

5 SECRETS

TO ELEVATE YOUR NEXT
STAIR BUILDING
PROJECT



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1. DARE TO BE DARING

DETERMINING YOUR STAIRCASE STYLE

Designing a staircase is dependent on your client's needs. However, there's something you have that the client doesn't. You have the experience of designing, installing, and working with multiple staircase styles. You have seen every shape and size imaginable. **So, don't be afraid to bring them new ideas they've never even considered.** After meeting with your client, you'll want to determine what they're looking for, their style, and their budget. From there, your imagination can run free.

There are many staircase styles that you can offer as options to your clients. From traditional and straight to modern and floating – the style you choose will be dependent upon the clients' personal style. The best part about choosing a staircase style? You can create a custom style if there isn't one that resonates with your client. Here are just a few of the most popular staircase styles you can bring to your next project:



STRAIGHT STAIRS

This style is for the project that requires a traditional aesthetic and vibe. Straight stairs are popular for a majority of homes and tend to be ... straight. Their clean and simple lines provide a seamless and timeless addition to any living space. For the client or project that desires the traditional feel of straight stairs, but add a little twist, suggest placing a landing in-between flights one and two if available.

GEOMETRIC STAIRS

Geometric stairs tend to make a statement and be the focal point of a living space. They are similar to a spiral staircase, in that they meander and turn throughout a central space. However, this staircase style has curves that tend to sweep gradually and gracefully downward giving a sense of elegance to the room's ambiance.

FLOATING

This newer staircase style is visually appealing in that it allows for more light and visibility to pass through the staircase. It's also pretty cool looking. They give the appearance of the treads of each stair as floating in mid-air by typically incorporating glass into the design. The design is great for the client who is looking for a modern and crisp style.

COMBINATION

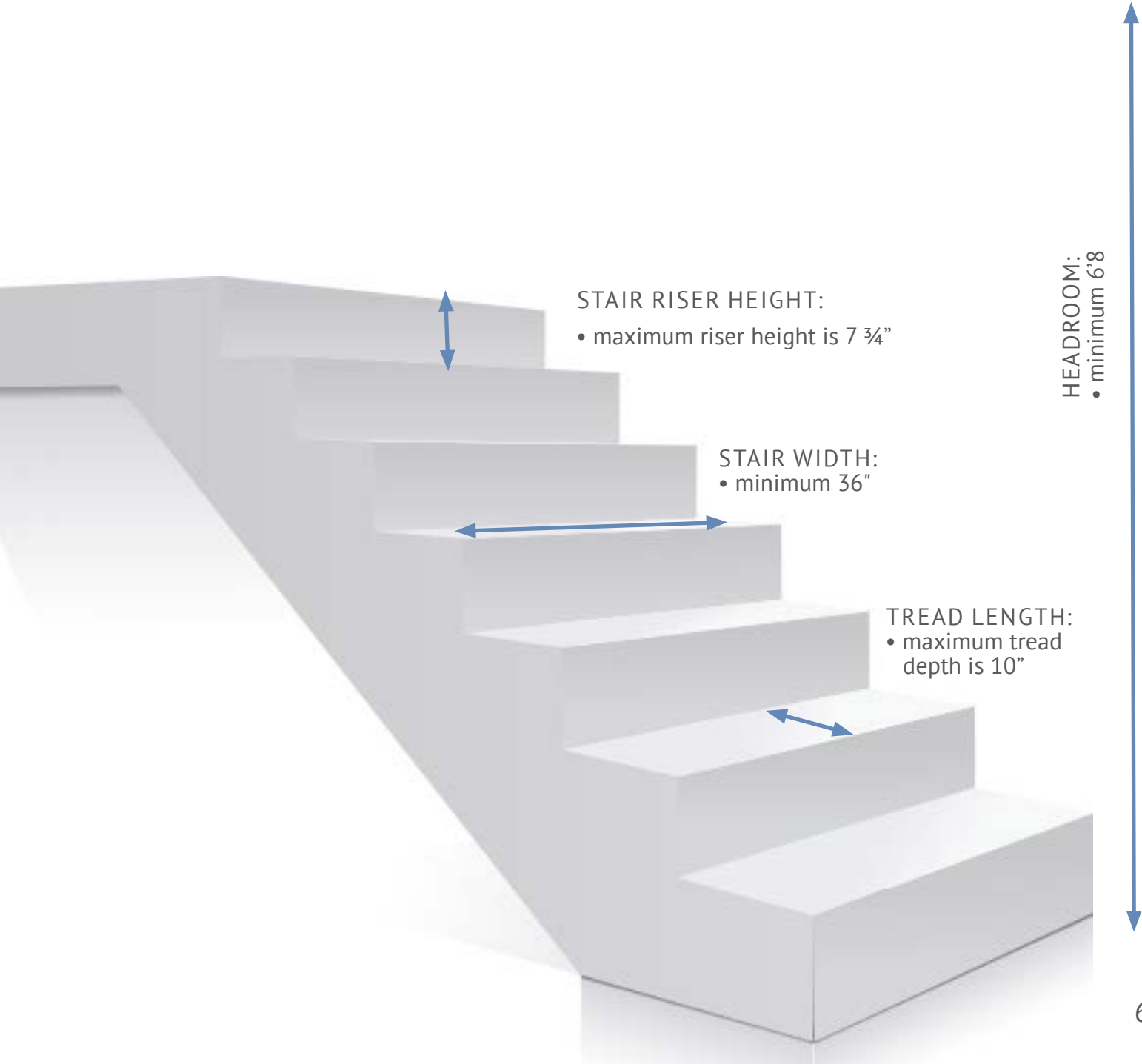
There are many variations for each of the styles previously mentioned. The best part about creating a staircase is that you can combine different styles to create your own sub-style. Pick a style or two (maybe three if you're feeling ambitious) and move on to the next step: figuring out how you're going to make it.

2. KNOWING THE BASICS

BUILDING TO CODE

If you have built stairs before, you are accustomed to the inspection process. Before you can proceed with the actual building process of the staircase, you'll need to figure out your measurements. This planning process is one of the most important steps in building a staircase (and building anything, ever) because there are many factors to consider. From handrails to headroom, you'll want to know the basics of stair design and be aware of the town's building code. Keeping your stairs up to code is essential – if you're doing a custom or unique project it is even more important that you double check to make sure your design is up to code.

Most cities will provide information about the requirements they have for residential stairs as they are built – however they can differ. We have provided just a few examples of city requirements in the state of Minnesota below but always encourage you to double check with your city’s building and re-modeling codes:



3. DESIGN TO IMPRESS

CREATING VISUAL INTEREST

Designing isn't only for interior designers – your opinion and insights on design as a stair builder are significant. Think back to the conversations you had with your client about their personal style. Do they enjoy rustic or traditional styles? Maybe they're looking for a unique and modern staircase style that represents who they are to a tee. We don't know exactly what your client is going to say – but we do know that carpeted stairs are out and fresh designs are in. Here are just a few staircase design options worth considering based on 2016 trends:



NIGHT/DAY STEPS

Night and day steps are on the rise in staircase design trends. The good news is that this trend can be achieved with a coat of paint or a dark stain. The purpose of this design is to give the treads of the staircase a much darker appearance than the risers.

ACCENT PAINT & PATTERNS

Similar to the night/day style, accent paints can be used to brighten and bring attention to the quality work you have put into the steps. Another popular trend is having patterns on the riser, or incorporating an ombre effect to the railings or balusters. This design aspect focuses on the cosmetic efforts that go into creating staircases but is still relevant. Staying relevant with staircase trends will show clients that you know your industry – inside and out.

FUSION

If you're working on a custom project for a client that wants something a little different, then fusion elements together will be your best friend. Fusing materials together in your staircase design simply means combining different materials. With glass becoming an increasingly popular staircase material, it isn't uncommon to see glass paired with different types of wood. Another fusion example that provides modernity is the combination of wood and iron. This mix of materials will be pleasing to the eye and provide a unique appearance to a traditional styled staircase.

4. QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

MATERIALS THAT CAN HOLD THEIR OWN

Your responsibility as a staircase builder is to provide work with exceptional craftsmanship and stability. With the amount of traffic and wear and tear a staircase endures, it's no surprise people want their stairs to be safe. As a staircase builder, you will want to make sure you're using the right materials for your project that will bring the client's style to life while keeping everyone who ascends or descends them safe. The materials you use (or don't use) will affect the lifespan of a staircase. Learn more about each of the materials below to prevent any creaking or movement happening in your next stair building project.

WOOD

One of the most commonly used materials for building staircases – and one of the options with the most choices to choose from. Woods range in color, grain, texture, hardness, and many other characteristics. It's important that you and your client are aware of the benefits and disadvantages of using a specific type of wood as your staircase material. Each wood has a personality of its own, which should be considered when looking at the overall design plan.

Knowing your budget is essential when picking out materials for your stair-building project. If you're looking for a lightweight wood that is easy to cut and economically priced – poplar might be the right choice. However, if price is not a factor and you prefer a durable wood known for its ability to resist warping – go with mahogany. The same goes for each and every material you consider purchasing. Consider how budget comes into play with the style and characteristics that are wanted for the project.



MARBLE

Marble staircases provide a sense of elegance and luxury to any space they're in. The benefit of using marble as a material is that it takes care of a lot of the work in terms of curb appeal. Let the material do the talking for this staircase style. Before considering this material, you'll want to make sure your client is okay with a higher price tag and the frequent floor maintenance that comes with having stone flooring. The benefit of this material is its durability and resistance to everyday scratches and pressure.

GLASS

If a space is in need of a staircase, but the client is worried that the addition would cause the space to be cramped, then glass would be an excellent material option. Using glass for a staircase has become a trendy way to give a space an open and airy feeling. This newer staircase material is breaking out of its stereotype of being frail and breakable and changing the rules. New variations of glass are being used frequently and successfully in staircases to add a contemporary style while providing safety.

CONCRETE

If your client is looking for shape in their staircase – look no further than concrete. This material melts into any shape you want it to take, while providing stability. This material appeals to a specific audience, as it isn't always seen as the most visually attractive staircase design.

5. SPRUCE IT UP

STEPPING IN AND MAKING CHANGES

You know your clients and the previous projects you have worked on. It's important to continue building rapport with them to maintain a respected reputation. One way to get more business for your company is by working with your existing clients and projects. The benefit? You know how everything was made and will easily be able to help with a remodel or makeover.

Popular sites such as Pinterest and Houzz now show people how they can incorporate DIY efforts into stair projects. However, you provide the expertise and craftsmanship that novice home remodelers want in their projects. Below, we mention just a few of the many spruce-ups people are administering to their stairs these days. Remember your staircase building doesn't stop when someone can successfully climb from one floor to the

A decorative background consisting of a grid of light-colored wood panels, arranged in a pattern that is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape. The wood grain is visible in each panel.

WOOD RESTORATION OR REPLACEMENT

Sometimes wood gets bleached by the sun or damaged beyond repair. Restoring the riser, treads or railing caps make an old and dingy staircase look brand new. Trends are constantly changing and perhaps a client wants help incorporating that night/day look in their staircase; which you know exactly how to do.

BANISTER AND RAILING UPDATE

If a space is in need of a staircase, but the client is worried that the addition would cause the space to be cramped, then glass would be an excellent material option. Using glass for a staircase has become a trendy way to give a space an open and airy feeling. This newer staircase material is breaking out of its stereotype of being frail and breakable and changing the rules. New variations of glass are being used frequently and successfully in staircases to add a contemporary style while providing safety.



Take these secrets and turn them into a staircase of your own or turn your client's dreams into reality. Stay updated on the latest trends and don't be afraid to use your imagination when working on a new project. Get inspired, work hard, and elevate your next stair-building project with one or many of the tips in this eBook. If you're looking for even more tips and tricks on wood crafting, custom projects, and designing than [check out our blog](#) or click the link below!

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