

## Embracing Wide Open Spaces With 'Barndos'

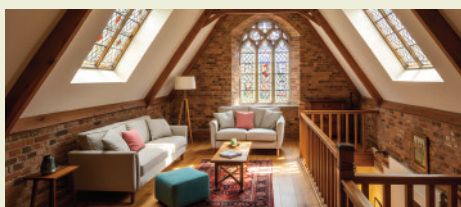
In the home design world, the term “open concept” has taken on a new meaning. If you like spacious layouts, the idea of industrial-meets-rustic style, and are looking for an economical home, you may want to consider a “barndo,” aka “barndominium.” These homes have become popular recently, particularly in rural areas, since being featured on a popular TV home show. Essentially, barndos are metal structures that have the same high ceilings as a barn with an open-concept design, often with exposed beams. They are typically built on large lots, which is why they are more popular in rural areas. So, what are some reasons for their increasing popularity?

- They are cheaper than a traditional home, and more energy efficient, helping to cut energy costs. The metal frame is a good base for insulation, which helps regulate temperatures.
- Their metal construction is good for longevity and durability. Metal is resistant to mold, mildew, rot, termites, and fire, and better able to withstand extreme weather, compared to traditional wood-framed homes.
- They are faster to build than traditional homes, taking approximately 3 to 6 months to construct, depending on the level of customization.
- Due to their open-concept design, the rooms tend to have better airflow, which helps reduce heating and cooling costs.



If you are dreaming of a barndo for your next home, keep in mind that while increasing in popularity, they still aren't part of the mass housing market. This makes financing more difficult (but not impossible) and may make it more difficult to resell the property. Also, check if there are any related zoning restrictions in the area you are exploring.

## Dreaming of a Church Conversion? Here's What You Need to Know



Have you ever looked at a church with its beautiful stained-glass windows and thought what a wonderful home it would make? As church attendance declines, more churches are being scooped up by reno enthusiasts. If a church conversion is something you are thinking of, here's

what you should consider:

- Check what permits or variances you may need.
- Check if the church has a heritage designation, which could add extra costs or restrictions to the renovations.
- Before putting in an offer, research the building code requirements and have an inspection done to check the structural integrity of the church. You will also need to tally the projected costs of renovations to

bring the building up to code.

- Lenders may require an Environmental Site Assessment before approving a loan to check for hazards, such as asbestos and lead-based paint.
- Since churches are generally tax-exempt, you will need to have that revoked for non-religious purposes.

**Takeaway:** If you do put in an offer on a church, you would be wise to have it contingent on looking into and securing any necessary noted requirements.

## Think, Act... Live!

“Step by step and the thing is done.” [Charles Atlas](#)

“Deserve your dream.” [Octavio Paz](#)