

How to Plan For Outdoor Living Space

Having additional living space outdoors can provide a new and wonderful extension of our home for relaxing with family and entertaining with friends. You may have always wanted to cook and eat with your family outdoors, snuggle up with your favorite book on a lazy fall weekend, or even have friends over to watch the big game outside while the kids play in the yard.

Whatever your particular reason for wanting an outdoor space, you may be unsure of where to start. You're not alone.

An outdoor remodel is a big project and requires preparation!

For someone who has never gone through the remodeling process before, starting out can seem intimidating and confusing. Not to worry. This white paper will break down the remodeling preparation process so you'll be able to:

- » Plan and budget for your outdoor living space remodel
- » Approach remodeling company candidates with some well-prepared ideas and visions
- » Get the most out of the initial consultation
- » Know when you're ready to move forward with your outdoor living space remodel

Planning and Budgeting

It's tempting to pick up the phone and start calling remodeling companies as soon as you start considering an outdoor living space remodel. Resist this temptation. It's far better to do a little planning on your own first.

You'll get more out of your initial consultation if you already have some ideas and a budget range.

Start by thinking about the kinds of needs you would like your outdoor living space to fulfill and ask yourself the following questions:

- » How much outdoor space do I want to allocate to this project and where on the property would it ideally go? Will the new structure be connected to the house or detached?
- » Will there be an outdoor kitchen, dining area, lounge area, fireplace, water feature, etc.
- » Do I want to be able to entertain groups in my back yard? If so, what size group?
- » What structures in my existing space must stay and/or be incorporated in the new space?
- » What specific features do I really want to have, such as a BBQ, sink, refrigerator, television, patio heaters, a bar, a fire pit or fountain?

Answering these questions will help you begin to define the look and functionality of your outdoor living space. Use this information to **create an outdoor living room wish list** – everything you want in your outdoor living room. In addition, it can be helpful to begin a collection of outdoor living images / photographs that represent the style and feel of the space you wish to have. Magazines and the internet are a good place to begin. Be aware that you do not need to have a perfect



Trust Your Home to Us®
619.441.9300 marrokal.com

vision of your outdoor living room. Rather, if you have a general idea of the available space and the different needs you want your outdoor living room to meet, this info will give the design consultant something to work with as he or she helps you refine your ideas during the initial consultation.

Depending on your budget, you may not be able to do everything on your room addition wish list. Go through the list and organize the items by priority, putting the things that you absolutely must have at the top and those that you would like to have toward the bottom.

It is in your best interest to think about a budget range before you approach a remodeling company. You don't need to have an exact number in mind – in fact, a range is preferred - but you should have some sense of your level of investment. This will help the design consultant work within your budget during the initial consultation. The size of the space, the options, features, and finishes will affect the total cost significantly. Your design consultant can help you to prioritize your goals to maximize your investment.

Once you have your outdoor living room wish list ready and a budget range in mind, you're ready to call a remodeling company like Marrokal Design & Remodeling to schedule an initial consultation.

The Initial Consultation

Most remodeling companies, including Marrokal Design & Remodeling, offer in-home consultations at no cost. Take advantage of this opportunity. A good design consultant will not only be knowledgeable about zoning, setbacks, and other city or county restrictions (which can be quite complex and vary from neighborhood to neighborhood), but also listen to your ideas, offer input and suggestions to develop your ideas even further, and be open to new ideas and possibilities.

Don't be shy! Make sure you get the most from your remodeling consultation.

In preparing for the initial consultation, we recommend that you have your outdoor living room wish list and an idea of your budget range ready. You may also want to organize and write down some questions before the meeting. We also highly recommend that you include all the people who will be affected by the remodel, if possible. This would likely include a spouse, partner or other family members who will be involved in the decision making process.

Remember that the remodeling consultation is for your benefit. Ask all of your questions, present your ideas and request feedback. A good design consultant will:

- » Listen carefully to your ideas, concerns and goals
- » Provide knowledgeable, considerate and helpful feedback
- » Point out potential issues or concerns with your wish list
- » Help you refine & develop your ideas even further
- » Provide you with different options to meet your remodel goals
- » Propose cost-saving (value engineering) options
- » Answer your questions thoroughly
- » Perhaps even have some ideas that you had not considered



Trust Your Home to Us®
619.441.9300 marrokal.com

- » Explain the design / build remodeling process – it is a collaborative process
- » Provide estimated cost ranges for different aspects of the project
- » Be respectful to you, your family (your pets) and your home

Gathering Design Ideas

A reputable remodeling company usually offers a showroom or design center where homeowners can work with the design consultant as well as experienced ASID interior designers to view examples. Marrokal's Design Center is where we share ideas and possibilities with existing and new clients to help them develop their visions and select materials, styles and colors. There is an infinite array of options, including tile, countertops, appliances, cabinetry, lighting and plumbing fixtures, flooring, doors and windows, etc. Small vignettes have been created to showcase how different materials can complement each other and work in harmony to create a space that will exceed your expectations, all while keeping your budget in mind. Starting to visualize what your newly remodeled space will soon look like with color renderings, 3D modeling, material samples and palettes is very exciting and rewarding if you are working with the right team.

Now it's time for you to take all of the information you've gathered and decide if a remodel is right for you.

Making the Decision to Do an Outdoor Living Room

Only you can decide if an outdoor living space is the right choice. You'll need to weigh the investment with the benefits.

When you decide to move forward, the remodeling company of your choice should take care of you throughout the remodeling process. At Marrokal, we make sure to keep in constant communication with our clients throughout the project. We are committed to ensuring the process is just as rewarding as the final product.

Now that you know how to prepare for your outdoor living space, it's time to get started with that wish list. We hope that you found this white paper useful and that you'll consider Marrokal when you're ready to get started. Visit www.marrokal.com to learn more about our company and www.marrokal.com/resources/free-consultation to request your complimentary in-home consultation.



Trust Your Home to Us®
619.441.9300 marrokal.com