

Expand Your Living Area

DOUBLE THE SIZE OF YOUR HOME'S ENTERTAINING SPACE
BY CREATING A WELL-DESIGNED OUTDOOR ROOM.



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Modern technology is awesome, but there is one thing we haven't figure out yet. That is, how to expand the size of your home for the holidays or while entertaining friends, and then return it to its comfortable, cozy size once the party is over. If only there were a button for that.

Maintaining a large entertaining area that only gets used a couple times a year can be expensive and wasteful. Not to mention more space to clean. It's far more practical to have a functional and efficient indoor-outdoor space.

By creating a well-designed outdoor area adjacent to your main entertaining rooms, you

can get more space when you need it, add value to your home and have a fun spot you're sure to use more than a few times a year. Combined with an open concept floor plan, the indoor-outdoor area will make parties enjoyable for everyone.

So how do you create the perfect party pad? Here are five tips to help you get started.

PUT A HOLE IN THE WALL. The goal is to blur the line between indoors and out so guests will move about freely. Line a living room wall with extra tall french doors or take a leap and invest in a big opening with pocket or accordian doors. When the weather is good, you can essentially open the whole wall doubling your floor space.



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TOP LEFT Make sure the furnishings in your outdoor area are comfortable and the arrangements work well for conversation. **TOP RIGHT** A wall of glass that opens to indoor living areas is a key element to getting people to move around. The more you break down the barrier between indoors and outdoors, the more likely your guests will be to use the space. **ABOVE** Incorporate your view into the outdoor living space, so it gives guests a reason to move out of the living room and onto a lanai or covered porch.

KEEP IT COVERED. Outdoor spaces work best when you have some covered areas. The reason is two-fold. They allow you to party on even if it's drizzling rain, and they create the feeling of an actual room. Covered spaces can be furnished more like your interior rooms because they won't be as affected by the weather if they are not fully exposed.

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CREATE SOME FLOW. Think of your outdoor space as an extension of your indoor space by keeping colors, furnishings and flooring similar. If possible, use the same flooring in both areas to really make the spaces feel connected.

MAKE IT LEVEL. Remove any visual or physical barriers between the two spaces like steps or awkwardly placed furniture. You want guests to feel as if they are simply walking into the next room.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VIEW. If you have an incredible view, why not make that part of your entertaining experience? Orient your interior to look at the vista through the adjacent outdoor space. Your guests will get a great view and you'll subtly draw them from the inside of the house to the outside. **LOH**