

BY LYNN HOPKINS

Not moving any time soon? The slowdown in the real-estate market has a lot of homeowners asking questions about their current residence. Where can we make room for a growing family by adding a couple of bedrooms? Can we carve out space for a home office? Will some artful reworking of the exterior make it more appealing to a potential buyer?

As an architect specializing in residential design, I've spent years addressing these questions for my clients. Adding square footage to a house can transform a poorly laid-out plan into something that perfectly suits the occupants, often with just a modest amount of new space. A construction project that recasts the exterior shapes of a house is an excellent opportunity to fix problems such as clumsy rooflines, poorly conceived entries, and missed opportunities for outdoor spaces.

In this article, we'll take a look at an assortment of houses that have been improved with additions both large and small. In each case, the addition not only provided the

Designing an Addition That Looks Right



Even a small addition can make your house live and look its best



GOING UP BORROW FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS, BORROW FROM A STYLE

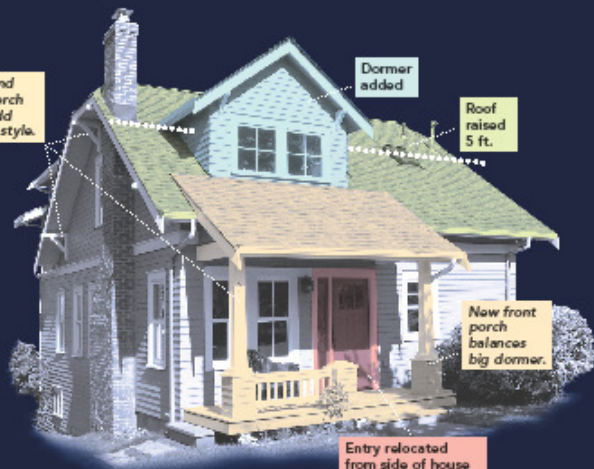
Brackets and tapered porch columns add Craftsman style.

Dormer added

Roof raised 5 ft.

New front porch balances big dormer.

Entry relocated from side of house



THE ORIGINAL HOUSE, a small, nondescript bungalow, had a cramped entry and odd windows (inset photo, facing page). In the walk-up attic, the roof's ridge was so low that a person could stand fully upright in only the very center of the space. When Seattle architect Jim Rymysza designed a second-floor addition (photo left) with two bedrooms, a bath, and a home office, the original roof was removed, and a new one built with the ridge about 5 ft. higher. Besides improving headroom on the second floor, the new roof respects the low-to-the-ground character of other bungalows in the neighborhood. This house still looks like a one-story home.

The new roof also borrows a half-hipped roof detail from an adjacent home. Deep eaves and an overhanging rake were part of the original house, a handsome and practical characteristic in rainy Seattle. New eave brackets play up the deep eaves and rake, transforming the home from a forgettable tract house into an exemplar of the neighborhood's prevalent Craftsman style. The tapered porch posts sitting on low, shingled pedestals further elaborate on this style.

Double-hung windows with a two-over-two muntin pattern, typical of the Craftsman era, replace the soulless casement windows of the original house. The foursquare lite pattern of the dormer windows adds another important level of detail and refinement.

The addition of a wide front porch not only creates a much more inviting and useful entry, but also cleverly balances the addition of a large dormer. Imagine how top-heavy this dormer would look if the porch weren't there. When expanding a house upward, it is important to consider how the new will affect the old. Often it's necessary to make changes on the first floor as well so that the entire house hangs together as a coherent whole.