

GRAND DESIGNS



THE UK'S
BEST-LOVED
SELF-BUILD
BRAND

We built our house for £172k

HOW ONE COUPLE CREATED THE PERFECT SPACE

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Exclusive look at this incredible home

STRIKING EXTERIOR FINISHES

Essential guide to cladding

SMART FLEXIBLE KITCHENS

Multi-use spaces that work harder

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THE TOP 10 SELF-BUILD SECRETS YOU NEED TO KNOW

HI-TECH DIGITAL BATHROOMS

Use less energy and save money

ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURE

By preserving an existing arch in this converted church, a striking entrance to this kitchen has been formed. Roundhouse kitchens start at £35,000 (020 7297 6220; roundhouse design.com)



Awkward features: KNOCK DOWN OR BUILD AROUND?

Don't let a nuisance nook or bulky beam thwart your design plans – embrace them with our clever ideas



← FEATURE SEATING

Davonport has clad this large column in stainless steel and added a breakfast bar to create a useful dining area and focal point. A similar project would cost from £35,000 (0845 468 0025; davonport.com)

↓ RUSTIC ELEMENTS

The timber beams on this pitched roof emphasise the structure of the building. The total project cost was £355,000, by Hudson Architects (01603 766 220; hudson architects.co.uk)

Self-builders starting from scratch have the advantage of carefully considering how structural elements will impact on the design and layout of their projects, whereas those who take on a renovation are often stuck with features they don't know what to do with. As open-plan living has become more popular, components that are necessary to the structure of your home that aren't aesthetically appealing are a more common issue. Whether it's a steel support in the middle of a room, or a sloping ceiling in a loft conversion, it can be both expensive and difficult to change or remove these architectural elements. Instead, consider how to incorporate these structures into your design, to create either a useful feature or a new focal point.

Practical pillars

A common and difficult structural element is a load-bearing pillar. When load-bearing walls are modified to form open-plan layouts, it often leaves columns that can't be removed without compromising the stability of your property. These can stick out from a wall or stand in the middle of a space and so it →

