

Basement Design with Better Homes and Garden's Home Designer

If you have never used any kind of CAD software before, then you're in for a treat. Better Homes and Garden's Home Designer by Chief Architect is an excellent tool to use for basement design.

You should know however, that this product will do many more things. If you have other home remodeling projects in mind such as a deck, kitchen, or bath the software you purchased to design your basement can just as effectively help you with those projects too.

First, some background.

I thought it would be a good idea to work with an actual basement design, rather than some hypothetical one I dreamed up.

The design I will walk you through is typical of many basements. I'll create a media area, a play area for the owner's children, a cabinet/bar area which incorporates a full size refrigerator already owned, some storage, and a workshop.

The basement project was started by the previous homeowner and left in an unfinished state for the current one.

From the pictures, I would elect to demolish everything, throw it into a dumpster and start from scratch with a clean slate.

Figure 1 is the current floorplan.

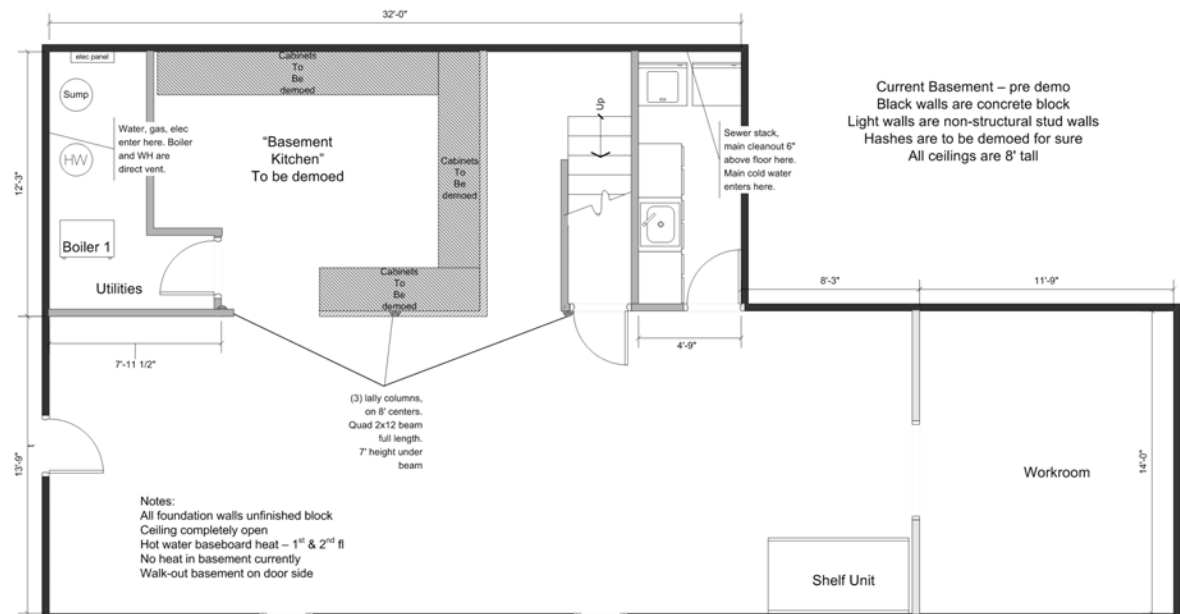
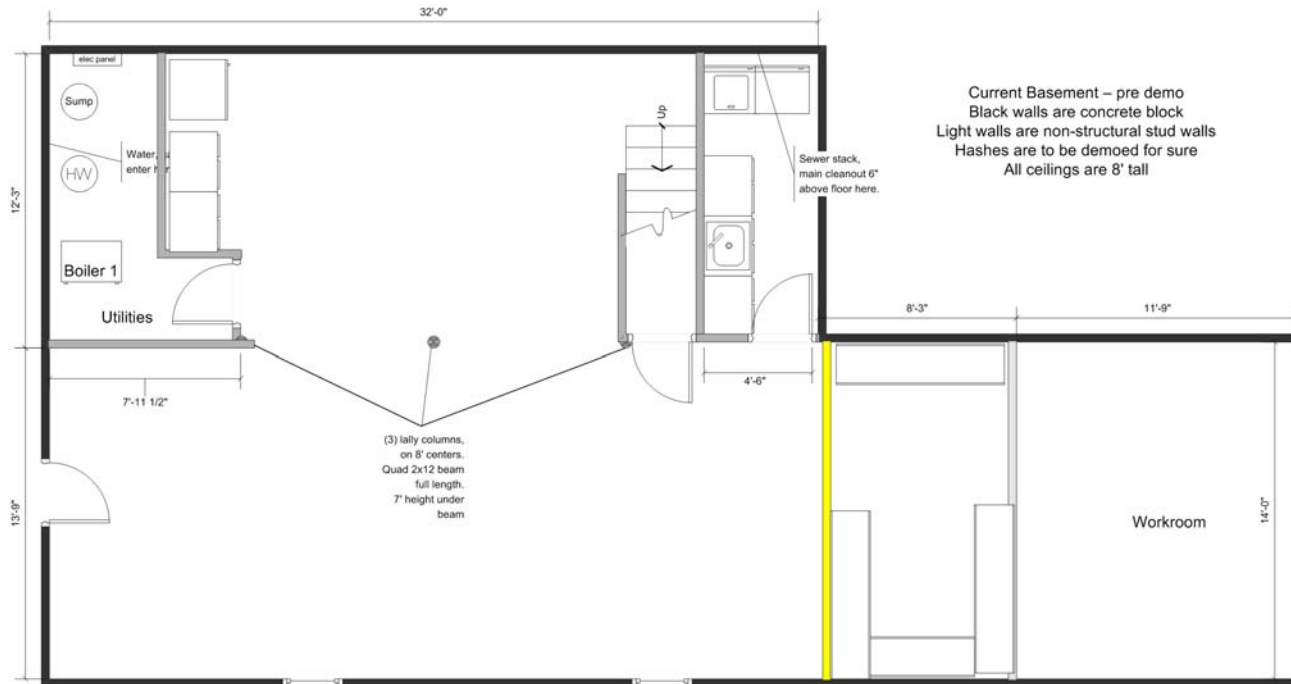


Figure 1

And this is sort of a proposed plan:



The poles that support the 1st floor are a major source of trouble in that their placement made it difficult for the owner's to "see" solutions toward a design.

Coming up with Ideas

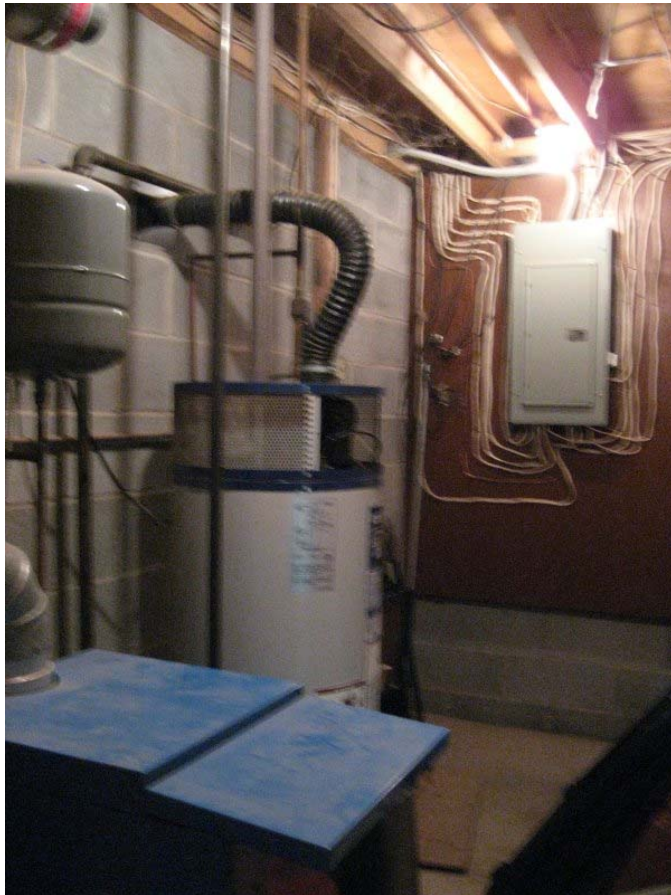
My first thought concerned the utility room. Was it possible to "lose" the bottom "L" portion where the door is shown and just have a straight wall with doors for ease of access to the utilities?

Second, of the main space, the "leg" section of the basement, where the workshop is located just how big does the workshop actually need to be and how much storage do you have to have?

I also wasn't satisfied with the way the laundry room was setup and wondered if I could improve upon it.

With those questions answered I started my design.

Photos of the existing space.



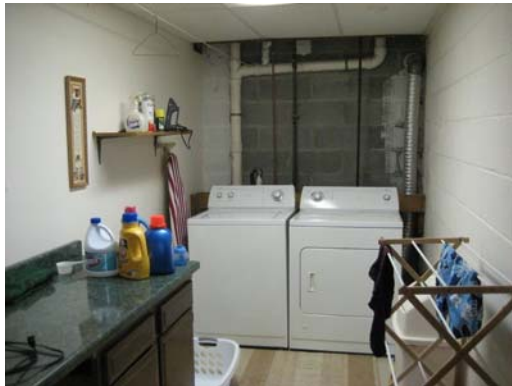
This photo shows the utility room. 2 sets of 2 double doors will allow for plenty of access to the mechanicals as well as maintaining a large finished space.



Previous owner's basement kitchen.



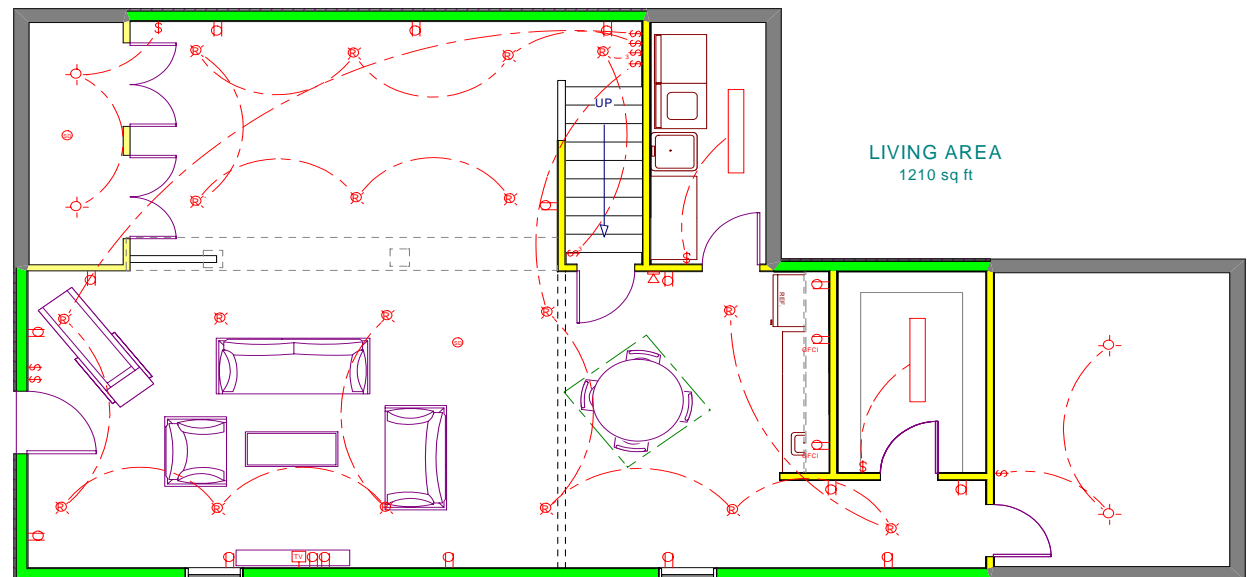
Walkout door – always nice to have.



Lastly, the Laundry room

When you read the other basement articles on estimating and ordering materials, you'll see how everything comes together. This is the exact process I go through for every basement I design.

Now, even though I don't want to really show the new plan all at once, I'd rather have you in a mystery about it a bit longer, it's probably best that I do. Then I'll show you how I got there.



If you haven't yet read the first chapter in the Basement Ideas publication, be it on CD, download, or in print, do that now. The material presented there tells you how to measure up the space so you can create a design that accurately reflects the existing boundaries you have to work with. This will be your "canvas."

Once you have a rough drawing, which is really a mapping of "fixed positions" of things, its time to actually start using the Better Homes and Garden software. The following series of clips on the website show you the Home Designer software, how it works, and how to create your design. Enjoy!