



The big
CHANGE

EXTENDING TO GET A
BIG OPEN-PLAN LIVING
SPACE AND CONVERTING
THE LOFT TO GAIN
ANOTHER BEDROOM
AND BATHROOM

Design your home around your stuff

Extending and converting is the perfect opportunity to solve your storage crisis, as the Clancy family found out...

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

1 Kitchen/living area
 'I wanted the open-plan part of the house to be a multitasking family space,' says Caroline. The kitchen cupboards extend the length of the living area, so the clutter created by a family of five can be put away easily and neatly
 Kitchen, £13,000, Newcastle Design. For similar bar stools, try the Abi gas lift, £163 for two, Furniture123



Get the
LOOK
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Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

BOUGHT FOR	SPENT	NOW WORTH
£81,500	£112,000	£326,000

THE PROPERTY

A modern, five-bedroom semi, bought in 1993, in Lucan, County Dublin, Republic of Ireland.



WHAT IT COST

Building work.....	£39,000
Loft conversion.....	£29,000
Kitchen.....	£13,000
Bathrooms.....	£7,000
Decorating.....	£7,000
Furniture.....	£10,000
Garden.....	£7,000
TOTAL.....	£112,000

WHO LIVES HERE

Caroline Clancy, a sales manager, her husband, Seán, who works in aviation, and their children, Lauren, nine, Ryan, six, and Lilymai, three.

have the advantage that you can check the progress of the build each day. That way, changes can be made on site immediately. We were able to change the position of sockets and light switches, move a door a little to one side to make it work better, and even changed the size of a room before the job was finished and the builders had gone.

THE LOOK

Cool and classic with a serene cream and white colour scheme.

LESSONS LEARNED

“It’s really hard work living on a building site, but it does



◀ **TOP FLOOR**
 A spare bedroom with en suite and plenty of fitted storage is in the loft

FIRST FLOOR ▶

Ryan’s bedroom and Lauren’s bedroom with en suite are at the front of the house. The bathroom is in the middle and Lilymai’s bedroom and the main bedroom with en suite and dressing area are at the back



◀ **GROUND FLOOR**
 The main living room is at the front of the house. At the back, there’s a large open-plan kitchen/living space and separate utility room



When you've lived in a house for almost 20 years, it's inevitable that you will have made some changes to it - new colour schemes, a revamped bathroom and perhaps a new kitchen, but Caroline and Seán Clancy have done so much more, turning what was an ordinary four-bedroom, semi-detached house in Dublin into something rather extraordinary.

Bought off plan in 1993, way before the couple's children came along, the house has evolved slowly and Caroline is the first to admit it wasn't always easy. 'Back in 2000, we decided to add a two-storey extension to get a bigger main bedroom and kitchen,' she says, 'but things didn't go according to plan.'

The couple's dream of a large, open-plan kitchen-cum-living space was somehow transformed into an extension with odd corridor-like rooms. So what went wrong? 'I think it was down to a number of factors,' says Caroline. 'Our lack of knowledge, a relatively

inexperienced architect and the difficulty in finding a suitable builder interested in a domestic extension in the middle of a building boom.'

Fast forward to 2010 and the Clancys had had three children and felt the house wasn't working for them. 'We did consider selling and moving,' says Caroline, 'but this house is perfect for getting to work and the children can walk to school, so we decided to stay put and make changes, but this time we would be careful about our selection of architect to help us make the most of the space.'

Caroline and Seán came up with a short list of three architects. 'The first one didn't listen to a word we said and just talked about his ideas, but the other two were good,' says Caroline. 'We went with Catherine Crowe from Optimise Design, whose work I had seen in a magazine, because she was obviously so capable. I also thought that a woman with children would appreciate what we needed as a family.'

The Clancys worked closely with Catherine on the house's plans from the start. 'She just got what

2 Kitchen-diner
Large expanses of glass, including skylights, ensure that the new extension is flooded with light. 'During summer, we enjoy having the large glazed doors open to the garden,' says Caroline. 'It's simply wonderful'

Henley oval extending table, £1,395; Long Island chairs, £195 each; all Neptune. Island unit painted in Light Gray Estate Eggshell, £48.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. For a similar lamp, try the Tea Party, £90, Debenhams



Create order

Fit a home office into an unused corner. For a slimline desk, install a shelf at the right height to sit at and then hang shelves above for storage

‘Although the children are small now, looking ahead there will be five adults in the house, so we knew the den would be a good idea’



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3 Office

The space linking the kitchen and hall has been transformed into an office area. ‘We previously had nowhere to put our paperwork, operation manuals and all those things that accumulate and end up shoved into drawers,’ says Caroline. Office painted in Light Gray Estate Eggshell, £48.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

4 Den

One of the family’s favourite spaces is the chill-out area of the new extension. ‘The pull-out storage drawers are for our three-year-old’s toys and DVDs,’ says Caroline. Indivi 2 corner sofa, from £1,779, BoConcept. Feature wall painted in Thunderstorm matt emulsion, £37.50 for 2.5ltr, Colortrend. For a similar floor lamp, try the Francesca, £180, John Lewis

'The whole house just feels more spacious, light-filled and functional now'



6 Main bedroom

It was love at first sight when Caroline found this wallpaper – it's neutral but it also has a subtle damask pattern that gives the room a glamorous feel. St Germain BP 1411 wallpaper, £70 per roll, Farrow & Ball. For a similar bed, try the Clifton, £638, Laura Ashley.

3 of the best **SHOE STORAGE UNITS**



£133

Very detailed
Ventilated at the rear to deal with smelly trainers
Merton shoe storage cabinet, Store



£275

Multitasker
You can sit on it when you're putting on or taking off your shoes
Shoe bench, John Lewis

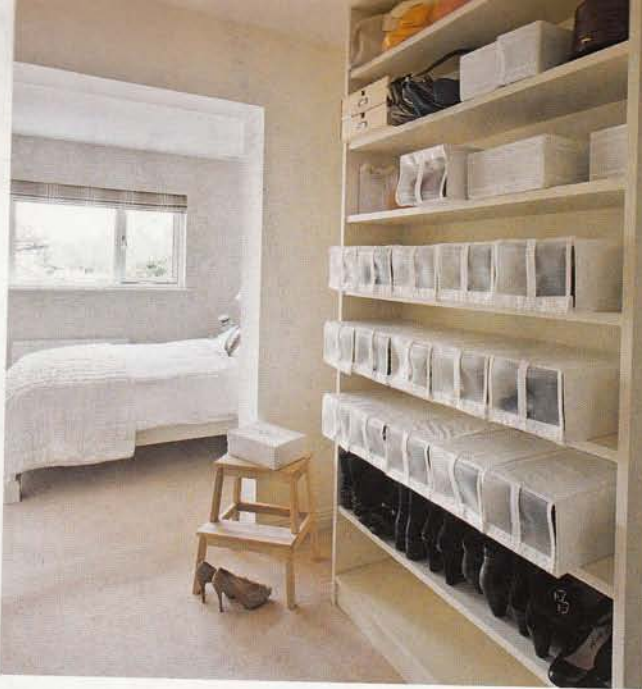


£495

Work of art
Wall-mounted, this one could be a Damien Hirst
Shoe box cube, Heal's

we wanted immediately,' says Caroline. The Clancys decided to add a one-storey extension to the previous addition to create one big living space that would have a separate utility room at the back and then an open-plan area that would incorporate a den complete with corner sofa and fireplace, a mini home office and a big kitchen-diner that opens out to the garden. 'Although the children are small now, looking ahead there will be five adults in the house,' says Caroline, 'so we knew the den would be a good idea, as we will need more than one living area in the future.' Then there was the small matter of converting the loft into a fifth bedroom with an en-suite bathroom.

Integrated into the plans was ample storage for everything. The architect designed floor-level toy storage in the den, so the couple's three-year-old daughter could pull out the drawers to get what she wanted and also tidy things away herself. But the pièce de résistance is the home-office area in the dead space between the kitchen and hall, which



6 Dressing area

Caroline and Seán's bedroom has a dressing space complete with a wall of shoe storage. 'With three children, everything in our house needs to be incredibly organised, because in the mornings it's really a case of grab and go,' says Caroline. For similar shoe boxes, try Skubb storage boxes, £8.99 for four, Ikea



7 Ryan's bedroom

This simple scheme can be adapted as Ryan gets older. His bedside table doubles up as a great storage unit for all his books and games. Hemnes bed frame, £139; Barnslig Rand duvet cover and pillowcase set, £15.99; all Ikea. For a similar storage unit, try the Juicy Fruits Quadrant roll-out cupboard, £112, Aspace

Sort out your children's toys

Keep them in their place with these buys



Pretty pockets

Keep floor space free with storage that can hang on a wall or the back of a door. Olivia floral hanging storage, £22, Feather & Black



Organised play

This unit comes with eight coloured bins to help categorise toys and games. Ultimate toy sorter system, £90, JoJo Maman Bébé



Bags of style

The beauty of bags is that you can easily move them around from room to room. Storage bags, £20 each, Cox & Cox

...s floor-to-ceiling cupboards for paperwork, board games, books and other odds and ends. The project took three months to complete. 'The build itself was difficult,' says Caroline. 'Although our builders were excellent and so patient with the children, it's the nature of the thing - living in a house with building work going on isn't easy! I think you just need to see there's an end in sight to keep your sanity.' Luckily, all the hard work and upheaval the family went through has paid off. 'The new living area is great,' says Caroline. 'It's lovely that we can all get on with various tasks in the same space without getting in each other's way. In fact, the whole house just feels more spacious, light-filled and functional than it did before. It's so much more family friendly and - best of all - everything has a home.'

TURN OVER FOR MORE SHOPPING IDEAS

For where to buy items shown, turn to our shopping directory



Get Caroline's look

Create a cool open-plan living space with modern pieces

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

IDEAL

Soothing hue

Keep calm
Clay Pale Intelligent
Matt Emulsion, The
Little Greene Paint
Company

£35.50
for 2.5ltr

Big bulb
Define a zone by
hanging three
of these in a row
MegaBulb pendant,
Holloways of Ludlow

£130



Downtime

The perfect place to stretch out
and relax at the end of the day
Indivi 2 corner sofa in
Grey Sazza fabric, BoConcept

£2,872



GREAT DEAL

Clearly great

Just a shade, but
just as beautiful
Madison glass
pendant shade,
John Lewis

£40



Cool cream

Nice and neutral
Snowfall matt
emulsion, Crown
Paints range,
Homebase

£18.98
for 2.5ltr

Flexitime

A modular sofa that can
be arranged to suit your space
Karlstad three-seater sofa and two
chaise longues in Tenö Light Grey, Ikea

£1,320



£36

High chair

Also comes in
red, black and
cream versions
Retro Circles
bar stool, Dwell

£129



Smart stripe

Made from 100% linen
Linen stripe cushion
cover, Oka

£8.99



Co-ordinating cushion

Amazing price and there are
matching curtains available, too
Mocha Milan cushion, Dunelm Mill

Raise the bar

This is what we
call a bargain
Eclipse bar stool,
Asda Direct

£49



Purple haze

Bring glamour to your worktop
by putting this out on show
Cast-iron shallow casserole in
Cassis (diameter 30cm), Le Creuset

£145



£45



Colour pop

You won't want to keep this dish
tucked away in a drawer either
Cook's Collection cast-iron shallow
casserole (diameter 30.5cm), Sainsbury's

FEATURE ALICE HUMPHREYS

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How to make everyday beautiful



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**WE LOVE THEM
- SO WILL YOU!**

10
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