

## Archway Press Articles 7.15.06

### Article 1

Southwest [home plans](#) are one of the most popular styles. They can have a variety of different looks, there isn't one distinctive type. However, there are similarities that they all have in common. In fact, Southwest style homes make use of common wood, brick and stucco patterns on the smoother walls. They also utilize flat frames. Tile work, stonework, courtyard fountains, as well as iron and brick are also heavily used in this style of home. What's the history? They were originally inspired by the early Spanish settlements throughout the Southwestern United States. But there's more to know about these beautiful and open floor plan homes.

The first thing to know is that they can be asymmetrical, which creates unique traffic patterns on the inside of the home and distinctive appearance on the outside. They also have a very casual, open and unpretentious look to them. The goal is not to impress visitors with huge stone pillars or grand facades, but rather, the homes are built to facilitate an ease of living and satisfy the senses. In addition, the typical Southwest style home is usually one story, two stories at the very most. The other key feature is a focus on being able to entertain guests with ease - the southwestern home could potentially open to a courtyard or informal entertaining area. What else can be said about the Southwest home? It is a romantic interpretation of the historically simple Spanish structures of centuries past.

Other Southwest house plans:

Pueblo: Another name would be "adobes" and are known by their massive earth-colored stucco or adobe-brick walls, which keep things cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

Spanish Revival: asymmetrical front with small, irregularly placed windows; white stucco over brick.

Mission: Popular in Arizona and California, red tile low pitched roof; stucco walls; arches

Southwest home plans have one other thing in common: they make for very comfortable living. A rich blend of tradition, comfort, and elegance provides for an upgraded way of life. Plus, they have an attractive appearance that will never go out of style; a classic look that takes the best of past and present architectural design.

### Article 2

[Contemporary home plans](#) all incorporate special features that past house plans didn't. Take pool safety fences for one. In the past, there were lots of homes with pools. But, not much thought would ever go into consequences that could result from having a particular feature like a backyard pool included in your home plan. Unfortunate as it is, many small children have been victims of such lack of planning. Other examples of this type of planning and thinking about a home would be feng sui or connecting a home with wireless internet and speakers.

Contemporary homes were very popular in the 1970s, but the style is still utilized today. Back then, they were known for their asymmetrical design, flat roofs with varied rooflines, boldly articulated windows, unique angles, silo-like towers, and other interesting features. The contemporary home plan was intended to impress and delight the senses. The emphasis was on style more than comfort, as their original intent was a post-modern interpretation of the modernist mindset, which showcased stark buildings with little warmth. Contemporary home plans today make considerations for a more livable and practical interior and exterior. They also can include references to traditional architecture.

That practical exterior idea is exemplified perfectly with pool safety fences. This great feature is something that no family with children and a pool should be without. What are they made from? Typically, wrought iron, wood, or vinyl. Also popular is a removable mesh pool fence. These are ideal because they are attractive, made from transparent mesh, climb resistant, and can be removed if needed. A removable pool fence offers a perfect solution for preventing infants and other small children from entering the pool water when they can't be seen.

So, if you own a pool, it may be time to add that protective feature that can give you total peace of mind. It's a small price to pay for that kind of security. Plus, it will add a nice feature to your contemporary home plan.

### Article 3

When you're shopping for home plans and [garage construction plans](#), there are countless things to consider, both on the interior and exterior of your future house. One thing that you'll want to be sure to consider for the inside of your home are the rugs and carpeting designs. They can add a big impact to the total feel of your interior decorating. What about the landscaping plan? How will that compliment the total look? Then, there is the garage itself. Will it be a 3 car or standard 2 car garage? Will it be attached to the home or a separate structure? What you need is a simple checklist that can assist you in planning your garage project.

- The first thing you may want to do is go to your property records file and locate the Legal Description for your property.
- Next, contact your local Building Department, and they will be able to provide you with the local requirements for obtaining a Building Permit. You'll also want to contact your local Planning Dept to determine which Zone classification you reside in.
- You should also have your property's legal description available. Get it by going to your County offices to research records of Plats and developments. You will need your property tax identification number for this step.
- Next is the Feasibility Study: By analyzing the information you've collected, you can determine if you can legally build your garage. Use a plot plan in scale to determine what sized building would fit on the property.
- Finally, select a design. If you are working with an architect, you can create a custom building design. There will also be considerable engineering for permits and construction.

So, there you have it, a quick and simple idea of how to proceed with your garage construction plans. Using an organized approach like this is also a good idea for other areas of your home planning. Whether it's the furniture layout, the rugs, the driveway or the wood flooring, using a checklist is a good idea. In addition, making as many decisions as early as possible will help you significantly.

### Article 4

[Old house plans](#) are becoming more and more popular as people try to recapture the magic and romance of yesterday's home design. And although creating an authentic reproduction may not be practical, it can be a stimulating and thoroughly interesting experience. In addition, you don't have to sacrifice updated elements to enjoy an old house or stock plan. Features such as pool

safety fences, high speed internet, and the latest kitchen appliances can all be a part of the total picture.

It's true that bathrooms and most other rooms were smaller on old houses, but that doesn't mean you can't change them on the plan. The overall homes were typically large – similar to how so many are today. So, that's something that truly works to your advantage if you want to use an old house plan for your home. The bottom line is that any home plan can be modified to accommodate modern lifestyles.

"Stock" Plans are also still used a great deal by many people, especially if total cost and timing are important considerations. Many years ago, building plans could be ordered from a catalog, or even a retail store like Sears. Today, they are mostly purchased on web sites that feature stock plans. Of course, many builders also offer stock plans for your selection. Be sure when you order them that they include the floor plans, foundation plans, structural framing plans, electrical and plumbing plans, cross section drawings, and elevation drawings.

Another point to consider is that you can truly customize old house plans and stock plans. Many people don't realize this. This provides a great opportunity to truly make your house a home. Want to install granite countertops? You can do it. How about adding an office? This change can be made too. Of course, these things will add to the cost, but at least you aren't limited in what you can do.

The bottom line? Stock plans and old house plans can make for wonderful homes. And your modern lighting, pool safety fences, and premium wood flooring can be included!

## **Article 5**

So have you looked at a variety of [floor plans](#)? If you haven't, you may be surprised with what you find on the various home plan websites out there. There's a floor plan for every taste, every style, and every budget. Looking for something traditional that has stood the test of time? Or do you want something totally unique and completely original? Do you want standard lawn landscaping, or desire something new and cool like landscape coatings, which converts bark mulch and wood fiber into colored enhanced landscape mulch?

One type that is especially popular is a wide-open floor plan. This kind of design can enhance the living space and provide an ideal environment for casual gatherings. Probably one of the biggest developments in the last ten years is the "Great" room, which is a super large room that combines the kitchen, living room and dining areas. This type of design provides for better communication between family members, and a more inclusive feeling in general. Another idea with an open floor plan is to use decorative columns to provide a transition from the foyer to the open areas of the formal dining and living room. And how about the kitchen? You can go big with this area and include a practical island bar.

Other types of floor plans are dictated by the area where the home is built. If it's a tract home, well then most of the homes will look the same and be built around a traditional floor plan, with a three bedroom, two bathroom type of set up. If it's a city dwelling, space will be at a premium and the floor plan will either go up, be long and narrow, or have smaller rooms. Open floor plans can't really be used in this type of environment.

Whatever type of floor plan you decide to go with be sure to plan it out carefully and ask lots of questions of the architect, contractor and / or builder. Open floor plans are definitely something that can add lots of flavor to the living space of your home. And if you decide to use interesting new exterior elements to complement the overall design and layout of your home, like high tech outdoor lighting, and landscape coatings, you will definitely enjoy them for many years to come.

## Article 6

An open floor plan can give extra space to any existing home and provide easy integration between outside and inside living areas. It also lends itself well to unique features that you can add to the home. Things like an extra bookcase unit, a center island for a kitchen or even a Clawfoot bath tubs for the bathrooms. Such additions can add unique appeal and return to a simpler time. But there's also something else that open [residential floor plans](#) can provide.

They can provide a great respite from the stress of every day work life. Even on days when family life at home can be just as stressful, a large, open floor plan gives you the space – both physical and emotional – that you need to unwind and truly enjoy the quiet times in your home. A great room which has accounted for every home feature you require, things such as built in entertainment units, a large bar that is connected to the living room, or an office that is close to the major living areas, can make for a very functional and beautiful home. Just imagine unwinding from the day looking out at the snow covered mountains from your great room. The extra physical space does something to the spirit that helps to relax the mind. Plus, residential floor plans that account for large open areas can give you the space you need for a growing family. And you can spend more time with your family when they are all in the same room. They all may even be doing different things – but at least they will be together. That's important for any family.

So, have you decided what type of floor plan you will build? Consider an open floor plan for all of the advantages we explained above and so much more. How else could you enjoy the comforts of your big leather chair in your great room or your claw foot bath tub in the larger open floor bathroom if it wasn't for the overall more open floor plan house? It's a good decision for anyone building a home.