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## Garden Planning Time Is Now. Landscape Architect Advises

Garden planning, believe it or not, is a popular wintertime sport throughout most of the nation, landscape gardeners remind.

In the winter, house-bound families start thinking of spring, warm weather and the outdoors, and that is just what the landscape experts want them to do.

We like to work on landscaping problems, one leading west coast landscape architect advises, when the family has done a lot of preliminary planning and when locations of major outdoor structures such as garden plots, fences and decks have been pretty much agreed upon. It makes our basic design problems much easier, he said.

Where does a family start, the landscaping architect was asked? Start with basics, he said, like fences, patio and deck installations and gardeners' tool houses. Then smaller garden plots, play areas and use areas can be more easily located.

Fence planning is most important, he stated. Find out what style of fence will fit with your home. There are too many styles: high, solid board, estate-type fences for maximum privacy; board-on-board or louvered screens for an air-conditioned yard; picket; basket weave; or designs with offsetting panels equipped with shelves for potted plants.

Next to deciding on fencing style, he said, settling on the kind of wood is most important. Western red cedar is a favorite wood with most landscape architects, although they sometimes use Douglas fir and redwood. Cedar is resistant to weather and need not be stained, for it weathers to a beautiful silvery gray, as do the other woods mentioned.

Patio deck planning is the next major step, the architect pointed out. Locate your deck adjoining the living room and kitchen, if practical, to save steps when serving food or when moving from inside to outdoors.

Decks come in many sizes, shapes, he said. The most popular deck adjoins the home, is generally an extension of the living room, is comfortably equipped with lounging chairs, and possibly has a fire-place or built-in barbecue. It is generally built of wood.

Because it is tough, durable and resistant to wear, Douglas fir dimension lumber, either 2x4s or 2x6s, make an ideal deck floor, he said. They should be laid on a solid foundation of heavier fir timbers and the timbers should set on a concrete block to prevent decay.

Deck boards can be laid the narrow side up when 2x4s are used and spaced slightly to allow runoff of water, but not far enough apart so a woman's heel will get caught. Some architects build permanent

## HOME CARE QUESTIONS

Q. We plan to finish off our basement and to use it as a recreation room. We hope in this way to keep the children from continually messing up the living room. Can you suggest how to create a maintenance-free recreation room at low cost?

A. The first step is to provide a separate entrance from the outdoors to the basement. With this entrance, your youngsters can come and go without disturbing anyone or anything upstairs. For easy maintenance, cover the steps from the basement to the yard with a steel hatchway. Materials in the playroom itself should be durable, washable and able to withstand wear and tear. Wood walls (plywood, knotty pine) and a washable tile floor will take a great deal of punishment.

Q. The stairs in my home from the first floor to the basement are worn and warped. I am afraid that someone may fall on them and suffer a serious injury. Is there an inexpensive way to replace these stairs, or must I have new ones custom-built?

A. A new product available at building supply yards enables any home handyman to build a perfectly accurate set of stairs. This product, called Stairgides and developed by the Bileo Co. of New Haven, consists of metal forms which can be nailed to the stringers, the sides of the stairs. The forms have regular steps. You simply saw the long wood sides along the steps, and then nail in the steps and you have a product that cannot be improved upon.

## Take Out Warp

Hold a heat lamp close to a warped board or cabinet door until it straightens. Immediately apply sealer to edges and sides to prevent entry of moisture.

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## Good Lighting Makes Home More Livable

Ever stop to think how important good lighting is in your home? Not just good light to see by and to prevent accidents — that's a must — but lighting which makes your home more attractive and your more comfortable.

Give your house a quick check and then see how you answer these key questions:

1. Do your rooms have strong light and dark contrast in them? Bright lights and deep shadows are distracting and hard on the eyes. This subtle discomfort can cause you to become nervous and ill at ease, even though you aren't aware of it. The remedy? Plan enough general lighting to give pleasant over-all illumination. You can accomplish it in a number of ways — one popular way is to use cornices, coves, and valances to direct light up or down over broad surfaces such as walls or draperies. Or you can use luminous ceilings. To have comfortable over-all lighting for all occasions, you can use light brightness controls.

2. Do you have light for specific seeing tasks, like reading and sewing? Be sure you have the right light at the right place for good vision. Lamps are usually best for this, so make sure they're tall enough and with big light shades to give plenty of light over the whole visual work area — you don't want to slouch to see, nor do you want distracting shadows in the work areas.

3. Do your lights glare? Wherever possible you should not be aware of the source of the light — naked glowing bulbs are uncomfortable; this also applies to cornice, cove, and valance lighting.

4. Can you adjust your lighting to any occasion or mood? Flexibility is the key to interesting lighting — light brightness controls let you vary the light to suit your needs and personality. For instance, when you have a few guests in your living room, low soft lights provide pleasant comfortable atmosphere; when you're entertaining a larger group, brighter lights — well-distributed — help keep things moving.

5. Do you have all the light you need in the bathroom for applying makeup — can your husband easily see to get a good clean shave? Then on you adjust these lights comfortably low for night time?

6. Is your lighting planned to bring out the beauty of your home? In addition to lighting for mood and comfort, you can do much with decorative lighting — from lighting gardens to highlighting unusual features in your house like prize paintings.

## Plywood Popular In Home Workshops

Plywood has become the most popular type of material used by home workshop hobbyists, reports the Institute of Home Designers. Unfortunately, not all workshop enthusiasts are able to use this material because they can't get the big pieces into their workshop. If you have an outside entrance to your basement, however, you will have no difficulty bringing in pieces as large as 4' wide and 12' long.

## Pencil Lubricant

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## Functional Built - Ins Create Useful Extra Storage Space

"Everybody's got problems," as they say, but for the home-owner there is one that is likely to stand out and that is the problem of storage space. Whether your home is old or new, big or small, you still undoubtedly face the question of where-to-put-what. In many new homes there is neither attic nor basement, and in older roomier houses the lack is in convenient storage space.

One thing that will help out a lot is to create built-ins appropriate to various rooms in your home. If you build them of lumber they can be given a wood stain to lend a note of warmth, painted to match an existing decor, topped with a clear finish to bring out the natural beauty of the wood, or dramatized with a pigmented

brush-on, wipe-off finish that will lend color but still allow the natural characteristics of the wood to show through.

What wood to choose is always a question. Certain species are good for certain jobs. Pine is reasonably priced and you might try the very light Idaho white pine or the slightly darker ponderosa, the lodgepole or sugar pine. For a still darker, reddish tone you can buy incense cedar or inland red cedar. The former has a pleasant fragrance that makes it particularly nice for built-ins designed for clothing.

The kitchen is a spot where many home-owners begin to improve their storage facilities with below-counter cabinets, cupboards, closets and open shelving. Give thought to special spots for equipment, mixer, coffee maker and the like, and plan your cabinets so that heavy or frequently used items are easy to get at.

Bedrooms offer hidden opportunities for storage. If you have an old house your closets may be big enough for shallow drawers to go at the sides or back. You can build these of lumber painted a bright shade to match or contrast with the closet's interior. Be sure you have a good over-head light though, or you'll have trouble finding things.

Storage walls also do yeoman's duty in a bedroom and especially in a child's room where toys can be thrown into cupboards and drawers that blanket a wall. A wardrobe type closet with shelves and drawers also can help teach a youngster to keep things neat, and give some thought to building a desk into the wall unit.

Bathrooms are another likely spot for built-ins. Even in limited space you can usually box in the area under your basin and this will give you a spot to store towels, soap, tissue and brushes and cleanser. Perhaps you can also put cabinets overhead. This is a good spot for medicines since children will be less likely to get at them there, but don't set the cabinets so high that an adult will have trouble reaching them.

Of course virtually every room in the house can benefit from built-ins. The living room will take on a new attractive personality if you house your radio-phonograph and television set in a storage wall made just for them or built big enough for general storage, books, records and bric-a-brac. The same goes for family room, den or library.

## Easy To Add Bathrooms In Most Houses

Every bedroom deserves a bathroom, say the home planning experts, and this convenient arrangement need not wait for a "dream" house of the future.

In fact, with the latest developments in bathroom and product designs, it probably can be had quite easily in your present home. It's not out of the question even if you live in an old, one-bathroom house.

The trick lies in making full use of all available space. An area under the stairs may be perfect for an extra powder room on the first floor. A roomy, old-fashioned closet upstairs might yield the necessary footage for an extra lavatory, powder room or complete bathroom. A back hall off the kitchen could house a "mud room" for washing up after work or play in the yard. And, lavatory-dressing tables can be installed right in the bedrooms.

**Space Utilization**  
Don't forget your present bathroom, either. Even if it measures as little as 9 x 12 feet, you can transform the area into a one-and-a-half-bathroom arrangement or two complete bathrooms.

If your bathroom is still smaller, you may increase its usefulness by adding a fixture or two. The installation of twin lavatories or the small home dental lavatory can go a long way to solving morning and evening bottlenecks in this all-important room. And, by building partitions, you can insure complete privacy, as well as multiple use of all your bathroom fixtures.

If available space measures 10' x 12'4", you can install two complete bathrooms in the most economical of all arrangements — with the toilet, lavatory and bathtub in each room installed against a common wall. This places all six fixtures close to waste and supply pipes, thus lessening the amount of costly piping needed.

**New Compact Tub**  
If your present bathroom measures 9' x 12', you may transform it into two complete bathrooms by using the American-Standard Restal in one bathroom. This compact tub, measuring only 38" x 39", takes no more space than most shower stalls, yet provides combined bath and shower facilities.

You may choose a bath-and-a-half arrangement. Suggested layouts of this type include the partitioning of one tub in a room of its own, easily accessible from two powder room areas.

## Home Supply Dealers Give Helpful Advice

Are you troubled with a home maintenance problem you are unable to solve? Don't overlook the standing offer of your local building supply dealer to give you free, helpful advice about all kinds of home repair problems. Your supplier keeps in touch with building material manufacturers, and is familiar with modern home maintenance materials and methods. For example, your local material dealer can show you how you can replace your worn-out wood hatchway, covering the steps from your basement to the grade, with an all-steel unit in half a day. If you plan to finish off a room, he can recommend materials which have proved serviceable and will fit your budget.

Building material dealers usually feature racks containing "How to do it" instructions from the manufacturer. Such literature is available free.

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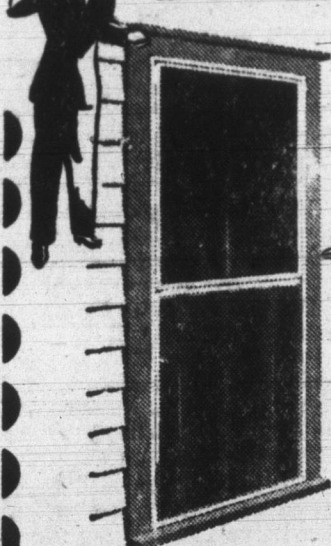
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