



▲ Angled wall sections, rather than confining walls, define spaces in this stylish, open plan, aided by contrasting floor, wall, and ceiling materials that distinguish and define the areas. A montage of built-in box cabinets displays artwork without encumbering floor space. The black fireplace and raised hearth are easy to see, easy to use, and effective as a design element.

# Gallery

## ROOM-TO-ROOM CONNECTIONS

An open floor plan makes it easier to get around in a house. Creative use of color and materials, built-in cabinets and cutouts, and interior windows and doors can organize the space clearly and unrestrictively.



◀ Color and pattern provide spice and spatial orientation here. Nonskid slate tiles cover the hallways, yielding to wood flooring at the wide doorless entries to the office, family room, and kitchen. Wall colors, from the yellow of the halls to the teal of the family room, further identify spaces. Some wall cutouts are display niches; others are interior windows that help spread the light.

▼ Instead of confining walls and doors, a bold flooring montage and commanding fireplace organize this living/dining/kitchen space without presenting obstacles to circulation and room-to-room communication. The mahogany floor strip stylishly marks the dining room boundary and signals the edge of the fireplace wall; a built-in cabinet-column ensemble identifies the opening to the kitchen.



# Gallery

## TUBS

Make a bathtub—even that old model you’ve had for years—stylish and user friendly by enclosing it in a surround that is deep enough to provide a surface for seating and maneuvering in and out of the tub. Finish it with materials that complement the room design and set the faucet controls at one end, where they will be accessible but not in the way.

► The broad, flat surface of the surround makes a comfortable seat for transfer into this tub. The lever-style faucets and pullout spray are convenient from outside or inside the tub, and offset enough to provide plenty of room for a parent to sit while bathing a child. Paired ceiling fixtures light the tub niche evenly.

► Like a ship at sea, this white tub and deck and light-toned wood surround stand out clearly from the deep blue floor and wall. The generous-size surround features seating space at both ends, and a cubby for slippers or towels. The offset faucet handles are accessible from outside the tub; the faucet itself is out of the way against the wall.



## Garage-to-House Connection

The garage is here, the house is there, and never the twain shall meet. Or shall they? In this case, a handsome covered ramp links the two. Constructed with cedar shingle siding, hardy Brazilian redwood flooring, and green-trimmed roof sections to complement the Arts and Crafts-style house, the 4-by-4-inch (10.2 × 10.2 cm)-wide pathway dresses up the entry and offers a scenic view of the yard as it shields people from the weather. Recessed fixtures light the passageway at night. The railing, crafted of red-painted metal rods and rustproof galvanized-steel panels in an Arts and Crafts motif, provides a decorative accent while guarding the ramp and deck.



◀ There's no need to iron the irregularities and character out of a yard to make it easily navigable. This raised wooden boardwalk "floats" above tree roots and uneven ground to establish a smooth, level pathway from the house to the patio.