

Hello again! As promised, this month we will talk about blowing out the walls. Why you ask? So, we can make our houses live for today. Many of us live in houses 20, 40, or even more than 100 years old. Our houses are great for many reasons: the location, the community, the character. The list goes on and on. But, many of our homes don't respond to how we live today. Today, the kitchen and the great room are the hub of activity in the home. These spaces need to have both visual and physical connection to live well. So, what does this mean? We need to open up the walls. Opening up walls can completely change the feel of a room. A room that seems small and dark will suddenly seem larger and more livable. A kitchen connected to the great room will be the hub of activity.

Below and surrounding this article is a case study house. It just happens to be my own. My husband and I purchased this home when we moved back to Ft. Thomas last June. We instantly fell in love with the location, the view, and the neighborhood. Our house is great, originally designed by Hans Nuetzel, a well known Cincinnati architect. Across the front of the house the Living Room, Dining Room and Kitchen were all situated to take advantage of the river view. However, they were all separated by walls creating a lack of connection between spaces. The entry, while beautiful, opened up to the coat closet instead of a view through the house to the river.

So, what did we do? I'm sure you know the answer. We started to take out the walls and recreate the spaces. Our first move was to take out the wall at the entry. What an improvement! The Entry and the Dining Room have a new lease on life and the view through the house is fantastic! Our second move was to take out the wall and built-ins between the Living Room and the Dining Room. Our contractor built back into the space a bar area, which enhances the use of both spaces. The third and final move was to blow out the wall between the Kitchen and Dining Room and to gut the Kitchen. We made some important moves in the Kitchen which improved the over all function as well as opening it up to the other spaces. The end result is fantastic. The spaces are connected physically, and visually. The views between rooms and out to the river are greatly improved, and the house lives for today!