



## YourSpace? Add new space in the basement, in the garage or under an awning

**Y**ou've heard of MySpace, where people create their own virtual social space on the Internet? Well, if we can coin a term, what about YourSpace? In this case we are referring to all those under-utilized spaces in your house that can be rescued from oblivion and turned into actual living spaces for you and your family.

You can carve out your own new space for work and leisure by adding rooms and storage areas in parts of the house many homeowners ignore — namely the garage and basement. You can also add relaxation space under an awning. And you don't need a computer to accomplish these worthwhile additions to your house.

### Upstairs, downstairs

Mike Kuplicki of Alure Basements, Inc. in East Meadow, says that finishing the basement is more economical than adding a dormer. "It's more friendly to your wallet to remodel what you already own," Kuplicki explains.

Downstairs can become a room for games, music, exercise or family activities. With limited natural light, it's a perfect place for a home theater, and it's an all but soundproof area that can be turned into a playroom for the kids.

"As the family expands, the kids can play without their toys crowding the upstairs rooms, or you can watch the news downstairs while they watch SpongeBob," Kuplicki says.

The biggest obstacle in basement construction is moisture, which can be especially troublesome on Long Island. "We live on an island with a lot of water and humidity," Kuplicki says. Lumber and drywall work upstairs, but erecting walls in the basement requires a different approach. Kuplicki says that one choice is The Owens Corning Basement Finishing System, which helps reduce dampness, mold and mildew. It also provides thermal and acoustic insulation. With many municipalities requiring a second exit for a finished basement, Wellcraft™ Egress Window Wells satisfy safety and code requirements and allow light to enter the basement area, he says.

### Maximizing garage space

Garages can be outfitted with new products that increase security and add storage space, eliminating clutter from other areas of the home.

"You can turn your garage into an organized usable space," says Tim Keiper of Potomac Garage Solutions in Islandia. Among the products they have available are Harding Steel Car Parking Lifts, which allow you to maximize the parking space in your

garage. Amarr Garage Doors are made of steel JELD-WEN and high-quality clear cedar. "They are the best made doors, and come in Bob Timberlake and Biltmore Estate Collections," Keiper says.

The Liftmaster Jackshaft Garage Door Opener 3800 features an ultra-quiet space-saving design, and power deadbolt security technology, which makes it virtually impossible for intruders to break in through the garage, Keiper says. Onrax overhead storage units offer 112 cubic feet of storage and hold up to 500 pounds. "They are great for storing holiday decorations and patio chair cushions over the garage door," Keiper says.

### The awning solution

Are you looking for a quick, easy way to add a leisure spot without going to great expense? Eleanor Braun of Rollup Awnings of Holbrook suggests that you purchase an awning. "An awning extends the inside of your home to the outside and allows you to sit outside and not worry about UV rays or weather on a rainy day," she says. Nowadays they come with wind sensors that automatically retract your awning when winds go above a pre-set velocity such as 25 miles per hour. Timers also retract the awning automatically. Awnings are available with a fully-enclosed tubular housing that protects the fabric and workings from the elements.

