

Sarah Susanka and Marc Vassallo



not so big remodeling

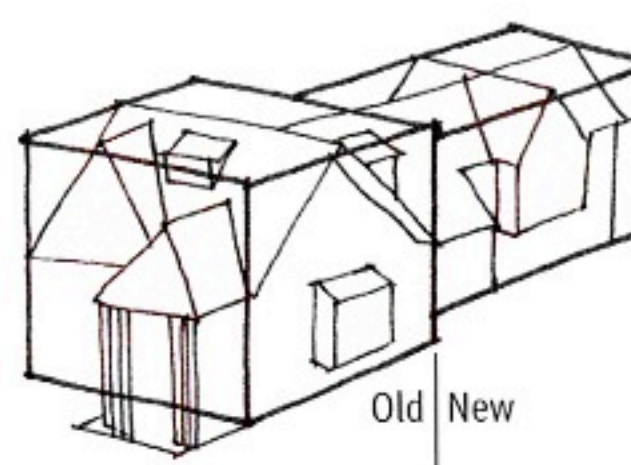
Tailoring Your Home for
the Way You Really Live

celebrate the new, respect the old

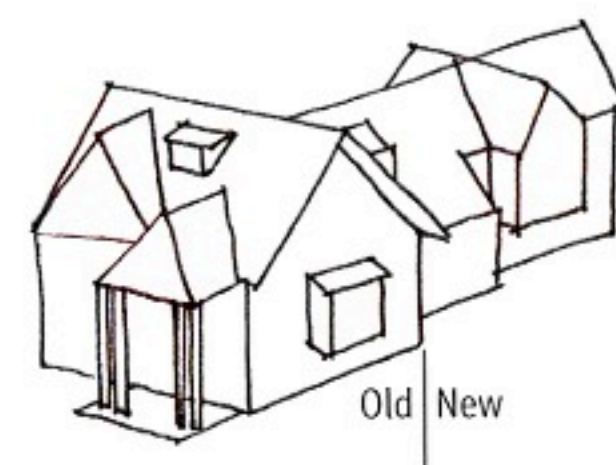
Architect Warren Lloyd and his wife, Jennie, liked the look of their Tudor Bungalow from the tree-lined street in their Salt Lake City neighborhood. But with a third child on the way, they were growing out of two bedrooms and a bath. They decided to add a family room to the back of the house, with two children's bedrooms over it, and to convert the attic into a master suite with a nursery. Extending the house into the deep backyard would also be an opportunity to create outdoor living space and to bring the outside in. From the front, the house still follows the old rooflines and looks almost the same as it did before the remodeling. Toward the back, the addition, with its jaunty red dormers, reads as something new—perhaps a series of additions, like those added over time to a Vermont farmhouse—yet also feels at home with the original Bungalow. The clapboards carry across from new to old, but what really ties the two together is their complementary scale: Both are Not So Big.

maintaining a sense of balance

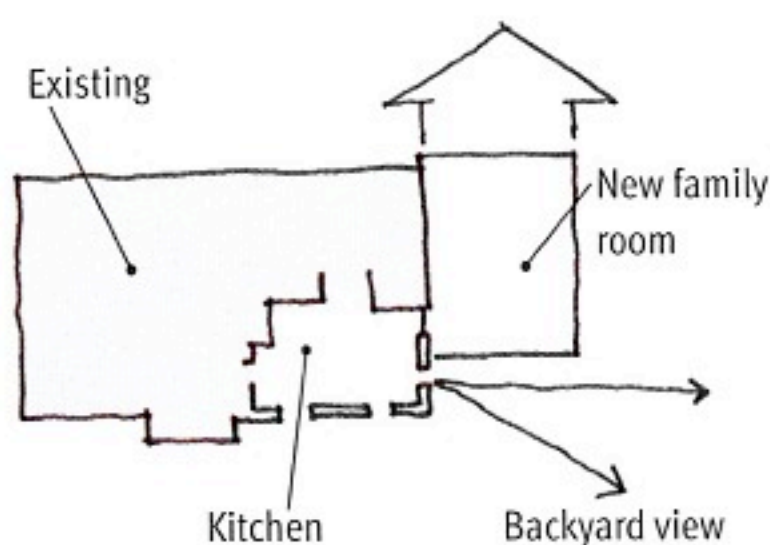
The addition at the back of this Bungalow doesn't maintain the look of the original in any strict sense. It introduces new forms, new roof shapes, new colors, even new window types. But it does maintain the human scale of the original. In both the old and new, the bedrooms are within the roof, and you sense this life lived within from the street. And in overall size and massing, old and new are proportionate, which is why they feel balanced even though they're not the same.



Old New



Old New



stepping back

Warren could have designed a larger family room, but instead he stepped it back to avoid blocking an existing kitchen window facing the backyard. Stepping back meant a somewhat smaller family room and smaller bedrooms upstairs, but it also meant the kitchen wouldn't be pinned in.



To accent the new dormers and dining room bay, Warren Lloyd consciously picked a rich red color that is dramatic and different yet compatible with the existing brick.



"We wanted our remodel to tell a new story but not detract from the original house as a story of its time."
— Warren Lloyd, architect and owner

The existing house had a fine front porch, but it stepped abruptly down to the grass. The new porch terraces down the front lawn and—in the true spirit of doing double duty—makes use of bricks removed from the back wall of the house.

The existing roof can help you decide where to add on and what shape to make it. This simple two-story gabled addition grows naturally out of the slightly taller two-story gabled roof that shelters the main house. The new roof is in the same family of forms and helps give the back elevation a much more interesting face than it had previously.

listening to your roof—again

In chapter 8 we discussed bumping out, which is essentially a very small addition, and we looked at the importance of paying attention to your roof. When adding on in a more extensive way, the roof is equally important. By understanding what that roof will readily allow you to do, you can make the added space look like a natural part of the house so that it doesn't shriek "I'm an addition" to the neighbors.

The drawings on p. 142 show four of the most common roof situations when considering adding on—a two-story gable, a one-story gable, a two-story hip, and a one-story hip—along with a few addition options for each. Obviously, this set of drawings does not depict every possible option, but it is designed to give you pointers for finding solutions for your own roof situation. If your house has a combination of roof forms or is more complicated than those shown, you should contact an architect or residential designer.

not so big principles

3D Composition

One of the most challenging aspects of any design project is crafting a pleasing composition. When you are designing in three dimensions, you have to think about what each face of the house will look like, what it will look like when seen from all the different angles it is visible from, and what it will both look and feel like on the inside. And when you are adding on, you also have to consider how the new will blend with the old, so that when you are done it looks like one house with one unified character.



Given the potential complexity, it's always a good idea to hire an architect who is used to working with remodelings to help you when it comes to adding on. The quality and character of the overall composition can have a huge impact on the value of your house. A well-proportioned addition can greatly enhance the value of your home, while a poorly proportioned addition can actually reduce the home's value, even though both additions may cost exactly the same amount.

retain the full height of ceiling available. Or you can add a framed opening to designate where one activity area stops and the next one begins. When used with discernment, this technique for adding character can also make a small space seem significantly larger than it really is because our eyes now perceive several places where before they perceived just one. Just as punctuation helps us to extract the full meaning of a sentence, spatial layering serves the same function for our eyes, separating the space we're looking at into bite-sized pieces without obscuring the experience of the whole.

The Away Room

In most homes today, there is a lot of noise-generating equipment that affects everyone who is home when it's in use. For example, when the TV is on in the family room or main living area, it is difficult to do anything other than listen to what is being broadcast. If children are playing a video game, the airwaves are filled with the sounds of the game, and there's no escaping the noise because they're in the family room, which is open to the kitchen. In both these situations, it's not the activity of TV watching or video game playing that's the problem, but the fact that everyone in the vicinity is subject to its acoustical dominance.

What's needed is a room that allows household members to remain visually in contact but which eliminates noise pollution. An away room is a space that either contains the noise generation or separates its users

from the noise from adjacent living space. Ideally, it is close to the main living area and serves as an acoustically separate retreat place that's still visually and/or psychologically connected with the main gathering area in the house.

In size it is best kept relatively small and cozy—perhaps 11 x 13 or thereabouts—and ideally it should be designed both to contain a noise source, such as a television or stereo, as well as to isolate external noise from within the space. In this way it can be used for a wide variety of purposes.

If more houses were equipped with this small but useful room, I'm convinced that many people would be satisfied with less square footage. We often end up making our houses larger in an effort to get away from each other's unwanted noise. There's a simpler solution. It's called a door. And a door that's made of glass, allowing view without the sound, gives connectedness but eliminates the irritation.

Well-crafted doors turn a space off the dining room into an away room while adding visual interest to both spaces.



Another popular solution is to create an office alcove that can be opened or closed as desired using sliding or swinging doors. The approach here can be similar to the one discussed in "Away Rooms" on p. 171, and in fact some away rooms will also double as an in-home office when needed.

not so big principles

Gateways

There's a psychological aspect to creating a workplace within the territory of the house. If your commute to work is no more than a few paces away from the room you ate breakfast in, it's important to give your home office a clear sense of separation from the rest of the house, even if that designation is no more than a door. Your objective should be to make the transition feel like a gateway to a new realm.

There are a number of ways to do this. The simplest is to make it look and feel like a different type of entryway than all the other doors in the

house. You could use a special door, or you could make the trim around the doorway look more like an exterior entryway than an interior one. Or you could literally make the doorway surround into a completely unique expression of entry. I did this once, many years ago, in one of my first remodelings, by adding a tile frieze above the entry point into the office (as shown in the drawing on the facing page). There was no questioning when moving through this portal that you were entering an area that distinguished itself from the rest of the house. Although this may seem like an insignificant decorating trick, the psychological impact can be great. Once you've entered, you know you are at work, and you are more likely to stay there for the remainder of the work day than when this kind of designation is absent.

Enclosure

There is a real art to making a space that can be closed off from the rest of the house without it feeling confined. If a room is small, like a spare bedroom, for example, you may need to do a little additional remodeling



The Away Room we saw in CHAPTER 12 doubles as a home office. Sliding doors enable the office to share in the life of the house or retreat from it.