



6. REDESIGN YOUR OUTDOOR SPACE

Familiarise yourself with your garden's characteristics before you start the project – knowing where light and shade falls will not only assist effective planting, but will establish which zones can best exploit the sun. 'Use a simple palette of materials and colours that work with your interior décor,' says Charlotte Rowe of Charlotte Rowe Garden Design. Better still, run the same flooring or wall colours from inside to out to create a sleek look. Built-in seating maximises on space, while an exterior fireplace offers a striking focal point and will entice you back outdoors during the winter months.



↑ **GET THE LOOK** Source similar slat fencing at The Garden Trellis Company, from £21.94 for a 450 x 1795mm panel. Garden designer Barbara Samitier can create a similar scheme for £20,000.

← **GET THE LOOK** A remodelled garden like this can be created by Charlotte Rowe Garden Design, from £50,000.



CHOOSING AN ARCHITECT

- Consultations should be free of charge, so shop around. Narrow down potentials over the phone and then interview them face to face.
- Architects have their own style and expertise, so select one with experience of your particular property type – a modern, minimalist thinker may not be ideal for a period home.
- Ensure you follow up references – a former client may cast valuable light on how your architect managed their time and budget.
- Check credentials – architects must be registered with the Architects Registration Board, while Royal Institute of British Architect membership is an indication of professional excellence. Learn more at architecture.com.
- Ensure the complete design, costings, time frame and payment schedule have been established before work begins. Expect this in writing from your architect in the form of a detailed appointment letter and a contract.

7. CONVERT YOUR LOFT INTO A MASTER SUITE

As well as providing a private sanctuary at the top of the house, an open-plan master suite fully maximises those precious additional square metres you're adding with a loft conversion. Incorporate screens and room dividers to section off areas without interrupting light flow and embrace the tricky corners – a bath can be tucked neatly out of the way underneath the eaves. 'Incorporate a dormer if you can and open up all the eaves for an increased sense of space,' advises London-based interior designer Stephanie Peltier-Dumeau. A dedicated dressing area is another luxury you might be able to accommodate – check out the design-led fittings available at Poliform and Hülsta.

↑ **GET THE LOOK** This loft project by Analytic Building Contractors cost approx £60,000, with the en-suite bedroom, designed by Stephanie Peltier-Dumeau, costing around £20,500. The woodwork is painted in Farrow & Ball's Down Pipe estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5l.

→ **GET THE LOOK** Expect to pay £60,000 → for a conversion like this by London-based Conley&Co. European Heritage's Black Earth tiles, £39 per sq m, are similar to those used for the bath surround.



Photography (opposite page, main picture) Ben Anders; Photography (opposite page, inset) MMG/Marianne Majerus Design; Charlotte Rowe Garden Design; Photography (this page, main picture) Nick Smith

