



Increase Your Home's Square Footage by Creating an Outdoor Living Space

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Do you want or need a larger home? If so, you don't have to move or construct an addition. Instead, you can add to your home's livable square footage by using the outdoors. It's completely possible to transform your ordinary outdoor areas into something amazing.

To begin, look at your existing patio, back yard, front yard, pool area, balcony or deck through a different lens. The space around your pool could house a beautiful gazebo. Your ho-hum patio could become an outdoor kitchen. Or, the wasted space on the side of your home can be turned into a meditation area.

The possibilities become endless when you start to see your outdoor space as more than a yard – you must broaden your horizons to consider what could add extra space, comfort, convenience, beauty and value to your home.

This white paper will focus on how you can transform your outdoors into usable, year-round living space. Specific topics of discussion include:

- Why Create Outdoor Living Spaces
- Develop an Indoor-Outdoor Flow
- Make the Most of Landscaping
- Consider the Forces of Nature
- Incorporate Creative Design Elements
- Don't Forget to Think Safety
- Real Life Examples of Successful Outdoor Projects

Why Create Outdoor Living Spaces

Your yard can offer so much more than an expanse of green grass or desert stone. In addition to adding extra living space to your existing home's floor plan, creating an outdoor space provides all sorts of uses and benefits. Here are some of the things you can create outside to enhance your existing living space:

- **Eating and Entertaining Areas** - Do you frequently have people over to your home? If so, you can improve the comfort of your guests by entertaining outdoors. Guests can be treated to a spacious, beautiful and relaxing environment. With extra space outside, you can even increase the number of people you invite to your home.

Your entertainment space can include a breakfast area, an outdoor dining room, an outdoor living room, an outdoor bar or tavern, a deck, patio, gazebo, pergola or any other area that can accommodate the intended function. When you design your outdoor space, you can consider one large social gathering spot or divide your existing space into social "hubs" based on activity. These activities include dining, drinking, conversing, swimming, playing games and more.

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- **Outdoor Kitchen** - Creating an outdoor kitchen has become a popular trend in home remodeling. A fully-blown outdoor kitchen has replaced the single barbeque grill of yester-year. Today's outdoor kitchens boast all kinds of appliances, accessories and seating. The outdoor kitchen has become a sophisticated extension of the indoor kitchen.
- **Pool Area** - Swimming pools are a popular choice among homeowners living in warm climates – some may even say a necessity. Although the space may not encompass an actual enclosed room with four walls, the outdoor space can be created in a number of ways to provide a resort-like atmosphere and create a sense of privacy.
- **Play Areas** - If you have an active family or have kids and guests who enjoy playing sports, you might want to set aside a special outdoor space for these functions. Depending on your interests, you can incorporate any number of activities, like ping pong, Frisbee, baseball, volleyball, bocce ball, badminton and more.
- **Relaxation and Meditation Areas** - If you enjoy peace and quiet, you can design areas to enjoy natural tranquility. Landscaping and other features can add to your relaxation and provide seclusion from the other parts of your backyard. Special considerations include aesthetics, privacy, access to nature and any other feature that will add to the serenity of your special retreat.
- **Areas to Take Advantage of Beautiful Views** - To add to your enjoyment and that of your guests, design your outdoor space to leverage your views. You may have lush desert scenery, great views of city lights or a striking mountain backdrop. In most cases, you want your views to be of your backyard and the natural scenery beyond your yard. Be sure to capitalize on the best of what your location has to offer.

Whatever function you create for your outdoor spaces, the focal point should be enjoying a natural setting. Backyard environments have increased in popularity and extend indoor living to the outside. When properly designed, outdoor living spaces blur the line between the inside and outside of your home. It's entirely possible to make your home look and feel like a resort!

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Develop an Indoor-Outdoor Flow

One of the goals is to make your outdoor space a natural extension of your indoors. Good flow involves both look and function. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Maintain Consistency with Your Home's Design** - You don't want outdoor living spaces to stick out like a sore thumb from the rest of your home. Instead, you want to create harmony and design them so they create a cohesive appearance as a natural addition to your home. To do this, you can incorporate a design scheme that matches indoor patterns, colors and themes, as well as your home's overall architectural style. Your goal is to ensure everything seems connected and inviting.
- **An Open Transition** - Open up the transition as much as possible with floor to ceiling windows or a moving glass wall system. This allows you to open up your space and let the sun and breeze in.
- **Establish Good Flow** - Regardless of the size of your outdoor space, you want to separate the different activities. For example, cooking, conversation, relaxation, games, and other activities should be accommodated in distinct areas and allow for an efficient flow of traffic throughout the inside and outside of your home.
- **Make Your Space Accessible** - It's important to consider the function of your outdoor space, and then create the necessary access. If you're creating an outdoor eating area, you want to be able to conveniently serve your food. So access to your inside kitchen is important. If you're designing a meditation area, you need to ensure you have access to nature, fresh air and privacy.
- **Tap into Existing Utilities** - Depending on function, you need to create proximity to your existing systems, like electric, gas and water, to avoid having to build new ones and incurring additional cost. For example, if you're installing a barbeque, you want to connect to existing gas lines instead of relying on separate propane tanks. Design a seamless infrastructure with everything tying together whenever possible.

Real Life Examples of Successful Outdoor Projects

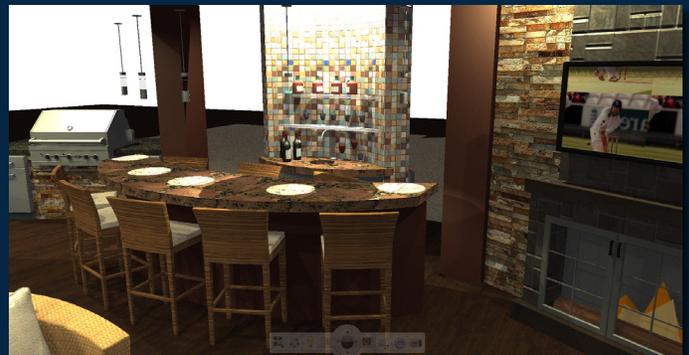
Integrating Indoor and Outdoor Space (Myles and Elaine)

This semi-retired couple have owned a second home in Scottsdale for eight years. Now that they will be spending more time in the home, they want to enjoy the outdoor space more. However, the home didn't provide a fully integrated indoor/outdoor feel.

To be able to more fully leverage the outdoors, the couple looked to buy a new, move-in ready home. But, everything they liked fell short in one major area: the views. The couple's existing home has spectacular, North Scottsdale mountain views. So, they decided to remodel their home, inside and out.

To create a seamless transition between the indoor and outdoor spaces, the project included opening up the back wall of the house and installing a moving glass wall system. The new design also carries the same floor tile from the inside to the outside patio area.

In addition, the upgraded outdoor entertainment area includes a new gazebo, a built-in BBQ and a fireplace to maximize usage year-round. And of course, the newly-designed outdoor space capitalizes on the beautiful views.



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Make the Most of Landscaping

Your landscaping plays a huge role in how well your space functions and looks. How you use your landscaping will impact many things, including:

- **Natural Elements** - Placing trees, vines and shrubs strategically can be an efficient and effective way to block sun, wind, dust and other natural elements. The creation of shade can be crucial to utilizing space in the warmer months of the year.
- **Privacy** - Landscaping is a great way to keep your area private and away from neighbors' prying eyes. You can install fences, tall plants, screens, canopies or other design elements to keep your space always private. Just make sure they remain so throughout the different seasons.
- **Beauty** - Nothing can create more natural beauty than trees and plants. With the huge amount of available options, you can transform your space into something really spectacular.
- **Aroma** - Along with beauty, the right landscaping can make your outdoor space smell good! Flowering, aromatic trees, bushes and plants create a special ambiance that makes you want to spend time in your outdoor retreat.

Your landscaping doesn't need to be confined to what's planted in the ground. You can also incorporate planters that add color, texture, fragrance and interest to your space. Whatever landscaping you install, you want to ensure it complements both your indoor and outdoor design. For example, if your interior design uses southwest elements, you may want to include the same feel with your landscaping. Again, it's all about creating harmony and logically expanding your available square footage in a consistent, appealing manner.

One last note about landscaping: If you want to control your costs and be more environmentally conscious, you should consider xeriscape landscapes. Desert-friendly landscaping saves water and energy while providing real beauty.

Creating the Ultimate Backyard Resort (Jim and Miriam)

A massive undertaking, this project was completed in two phases. The first phase involved a complete whole house interior remodel and the initial elements of an outdoor project. As part of the outdoor transformation in this first phase, a gas fire pit and a meditation area were incorporated near an existing waterfall.

However, at least 50% of the yard was still not being utilized, much due to the heat and lack of shade. So, phase two began with an emphasis on landscaping and creating shade. An existing barrier of Oleanders provided shade, privacy and security on one side of the property, but extensive landscaping was needed for all of the south and west facing open areas.

In addition to the emphasis on providing ample shade, the second phase of this outdoor project incorporated several structures and amenities:

- An outdoor kitchen with two barbecues, an outdoor refrigerator, granite countertops and storage space.
- An outdoor breakfast area with a granite round top and a custom steel base with seating for four to six people.
- An outdoor dining room with a granite top and a custom steel base with seating for eight to ten people. This space sits on a brick, sand set floor and also provides a serving buffet.
- An outdoor 12' x 12' tavern. This space has a four-door, eight-foot tall, French door entry system, as well as a full commercial bar, cabinetry, TV and music.
- An outdoor swing area created from an old world steel base with a bed-size mattress as a swing. This tranquil space is covered with grape vines and incorporates subtle lighting.
- An outdoor gazebo with lighting that serves as an outdoor living room.
- Outdoor music and lighting integrated throughout the space to create the right ambiance.

The second phase of this complex project was completed within 12 months. The end result delivered a unique resort-style environment for entertaining a large number of people. All the elements of this project, including the tavern and barbecuing areas, enhanced the homeowners' lifestyles.



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Consider the Forces of Nature

When you begin your outdoor space design, think carefully about how the weather will impact your use year-round. Here are some suggestions for managing the elements so you and your guests are as comfortable as possible and can use your space throughout the entire year:

- **Sun** - The Arizona sun can be a double-edged sword. Sunshine offers many wonderful days of beautiful weather. In other words, you infrequently have to cancel outdoor activities because of rain. But, direct sunlight can also make things pretty uncomfortable, especially if you're sitting in it on a hot day. Squinting for long periods of time gets very unpleasant. When designing your outdoor space, you need to identify where the sun shines at all times of the day and year. Options for eliminating sun include landscaping, structures, trellises, umbrellas and canopies.
- **Heat** - If the heat will preclude you from enjoying your outdoor space during the summer months, you should consider specific strategies. In addition to creating lots of shade through landscaping and structures, you can also install misting systems and fans. These systems make your space significantly cooler, even when the thermometer hits triple digits.
- **Cold** - Likewise, you don't want chilly winter weather to drive you indoors. Outdoor space heaters and fireplaces can help make your outdoor space comfortable when the temperatures drop.
- **Rain, Wind and Dust** - Creating covers is an obvious way to keep out the elements. Structures like patio covers, umbrellas, gazebos and pergolas provide a roof and can keep the rain, wind and dust out. Walls, screens and landscaping can also help provide protection.

But you also need to think about what's not covered, like furnishings, appliances and other things. If you have wood elements, make sure to protect them regularly. Wood is high maintenance and requires effort so it doesn't become worn, weathered and rotted. Many fabrics fade in sun, so you'll need to protect them as well.

Although your outdoor space will look and feel like an extension of your inside rooms, don't forget it will be subject to natural elements. Natural elements can take a toll on people and materials, so you need to plan accordingly so your outdoor space gets lots of use.

A Gazebo with All the Comforts of Home (Nick and Malu)

To take advantage of a climate perfect for entertaining outside, this project involved constructing a gazebo that provides the ideal environment. The structure included a kitchen, entertainment wet bar, a living room with fireplace and dining room, and even a shower.

When considering how the client will use this space, it was important to incorporate climate control elements, such as built-in outdoor heaters and misting systems. Other desirable additions included roll down sun screens for hot days with direct sunlight, as well as roll down clear plastic walls for cooler nights.

Completing this project successfully required a thorough analysis of weather elements. In addition to keeping out the heat, sun and cold, this project had to consider minimizing dust. The roll down clear plastic walls protected the gazebo's interior from dust. Providing this barrier allowed the homeowners to entertain on short notice – no excess time or energy had to be spent removing dust from the entertainment space.



This project exemplifies the importance of understanding a structure's orientation from a north, south, east and west standpoint. Considering how the sun, shade, wind and other weather elements affected the gazebo occupants contributed to a successful project outcome. In addition, Republic West Remodeling and the homeowners fully analyzed how the new gazebo would relate to other surrounding areas of the outdoor space, including the pool, hot tub, grass areas and home.

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Incorporate Creative Design Elements

Once you determine functional issues, you can start to think creatively. Certain elements may serve a function, and / or they may enhance the beauty and ambiance of your space. The following list highlights some design elements that can add creativity and atmosphere:

- **Lighting** - Use of lighting definitely adds function to space, but it can also create drama. Accent lighting is one way to create a desired mood. Coming in all types of shapes, sizes and functions, you'll have many of options for accomplishing your various lighting goals.
- **Water** - Pools come in all shapes and sizes too and can provide a fun option for your backyard. The type of pool you select should be based on your available space, intended use and desired level of maintenance. Other water features include fountains, waterfalls, streams and ponds.
- **Fire** - Outside fireplaces and firepits create an atmosphere of camping in the wide open spaces. They also create a warm, cozy and relaxing environment.
- **Furniture** - Trying to select furnishings can be overwhelming, given the huge assortment of types, designs and materials. You can also build furniture elements into your space, like seating and tables.
- **Stone** - A natural element for outdoor design, stone is often used in walkways, seating, tables, benches, fountains and more.
- **Accessories** - To create beauty, comfort and continuity with your indoor space, accessorize your outdoor areas with things like pillows, candles, art and other things. Accessories help create warmth and personality.

Extending Living Space to the Outdoors (Brett and Paige)

For some time, the homeowners dreamed of creating an extra gathering space in their home for friends and family. A dated backyard with an unused pool provided the perfect canvas for an outdoor living space transformation.

To make room for a large covered patio, the remodeling team removed the old pool. The patio structure was built just outside the family room and kitchen to promote the desired flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Large French-style doors open from the kitchen space to the new outdoor dining area. To accommodate the three-panel French door system, a small window was removed from the family room. The beautiful French doors provide an enhanced, inviting view from the front entry of the home to the new outdoor living space.

Other features in the new outdoor space include:

- Brick Pavers
- Flat and Vaulted Ceiling Sections
- Exposed Stained Beams
- Built-in Heaters for the Cool Winter Months
- A Commercial Grade Mister System for the Hotter Months
- A Large Wall Mounted TV
- Built-in Sound Speakers
- Ceiling Fans
- New Lighting

The homeowners accomplished their goal of creating additional living space by expanding to the outdoors. The space provides a new dining area and a comfortable seating space that also functions as a yoga studio.



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Don't Forget to Think Safety

It's easy to get caught up in making your outdoor space beautiful, comfortable and functional. But, safety needs to be the most important consideration in every design decision you make. Think about how people will use your space and ensure they always remain safe.

For example, safety elements to incorporate include:

- **Pools and Water Features** - You need to keep children and pets away from water. Install appropriate measures, such as locked gates, fencing and alarms to avoid tragedies.
- **Walkways** - Certain types of pavers, concrete and brick may look wonderful, but can you, your family and guests walk safely on them? Could a woman in heels easily navigate your walkways? Will the material you select become too slippery when wet?
- **Play Areas** - Do your children and grandchildren have secure areas in which to play? Is recreation equipment, like swings, slides and trampolines securely installed? In addition, if you're devoting space to playing sports, like baseball, volleyball or soccer, you don't want anyone to be chasing stray balls into the street.
- **Landscaping** - Although landscaping plays an important role in protecting from the elements and creating beauty, you need to determine if any element poses a threat. Is a cactus with dangerous needles located within close proximity to people? Are any tree branches hanging too low that taller people could hit their heads?

Pool Safety First (Joel and Chris)

To provide a relaxing, yet safe, environment for a very large extended family, this project involved designing a gated pool surround and large exterior gazebo. Decorative iron fencing created a luxury resort feel while providing a safe environment for young kids.

An added project goal required the outdoor design to blend seamlessly with the existing house. Therefore, all materials, including ledger stone, were carefully selected.



A large exterior gazebo was enhanced by adding a glass surround, beautiful countertops and ledger stone accents. The gazebo provided areas for dining year-round and watching sporting events on a secured large screen television.



This project provides a relaxing area for adults and a fun, safe environment for kids. Creating the perfect blend of indoors and outdoors, the family has the extra space it needs to enjoy the beautiful Arizona weather throughout the year.



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Republic West Remodeling – Home of the Dream Assurance Plan™

With Republic West Remodeling, your outdoor remodeling project will be a dream come true throughout the entire process. - With over 18 years in business, we've learned a thing or two about how to efficiently complete projects to every customer's expectation. And our testimonials, references and track record back this up.

We've also developed the Dream Assurance Plan™, a custom remodeling process that strives to deliver a pleasant experience and a successful outcome for our customers. We're determined to transform the common perception that every remodeling project will be a nightmare.

The Dream Assurance Plan includes three concepts:

- Design & Visualization -- One of the great risks in custom remodeling is having the end result not meet your expectations. When you're transforming outdoor space into livable square footage, you need to think beyond what special requirements are needed to protect from the elements and enhance the overall experience of being outside.
- Republic West Remodeling helps you see the big picture. We take time to listen, address all design and functionality issues, provide attention to detail, create personalized visualizations so you know how your remodel will turn out and provide professional support throughout the entire project.
- Cost Certainty – To avoid spending more than you expected, you need a remodeling company that will help keep your budget on track. To avoid "cost creep," Republic West Remodeling provides a breakdown of project of scope, line-by-line. We have great respect for the budget and a real understanding of actual (not estimated) costs. When we finalize a contract with you, the amount will be the same or very close to the cost at the end of the project. The final cost will only change if we mutually agree to a change in scope of work.
- Time Certainty – Nobody wants the never-ending remodeling project! Republic West Remodeling keeps your inconvenience to an absolute minimum and does everything possible to finish your project quickly. Our great attention to detail and extension planning process ensures we execute your project as expected. We also deploy trained field personnel who use a sophisticated daily communication system to keep everything moving efficiently.

Republic West Remodeling assures your outdoor remodeling project will be as you visualized throughout the entire process – from creative design to detailed planning to execution and construction.

For more information on home remodeling, or to request a free, no obligation, design consultation, visit <http://www.republicwestremodeling.com/remodeling-and-construction.php> or call (480) 428-2695.