

Studios and Retreats

KIDS LOVE FORTS, PLAYHOUSES, AND TREE HOUSES. Adults are similarly drawn to backyard retreats—cozy outbuildings for painting, writing, reading a good book, or relaxing with a cup of coffee. These are personal spaces designed for escaping the stresses of day-to-day living.

Some homeowners transform existing garages, playhouses, or sheds into inviting and functional spaces. For others, designing and building a retreat from scratch can be just as much fun as spending time in it later. Even the most rustic backyard retreat can be enjoyed during warmer seasons when there's good weather and natural light. Equipped with some of the luxuries of home—such as comfortable furnishings, a half-bath, and utilities—it can serve as a guesthouse, home office, or relaxing year-round refuge.

▼ THIS WOOD-AND-STONE DINING PAVILION is the hub of the backyard and a destination for many gatherings. The canvas canopy provides shade and cover from light rain, while the fireplace adds warmth on cool evenings. Storage for firewood is built conveniently into adjacent walls.

