

# around the HOUSE

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## More Than Dirty Laundry

**It seems there is no better time to “multitask” than laundry time.**

In order to be able to get everything else “done” when the actual machines are doing their job, centrally locating the laundry operations



within the home will help you get the job done more comfortably.

The benefits of locating or relocating the laundry area on the main level are obvious. If you use a wheelchair, a main-level laundry space is the only practical solution.

For others, it can save time running up and down stairs and avoid the possibility of falling on the stairs while hauling laundry.

## Location, Location, Location

An effective location may be adjacent to the main bedroom yet not too far from all the others.

This will depend on where the majority of laundry is coming from. I recently designed a home with pocket doors from the master bedroom and the hallway that connects to the secondary bedrooms.

The laundry room should preferably have nearby access to the master closets. It's best to separate the actual walk-in closet and laundry room for

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humidity reasons, which can be an issue in the Midwest. But they have been successfully combined in the same space.

## Right in the Side Pocket

Pocket doors are a good passage choice, as you may have your hands full when actively going through. Remember the wall framing or plumbing requirements where the pocket is located.

Sometimes a double-framed two-by-four wall is preferred when considering the wall space a pocket door saves, as opposed to swinging doors that are open against the wall.

Cabinets and plumbing require a solid wall for pipes and structure

when hanging. If a pocket-door void is behind them, the structure will not be adequate. Pocket doors are especially effective if there are two doors into the room.

Make sure to include a door silencer (bumper within the pocket itself) to avoid slamming the door. Consider a door edge four-inch-by-nine-inch double-sided pocket door handle so you don't have to pull on the door itself to close, or dig your fingers into a small-diameter ring.

Pocket doors are great, but the standard door edge pull hardware is anything but Universal Design and can be so annoying.

The product noted is a good pull and possible locking solution for a pocket door. I'm not making an endorsement here, but a good and hard-to-find item is at [hangingdoorhardware.com/pocket-doors/ada](http://hangingdoorhardware.com/pocket-doors/ada).

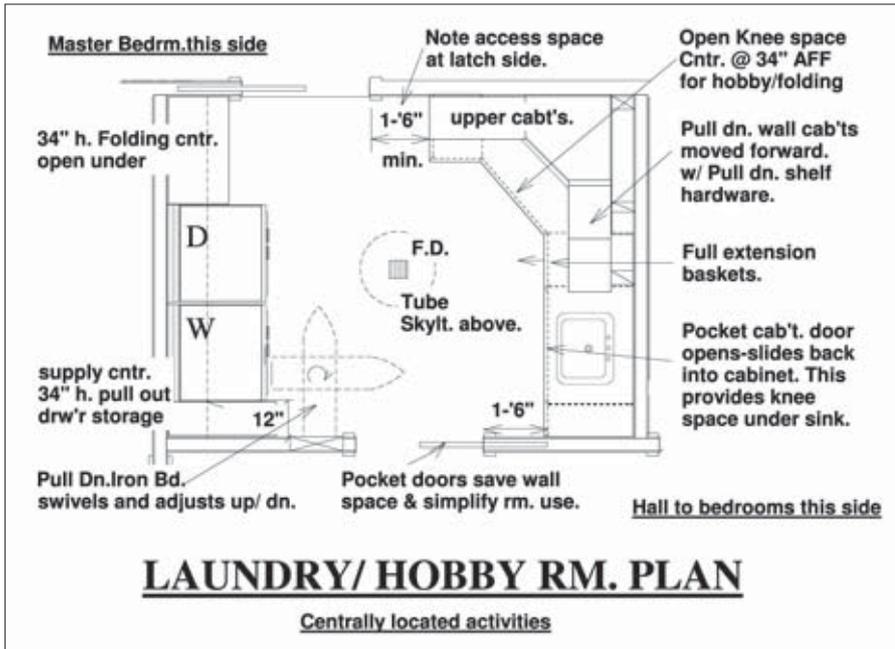
## What's in a Wall?

It takes more than a three-foot-wide door to make any door passage accessible.

Just as important is the ability to access or reach the door handle. If you use a wheelchair, you're well aware of the 18–24 inches required at the pull end of the door. With a pocket door, a side approach will be required to reach that pull, and the adjacent wall side space is needed for footrest clearance.

A 12-inch-high “indestructible wall” tile base detail with concrete backer board is best so the footrest will not destroy the walls in locations such as this. Remember to place door kick plates on all wheelchair passage doors, as damage may be a concern.

A pocket door should also be enclosed at the top and insulated. In all wet and high-humidity areas, use fiberglass matt drywall that has no cellulose contained within and thus will not allow mold growth. This can



become an issue in high-humidity areas and within the pocket itself.

## All in One

Keep in mind there are venting code requirements for the dryer.

The 2009 International Residential Code states the vent can't be longer than 20 feet, and you'll need a fan to make sure the air will make it to the exterior.

However, dryer vents can be a source of allergens and mold, and they have been known to be a fire hazard as lint can build up. Vents can also be costly to install with all the bends, and they suck the rooms' newly cooled or heated air out of the house. They can be very inefficient.

When your laundry room is located deep within the home, a "ventless laundry machine" may be the solution. There are several brands, but a really good unit is the Thor WD9900 ([oasisappliance.com/products/thor/index.html](http://oasisappliance.com/products/thor/index.html)). It's the size of a dishwasher.

The washing and drying functions occur within the same unit so there is no need to transfer clothing. It can even be installed near a kitchen sink or in a linen closet.

The machine operates on 110 volts and a dedicated 15 amp circuit. It's Energy Star rated so it will qualify for rebates. This unit is even raised and meets Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) criteria.

February's article will continue with additional laundry-space planning and detail considerations.

For more information, visit [universaldesignonline.com](http://universaldesignonline.com).

*PN and PVA do not endorse or recommend specific products or services. The descriptions here are purely for informational purposes. ■*



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### Tub, Toilet and Shower Chair

- The lightest, smallest and best tub transfer bench/commode chair available. Folds up and packs in a carrying case that complies with FAA requirements for carry-on luggage, making it small enough to fit underneath most standard wheel chairs. Capable of going through most airport X-ray machines



**MULTICHAIR**  
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### Roll-in Shower Chair

- Push handle back, Cantilever fold-back padded locking arms, Adjustable swing-away footrests, Total-lock brakes on 5" casters, Adjustable seat height, Seamless padded Ensolite back and seat cushion.



**MULTICHAIR**  
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- Removable connector bridge section for shower curtain closure.

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