

The year is off to a great start in both new home and builder spec design. Erik Peterson AIA says, "As home building springs back, we are seeing some definite trends moving forward".



Here is PHX Architecture's 2012 Top Ten Design Trends:

#1 "Right Sizing". There is no question that homes are smaller, but more importantly people want well designed spaces that get a lot of use. Gone are spaces that might be used a hand full of times in a year, and in are rooms that multi-task, and feel comfortably sized.

#2 Gen Living. While families today are as mobile and flexible as ever, there is trend of 'huddling' with multiple generations living together. Unlike before where that might mean a '20' something moving into an old bedroom, todays design includes separate multi tasking suites with separate entrances and shared kitchen space; Gen Live'rs have privacy and independence, but can mingle with the family too.

#3 LED Light. Homes are increasingly turning to LED lighting to warm and illuminate a space. Gone are unflattering fluorescents, and in are LED fixtures that look and feel like the warm glow of home, but last for thousands of hours. No more ladder gymnastics!

#4 Jack (and Jill) is Back. Shared kid's baths are in again. What's different this time around is no shared sinks, each get their own. Toilets, tubs, and showers are shared, but there is still some personal space for each child with sinks, mirrors, drawers, and cupboards for each.

#5 Convenience Design. Why drag laundry from one end of the house to the other when the washer and dryer can be located by kid's rooms, in master closets, or near the linen closet. Today, more than ever, people are thinking about how they live and designs show that.

#6 Neutral Finishes. Architectural materials and finishes are increasingly neutral with a pop of color in accessories and furnishings. This allows people to update their home quickly and change the mood and feel with less cost.

#7 Less "Drama". The theater room is moving back into the main stream. People want to experience movies and electronic games as a family, and with today's technology the theater experience is right in the middle of everything. Wii anyone?

#8 Love your Bath. For century's the free standing tub was it; in the west it was the outdoor metal wash tub with a pair of cowboy boots perched on the rim, in the east it was the cast iron claw foot, and in the far east a wood sided tub with dipping ladle, all replaced by the built-in marble ledge jetted spa tub. Guess what the free standing tub is back, sleeker, jetted, in a range of styles from modern to traditional.

#9 iHome. Apple products have changed the world and our homes are no different. In 2012 the IPAD and Apple technology are everywhere in the home changing how we control heat, watch TV, movies, pictures, play games, work, and learn.

#10 Quality not Quantity. People are looking for smaller homes that are well designed with quality finishes, furnishing, technologies, and accessories. There is also emphasis on 'green' principles which might cost more initially, but work better, are healthier, and sustainable.