

LEWIS COUNTY CHAPTER OF OLYMPIA MASTER BUILDERS



Before you know it, school will be back in session, and that means the kids will be bringing home more and more homework. This, combined with a growing trend of professionals who are able to work from home on a permanent or part-time basis, places increased emphasis on creating the perfect home office.

While the dining room table or living room couch are commonly used as work spaces, they are typically not the best areas to foster productivity. Ideally, your home should have a dedicated room that serves as a home office. But simply adding a desk and a lamp to a room and calling it the “office” is not a guaranteed way to stay organized and do your best work.

As the school year ramps up, now is the best time to assess your home office needs. The following are some critical design elements of your home office space to consider:

Comfort

Let’s start with the obvious: seating. Don’t purchase just any office chair based on price or appearance. Quality, design and features vary significantly, so if you end up with a chair that is uncomfortable, even if it looks attractive, you might end up subconsciously avoiding the office altogether. Take the time to try out as many chairs as possible to find the one that suits you best.

For the desk, ensure it’s large enough to accommodate your supplies and electronics while allowing sufficient space to work. The last thing you want to do is constantly move papers, printers and other items to clear a workspace. Also, for those who spend most of their day in front of a computer, consider adding a height-adjustable desk, which can help improve posture and reduce back pain.

Lighting

While some people prefer to work in dark and secluded spaces, most would like an office that is bright and inviting. Lighting should enhance the various roles of the room, so consider using a combination of ambient and task lighting.

Ambient lights establish the overall level of lighting in the room. This can be achieved with ceiling-mounted fixtures, but recessed lights typically have the best effect. For task lighting, choose desk and floor lamps that fit your style and serve a distinct purpose such as working at a computer, writing or reading. The most important thing is that the light sources are balanced with similar color temperatures.

Multi-use

For those who have kids, it



Back to School – Creating the Perfect Home Office

is possible to build an office space that everyone can use effectively. But depending upon the ages of those who will use the office, design considerations may need to be made to create a space that is equally inviting to both younger and older family members. Choose a color palette that is bright and cheery, but not distracting. Determine a furniture layout that is functional and that creates designated workspaces and enough seating for at least three or four people. Corner desks can be a good use of space, as well as “T-shaped” desks that provide extra seating in the middle of the room.

To maximize space even further, be strategic with shelving. While corner shelves and floor-to-ceiling shelves might work for some, they can also consume valuable space that could otherwise be used for desk space. Consider installing shelves above the 4-foot-line to allow for more seating options along the room’s perimeter.

Creating the perfect home office can take a lot of time and planning. But if done right, it will not only benefit you and your family, it will also help enhance the value of your home.

Each home and the needs of those who live in them are unique. To find a Lewis County professional who can help you identify the best options for designing your home office, visit our searchable online directory at omb.org.

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Saturday & Sunday 10:00-4:00pm daily

FREE ADMISSION (scattered site event)

The Tour of Homes is an opportunity to explore the craftsmanship of our region’s finest. Homes will be open throughout Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater for you to view new construction and completed remodel projects, meet the teams behind the work, and ask questions about your own upcoming plans. The Tour of Homes Guide, complete with detailed driving directions and an interactive map will be available online the week of the event at omb.org.



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