

NEWS RELEASE



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Sarah Susanka's Not So Big® Architectural House Plans Now Available Exclusively on Houseplans.com

*Architect and best-selling author offers eight of her own
"Not So Big" plans designed for today's informal, downsized lifestyles*

NOVATO, Calif. (Sept. 16, 2009) – Americans are downsizing. Leading the charge to offer high-quality, smaller home designs are California-based Houseplans.com and award-winning architect Sarah Susanka, author of *The Not So Big House* series and *Home By Design*. Houseplans LLC, the largest online source of affordable, quality home plans, today announced that eight of Susanka's architectural house plans are now available through Houseplans.com, including the original Not So Big House plan that Susanka designed as her own home in St. Paul, Minn.

"Not So Big puts the emphasis on quality rather than quantity and is designed to fit the way we really live today," says Susanka. "It's a message that's being embraced now more than ever, and it's wonderful to see so many people come to the realization that a house doesn't have to be bigger to be better. I'm thrilled to be working with Houseplans.com to make this simple truth accessible to even more people."

Susanka's architectural plans provide a level of detail, quality of thought and emphasis on energy efficiency that set them apart from other plans. While most plan blueprints are typically four to six sheets long, many of these plans are 20 or more, illustrating all the special details that make a design work together as a unified whole. Each plan has been molded, sculpted, tailored, and proportioned with Susanka's artistic eye, offering people without the time or resources to hire an architect of their own access to some of her most beautiful and well-loved house designs.

The architectural plans feature Susanka's trademark open floor plan, with specialized spaces for today's lifestyles such as "away rooms" and "poyos" (place of your own), as well as screen porches for greater indoor-outdoor connections. Plans range from \$5,000 to \$6,500. Houseplans.com offers free quotes for custom changes and their friendly and knowledgeable customer service staff is available to answer questions.

"With her wonderful Not So Bigbooks, Sarah has become the J. K. Rowling of home design," says Dan Gregory, editor-in-chief at Houseplans.com. "She brings a brand of practical magic to the way she talks about the home, inspiring us all to think about the elements that really matter – the quality of light, a comfortable layout, the importance of personal touches like reading nooks, how a stairway can serve as a seat or display area, and the way changes in ceiling height can add a sense of spaciousness."

Not So Big Architectural House Plans for the Way We Really Live

Few people have had as great an influence on the American home and lifestyle as Sarah Susanka. Just over ten years ago, Susanka's "build-better-not-bigger" message from her first book, *The Not So Big House*, became the rallying cry for professionals and homeowners seeking houses designed with quality and character, rather than simply to impress the neighbors.

Today, Susanka is well known as an accomplished architect, sought-after speaker and beloved author whose books have sold more than one million copies. As an advocate for the re-popularization of residential architecture, Susanka is reinventing the world of architectural house plans. She shows how to make the most of our natural resources, as well as how to make both the space and time to create homes that are practical, innovative and personal. To accentuate the focus on energy efficiency and sustainability that is at the core of Susanka's design philosophy, all her plans available through Houseplans.com include special features designed to help keep utility bills low and indoor comfort high.

Bigger Isn't Necessarily Better

According to U.S. Census data last year, for the first time in more than 10 years, the average square footage of single-family homes under construction fell significantly – from 2,629 square feet in the second quarter to 2,343 square feet in the fourth quarter.

"The shift to smaller house sizes offers Americans the opportunity to focus on the aspects of a house that truly make it a *home* – quality, character, comfort and beauty," says Susanka. She asserts that designing homes for the way we *really* live, by eliminating unused formal spaces and tailoring the remaining spaces to fit the homeowners' lifestyles, is key in creating homes that feed their inhabitants' spirits.

Finding Sustainability the Not So Big Way

Smaller, more personalized homes are also more sustainable as they allow homeowners to minimize the cost of heating, cooling and cleaning rarely used rooms. With energy efficient features and detailing that's designed to last for centuries, Susanka's house plans are designed to have a low carbon footprint. Most importantly, homeowners tend to take better care of places they love, places of beauty. Susanka's eight architectural plans on Houseplans.com epitomize perfectly sized, well-tailored and better-built homes of beauty and integrity that will be cared for and enjoyed for generations. Plans range from 1,740 square feet to 3,476 square feet.

Eight Not So Big Architectural House Plans

Among the architectural house plans is Susanka's original Not So Big House, designed as her own in St. Paul, Minn., where she lived until she moved to North Carolina in 2001. Also available are the plans for her Home By Design Showhouse and Not So Big Showhouse from the 2004 and 2005 International Builders' Shows.

- **The Original Not So Big House:** Featuring spacious light-filled rooms, built-ins and an open floor plan, it exemplifies the principles of "not so big" design.
- **Prairie Ingenuity:** This home, which is filled with simple but elegant architectural details, illustrates how a few simple design decisions can contain costs without sacrificing spaciousness and character.
- **A Good Neighbor:** Designed to blend into existing neighborhoods, the hipped roof with large projecting overhangs, horizontal trim bands, contrasting brick base and two story form of this home add a sense of the past to what is in reality very contemporary detailing.

- **The Not So Big Showhouse 2005:** A variation of A Good Neighbor, this home features wonderful wrap around and screen porches, as well as a combination of open spaces, varied ceiling heights, well-placed windows and excellent lighting on the interior, giving a simultaneously spacious and cozy feeling.
- **A River Runs Below It:** This is an elegant yet modest Prairie-style home designed with primary orientation around outdoor views, accessed through floor-to-ceiling windows.
- **Prairie House:** Many of the hallmarks of Prairie School architecture are apparent in the design of this home, such as a wide, low-pitched roof, generous overhangs, horizontal siding and windows banded together with continuous trim lines – creating a house that can live elegantly but easily in the twenty-first century and beyond.
- **Home By Design Original:** Luxurious in feel, this home includes abundant windows, terraces and a large screen porch for virtual integration with the outdoors. The exterior evokes a Prairie-style feel with its horizontal lines, modest roof pitch, large overhangs and plentiful corner windows.
- **Home By Design Showhouse 2004:** This home, a variation on the Home By Design Original, is a model for all the key principles related to the use of Space, Light and Order as outlined in Susanka’s book, “Home By Design.”

To order a Not So Big architectural house plan, please visit <http://www.HousePlans.com> or call 1-888-705-1300.

About Houseplans.com

Houseplans.com, based in Novato, California, makes quality home design affordable to a wide popular audience by using all the resources of the Web to streamline a complex process. Their easily searchable database of more than 28,000 plans functions as a vast library of design ideas that includes, in addition to Sarah Susanka’s *Not So Big* plans, their *Exclusive Studio Collection*, *Rare Historical Plans*, and thematically organized designs. Their *Plan Customization Service* can adapt any plan to the owner’s site and requirements while their *Instant Cost-To-Build Reports* allow for thorough budgeting. Builder-developer plan sets, land purchase, financing, and designing from scratch are also possible through Houseplans.com. Follow the Editor’s *Eye On Design* blog at <http://blog.houseplans.com/>.

About Sarah Susanka, FAIA, www.NotSoBigHouse.com

Susanka is the author of eight books that collectively weave together home and lifestyle, revealing that a “Not So Big” attitude serves not only architectural aims, but life goals as well. Her books have sold well over one million copies and include: *The Not So Big House*, *Creating the Not So Big House*, *Not So Big Solutions for Your Home*, *Home By Design*, *Inside the Not So Big House*, *Outside the Not So Big House*, *The Not So Big Life* and the 10th Anniversary edition of Susanka’s first book, *The Not So Big House*. Susanka’s eighth book, *Not So Big Remodeling*, was released in March to rave reviews and is an Amazon.com best seller. Susanka is a member of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects and a Senior Fellow of the Design Futures Council. She was born in Kent, England, and lives in North Carolina. Join her online community at <http://www.NotSoBigHouse.com>

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Editor’s Note: To arrange an interview or secure artwork, contact Suzanne Fedoruk Herrick at 612-861-7807, 612-247-3079 or suzanne@fedorukinc.com.