

# Basements Regaining Popularity In New Homes

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## Buyers Get More Space At Low Cost

The basement is staging a strong comeback as a preferred home feature.

That is the observation of many building trade observers, particularly in areas where basements were predominant before the advent of basementless slab construction just after World War II.

In the huge Chicago area, for example, the swing back to basements is pronounced. This is true among the larger, more expensive homes as well as small dwellings.

Many Chicago area builders report they now are providing basements with practically all their houses, whereas a few years ago they offered a choice which included slab type homes.

Most of today's buyers demand houses with basements because they have come to appreciate that basements are bargains, these builders explain.

"Upstairs space costs 14 or 15 times as much per square foot as basement space," says James Jackson, controller of the Herzog Realty Company, one of the Chicago area's major builders featuring basements and hardwood floors.

Only \$1 a Foot More  
"It costs only about \$1 a foot more," Jackson adds, "to include a basement in a ranch-style house. For that relatively small amount the customer receives double the space he would otherwise. Additionally, he gains upstairs space by having the heating and laundry equipment in the basement."

Evidence of similar partiality to basements is reported by a New Jersey contractor in American Builder, a leading trade publication. The contractor said that since last spring he had sold 175 houses with basements as against only 14 basementless houses built on slabs. The latter dwellings were priced \$1,000 lower.

Actually, he added, the 175 to 14 ratio did not truly reflect the extent of buyer preference. He explained that he had been "pushing" the slab models. Otherwise he might not have sold any, he declared.

The overwhelming popularity of his basement houses, which are in the small home class, can be attributed to the much greater space received for the money, the builder asserted.

"With an extra \$1,000, he explained, buyers double their house area and they get a real wood floor over the main level."

**Oak Floors Generally Used**  
Floors of oak or other hardwood, noted for natural beauty, foot comfort, warmth and other advantages, are specified almost universally nowadays for homes with joist-and-subfloor construction, such as that employed in houses with basements.

In a statement directed to builders of small homes the magazine urged the inclusion of basements to meet the space problem.

"Basements are the cheapest way to provide that extra space," it declared. "Even where slab or crawl space is the local preference, basements might mean extra sales on the basis of space."

Growing recognition of the value of basements for varied uses, such as workshop, recreation and laundry, is reflected also in Practical

## Floors Of Oak In Slab Home Lend Comfort

More and more builders are discovering the advantages of providing oak floors in houses erected on concrete slab foundations, lumber dealers say.

Such dwellings sell faster since the vast majority of home buyers rank oak floors among the home features they want most.

In slab-on-ground houses, the dealers point out, floors of oak are especially desirable. Besides offering natural beauty, durability and easy upkeep they contribute two particularly important qualities—warmth and resilience.

The warmth is due to the wood's insulating property. Oak retards heat loss. Thus it is able to keep a home warmer in winter. Its resilience, a quality resulting from its structural composition, makes the wood easy on the feet.

The popular strip style of oak can be installed nowadays in slab-on-ground homes by nailing it to screeds embedded in mastic on top of the concrete. This system eliminates the expense of subflooring.

Block style oak floors can be laid in mastic directly over the concrete without use of screeds. Both strip and block flooring are available in unfinished and in prefinished form.

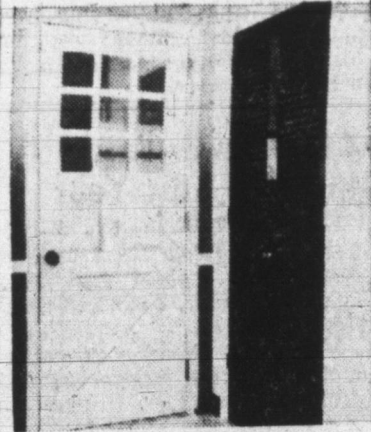
Builder, another major trade publication.

Rudolph A. Matern, AIA, the publication's consulting architect, advises readers in a recent issue that full basements are a sales must in many areas.

"If omitted to cut costs," he points out, "much of the anticipated saving will be eliminated by the extra floor space which must be added for heating unit, laundry, storage, etc."

Most hardwood flooring used in American homes, builders say, comes from the Southern and Appalachian regions.

## Pine Doors Create Colonial Mood



An authentic Colonial mood is created in the kitchen of this \$60,000 New Jersey home by artfully combining two styles of ponderosa pine doors. The panel door with window-paned upper section leads outside. The louver doors screen a one-package-deep storage closet.

## KITCHEN HEARTH Old Idea—New Design



More than just a work area, this cheerful kitchen is a versatile "base of operations" for a modern homemaker. The charming Early American decor, relaxation corner, open hearth with rotisserie and a compact food preparation area make this room a comfortable and pleasant place to cook and entertain neighbors for coffee. An informal atmosphere is created by the handsome wood tones of Marlite Random Plank on the main wall above the hearth. Highly-resistant to heat, stains and other hard wear, the plastic-surfaced hardboard paneling can be cleaned with a sudsy cloth. The same easy-to-clean paneling, but in a star pattern, in the food preparation area emphasizes the unusual window treatment. An extremely colorful room, the range and built-in cabinets are red to harmonize with the hues of the pillows on the brick ledge.

## 1960's Electric Appliances Offer Space-Age Features



Two of the most coveted kitchen appliances—an electric refrigerator-freezer and automatic electric dishwasher—provide both time-saving efficiency and good looks in the modern kitchen.

Women today are looking over the new 1960 electric appliances as avidly and critically as men inspect new cars. Each year sees new efficiency and beauty features added to major kitchen appliances. The canny shopper takes them all into consideration before choosing.

Take two of the currently most coveted appliances—electric dishwashers and electric refrigerator-freezers. Here are some of the more notable new features to look for:

**Automatic Dishwashers**  
Dishwashers, both built-in and portable models, are quieter and have more capacity than ever before. Some now hold as many as 14 place settings. There's more flexible loading, with special racks to hold odd-shaped pieces. Front-opening, top-loading, and roll-out models are

available to suit the preferences of all families.

Other electric dishwasher features today include devices for better water distribution and more powerful cleansing and rinsing, automatic detergent dispensers, plus dispensers of wetting agents that leave glassware spotless.

**Electric Refrigerator-Freezers**  
New electric refrigerator-freezers have been designed with an eye to growing families with limited kitchen area. Manufacturers have built more storage space inside without increasing the amount of floor space needed and freezer compartments have been enlarged without sacrificing refrigerator space. Both of these have been accomplished by the use of thinner, more efficient insulation.

## Leaks in Roof Often Caused By Ice Dams

Winter is a time of toll and trouble for houses as well as humans. Among the orneriest of these troubles are ice dams.

These are accumulations of ice in gutters and along the eaves of a house that can cause damaging leaks if the roofing material is improperly applied. Escaping heat from inside the house melts snow on the roof and water runs down to the gutters or eaves where it freezes.

Eventually gutters are blocked and water may back up under roofing material. Here it can leak into the house, staining and damaging walls and ceilings and even causing rot that weakens structural timbers.

Ice dams can't cause damage to a house protected by asphalt shingles that are applied properly. Reliable roofing contractors apply an eaves flashing strip under the shingles along the eaves. This consists of a wide, heavy-duty strip of asphalt roll roofing that prevents leaks.

To avoid the high cost and inconvenience of leaks caused by ice dams, home owners can call in a roofing contractor for a roof inspection.

If the roofing material is old, brittle and looks shabby, the contractor may suggest a new roof of asphalt shingles in order to avoid costly leaks in weather of all kinds.

A new roof of asphalt shingles is low in applied cost. Once it is in place, the home owner is assured of years of protection from the roughest weather. A new roof in one of many colors available also adds value to any house.

A leading cause of ice dams is little or no ceiling insulation. Costly heat escapes through the roof, melting snow and ice on the roof. A home owner often can correct this himself by installing batts or blankets of mineral wool in the attic floor.

A minimum thickness of 4 inches of insulation is needed to insure effective results. This not only helps do away with ice dams but cuts heating costs by reducing heat loss.

**Oak 'Shorts' Economical**  
Among the several grades in which genuine oak flooring can be obtained is a classification known as 1 1/4 Ft. Shorts. Particularly economical, it is especially well suited to use in small areas. Pieces in bundles of this flooring may range from 9 to 18 inches long, but they average 15 inches.

**Oak Floors in Colors**  
Oak floors in attractive decorator colors are coming into vogue. The innovation has been spurred by the introduction of new easily applied penetrating sealer stains which do not obscure the beauty of the wood grain. One company, for example offers a line of 12 colors, including various shades of blue, green, red and brown.

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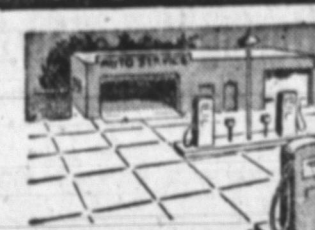
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