

30 Great Ideas for a 'Starter' House

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The stand we selected has dimensions of 25mx30m, with a southern entrance to form a private northern enclosure. It is always better to select a site with this orientation in our hemisphere.

In our design we used corrugated iron S-rib sheeting and standard steel windows. This design is not suitable for coastal conditions.

Also, with the house being on one level, the plan would not suit a site with large contour falls.

Great ideas in terms of design

1. The house could be built in phases, from a bachelor's cottage to a family home – a house that 'grows' with your needs.
2. Different mutations could be used – first phase, second phase and third phase.

The living room

3. A built-in couch is used as a focal point when entering – a practical space-saving feature for first-time home-builders – and eliminates the need to buy an expensive couch.
4. The fireplace doubles as an entrance focal point and creates a sense of arrival for the visitor.
5. The fireplace placed on the southern side warms up the living space from the 'cold' side of the house.
6. The cavity wall on the western side serves not only as insulation from the western sun but is also used as a design element.
7. A TV and hi-fi unit is built in and recessed from the living room for optimum spatial use in the living area.
8. Exposed trusses effectively raise ceiling height thus creating a more spacious effect.
9. Steel trusses could not only give a modern look to your interior but possibly also save on costs.

The kitchen and dining room

10. The kitchen and dining room are combined, a result of a new tendency to do away with space that is not often used (e.g. formal dining rooms).
11. The 'clean' kitchen is separated from 'storage' pantry and 'dirty' scullery.
12. The pantry is back. Cupboards are very expensive and this is cited mostly for the return of the pantry.
13. A work surface with plugs in the pantry provides space for all electrical appliances to be used in the pantry e.g. can-openers, mixers etc. – so an appliance is used where it is stored.
14. The stove is placed as a focal point. We would advise that you spend a bit more on an aesthetic stove with extractor fan e.g. stainless steel. The whole kitchen then looks expensive and becomes a feature in itself.
15. An eastern window in the kitchen fills the whole living area with morning sun.

The patio

16. A pergola could be added later or stretched canvas could be used as we have shown on our elevation drawings.
17. The braai features as a sculptural element with two side tables built in on either side.

The bedrooms

18. The southern bedroom could be used as a home office or study, therefore access is placed in close proximity to the living areas.

19. French doors are used in the bedrooms to extend the room into the garden.
20. In the master bedroom the vanity is built into a niche. Again the niche is used as a space-saving element.

General

21. The bathrooms all look out onto an enclosed garden – providing a spacious feel in what is usually the most cramped part of a house.
22. A focal point – viewed through a window at the end of the passage (could be a sculpture, sundial, boulder or plant) – leads the eye through the corridor towards the exterior. Exterior and interior become one.
23. Site works – we used 13mm gravel/crushed sand as paving with a brick edge of hard-baked stock bricks.
24. In the garage allowance is made for garden tools and a lawnmower.
25. Standard steel windows are used, but arranged in various combinations and mutations. They are given a 'custom-made' look.
26. Bold colours are used to accentuate the strong graphic qualities of the design.
27. For floor covering, pigmented screed is used with a tile inlay pattern. The pigmented screed is divided with a straight edge while still wet to look like large tiles.
28. Proper foundations and surface beds should be installed at the stoep which could be enclosed in a possible 'fourth phase' (not indicated on plan).
29. A garage on the boundary line is permitted by most local councils. This saves on the cost of your boundary walls.
30. Trees and landscaping could be used to enhance certain aspects of the design, e.g. to strengthen the entrance axis. Using plants (with architectural form) as focal points could be very effective and less expensive than sculptures or garden ornaments. ▲



ABOVE (from left) Cecile du Randt, Liam Purnell, Thomas Gouws, Pieter Mathews, Jacques Gerber, Anton Smit (seated).

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