

### Gather your team

For a complex project such as this, an experienced RIBA-registered architect will be invaluable (see [architecture.com](http://architecture.com)). Or you could use a design-and-build firm to avoid the headache of finding your own builder. Ideally, any builder you choose will be a Federation of Master Builders ([fmb.org.uk](http://fmb.org.uk)) member. Ask friends and neighbours for a recommendation, and visit completed and in-progress projects to check their work. Project management is a vital part of the process – only embark on it yourself if you have experience, plenty of time and are immune to stress. >>

**RIGHT AND BELOW** Fletcher Crane Architects devised this 60sqm zinc-clad extension to a four-bedroom Victorian house in Kingston, south London, for a family with grown-up children. Built with a steel frame and infill cavity wall construction, it was part of a complete refurbishment. The extended main bedroom looks down into the new kitchen. ([fletchercranearchitects.com](http://fletchercranearchitects.com))



### HOW IT LOOKS

Tips on aesthetics

from architectural designer Nigel Lewis, director of Space & Style Home Design ([spaceandstyle.co.uk](http://spaceandstyle.co.uk))

- Most councils require two-storey extensions to reflect the design of the original house by including similar materials and roof shapes. But some homes have features or materials that would be difficult to include due to their cost or lack of availability and replicating an older style may not look convincing, detracting from the historical design of the building. In this case, extending with an obvious difference in design may be acceptable.

- If your home is in a road of widely differing property styles, the opportunity to introduce a design that's distinct from the house may be possible, subject to local planning policies. Side extensions are more visible and can impact on the street, which is of particular importance in a conservation area, whereas extending at the back of the house offers greater scope and freedom to diverge from the original look.

- If your aim is to create a distinct design, consult your local planning office at an early stage.

