Guide to Home Planning

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FOR HOME OWNERS' CATALOGS
You plan your home...

Planning your own home is a glorious adventure for all the family. It is a tremendous step you are taking, and may seem a little bewildering at first. Probably never again will you spend so much money on one thing. So you simply cannot afford to make mistakes, mistakes you might have to live with for the rest of your days.

That's why you should go at this job slowly and seriously, using the best professional advice. This Guide is part of that advice, designed to eliminate some possible blunders. Dependable help makes home planning absorbing and rewarding; fun while you're doing it and a joy for years to come in the pleasure the finished product gives you.

Home planning in its first stage is partly a family question-and-answer game. You know you want a home. But do you know exactly what kind of a home—and a setting—you want? If you do you're almost unique. Practically everyone is agreed on generalities. They want homes which are well planned, well built, handy, comfortable and attractive, but they are hazy as to materials they prefer, whether this or that heating is the thing, where to use fluorescent lights, and about porches and front halls, and whether it's a good idea to substitute a dining area for a dining room.

Now no one but you can answer many of the dozens of questions which are going to come up. But right now you probably don't know half the questions and certainly not the answers yourselves. This Guide is packed with vital questions to help you clarify your own ideas and make necessary decisions.

After you know where you will build, supply yourself with a folder, lots of paper and plenty of sharp pencils before you begin. As you discuss, make decisions and fill in answers, make ample notes. If you leaf through the question lists now, you'll find there are many questions you're no yet ready to answer. When you've finished studying these pages, you'll be much surer about the answers.

You will save yourself some disappointments if you set a rough budget before you get too far in your planning. It's good to have a springboard figure of what you can afford. Considered a good way to arrive at this is to multiply your year's income by one-and-a-half. This will give you a safe cost for the house you can afford. Then multiply your yearly income by three and you have a maximum figure of cost. The final, over-all cost of your new home had best lie between these two amounts, just where being partly conditioned by how much cash you can put into your down payment.

When you've got your financial status down pat and your rough architectural plans in hand, go and talk your project over with a member of a responsible money-lending institution in your community. One of the first things they'll be interested in is the neighborhood you plan to build in. The chances are you've spent many Sundays looking at sites and deciding just that. Only after you've picked your lot and straightened out a financing system will you be ready to have final working drawings made and out for bids. But let's get back to the planning!

Professional architectural advice is necessary to sound home planning. However, to get the most for the money you pay for this service, you'll do well to be clear as possible what kind of house you honestly want before you take your problem to the expert. He can realize your ideas in brick and wood and stone and metal only if you can tell him precisely what they are. So gather the family around the conference table and start planning.
First things come first...

When it comes to home planning, every single member of the family should have his or her say, because you’re all going to live together here, and God willing, be happy under this roof. Listen to all voices around the family council table. This makes a fine democratic set-up, but it isn’t going to work unless you all know what it’s practical to have.

There’s been a lot of talk about new developments in building materials and methods. Some of these are wonderful improvements, and some of them are far, far in the future. Start by bringing yourself up-to-date, getting a grasp on the facts. Read the pages of this book through attentively and then you’ll have a basic knowledge of what’s what. When you’ve finished your preliminary run-through, tackle the questionnaires, consulting together, and fill them in as far as you’re able to.

About now is the time to get out cross-section paper and to make your sketch diagrams of room layouts (see page 8). Try arranging room units in a general over-all scheme, bearing in mind the nature of your lot (best exposure, prevailing breeze, slope, areas for outdoor living, etc.). Don’t get too agitated if you can’t devise a scheme which works. Actually, that is the job of an architecturally-trained expert, but by making rough layouts you will prepare yourself to tell him some of your ideas. Try to establish dimensions which take into account the new furniture which you will want, so it will fit in pleasantly and conveniently.

Spread your sketch planning over a number of sessions and a number of weeks. Compromises are effected gradually. Flash ideas, at first hotly defended, subside. You’re going to live in this house a long time. You can afford to take time to get it right.

When you’ve got a fairly unanimous picture of what you like, find your expert and start working with him on it. The matter of money will now become increasingly important, because he is trained to be able to give you rough estimates from early sketches. Don’t be down-hearted if you have to cut your cloth to fit your purse. Nine times out of ten an even better plan will emerge, sparser and more efficient than your first dream.

Though you are full of enthusiasm for the life you will lead in your new home, in sober fact you should remember that one day you may want to sell it. From this point of view it’s sage to curb any leanings toward bizarre or odd features.

When you have acceptable sketch plans it is time for you to go back to your financing institution. You are armed with some estimated figures, ready to learn how best to swing the money end of your home.

It is only when all this work is over that you will be ready to have final plans, working drawings, ‘blueprints’ made. Naturally your expert will draw them, but don’t be intimidated into accepting the plans if you’re not wholly satisfied. Continue to make necessary changes and improvements until you have things right. They are simple on paper; they will be impossible later without added costs and heartbreak after construction has started.

The list that follows has been arranged to make it easy for you to add pencil comments. Take full advantage of this feature. Now is the time to record all your ideas in full. Later will be too late.

Check or fill in all the items you can on the next page thinking always of what you really want to do in your new home, and the facilities therefore to be provided.
Needs and Requirements Check List

MRS.

PROFESSION OR OTHER WORK...Office work at home □ Requires space FT. BY FT.

Studio □ Music room □ Requires space FT. BY FT.

HOBBIES OR COLLECTIONS (list) Requires space FT. BY FT.

SPORTS (list) Requires space FT. BY FT.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

SLEEPING

Separate bedroom □ Shared with □ Size of room desired FT. BY FT.

Beds: twin □ double □ single □ sleeping porch □ Windows open N □ S □ E □ W □

Other comments

DRESSING

Separate dressing room □ Built-in units

Combined dressing room and bath □ Combined dressing room and wardrobe □

Vanity □ Dresser □ Triple mirror □ Full length mirror □ Safe □

for the following number of suits..., dresses..., hats..., coats..., shoes..., sport clothes..., Other clothing (list)

CLOSET AND STORAGE SPACE

SPECIAL FURNITURE OR EQUIPMENT (list) Mothproof storage space □ Fireplace □ Telephone □

Radio □

MR.

BUSINESS OR PROFESSION...Office work at home requires space FT. BY FT.

HOBBIES OR COLLECTIONS (list) Requires space FT. BY FT.

SPORTS (list) Requires storage space FT. BY FT.

OTHER ACTIVITIES Special requirements

SLEEPING

Separate bed room □ Shared with □ Size of room desired FT. BY FT.

Beds: twin □ double □ single □ sleeping porch □ Windows open N □ S □ E □ W □

Other comments

DRESSING

Separate dressing room □ Combined dressing room and bath □ Combined dressing room and wardrobe □

Dresser □ Mirror □ Safe □ Built-in units (describe their use)

CLOSET AND STORAGE SPACE for the following number of suits..., shoes..., hats..., coats..., Other clothing (list)

SPECIAL FURNITURE OR EQUIPMENT (list) Mothproof storage space □ Fireplace □ Telephone □

Radio □
### CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aging</td>
<td></td>
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#### Hobbies and Sports
- Requires space ____________ ft. by ____________ ft.

#### Work or Study Space Required
- ____________ ft. by ____________ ft.
- Storage space ____________ ft. by ____________ ft.

#### Sleeping
- Separate bed room [ ]
- Shared with ____________
- Desired size ____________ ft. by ____________ ft.
- Dressing: Separate dressing room [ ] Built-in units ___

##### Closet and Storage Space
- For the following number of suits: ____________, dresses: ____________, hats: ____________, coats: ____________, shoes: ____________
- Also space ____________ ft. by ____________ ft. for storage of toys and games.

#### Special Furniture
- (list)

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### Other Resident (name)___
- Relationship ___

#### Special Considerations
- ___
GROUP ACTIVITIES

TYPES OF ENTERTAINMENT: (maximum number of guests to be filled in blanks)

DINNERS........................................ MUSICALS........................................ TEAS........................................

CLUB MEETINGS................................ LUNCHEONS....................................... GARDEN PARTIES................................

HOME MOVIES................................ DANCES............................................. GAMES (children)..............................

CARD PARTIES................................ BUFFET SUPPERS............................. TELEVISION.................................

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

LIVING ROOM Size ______ FT. BY ______ FT. Ceiling height ______ FT. Living room activities

Is close relation between indoor and outdoor living spaces desired YES □ NO □

DINING ROOM Size ______ FT. BY ______ FT. Separate □ Combined with

LIBRARY OR DEN Size ______ FT. BY ______ FT. How many feet of shelving ______ Firepace □

POWDER ROOM Size ______ FT. BY ______ FT. Lavatory □ with door to

GAME ROOM Size ______ FT. BY ______ FT. Where located

Special requirements

GARAGE Number of cars ______ Other uses: Work bench □ Garden Tools □ Bicycles □ Storage for

OUTDOOR LIVING AREAS DESIRED Covered porch □ Screened porch □ Terraces □ Upper level sun decks □ Green house □ Sun room □

STYLE OF HOUSE DESIRED (Type of architecture)

One story house □ Two story house □ Is basement desired YES □ NO □

USES OF BASEMENT Hobby shop □ Home work shop □ Game room □ Photographic dark room □ Storage for

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________
Your land
and your home...

You probably have your lot but if you haven't one already, two questions should keep running through your mind—Do we like this community, and will such-and-such a site be suitable for the house we have in mind?

Around the question of neighborhood cluster a number of considerations:

a. Have we friends in the neighborhood or are we going to like the people who live here? Are their children our children's ages?

b. Is it handy to stores, schools, buses, places of worship and all the things which go with family life?

c. Is it an up-and-coming neighborhood, crisp and neat, showing community pride?

d. Are there the services which we shall require like electricity and gas, water and sewers, surfaced roads, pavements, fire and police protection, etc.? These last have a bearing on your insurance rates.

e. Is it acceptable for a mortgage? (Remember this will affect your loan.)

For the budget, note that the price of urban or suburban land usually should not exceed 20 per cent of your over-all expenditure. In the country it may be as low as 5 per cent, but there you will probably have to install some of your own services, dig a well and sewage system, bring in or make electricity, even build a road.

To go back to the second of the crucial questions, the suitability of the site to your house, you may find your land before you begin designing your home or you may begin planning your home and then find your lot. Either way the site and the building must be treated so that they end up in the closest possible harmony.

Where the house will stand and which way it will face come under the head of orientation. What that means to you is planning to make the most of the view, of the sun throughout the day, and of the prevailing breeze. Also to get the most privacy. Home building experience shows that in general it's good to have living rooms face south, southeast, or east, the kitchen any direction but west (to avoid the broiling late afternoon sun), workrooms in a northerly direction (uniform, unglaring light). Bedrooms, used largely at night, can face any direction, but look out for eastward windows at the foot of your beds if you don't mean to get up with the birds. The diagram below shows how rooms can be arranged suitably as far as the compass goes.

But there are other considerations. A house planned for a level lot is unfitted to take advantage of certain charming features which can be devised for a hillside site, and vice versa. One treatment, ideal for a corner lot, may lose all validity on an inside lot. And don't forget the landscaping possibilities, where you will have a garden, lawn, play-space, outdoor living areas, and where trees will be to give shade or privacy. (Lawns and landscaping are discussed at greater length on page 27.)

Finally there is a slightly intangible factor which is still terribly important. The kind of community you're moving into and the kind of lot you're building on may decide the plan and style of your house. It would be poor taste to build a house out of keeping with the neighborhood in style, size or cost. But let's get on with our planning.
You draw a plan...

The easiest and most accurate way to set about making rough plans is on cross-section or graph paper. It is ruled into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch squares by light blue lines. You can buy it by the sheet or the pad at your stationer's.

Decide on a scale. A square on the paper to indicate a square foot of house is handy. But if you make the sides of two squares equal one foot, you have $\frac{1}{4}$ inch scale, and the furniture drawings on page 10 may be traced and cut out so that you may fit them onto your plans. "Quarter inch scale" means that $\frac{1}{4}$ inch measured on paper indicates 1 foot in the actual house.

Don't bother with refinements like thickness of walls. Your architectural expert can take care of all that. What you are after is general proportion and relationship of rooms to each other on the plan. Here you will first have to make a rough plan. Besides putting the points of the compass where they belong, indicate prevailing wind, sun, view, and other orientation factors. So start with a rough plan to decide on the general location of the rooms in relation to sun, wind, view, street, etc. (Diagram, left.)

Then at a larger scale ($\frac{1}{2}$" = 1 foot is good) these preliminary schematic plan sketches be with the living room, the room which will be center of your lives, and fit the parts of the house to that. It is no more important than any of the other rooms, but it seizes the imagination, for it is heart and holds the hearth.

When you have a plan scheme that seems all right at this scale—draw it at quarter inch scale and arrange your furniture "cut-outs" on the paper. This will help locate doors and windows so that there will be wall-space and clearance space. Your final working drawings and blue prints will be at a scale too. ("Cut-outs" are shown on page 10.)

Turn to the check lists which will remind you of many planning features vital to the smooth running of the whole house.

Sketches show a plot plan and a rough house plan drawn on cross-section paper. They do include every last detail which will go into your house, but they do have the main design elements. You may be sure, in using them as an additional check, and in following a similar method you be crystallizing your ideas in the logical way.
Your house is taking form. You have checked the Needs and Requirements List. You know the number of rooms you will have, about where they will be, something about their size. Now you can get down to studying whether your room layouts are going to work. The best way to discover this is by asking yourself what you will want to do in any one room, and then seeing whether you can do it as you’ve set it up.

Front hall first. Can it be reached under cover from a car on rainy days? Does it prevent casual callers seeing all that goes on in the living room? Does it also prevent chilly drafts? Does it have adequate closet accommodations where outer garments and overshoes can be put? Can the floor be freed of mud and dampness easily? Long halls are not only inconvenient, they’re also expensive since the more compact the final plan, the shorter the outside walls.

At times the living room is a place for entertaining. Can a group gather cozily around the fireplace, play games? Have you provided storage space for game equipment? Will a gathering of friends divide up naturally into friendly groups as your furniture is placed?

At other times the living room may mean a place for reading, sewing, doing homework, keeping house accounts. Is there place for the easy chairs, sofas, tables, desk, for doing these things? Room for armchair tables? Well located outlets for the right lighting without interminable and entangling electric cords? Have you ample shelf space for collections, if you’re a family of hobbies? Built-in cabinets for albums or phonograph records?

The dining room is far less flexible and so less complicated to arrange, but it takes some doing. The big decision to make here is whether it will be an integral part of living room or kitchen, or a room of its own. Either way you won’t want the dining room table any further from the range than need be and you must have china-linen-glass-silver storage areas handy. Be sure, too, that you leave adequate lanes for serving.

The kitchen has become a scientifically planned food preparation center, and so a delight to work in. Appliance manufacturers have engineered it to a state of wonderful exactness. Unless you have strong convictions about special features, the home owner cannot do better than to study the basic layouts they have evolved (see pages 16 and 17), designed to fit snugly into various shaped spaces. But you must decide where the laundry is to be done, and whether the basement will be handed over to the youngsters for entertaining, used as a workshop, or store room, or both. Where will you place your heating units?

When you get to the bedrooms, be sure you leave ample, unbroken wall areas for beds, heads, and dressing tables. Do have enough free floor space for a slipper chair or two. Readers-in-bed will make sure of the electric outlets so that reading lamps can be just right.

Have you left room in the bathroom for a generous clothes hamper? Will the medicine chest be big enough for accumulating adhesive rolls and cough syrups? Is the linen closet near at hand? Are there outlets for your electric razor, the electric heater and such?

Take great pains in all rooms to see that light switches are placed where they seem handiest to you. Be sure steps are brightly lit for safety. Finally garner every inch you can for storage. Closets and store rooms can make all the difference between comfort and crowding. Closets designed and equipped for the things they will store save lots of space.

In order that you may allow adequate space for various pieces of furniture, a page has been devoted to 1/4 inch scale diagrams from which you can trace cutouts. Dimensions are average, but many variations in size do occur, so do not take these as final. Cut out the furniture diagrams from your tracings, making as many duplicates as you need. Then test the workings of your 1/4” scale plan by arranging the furniture cut-outs in the rooms. It is a good idea to fill out the check lists for each room first.
Typical furniture pieces...

**LIVING ROOM**

- **Club Chair 1**: L 2'6" D 3'0" H 3'0"
- **Occasional Chair 2**: L 2'3" D 2'6" H 3'0"
- **Wing Chair 3**: L 2'6" D 3'0" H 3'0"
- **Chair 4**: L 1'6" D 1'6" H 3'0"
- **Sofa 5**: L 6'0" D 2'6" H 3'0"
- **Love Seat 6**: L 3'6" D 2'6" H 3'0"

**OFFICE**

- **Flat Top Desk 7**: L 4'0" D 2'0" H 3'0"
- **Secretary 8**: L 2'8" D 1'6" H 6'2"
- **Governor Winthrop Desk 9**: L 2'8" D 2'0" H 3'0"
- **Breakfront 10**: L 4'0" D 1'6" H 7'2"
- **Low Boy 11**: L 2'4" D 1'6" H 7'2"
- **High Boy 12**: L 3'0" D 1'6" H 7'2"

**FURNITURE**

- **Coffee Table 15**: L 2'2" D 2'0" H 1'6"
- **Card Table 16**: L 2'4" D 2'0" H 1'6"
- **Drum Piecrust Tables 20**: L 2'6" D 3'0" H 1'4"
- **Lamp Table 21**: L 2'6" D 3'0" H 1'4"

**DIAM. 2'6" TO 3'0" DIAM. 2'4" TO 3'0" DIAM. 2'0" H 1'4" TO 1'8" H 2'3" TO 2'6" H 2'1" TO 2'7"**

**DINING ROOM**

- **Chair 22**: L 1'6" D 1'8" H 2'6"
- **Arm Chair 23**: L 2'0" D 2'0" H 2'6"
- **Serv-table 24**: L 2'6" D 1'2" H 3'0"
- **Side Board 25**: L 4'0" D 6'6" H 3'2"
- **China Cab. 26**: L 3'0" D 1'2" H 5'2"
- **Corner Cab. 27**: L 3'6" D 8'0" H 5'8"

**DICTIONARY 28**: L 3'0" D 6'0" H 5'0"

**ROUND TABLES 27'7" TO 5'9" DIAM.**

**BEDROOM**

- **Single Bed 29**: L 6'10" D 3'0" TO 3'9"
- **Double Bed 30**: L 6'10" D 4'6" TO 4'10"
- **Chair 31**: L 2'0" D 2'0" H 2'6"
- **Arm Chair 32**: L 2'6" D 2'0" H 2'6"
- **Dresser 33**: L 3'0" D 2'6" H 2'0"
- **Chest of Drawers 34**: L 2'8" D 3'4" H 3'8"

**Night 35**: L 1'2" D 1'2" H 2'0"

**Dressing Table 36**: L 3'0" D 2'0" H 1'10"

**Chaise Longue 37**: L 4'0" D 2'0" H 2'6"