

# Expand your outdoor living options

**Expand your outdoor living options with a pergola, gazebo or pavilion**



A contemporary style Japanese garden features a shade umbrella so homeowners can enjoy their bonsai trees, bamboo, Japanese maples, grasses and azaleas. ( *Stock Photos* )

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**Content That Works**

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With spring and warmer weather in full force, you want to venture more regularly beyond your back door and bask in the splendor of Mother Nature on your patio or deck. The catch? The sun can get awfully bright

and hot, and it's no fun being exposed to rain or other unwanted elements.

The solution? Take shelter under a protective partial enclosure such as an awning, patio roof, pergola, gazebo or pavilion, which can significantly expand your outdoor living possibilities and make your home more amenable to alfresco relaxing and entertaining.

"Outdoor living spaces are a great way to add value to your home and expand its livable areas without having to undergo an exorbitantly expensive or intrusive renovation," says Matt Daigle, CEO and founder of Rise, a sustainable home improvement online resource based in New Brunswick, Canada. "Not only that, but you don't need to heat or cool this new space, which saves on power bills and your carbon footprint. Plus, an awning, overhang or other sheltering structure near the rear of your home may help regulate your house's temperature by shielding it from the sun."

Leslie Chapus, vice president of sales for Miami-based Azenco, which designs and installs pergolas and other outdoor structures, says these additions also increase the aesthetic appeal of your patio, deck or yard.





**A pergola can be left open above, or a shade canopy can be attached to the beams to provide added escape from the sun. -**

"Anyone who is looking to spend more time in their yard, especially those seeking to host more guests and visitors after the pandemic subsides, would be a good candidate to invest in a permanent outdoor structure," Chapus says.

Which one is right for you? That depends on your needs, budget and available space.

An awning, commonly made of a cotton, acrylic, polyester yarn or vinyl canvas stretched over a rigid frame that hangs and angles down from the side of your house, can be an affordable option, typically ranging from as low as \$1,400 installed.

"Most of the time you see awnings over a dining space, but they can also be used for a seating pit. They are a great option when you're right

against the house or have a deck parallel to the house because they have to be mounted on your home's exterior," says Joe Raboine, director of residential hardscapes for Belgard in Atlanta.

Alternatively, ponder a roof extension (also called a patio roof), which also attaches to your home's exterior and hangs down on an angle but features a much more sturdy and solid wooden frame and a proper shingled roof supported by posts. Expect to pay \$6,000 and up, depending on size.



**A worker installs an awning on a house wall. Awnings can be installed for as low as \$1,400. -**

If you don't want a structure attached to your home, consider a wood, metal, PVC or composite pergola, comprised of four vertical posts that support a lattice of crossbeams that can be covered with a tarp or temporary shade, left uncovered, or used to grow roses or vines.

"A standard pergola with limited shade and no weather protection remains the most popular vertical feature in yards," says Raboine, adding that you will likely spend \$5,000 and up for a pergola.

Instead, add a free-standing gazebo -- a square, rectangular, hexagonal or octagonal-shaped structure with four to eight pillars, a solid roof, and open sides surrounding it. These can be built over wood decking, on a concrete pad or over a flat stretch of grass. Gazebo costs, including labor and materials, range from about \$3,400 to \$9,600, per HomeAdvisor.

"When considering a gazebo or other wood structure, think about its long-term maintenance -- especially ones built from wood," says Travis Nolan, owner of Old Crow Painting in Tampa, Florida. "These should be properly weatherproofed initially and throughout their lifetime, especially in human and subtropical environments. A high-quality oil stain will last around five to seven years before needing to be reapplied, but will keep the wood rich and beautiful while protecting it from the elements."





**A pavilion is a large, sturdy addition with more structural support in the roof. -**

Your next step up is a rectangular-shaped pavilion, which is similar to a gazebo but usually larger and boasting more structural support in the roof.

"Typically, a full pavilion features a standard covered roof, is free-standing with four legs, and requires more materials and labor," Raboine explains. He estimates that a large pavilion can run \$20,000 and up, including installation.

As with any home improvement project, it's important to do your homework, learn if your municipality will allow it, and research outdoor structure products and installation professionals thoroughly.

"Materials and quality craftsmanship are a crucial factor. Look for a product that is well-built with a good track record of customer reviews

as well as a qualified installer who can handle any permitting or local code concerns on your behalf," recommends Chapus.

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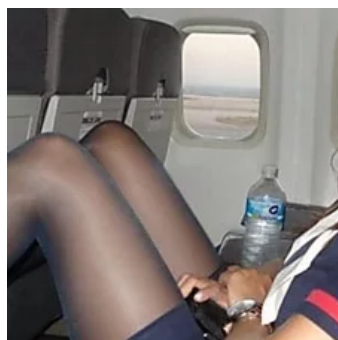
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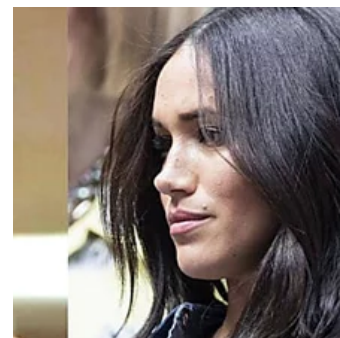
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