

Your Perfect House

HOUSE SIZE CALCULATOR

The *Your Perfect House* HOUSE SIZE CALCULATOR is a handy tool that helps you develop the program (the list the rooms and spaces you might like) for your new house or remodeling project while automatically calculating the overall **Total Square Footage** of the house and the **Estimated Total Cost**. This interactive form can be altered as you go, allowing you to make adjustments and changes to the rooms and sizes until you strike a balance between size and budget. If you develop a realistic program with target room sizes and construction cost BEFORE you start designing floor plans, you will eliminate the frustrating trial and error that often is a part of designing a house while trying to still meeting a budget.

Instructions for Using the HOUSE SIZE CALCULATOR

STEP ONE - Enter the Project Name in the “**Project Name**” box. This is done by clicking in the pink area to the right of the words, “**Project Name**” and typing in the name.

STEP TWO - Enter the Floor Names for each of the floors your house will have. You can do this by overwriting the words “**Enter Floor Name**” in the gray bar. (Left click, hold and drag the cursor over the words, “Enter Floor Name” and then type in the new floor name). At the bottom of the calculator you will see tabs labeled, “**Add Floor**” and “**Remove Floor**.” Use these tabs to add or subtract floors to match the number of floors in your new house. Simply click on the tab and a floor will be either added or removed.

STEP THREE - Enter the Room Names. You can do this by either entering the room name in the entry field below the word “**Room,**” or by clicking on the

down button to the right to cause a drop down menu to appear containing a number of pre-entered room names. Be sure to add every room and space you expect your house to have, including hallways, powder rooms, closets, and staircases. It is customary to include the area of staircases on the floor below. You do not need to include the floor area of the staircase at the uppermost floor.

The calculator's default set up shows only three room spaces per floor. It's likely you will have more than three. To add more rooms, simply click on the "**Add Room**" button to the left and another room space will appear. Then enter its name as before.

STEP FOUR - Enter in Target Room Sizes in the column entitled "**Length x Width.**" You can enter in the dimensions by overwriting the zeros that appear by default. If you don't know exactly what room size you'd like, use rooms in your existing house as examples. Measure them and ask yourself if they are too large or too small. Then try to decide what adjusted size might be a perfect target size for your new house. After you have entered the room dimensions, click in the box to the left of the dimensions under the words "**Estimated Area.**" The total square footage of the room should appear automatically, saving you the trouble of calculating it yourself.

If you don't know target dimensions (length and width) that you would like for a room or space, you can simply enter an estimated area, in square feet, under the right-hand column named "**Estimated Area.**" This is handy for entering area allocations for hallways and closets that may not have a defined shape. You will notice that when you enter the estimated area and then click elsewhere outside of the box, a "**Calculation Overwrite**" warning window appears asking you if you are sure you want to modify this field. Just click "**Yes**" if the entry is correct.

You will notice that as you enter dimensions and square foot areas, the calculator tallies up the total as you go. You will also notice a line entitled, "**Walls and Waste Factor.**" In all houses, a substantial amount of square footage gets used

up by the walls, themselves. Most walls are nominally four inches thick. So every three running feet of wall takes up a square foot of space. The exterior walls of a typical house occupy over 100 square feet and often much more. Additionally, no matter how well designed your house is, there will inevitably be some wasted space where rooms don't fit together perfectly and adjustments are made to align walls, etc. These areas of "lost space" need to be anticipated and accounted for, since they are real and cost construction money. We add in a "**Walls and Waste Factor**" for this. Usually **15%** is a good target percentage. You can change this percentage in the Calculator by overwriting the **15%** figure. If you feel you can be extremely efficient in your layout of the house or maybe you will have a very open plan with few interior walls, you could reduce this to **12%**. If you know you want thick walls and want to estimate on the safe side, increase this figure to **18%**. Whatever you choose for the "**Walls and Waste Factor**," the calculator will update the totals automatically.

STEP FIVE – In the "**Summary of Calculations**" you will see that the floor names and totals have been brought forward and a "**Total Square Footage**" result has been calculated automatically. Below that is a table showing the "**Construction Cost Calculations**." This is where the "**Estimated Total Cost**" is computed. The calculator has a default setting of **\$200** per square foot for the construction cost. It will have automatically multiplied this amount times the total square footage of your program (list of rooms and spaces) you created above. You should adjust the "**Cost per Square Foot**" to reflect the construction costs in your locale and a cost reflective of the type of house you plan to build. You can get advice on what this figure should be from local builders and architects. The denomination of the currency is shown in US Dollars, but it can be adjusted to Euros or Pounds by clicking the down arrow next to the dollar sign and selecting another currency from the drop down menu.

The last figure on the calculator is the "**Estimated Total Cost**" of your house.

STEP SIX – The calculator is totally interactive. You can go **back and make unlimited adjustments** to the rooms you want, the room sizes, and the estimated cost per square foot. Do these adjustments until the calculated “**Estimated Total Cost**” matches your budget. Save and print out the results. This will give you and your architect or designer a detailed program from which to design the house. When you get a house design that matches the rooms and sizes in your program, you will have confidence that it should match your budget. You will avoid the frustrations of having to alter the design you fell in love with to meet the budget.

Feedback – We welcome your feedback. Please contact us at info@designingyourperfecthouse.com.

Good luck **Designing *Your* Perfect House.**