

Better Homes and Gardens

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL:

Getting kids through tough transition
Take-along kits for babysitting success

by Shawn Gilliam

Photographed by
Brad Simmons



living large

ANY ADDITION WILL BOOST A HOME'S SQUARE FOOTAGE.
BUT THE BEST ONES GO FURTHER: THEY INTRODUCE STYLE AND
FUNCTION WHILE BLENDING IN WITH WHAT'S ALREADY THERE.







Symmetry and formality were right at home in 1926, when starched collars were a wardrobe standard and when this Chicago-area Colonial was built. The home's classic details and straightforward floor plan have weathered the trends of time, but its overall function was too rigid for today's casual-Fridays mode of living. So Susan Tennenbaum and husband Stewart Schoder hired architect Fred Wilson to add family-friendly spaces to the back of their home.

Walls of windows and French doors combine with wide interior passageways to carry sight lines from one side of the house to the other, and from the front door to the backyard. But because rooms measure no more than 180 square feet, they maintain a sense of intimacy. "Everyone in the family can be connected, yet still have some privacy if they want to," Wilson says.

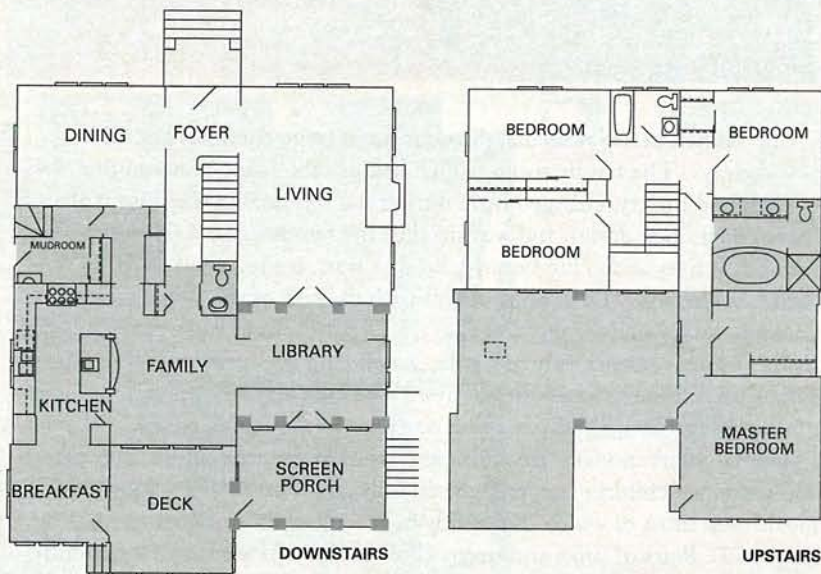
The library (*left*) bridges the old structure and the new. It's in the center of the action, affording views toward the screen porch, family room, kitchen, and living room. Yet, French doors and floor-to-ceiling bookshelves embrace the room and section it off from adjacent spaces. Likewise, the breakfast room (see *page 173*) connects to the kitchen via a tall arched opening. But the room's three-gable cathedral ceiling and warm yellow walls give it an architectural feeling of its own. The room maintains an intimacy, as well, thanks to a footprint comfortably scaled to hold a rustic French table.

Before the library space was remodeled, it was part of a 1980s family room remodeling. The space now features windows and French doors opening to a new screen porch. "The screens are big and don't have mullions to obstruct the view," says homeowner Susan Tennenbaum.



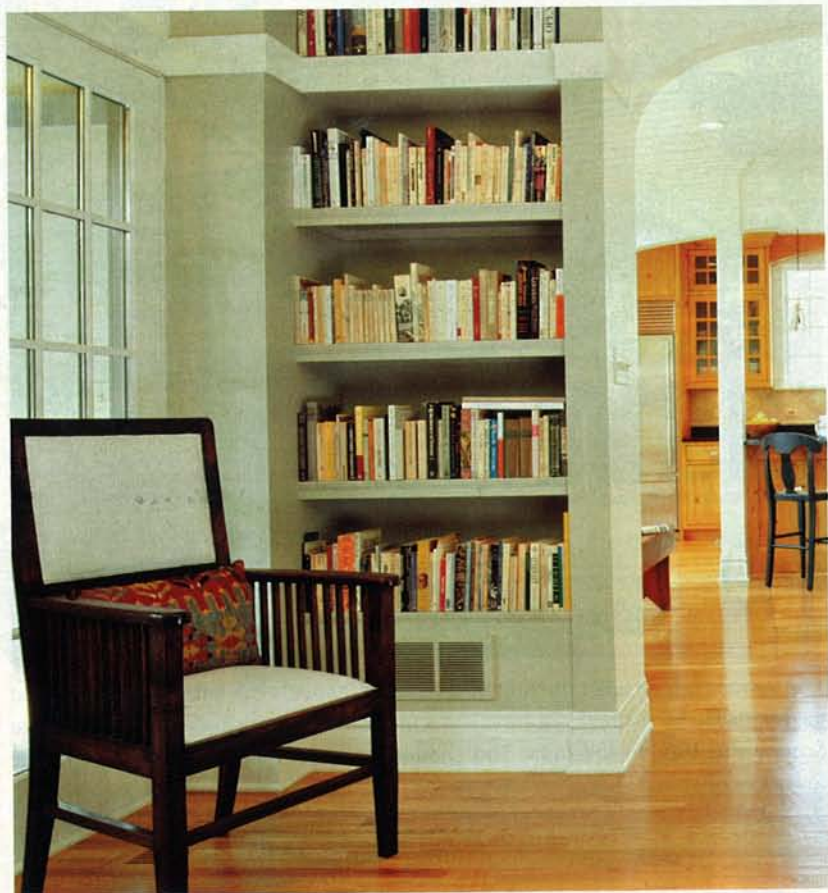


The remodeling affected the rear of the house (*above*). The left side was bumped out for the kitchen's breakfast area. The screen porch, library (*left*), and master suite occupy the area on the right. The shaded areas on the plans (*below*) indicate reworked or added space.



Architectural details tie the remodeled space to the original home. Stucco and cedar-shake siding wrap the entire exterior, as do divided light (true and simulated) windows. And although transom windows are new to the home, they're consistent with its era and style.

On the inside, the library's crisply painted trim contrasts with taupe wall paint, creating a scheme harmonious with the soft hues used in other rooms. The head casing that separates the transoms from the French doors runs at the same 7-foot height around the entire space, blending with the built-in bookshelves. Even a contemporary feature—the computer niche—fits into the bookcase design. Its black granite ledge is supported by a steel angle embedded into the wall, freeing up leg space below.



The home's newly remodeled rooms boast large windows and wide passageways. The family room, which bridges the space between the kitchen and library, changed little during the remodeling because it already featured an open design and was sized to the family's needs. "I didn't want the addition to be too big because I didn't want it to take up much of the yard," Susan says. "I had no problem with the size of the original family room. It works well for us." Because traffic patterns cut right into the room, its furnishings consist only of a sofa, bench, and TV armoire. "It's really an extension of the kitchen," Susan says. "The kids are either hanging out at the computer in the library or they are here in the family room."

The kitchen's modest size and open design mean that Susan, Stewart, and their two children can easily visit with each other before and after mealtimes, most of which they enjoy in the adjacent breakfast room (page 173). Pairs of sinks and ovens allow Susan and Stewart to efficiently prepare meals. Despite such modern amenities, the kitchen's pine/stainless steel/black granite materials complement the home's traditional style. A pair of glass pendants illuminates the snack-bar island without blocking views through the kitchen window—which, along with a skylight, keeps the workspace bright.

The library (above) opens to the family room and kitchen (right), where golden retriever Zephyr takes a break. Such architectural features as oak floors, custom moldings, and arches traverse the three spaces. "We used that elliptical arch in different configurations, so it pulled a true element of the original house into the addition," says architect Fred Wilson. "It worked at different levels: where the wide arch goes into the kitchen and where the narrow arch leads into the library."



THERE ISN'T MUCH FURNITURE IN THE KITCHEN, SO IT'S OPEN AND LIGHT. THE OLDER I GET, THE MORE OF A MINIMALIST I BECOME.

—SUSAN TENNENBAUM



Not all of the remodeled spaces are built for family togetherness. The old kitchen, for instance, was transformed into a mudroom. "A mudroom was the number-one item on our wish list," Susan says. "In the old house, the back door opened onto a carpeted family room, which was a mess." The new space features an easy-care slate floor and a place to stash coats and shoes.

Upstairs, the master bedroom is designed much like the breakfast room—complete with a cathedral ceiling and a circular window. Wilson designed window shutters that can be shut with a pole. "It's difficult to put a window treatment on a round window, and I wanted a way to shut the light out," Susan says. The bath, on the other hand, is nearly always bathed in light thanks to a skylight above the tub. 🏠

The mudroom's shoe cubbies (*below left*) are built across from a side door that enters the space from the driveway. Stairs then step up to a landing (*bottom left*) that connects to the kitchen. The upstairs master bedroom (*right*) and bath (*below right*) feature similar paint colors and finish materials as first-floor spaces.

Buying information, page 259

