

Laundry Rooms No Longer an Afterthought

For one of the most heavily trafficked in many people's homes, the laundry room used to be considered an afterthought. You just needed to make sure you had space for the washer's hoses and electrical outlets for the washer and dryer, and that was about it. The appliances typically laid in a narrow area like a utility space that left little for anything else. But not anymore.

The latest trends in laundry rooms include:

- **More convenient locations** – Anyone who has made the trek up and down their basement to clean their clothes knows what a pain that process is, mentally and physically. Now laundry rooms more often are next to bedrooms or bathrooms, the main spots where items need to be washed. This results in less hassle and stress for the homeowner. More than 60 percent of laundry rooms are now located on the main level of the home versus just 45 percent back in 1999 (http://www.jiancai365.cn/new_view.asp?id=6756).
- **More storage** – Cabinets in the laundry room have become standard expectations among home buyers. You can store not only detergent, softener and other cleaning products but also other items that will not fit in your closets, bathrooms or kitchens. Some new homeowners prefer front-loading washers and dryers to use their top counters for extra storage as well. Believe it or not, more people are also putting a freezer or second refrigerator in their laundry rooms (<http://www.rd.com/familyhandyman/content/30865/>).
- **Updated appliances** – For those in homes whose floor plans do not allow bigger rooms for laundry, there are stackable washers and dryers, and even combination washer/dryer combos. That's right – one machine to do both tasks. For those who do not want to tear holes in a wall or ceiling for a dryer's ventilation duct, there are ventless washer/dryer combos too.

Also, do not forget color. There is no law saying that washers and dryers and the rooms containing them must all be white or light cream, yet most remain that way.

Some people have even added a TV or radio in their laundry room as well. Why not? If you are like most average Americans, you will spend around six hours per week doing laundry. You ought to make the time spent doing it as enjoyable as you can.

Rich Van Tassel is President of Royal Oaks Building Group, LLC, an award-winning home building company located in Raleigh, North Carolina.