

Planning an Addition

Maybe it's a new addition to your family or your home is just busting at the seams, but something's happened that's got you thinking you need more space.

House shopping need not be your first step. If you have the room on your lot, consider adding some square footage to your home.

PLANNING AND ZONING

Your first stop when considering an addition should be with your city's planning and zoning department. Ask for a copy of your most recent property plan and survey. If it's been a while, it may be a good idea to have a new one done.

Check what the rules for expanding your living space are. Additionally, your homeowners or civic association may have rules governing what style your addition must be, where it can be placed and how well it blends with the existing home.

Look for things like easements, setback requirements, floor area ratios, height limitations and more. If you're going to have to remove trees or other vegetation, look to see if



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you have requirements about when and how you can take down trees and shrubs in your area.

TYING IT IN

Be mindful of how your addition will tie into the home, including floor levels and the

mechanical, electrical and other systems that are already in your home.

Consider how you'll heat and cool the space and whether your existing HVAC is enough to handle the extra square footage or whether that will need an upgrade, too. If your addi-

tion includes a kitchen or bath, consider whether you have adequate water pressure to support the plumbing. You may need a subpanel for the additional electricity to power the addition.

If your addition is a new level to an existing home, have your

contractor check whether the existing foundation can support the extra weight.

WHERE WILL YOU GO?

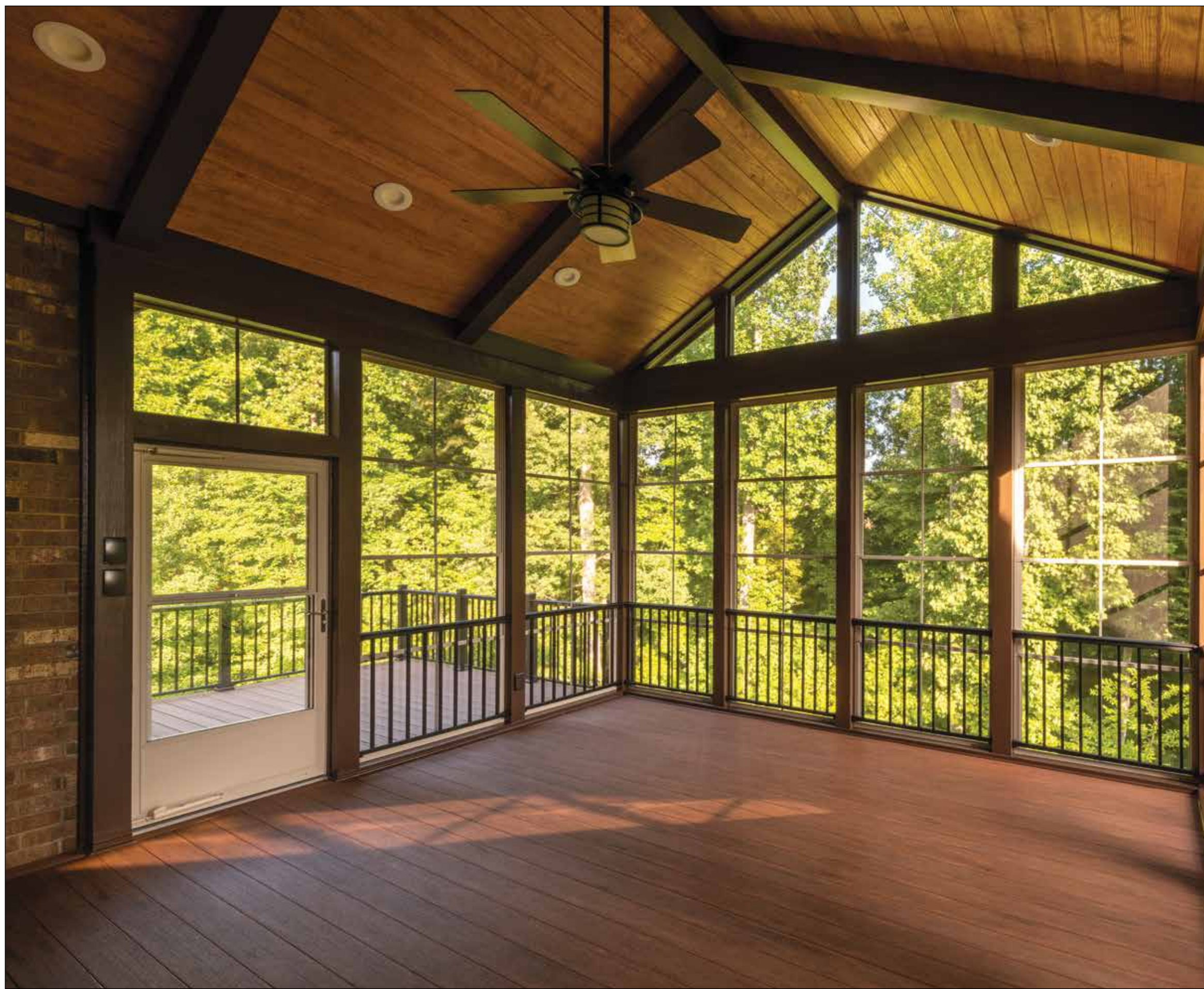
Building an addition is a big interruption to the life of your home. Consider how your family will endure such a disruption and whether it will even be possible to live in the house while the addition is being constructed.

Not only will crews be in and out, but you may have disruptions to your heating and cooling, plumbing and electrical systems during construction. There will definitely be noise and dust, and probably more than a few deliveries and other disruptions to your family life.

If you're moving out for the duration, include the costs of rent and other related expenses into your budget.

FIND A PRO

Generally speaking, a home addition is a complex project that can have long-lasting effects on the existing structure. In other words, it's not a DIY job. Look for a professional contractor or a design/build team that has a good reputation in your area. Talk to several before choosing which one to make your dreams come true, and make sure you're completely comfortable with the process every step of the way.



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REAL ESTATE 101



HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

Second Thoughts

When hiring a contractor for an addition, there are some questions you should have the answers to before you make your decision. Read HomeAdvisor's list of recommended questions to ask potential contractors at bit.ly/4c6ViJ9.

Marketable title: a title that is free and clear of objectionable liens, clouds or other title defects. A title which enables an owner to sell his property freely to others and which others will accept without objection. **SOURCE:** Illinois Real Estate Lawyers Association

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