well as for food preparation?
4. What appliances are necessary?
5. Is there a particular appliance/fixture arrangement that suits you best?
6. Do you like to be able to look out the window while working in the kitchen?
7. Do you like a bright or sunlit kitchen?
8. Is it important to have an exhaust fan in the kitchen?
9. How do you prefer to deal with waste and garbage?
10. Where and how would you like to store your food?
11. How much cupboard or drawer space do you need?
12. Do you like pots and pans, dishes, utensils and food to be visible or hidden?
13. Would you use timbers to hang pots and pans?
14. What non-food items do you store in the kitchen?
15. What other items (such as desk, TV, fireplace) would you like in the kitchen?
16. Should the kitchen be separate from the rest of the house or linked to other areas?

Living:

1. How do you want the living area to feel?
2. Should it be separate or integrated into other living areas?
3. What activities go on in the living area?
4. How many people should it accommodate?
5. Should it have partitions and doors?
6. Should it be bright during the day?
7. What sort of artificial light is compatible with your image of shelving space?
8. Is a fireplace desirable?
9. List any equipment you think should be in the living space (stereo, books, video etc.)
10. How do phones and TV figure into your life?
11. What should the predominant feeling of the house be (rustic, informal, elegant, etc.)?
12. How would you describe the style that makes you feel most comfortable (modern, colonial, etc.)?
13. What are the attributes of the timber frame that would help to achieve the above requirements?
14. What other rooms or activity areas are necessary (study, playroom, darkroom, shop)?
15. What guest accommodations are necessary?
16. Is additional storage space necessary?
17. How much interaction between the indoors and outdoors is desirable?
18. Do you like transitional spaces (porches, decks, etc.)?
19. Do you see the exterior landscape as formal, casual or natural?
20. What requirements do you have for outdoor activities and accessory buildings (pool, tennis, gardens, horses, basketball, etc.)?
21. What is your attitude toward dirt?
22. Where do you mind it and where is it okay?
23. How do you clean it up and how often?
24. How many vehicles do you have and how do they fit into your life?
25. How many and what kind?
26. Plants? How many?
27. What sort of textures do you like?
28. What colors do you like?
29. List the things you can't do in your present environment that you would like to do in your new environment.