

House Design Criteria

As stated in Habitat for Humanity's U.S. Affiliation Agreement, affiliates' construction practices should reflect the Habitat intent of building simple and decent houses as defined at right. New construction and rehabilitation projects may provide a set of circumstances with local code requirements or community covenants in which some of the guidelines cannot be met.



The following points define the criteria that affiliates should incorporate into their house designs:

1. The living space provided—excluding stairwells (except to a basement) and exterior storage—should not exceed:
 - 900 square feet for a two-bedroom house
 - 1,070 square feet for a three-bedroom house
 - 1,230 square feet for a four-bedroom house
2. The basic house should have only one bathroom and should be accessible to persons with disabilities. The bathroom may be compartmentalized for increased usefulness. Three-bedroom houses may have an additional half bath. Houses with four bedrooms, or five or more people, may have an additional full bathroom.
3. Families should have an opportunity to choose decorative finishes for their house whenever possible.
4. A budget may be established with a predetermined limit (e.g., \$1,000) to allow the family to personalize their home with such features as appliances, fencing, shed, etc.
5. Each house should have a covered, primary entrance.
6. When feasible, at least one entrance to the house should be accessible to persons who have difficulty with mobility.
7. All passage doors, including the bathroom door, should be three feet (3') wide. Halls should be three feet and five inches (3' 5") wide from rough frame to rough frame. [Note: if there is a door in the hallway, the minimum width increases to three feet and seven inches (3' 7") from rough frame to rough frame.] These standards allow for simple access for persons with disabilities. Further adaptations may be needed if a family member is disabled.
8. Homes should not have garages or carports.

Plans that conform to these guidelines are available in the Habitat for Humanity Planbook, item #3998, on BuildBrand at <http://buildbrand.habitat.org> or by calling the US Support Center at (877) 434-4435.