



## DOG DOMAINS

Incorporate your four-legged friend into your home's design

BY SARAH SEKULA

Spending more time at home this past year has had its benefits, especially when it comes to spending time with furry loved ones. For some, it's also provided extra time to renovate, and pet-loving folks are even adding features specifically for their dogs.

"Pets are part of the family, so incorporating them into individual rooms, like a dedicated feeding area in the kitchen, or a cozy cubby near where the family spends time, are the way to go," says Jen Pinto, senior interior designer at San Diego-based Jackson Design and Remodeling.

Pinto says she routinely gets requests for dog-centric designs. "Whether it's a pet-washing station, a special area for

their food or cubbies for sleeping and easy access to outdoors — this is a trend we see continuing in the future."

Designer Denise Davies, founder and CEO of Connecticut-based D2 Interieurs, agrees. She was hired to create a fun and functional space for her client who lives on a 30-acre property. The client's three dogs roam free and need to be constantly cleaned. Davies decided a dog-washing station was a great solution because it doesn't require the owner to stoop over, which means it's easier on your back than a regular tub might be.

"You can close the doors, and the dog can drip dry," Davies says. "It also has the adjustable showerheads and nozzles so that you can really get all the shampoo and conditioner out of the dog's hair." >



### TRY TO BLEND IN

The goal with dog décor is for it to fit in with your existing interior design and give your pet a special place of comfort or maybe a place to release some energy.

Jackson Design experts dreamed up a safe outdoor space for a client so the dogs could run around as often as they liked. “Both turf and concrete were used to give them surface options in varying weather,” says Pinto. “The dogs can safely access this outdoor space from a door in the doggy den — even when the clients aren’t home — and will still be comfortable and protected.”

Pinto emphasizes considering the pet’s personality and specific needs before designing anything. For example, when Pinto designed a kitchen feeding area, she made sure there was a light above the bowls, so the homeowner’s pup could see her food when she takes nibbles at night. Better yet, it’s brilliantly tucked away beneath a countertop. Studio Dearborn, an interior-design firm based in Westchester County, N.Y., did something similar on a recent project where it installed built-in dog bowls that can’t get knocked over.



### NOOKS AND CRANNIES

Nooks have the advantage of giving the dog a nicely contained hideaway that makes good use of otherwise wasted space. A nook can be under the stairs, under a coffee table (or even built into a coffee table) or under the kitchen counter. Marnie Oursler, president of Delaware-based Marnie Custom Homes, created an under-the-stairs nook with a sliding barn door that seamlessly blends in with the kitchen décor.

Similarly, Tamara Day, host of HGTV’s *Bargain Mansions*, created a hideaway with durable hardwood floors and also tiled the walls from floor-to-ceiling for easy cleanup from spills and slobber. The doggy nook is right off the kitchen door to allow the dogs easy passage. To top it off, she included a dog bed designed in a washable fabric to match the tile and overall look of the home. The recessed dog bed, which can be pulled out when needed, allows the homeowners to fully use the countertop space. Next to the nook is a built-in fridge to store fresh dog food and treats. ■