

June 1989

\$1.95

# Sunset

The Magazine of Western Living

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# Adding on

How to expand a house laterally—the third of our remodel strategies

**Adding laterally** may be the best way to expand your house when you have a big enough lot. But tacking on an extra room won't necessarily make your house more comfortable. The best horizontal additions also improve the function and comfort of adjacent spaces. In this final installment in our three-part series on remodeling strategies, we illustrate a variety of ways to add more than just square footage.

As you think through your addition, catalog your needs, desires, options, and constraints. How will the new space be used? Will its function be compatible with the function of adjacent spaces? Where can you most logically and feasibly attach it—at the front, the side, or the rear? Can you extend or expand a circulation pattern (for instance, by linking a new bedroom with an existing hallway or reworking existing spaces to create an efficient, comfortable connection)?

What are the structural considerations? Is a bearing wall obstructing a potential connection? You may be able to open it up by replacing it with load-bearing beams or columns. If you're adding plumbing, can you install water lines near existing pipes to save money? Can you take advantage of outdoor space?

Do you want the addition to look as though it's part of the original house, do you prefer a sense of contrast, or would you rather have it feel like a separate structure entirely? Think about materials, proportions, light, and form—and how such elements can help the extension blend in or stand out.

Are there setback requirements, height limits, building code restrictions, or design-review provisions to consider? Check with your community's building department before submitting final plans. Some departments provide printed guidelines explaining the permit process.

## Two bedrooms spliced onto the back of this house

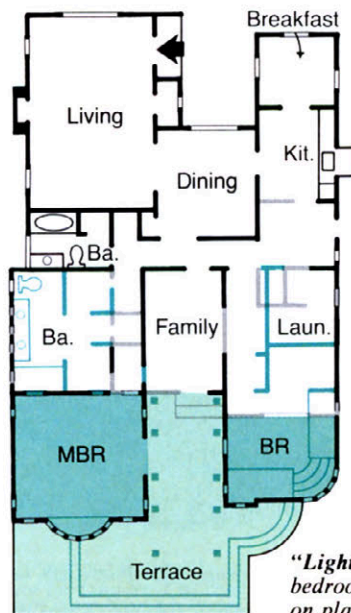
**Call this rear extension** a splice-on instead of an add-on. The two-bedroom, U-shaped addition across the rear of Susan and Michael Cohen's 1,100-square-foot Spanish-style bungalow in Los Angeles makes a seamless transition between existing and new portions. In blurring the boundary, the 350-square-foot addition works beautifully with adjacent spaces reconfigured from the original two bedrooms and a small study.

To ensure a smooth connection, architects Barbara and David Kaplan of Santa Monica, California, converted these spaces at the same time they added on the

new ones behind them.

The old master bedroom made way for a dressing area, new master bath, and hallway leading to the new master bedroom. The children's old room became a pantry and laundry, a bookcase-lined hallway leading to the children's new bedroom, and a closet.

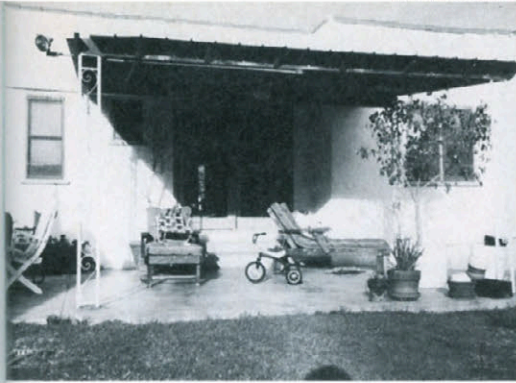
Both new bedrooms face each other across a small pergola off the original study, which now functions as the family room opening directly onto the children's hallway. A raised concrete terrace for barbecuing and entertaining extends 15 feet farther into the garden.



*"Light chimney" and window seat brighten master bedroom, part of back-of-house addition (in color on plan). Both bedrooms look out on new terrace*



MICHAEL COHEN



*Before.* Makeshift canopy and abrupt stoop gave patio an awkward, temporary feeling; tiny windows kept bedrooms dark, constricted



GLENN CHRISTIANSEN

*After.* Rear extensions consist of new master bedroom (windowed bay at left) and children's room (tower on right). They flank trellis-topped pergola opening to wide terrace

*Corner amphitheater* (base of round tower), built-in bunks, and diminutive cavern turn sisters' new room into a fantasy landscape

