



Designing Foyers & Mudrooms

Written by:
Stephanie Hintz

Resident Interior Designer at Wisconsin Log Homes



I. WHAT DESIGN ELEMENTS SHOULD YOU CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING YOUR FOYER?

The purpose of the foyer is to welcome guests and bridge the space from outside to inside. The first design element would be storage, even if it's concealed. Think about the way your family will use this area, or is it primarily used for guests? How much room do you need to store coats, gloves, umbrellas, and outside gear? Make sure there is enough storage for your own use, and keep some space readily available for guests and you'll never be scrambling for hangers. Storage can be incorporated in many ways - a traditional closet, a tall armoire, benches with storage underneath, or even freestanding pottery and urns.

Remember, your foyer should be welcoming. A cozy foyer can be designed to be elegant or informal, and a spacious foyer can be designed to be inviting or grand. Consider basic design principles such as unity, balance, harmony and scale. These principles can be manipulated with color, texture, furnishings, lighting and accessories. With large foyers, start with the ceiling and work your way

down. Select a large light fixture to balance out the space. This is a great place for statement art or collectibles - something that introduces all your guests to your personality and sets the tone for the rest of the home.

Consider the canvas of the room. Choose flooring that is durable and easy to clean and also a representation of your style. Decide if the floors will contrast with the wall color or blend together. This is a fun area to highlight and accent a wall, or a gorgeous staircase. Make it yours by adding that extra touch that shows who you are. If you love the beach, a sandy texture to a wall or oyster shell accents might be perfect and subtle. Do you love books and reading? Add a cozy chair and side table, or maybe a soft accent lamp. These little details will personalize your space. There are plenty of foyers that are designed beautifully, but may end up looking like a hotel lobby rather than a home.

2.) WHAT DESIGN ELEMENTS SHOULD YOU CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING A MUDROOM?

This has become one of the most important spaces in the home, next to the kitchen! With today's busy lifestyles, people are always on the go even in secondary vacation homes. Every moment in your home is valuable. Mudrooms offer family members a place to dress for the outdoors, store daily-use items like backpacks, dog gear, or work satchels. It may also double as a laundry and craft room or a small in-home office or message center.

Much like foyers, the first thing to consider would be storage. Busy families should allow a locker or specific place for each resident to have for their own belongings. This also becomes a huge time saver when dashing outdoors for work or play. If this room will also serve as a laundry, reserve hidden space for dirty clothes and a folding center. You don't want to walk in the door and immediately see your undone work.



Make this room feel inviting and not so utilitarian. This can be achieved in what finishes you choose - flooring, wall treatments, and lighting. Just because it is a "work room" does not mean it has to look that way. Next, remember the principles of design. Make sure that even though this room wears many 'hats,' it feels balanced and relates to the rest of the home. Again, select finishes that will hide what you want, and highlight the rest. Sometimes high contrasting mudrooms can feel smaller, confusing and cramped. Try blending in your cabinetry, walls, and appliances, and make the ceiling and floors do the contrast work. You may be surprised to see your clutter and tension disappear (it will be less stimulating visually) and also add style with elements of surprise. And as always, make sure you have adequate lighting here.

Be sure to make this space your own. Have children or pets? Create built-in wall frames that allow for new photos or artwork to be exchanged easily for variety. Sure beats magnets on

the fridge! Travel? Swap them out with recent travels, or local experiences like that great fishing trip, hunting or hiking adventure. Besides utilitarian lighting, add one that speaks to you and also gives this room a hint of a secondary foyer, which it essentially is. Really want to amp it up? In colder climates, add built-in areas for heated boot dryers, mitten warmers, etc. In warmer temperatures, leave room for extra towels, walking shoes, or bug repellent.

3. WHAT IS A DESIGN ELEMENT THAT IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED IN A FOYER? IN A MUDROOM?

In the foyer, I often feel new homes do not emphasize the personal element of the homeowners. Sure, nice art that perfectly complements the lighting and wall color may look great, but it can also feel sterile or forced. In mudrooms, homeowners often forget to plan out specific areas for day-to-day activities and needs. On the original plan you may have only placed doors, closets and windows. A more specific approach will ensure no regrets or “wish-we-would-haves” down the road. If you plan on living in your home 5 years or less, consider the resale value and comparable home prices. If you will be in the home long-term, go ahead and add the details you will appreciate.



Please contact Stephanie Hintz for your design needs.
stephanieh@wislog.com or 1.800.678.9107