



Hot DESIGN TRENDS for new homes in 2013

Home buyers are back! Recent consumer preference surveys show they are diverse and they expect more in a new home or a remodeled floor plan. New home designs have smarter floor plan layouts and feature efficient use of floor space, creative storage solutions, multi-generational accommodations, flex spaces and more.

Capture More Buyers: Include the new features they want.

Is there enough storage? Are your current designs Energy Efficient? Do they have Open Living Spaces? Do they have

Outdoor Living spaces? Are they Pet-friendly? Savvy home designers and builders have listened to what buyers are asking for – and they are catering to these desires with new home features implemented in creative ways.

Let's break down a few major guidelines of what's trending in new home design, both nationally and locally. You can use the following ideas as your own checklist to determine which home features best suit buyers' specific lifestyles.



**about
the
author**

Tony Weremeichik, CPBD, AIBD, CGP

Tony Weremeichik is the Principal of the Architectural Design Studio at Canin Associates - an urban planning, landscape architecture and architectural design firm in Orlando, Florida. His wide-ranging expertise in housing design includes innovating and advancing design trends in new home, custom home and remodeling design. Tony has over 20 years of experience designing residential, mixed-use and community buildings in master planned communities and resorts throughout the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. Tony can be reached at tweremeichik@canin.com.

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everyday living spaces

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Trend 1: Everyday Living Spaces

Great Rooms:

You'll probably see fewer formal dining and living rooms in favor of larger, open great room spaces that combine the family area, ONE place to eat and the kitchen. It's like the social center of the home. Today's living spaces are ideal for the entire family to hang out after work or school as well as for larger gatherings with friends and family on Thanksgiving or Superbowl Sunday.

Outdoor Living Spaces:

There is way more value in a home that has an extension of the family room onto a covered outdoor living space. Outdoor rooms need to be designed for furniture and comfortable circulation. Don't settle for the leftover square concrete slab in the back – that just winds up as storage or circulation, not living space. Intentionally designed outdoor spaces add square footage, livability, perceived value and leads to more sales.

Indoor/Outdoor Relationships:

Look for plans that blend the indoor spaces and outdoor spaces with the use of sliding glass doors or windows. Back patios with screen options expand the living space and create free-flowing entertainment opportunities.



inside / outside comfort

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style / details / materials



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Trend 2: Curb Appeal

Real Character:

"No Cookie Cutters" - Today's architectural styles are trending away from boring beige stucco that has dated homes for the past two decades. This year, homes have richer character and architectural details that create strong curb appeal.

Hybrid Styles:

Transitional styles – a blend of traditional styles mixed with contemporary styles – are popular. Not too modern, yet also not so conventional.

Architectural Details:

Authenticity. Buyers can tell the difference in value between appropriate, crafted details and scored stucco imitations. Faux ornaments? That's out. Keep it real. The difference is in the details.

Exterior Colors:

Builder Beige? Some buyers still like neutrals, but not all. The right paint color palette can add value to a home, accentuate the architectural style and add life to a neighborhood. Embrace color; richer paint colors are attractive and are growing in popularity with contemporary styles.



center of attention

Trend 3: What's New with Kitchens

Kitchens are still the heart of the home and are a top concern on buyer's new home or remodel lists. Kitchens must be designed right or the whole plan can fail. Buyers want larger kitchens with islands and with plenty of storage.

Islands:

It's where everyone hangs, so today's islands have bar seating. A one-level, lower height island visually opens the kitchen and it's ideal for eating or doing homework.

Appliances:

You will likely find the latest energy efficient appliances in today's new kitchens. With microwaves now being questionable for your health, convection ovens and steam ovens are gaining popularity.

Storage:

Not only are more useful cabinets needed, but walk-in pantries are preferred.

Natural Light:

Daylight is a delight. Have plans that incorporate windows. If there are less wall cabinets to make space for more windows, make up the difference with more functional base cabinets to compensate.

Trend 4: Maximize Storage

Don't overlook this important feature – Buyers want lots of storage and there is still probably never enough. While looking at prospective floor plans, look beyond the rooms and explore homes for necessary storage in creative places.

Attic Trusses:

Buyers can save money on off-site self-storage lockers. If properly designed within the trusses, attics with headroom can hold seasonal items and rarely used "stuff".

Walk-In Closets:

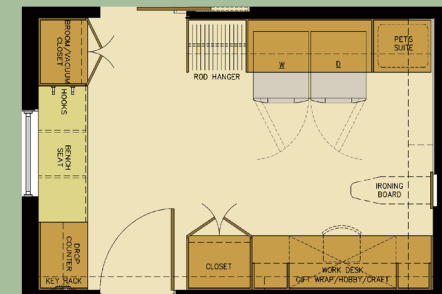
It's not just the size of the closet, it's what you do inside it. Using closet organizers can double storage capacity.

Garages:

Double check the dimensions of the garage. Right-sized garages provide enough room to park cars plus have room for the door swings and provide ample storage for bikes, workbenches and lawn equipment.

Extra Spaces:

Under the stairs is ideal for luggage and seasonal decorations.



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places for my stuff



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Trend 5: Household Laundry Suites



I'm not sure why, but many plans neglect the need for household storage and the proper processing of laundry. Check plans for:

Wash/Dry Iron and Fold:

Is there out-of-the-way floor space for dirty laundry baskets? Is there a counter to sort or fold clothes or iron them? Here's one resurging Laundry trend: clothes hanging rods and laundry chutes from the second floor.

Shelving or Cabinets:

Ample storage space is needed for bulk paper goods, hurricane supplies, household cleaners, etc.

Broom/Vacuum Closets:

Some new plans provide a concealed space for this – some may even have added a power outlet needed to charge Swiffers and other cleaning tools.

Pet Suites:

Laundry rooms can multi task. Pet-friendly plans provide spaces for a pet bed, bowls, food, and leashes. More elaborate suites even have optional doggie doors to covered patios.

Trend 6: Drop Zones

Instead of cluttering kitchen counters, many of today's new plans offer this little convenience – a place to drop things when entering the home.

Drop Counter: Paired with a key rack, a counter to store keys, charge cell phones, leave a note or store a purse. **Junk Drawers:** These can be underneath the drop counter instead of wasting a kitchen drawer for all of life's small necessities and tools. **Bench Seats:** A place to kick off shoes and store them underneath. **Backpack Hooks:** Not just for backpacks but for coats too. **Lockers:** Store school books, sports or workout gear.



Trend 7: Smarter Homes

Today's homes are more Energy Efficient than older homes. Buyers want to save some "green" with "green" home features that will keep monthly utility bills low for the long term. Remember that operation and maintenance of a new home has an impact on monthly bills in addition to a new mortgage. Evaluate a homes' energy efficient features – especially insulation and Energy Star Rated appliances, windows and doors, and look for performance that will offer a low HERS (Home Energy Rating System) index.

Growing in affordability and popularity, some new homes may offer upgraded Home Electronics packages – iPad or cell phone control of lighting, security systems, thermostat and energy monitoring.



about our firm Canin Associates believes great ideas and great placemaking merge when connections are made to the regional context, vibrant architecture and the cultural heritage of a region. Our 33-year old interdisciplinary firm of idea-based professionals is committed to creating sustainable resort and mixed-use communities that enrich the quality of life and are wonderful places to live, work, play or visit.



www.canin.com

CANIN ASSOCIATES
urban planning • landscape architecture • architectural design
500 delaney avenue orlando, florida 32801 407.422.4040
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