



REMODEL

DESIGN

BUILD

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## **Planning a Mudroom**

Are the shoes, keys, and coats lying all around your home driving you crazy? Need some extra storage? Why not try building a mudroom or converting an existing room into one? Equip it with lots of easy-to-reach shelves and pegs to encourage your family to put away coats, shoes and items they use every day. The benefits don't stop there.

**Benefits of a Mudroom:** A mudroom traditionally serves as a buffer zone to keep outside elements from getting inside your home. Mudrooms can be a separate room or an area near the entry door that acts as a transition zone. The benefits of having a mudroom include:

- **Cleaning** - Instead of mopping and cleaning the whole house every time the kids and dogs come running in from the rain, all you've got to worry about is a small space. The rest of the house stays spotless (well, almost). If you're really ambitious and have the space, add a floor drain or sink to your mudroom. If you have allergies, a mudroom may help you breathe easier because it cuts down on the amount of dust, pollen, and mold tracked into your house.
- **Storage** - A mudroom can double as an extra closet. Who couldn't use extra storage space?
- **Heat Transfer** - Mudrooms increase heating and cooling efficiency by adding a transition zone. The ideal mudroom has two doors: an outside entrance and an inner door.

**Mudroom Location:** Locate a mudroom where it will be most useful:

- Kitchens are usually near driveways and backyards. In most homes, the kitchen becomes the mudroom by default since that's where the entry door is usually located. Convert the area near the entry door into a truly mud-proof zone.
- Garages are transition areas from the outdoors. If you're adding a garage, add a mudroom too. Or convert a corner of an existing garage.
- Utility rooms can be expanded. They make good mudroom conversions if they have an outside entrance.

**Mudroom Elements:** In many homes mudrooms are an easy addition or conversion. Standard dimensions are usually between 6' x 6' and 7' x 9'. Make it larger if you wish to add a washer and dryer.

This is one room where you want the floor to get dirty. Select flooring that's moisture-proof, easily cleaned, and practically indestructible.

- Tile or stone fit the bill perfectly. Make sure to use the non-slip kind.
- Vinyl flooring works well in mudrooms. Pick a color that will not show dirt, and take extra care to install it on a moisture-proof substrate.
- Concrete is suitable for mudroom floors. It is easy to clean and makes an attractive alternative when it is stained or etched.
- Fiber mats and a boot scraper at the door help shoes get clean.
- Rugs can collect water and dirt from feet before they track it into the house. Make sure the rugs are non-skid and washable.

Adequate storage is a must. Whatever your interests - gardening, sports, or pets - make room to store your things.

- Shelving is essential. Use ventilated wire for quick drying. Create and label individual sections for each family member to keep things organized.
- Pegs accommodate wet jackets, hats, pocketbooks and umbrellas. Pegs or hooks also help organize key rings and dog leashes.
- Place shelving and pegs at proper levels for each family member's easy reach.
- A mudroom is a great place to locate the family recycling center.
- Add a laundry basket or bin for your wet duds.
- Personalize each family member's storage area by color or name.

Proper heating and ventilation reduces humidity and prevents mildew. It also speeds up the drying of wet garments. An adjustable vent to control heat or air conditioning is a small investment.

- A bath-type exhaust fan with a timer is effective, as long as it's vented outdoors. A heat lamp would be nice to ease the chill after a day of sledding.
- Make sure the entry doors are airtight and secure. Use pet doors to save energy.

If you plan to add a wall color, select paint that is easy to clean, mildew resistant and moisture proof. Higher gloss acrylic latex paint offers both of those features plus extra stain resistance.

**Other things to consider include:**

- A bench or chair is convenient for removing wet shoes. Keep a pair of clean, dry shoes nearby to slip on.
- Tack up the art overflow from the refrigerator door and start your own gallery.
- A mirror is also a practical addition if you want to get a quick peek at yourself as you leave.