

## The Architect's Tool Box

Architects are sculptors creating spatial experiences. What? Let me see if I can break this down. Have you ever walked into a building, maybe a church, or a house that stops you in your tracks? What is it about the space that makes it breathtaking; the color, the light, the proportions, or maybe the ordering of materials? Most likely, it is all of these things working in unison. My point being, these things don't happen by accident. Architects mold space to create a desired outcome.

Consider the U.S. Capitol building in Washington D.C. Everything about this building says power. Visitors standing beneath the huge dome are awed into silence. Why? Structurally the dome is amazing; the height, the size, the way light streams through the openings. The materials used in the space are equally beautiful, marble and granite in a Corinthian order. It is the combination of these things that makes the building magnificent.

What about Falling Water? Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, it is one of the most famous houses in the United States. Wright was a master at using light, materials, and spatial relationships to create really great houses. His design influence can be seen throughout the Midwest in the craftsman style bungalows dotting the local streets.

Architects apply similar design principals to all buildings. In the toolbox you will find light, materials, texture, order, proportion, and most of all space. We understand what makes space comfortable, beautiful, and magnificent. This is called the spatial experience. As we design, we are sculpting the spaces, and considering the impact of light, materials and order. We consider the occupants and how the space will be used, when the space will be used and any unique requirements. This is the architect's toolbox.

You might be thinking, this really doesn't apply to me and my house. But, I'm telling you, it does. A well designed house or addition can make all the difference. My clients are mostly residential and I apply the same principals noted above to all of my projects. The first goal, when meeting a new client, is to understand what they are truly trying to accomplish. What is the end state? What is the client's lifestyle? It's not just about the size of a space, but how it will function, and the atmosphere desired. I use this information to create spaces that will fit the client's needs perfectly. Next time you walk into a house that really feels good look around and think about these things; materials, light, order, space, and proportions and remember these things don't happen by accident.