

Our expert extension guide – from inspo to how to



extend

Advice and buys for excellent home extensions

EXPERT VIEW

How to find an architect for your project

Cordula Weisser, founding director of ZCD Architects

“ Bring an architect on board as early as possible, even if it is just to get some initial advice.

In my opinion, one of the most important aspects of a project is the brief writing stage. An architect can help you to determine your core needs and spatially realise them.

Search fairly locally – if you’re in Manchester, don’t choose a London architect. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) is an invaluable place to start. I also find that a lot of people are led to us via Instagram these days.

Talk to around three architectural firms. Find out how the practice works, and how busy they are. It’s also important to find out their sustainability credentials. Ask them to talk you through a project and how it evolved – this way you can see how they problem solve and what they get excited about.

I think most architects will agree, we relish the opportunity of an unusual project. It’s important to establish that enthusiasm and find someone who won’t be put off. Go for a small firm, so you can guarantee the director’s input.

Then it is really just down to your gut feeling. Depending on the size and complexity of your extension project, first meeting to completion lasts at least a year on average, so make sure you like and feel confident with the firm and the architect you will be working with. ”



PLAYFUL TOUCH

Whoever thinks you should play it safe in a kitchen extension hasn’t seen this by DF_DC architects. Designed with a young family in mind, this open-plan space features a swing in the middle. What do you think?



Designed in collaboration with Sebastian Herkner, Ligne Roset’s Taru daybed is perfect for lounging in your new extended living space. **Taru daybed in Steel Blue, £3,207; footstool, £928 (ligne-roset.com)**

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EXPERT VIEW

Creating a light-filled space

Ally Dowsing-Reynolds,
co-owner at Dowsing & Reynolds

“The first thing to ask yourself is, how will you use the extension? Think about its use for daytime and evening – these can be two very different spaces. Having multiple light sources gives you a wider range of uses for the extension at all hours of the day. Your choice of designs will depend on what you are using the space for, as this will help you determine where functional ‘task’ lighting and decorative ‘accent’ lighting is needed.

Create layers with multiple light sources throughout the space that you can control on dimmer switches.

It’s also been shown that people congregate around light sources, so clever placement of lighting can provide anchors for people to be together in a large space.

Lots of natural light in a south- or west-facing extension might seem like the dream scenario,

but can fall into the trap of getting too much glare. Get blinds fitted within the panes of bi-folding doors, or simply fit two sets of curtains – one thinner option to reduce the glare but not block out light completely, and one thicker design to help keep the cold out at night. Style them together and they’re not just a practical choice but a design focal point too.

Painting a room white doesn’t always have a brightening effect on the space.

In some north-facing rooms, it can feel overly clinical. Instead, consider what colours you have used for the rest of your home already, or look in your wardrobe and see what tones you naturally gravitate towards. Dark colours bring depth and I love how they look different against the changing daylight hours and then again in an evening against lamps and pendant lights. If you’re tempted, try painting one wall and live with it for a few days, see how it makes you feel.

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PAPER IT

‘Now more than ever I’ve felt the ethereal beauty of the great outdoors,’ says Nina Tarnowski, founder of Woodchip & Magnolia. ‘Our new collection of paint and paper, Petrichor, draws inspiration from my morning runs through the countryside.’ And it will do wonders for your extension. **Floresta wallpaper in Pink/Gorse, £85 a roll (woodchipandmagnolia.co.uk)**

Follow through

Suitable for both indoor and outdoor settings, Ca’ Pietra continues the terrazzo trend with the new large format Piazza Porcelain collection, which comes in six options – four patterned and two field tiles. **Piazza Geo Anthracita porcelain tiles, £70sq m (capietra.com)**

HOLDING PATTERN

Choosing a flooring for your new extension is one thing, but deciding on a laying pattern has the potential to really elevate the final look. These American Oak and Aged Oak designs from Amtico’s Signature range work well in a parquet format. **From £70sq m (amtico.com)**



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3 WAYS TO DO

Dining

Sophisticated round wood designs for a kitchen-diner extension, from top:

1 MENU Androgyne dining table in dark stained oak, £3,095 (amara.com)

2 Walnut pedestal dining table, £599 (johnlewis.com)

3 ODA table in ash veneer and iron, £1,129, (brostecopenhagen.com)



LITTLE BLACK BOOK
GLAZING SPECIALISTS

1 Fabco Sanctuary Experts in steel windows, this West Sussex-based company has a strong team of designers to help you on your project. This is glazing that makes a statement, on everything from partitions to shower screens. You can even visit the factory and see your designs being made. (fabcosanctuary.com)

2 Express Bi-Folding Doors The brand manufactures and installs three different aluminium bi-folding door systems, each with their own features, benefits and price points, as well as sliding doors and glass roofing systems. (expressbifolds.co.uk)

3 Architectural Bronze Casements Whether you are restoring a historic property or building new, you can find bespoke bronze windows, doors, screens and secondary glazing, all handmade in Lincolnshire-based workshops. (bronzecasements.com)

VIRTUAL REALITY

Almost as good as the real deal, HI-MACS' new virtual showroom experience allows you to browse surfaces in-situ, all from the comfort of your own home. From kitchen islands and worktops, you can even play around with different colours and finishes through the screen. (himacs.eu)



GLASS HOUSES

Extensions can often deprive the rest of the house of light if not planned well. Here, a glazed surround helps brighten the Roundhouse kitchen. Kitchens from £30,000 (roundhousedesign.com)