

## NEW HOMES & CONDOS

# Let's be open about 'open concept'



### DVIRA OVADIA LIVING BY DESIGN

**M**ain floor, open concept designs are still on trend and all the rage — and for good reason.

Just as the name suggests, open concept living incorporates large, open rooms — the most common being, the living room, dining room and kitchen combined into one shared space.

An open concept plan is ideal for entertaining or for parents who want to keep a close eye on the childre. It also makes any home feel larger, updated and contemporary.

Turning a traditional home into an open concept home can be a big project. Removing walls may require structural changes such as beams and extra supports.

This is where a professional designer comes into play. Hire a designer to provide you with a floor plan and make sure that your budget and wish list are in line.

In addition, a designer will help you with the permit process and ensure you are protected throughout the renovation.

Obtaining a permit will guarantee that your town or city sends appropriate inspectors to make sure that the renovation is on track and that your contractor's work meets building code.

Although breaking down the walls can feel like you are baring it all, open concept allows natural light to permeate throughout your home.

Adding an archway in place of an interior door will give your home an open concept look without having to complete a major renovation.

Archways come premade or may be custom built to suit the entranceway and don't necessarily have to be arched, they can be square.

The key to having an open concept plan that is cohe-

sive and flows correctly is to link the spaces but keep the rooms separate at the same time — divide with design.

Create focal points in each living, dining and kitchen area to define the space, such as an island or peninsula to define the kitchen.

When decorating open concept spaces on HGTV's Income Property, I used pendant lighting and area rugs to ground and define zones.

Keep in mind, removing interior walls means there are fewer walls to place furniture and cabinetry. Plan carefully and consider storage options for the perimeter walls.

Your living room seating arrangement should form a square or rectangle — furnishing the entire area around the square.

The correct placement of furniture might include two chairs on one side and a sofa on the other, facing the chairs.

Alternatively, you could position two sofas so that they face each other. Leaving one end open, might create and undefined area.

### Tips

1. Sit down with a designer like myself, and consider the placement of furni-

ture pieces that generally sit against walls such as televisions, computers and desks. Incorrect placement can make household necessities look out of place and cumbersome.

2. Keep your color palette consistent throughout the zones, your walls and floors should each be one consistent color all the way through, to maintain continuity and avoid disrupting the visual flow.

3. Hide the unsightly back of a sofa with a console table, and tuck baskets below to store TV-room accessories.

— *Dvira Ovadia is principal of Dvira Interiors, a Toronto-based celebrity and award-winning designer who appears regularly on HGTV. For more information, visit [www.dvira.com](http://www.dvira.com).*



Keep your colour palette consistent throughout each "living zone" including the walls and floors to maintain continuity and to avoid disrupting the visual flow.



Your living room seating arrangements should form a square or rectangle and might include two chairs on one side and a sofa on the other.

Bring your design dilemma to Dvira Ovadia at the Fall Home Show at the Better Living Centre from October 1-4. Dvira will be speaking on stage Friday, October 2 at 6 p.m. Visit [www.fallhomeshow.com](http://www.fallhomeshow.com) for details.



Create focal points in each living area to define the space, such as an island or peninsula in the kitchen.