

Reimagine your garage and give your family the space they need



Epoxy type flooring is a paint-like durable coating that looks amazing!

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO®

This past year is one we will likely never forget. Many of my clients found themselves scrambling for more space in their homes. They were having to share not only the Wifi, but the actual rooms they needed to work in. Once we realized that the pandemic was not going away in a couple of weeks, we knew that we had to figure out how to live, work, and go to school together – at home! This presented a huge challenge for families. I started getting calls last summer from clients that needed help creating more space.

My solution for many of these families was to design a multi-use garage space. The average size 2 car garage is 24 X 24 (576 sq ft.). Compare this to an average size bedroom of 12 X 10 (120 sq ft.). By making some simple changes, we were able to create space for several needs—home office, school-work area, exercise space, teen hang out, and storage too!—for a fraction of the cost and time of adding on a new room. Converting garages to create extra living space is a trend that is here to stay.

What are you currently using your garage for? Let's face it, many of us do not use our garages well. They can easily become a cluttered catch-all for items, much of which we are not using, can't access, or have even forgotten about. Do you know what “stuff” you have buried away in your garage? Most garages are filled to the brim with a variety of items we seldom look at or use including household products, memorabilia, old papers, used toys, furniture, items we are saving for our kids, unfinished craft projects, broken items we plan to repair someday, outdated electronics, cords (to what?) and of course “mystery boxes”.

Your garage can be so much more than an overstuffed storage space! It's time to reimagine your garage. If you are like most of my

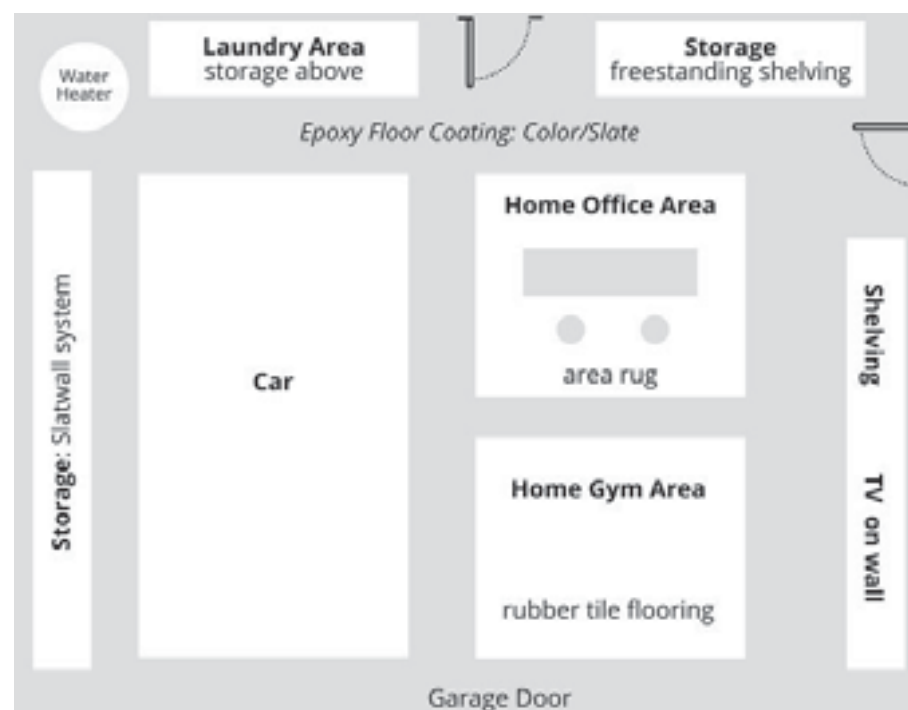
clients, you probably do not know where to start. I recommend that you start with your ideal vision for the space.

Create a simple sketch of the garage and rough out each zone – be sure to allot enough space for its use. For example, maybe you want one fourth for exercise equipment, one fourth for home office and the rest for a car and storage.

Here are some ideas for how you can use your space:

- **Work from Home Office:** Post-COVID, more people are working from home than ever before. Create an area for your home office (or kid's study space)
- **Exercise Area:** Create a space for workouts, yoga, meditation and more. Cover the floor area in rubber tiles which are easy to install and easy on your joints.
- **Craft Space or Workshop:** Keep all of your tools (or craft supplies) within easy reach and have space to work in.
- **Kid's Hangout:** Kid's of all ages (yes, adults too) can use more space to hangout and relax in. I have had many TVs installed in garages this last year.
- **Storage:** We all need extra storage space. Slatwall systems, overhead storage racks, freestanding and wall shelving, and garage attics are some of my space-saving solutions. Vertical and ceiling storage is often overlooked and underused.
- **Cars:** Yes, some people actually park their car in the garage. You can mix and match by having a car parked on one side and your home gym on the other side.

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Reimagine your garage - create a simple layout of your wants and needs.

Photos and image provided