

**The**

# Patio Decorating



**Idea Book**



# The Patio Decorating Idea Book



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## INTRODUCTION

Patios are common features in homes around the world. In places that have warm weather all year long patios are often considered to be an additional room in the house that are used just as much for daily activities as any other room. In Italy and in Spain and in some parts of the Middle East patios are often built into the interior of a home with the main living spaces being built around a central open-air patio that lets light and air into the home while at the same offering a protected outdoor space for the family to enjoy.

In the US patios are often built as an adjunct to a home. Many homes have a concrete or flagstone patio area that encompasses part of the backyard of the home and is often used for outdoor entertaining during the warm summer months. Patios are becoming more important to homeowners because many homeowners are choosing to stay home and entertain rather than go out to eat or go to bars because of the increases in the cost of gas, food, and other basic living necessities.

Homeowners are realizing that adding the luxury of a well-decorated and furnished patio to their homes is an excellent investment. The more they do to spruce up their patio the more they add value to their home. Plus, they are finding that it is fun and economical to invite their friends and family to their homes to entertain and spend time with loved ones in a relaxing, comfortable environment.

With the renewed interest in home entertaining that is sweeping through the country more and more people are trying to find new and fun ways to enjoy their patios. Even if you have let your patio go it's still possible to transform your patio into a comfortable, inviting spot where you and your family and friends will love to spend time. Patios aren't just for barbecuing anymore, and there are hundreds of ways that you can easily create the outdoor space of your dreams using the patio that you already have and a small budget for furniture and supplies.

If you use your imagination and the tips in this book you'll be amazed at the many different functional, comfortable, and beautiful outdoor spaces you can create with your existing patio. Isn't it time that you turned your patio from an afterthought into one of the places in your home that you love to be?

Let's get started!

## DESIGN TIPS FOR DESIGNING A NEW PATIO

Most new homes are built with a patio already included in the design but if you have an older home or are purchasing an older home a patio might not be included. It's easy to build a new patio for your home as long as you have some backyard space. You can spend as little or as much as you want building your new patio because there are endless ways to fit a patio into an existing backyard if you are creative.

There are some important factors that you need to take into account and some design rules you should follow if you want to create a great patio that you and your family and friends can enjoy for years to come. Here are some tips that will help you design a new patio:

### **Where are you going to put the patio?**

Do you want your patio to be adjacent to your house? Most patios are, but they don't have to be. Some people find it more convenient to have a patio attached to the kitchen or dining room to make it easier to bring dishes, drinks and other items out to the patio but the patio can really go anywhere.



You could create a lovely open air patio in the center of your backyard, or at the far end of your backyard, or on the side of the house. If you are going to put the patio somewhere other than adjacent to the house make sure that you make a plan to add a walkway to the patio so that you and your guests aren't walking on uneven ground to get to the patio from the house.

You also need to consider the sun when deciding where in the yard to place the patio. How much sun does your yard get? How does the sun travel over your yard? In other words, what is in sun or in shade at certain times during the day and early evening? If you are planning on being outdoors mostly in the afternoon ask where the sun will be shining at that time. If you don't want your patio to have full sun exposure in the afternoon then you might want to place the patio in an area of the yard that only gets partial sun, or that has some kind of natural shade like trees or bushes.

## **What shape do you want the patio to be?**

This really depends on where you choose to put the patio. Most people choose a large, square patio if the patio is coming off from the house. If you're going to put the patio in another part of the yard then you can get creative with the shape of the patio. You could put a large circular patio in the center of your yard, or a kidney shaped patio at one end of the yard. Think about where you want the patio to go and make the patio a shape that will fit in well with the natural shape of the yard.

## **What materials are you going to use to build your patio?**

Most people only think about materials in terms of the cost of the materials but that is not your only consideration. You also need to think about what materials are going to last well over time and what kind of maintenance each type of material will require. When you're figuring out your budget for the patio take into the account the maintenance costs of each different type of material and you might find that you're better off choosing a more expensive but more durable material up front rather than choosing a cheaper material that has a higher average maintenance cost. Also make sure that you budget for any additional walkways or paths that need to be built.

When you are choosing the material to use as a foundation for the patio, think about the long-term practicality of the material before you make a final decision. Concrete is probably the easiest material in terms of upkeep and maintenance, but patio tiles or brick paving stones can add a lot of personality to your patio. Though more expensive, you can buy special patio brick or stone that is designed to wear well in high-traffic, need little maintenance, and could last for decades. Remember that your patio is an investment so an up-front higher cost can actually be a better expense in the long term. No matter what material you choose make sure it's easy to clean and that it will stand up well to the climate that you live in.

## **Is the ground in your backyard level and even?**

If it isn't then you might need to grade the backyard or at least the part of the backyard where you plan to build your patio. You have to make sure the patio is level. A small amount of unevenness won't be enough to be noticeable to the people who are standing on the patio but if your patio foundation is laid over uneven ground then eventually the foundation will start to crack and split and you might have to lay a whole new foundation. So make sure the ground where you want to build the patio is even to begin with to make sure you can enjoy your patio for many years to come. It is a good idea to hire a contractor who can assess the evenness and stability of the ground where you want your patio. A good contractor can suggest ways to handle any potential problems.



## PATIO FURNITURE

Buying patio furniture can be a little overwhelming because there are several types of patio furniture and hundreds of styles made from those materials. The type of patio furniture that you choose should depend on your personal taste but also on the climate where you live, whether your patio is covered or uncovered, your budget and several other factors. Through keeping your priorities in order and thinking things through, selecting the right patio furniture for you can be easy.

When you're choosing new patio furniture the first thing that you need to do is pick a type of material. The most common materials for patio furniture are wood, wicker and rattan, metal, and plastic.

### Wood

Wooden patio furniture is very popular. In general wood patio furniture can stand up to the elements like very hot sun or summer storms pretty well but if you're going to use wood patio furniture you should treat it with a water resistant stain to protect it from drying out in the sun or becoming damaged from being out in the rain. Wood furniture is a good choice if you do a lot of entertaining because it's very sturdy and can accommodate people of all different sizes. It's also very easy to change the look of wood furniture with a new coat of paint. If you like to change the décor of your patio frequently and don't want to have to buy new patio furniture every time then Wicker or Rattan furniture would be a good choice for you. Good quality wooden patio furniture can be expensive but if you perform regular maintenance of painting or staining the wood every few years the furniture will last for a long time.

### Wicker and Rattan

Wicker and rattan furniture is the second most popular type of patio furniture that is made from natural materials. Both wicker and rattan furniture is very strong but also very light, making it great for patio furniture that needs to be brought indoors or moved frequently. Wicker is actually not a material by itself. Wicker is the end result of weaving rattan with other materials, usually bamboo slats, to make furniture.

Rattan is technically a tree although it grows like a vine along the ground. The rattan vines are cut and peeled, then steamed to make them pliable, and then they are used to create furniture. Rattan furniture can be made of stripes of Rattan that are woven together when the wood is wet or it can be strips of Bamboo or other materials woven around straight rattan slats.

Both rattan and wicker furniture are an inexpensive alternative to hardwood patio furniture if you want to have patio furniture that is made from natural materials. These types of patio furniture don't require a lot of maintenance and be used in or outdoors all year long. It's also possible to change the look of Wicker or Rattan furniture by giving the furniture a new coat of paint, so if you change the décor of your patio frequently without buying new patio furniture every time then wicker or rattan furniture would be a good choice for you.