

# Not your father's basement

BY Norm Lecuyer  
PHOTOS COURTESY  
Just Basements

Basements continue to improve in function and style

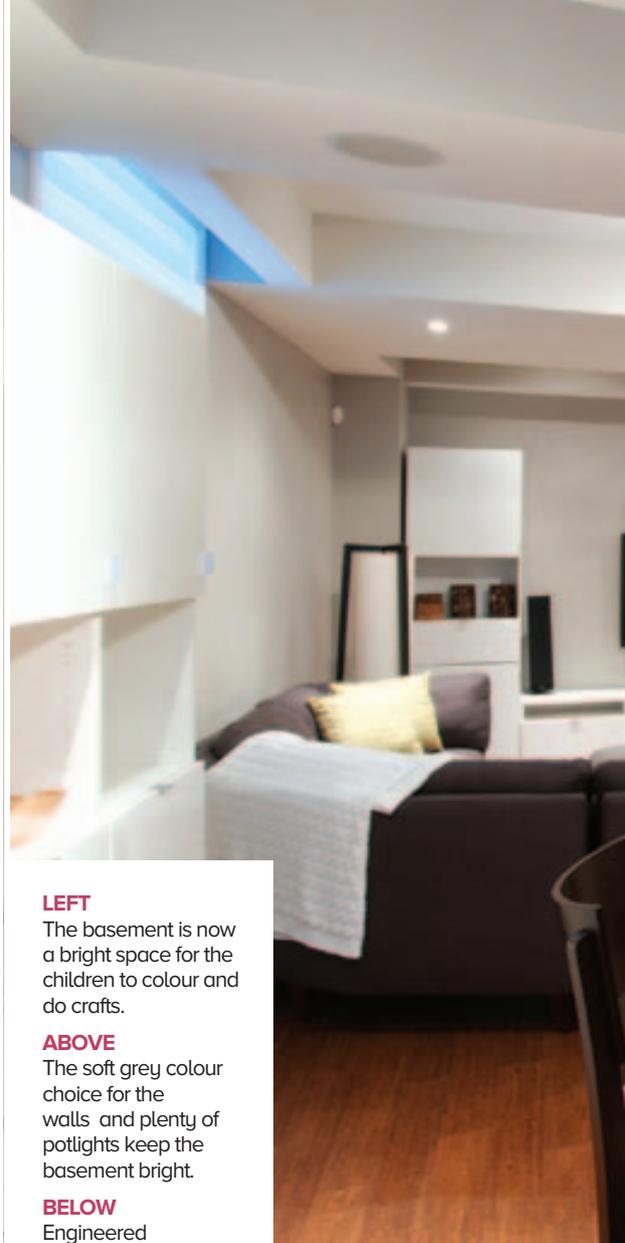
**H**omeowners are investing in their basements like no other generation before. New technologies, building techniques and products have allowed the basement to rise to the status of main floor rooms making it one of the most popular spaces to enjoy.

When planning your renovation, consider what you want to use the basement for. More than any space in your home, it can be exactly what you want it to be. Can your kitchen be a games room complete with pool table? Can your living room be a dance studio for aspiring ballerinas? No. But your basement can. A well-designed basement can support virtually any activity your family could want in a home.

New technologies such as improved exterior foundation control systems, higher insulation levels and better structural materials allowing for longer joist spans and higher headroom, have all improved the basement and prepared them for future finishing. Builders are allowing more homeowners to upgrade their basement ceiling heights to nine feet, and roughing-in bathrooms and kitchens to get it ready for future living space.







**LEFT**

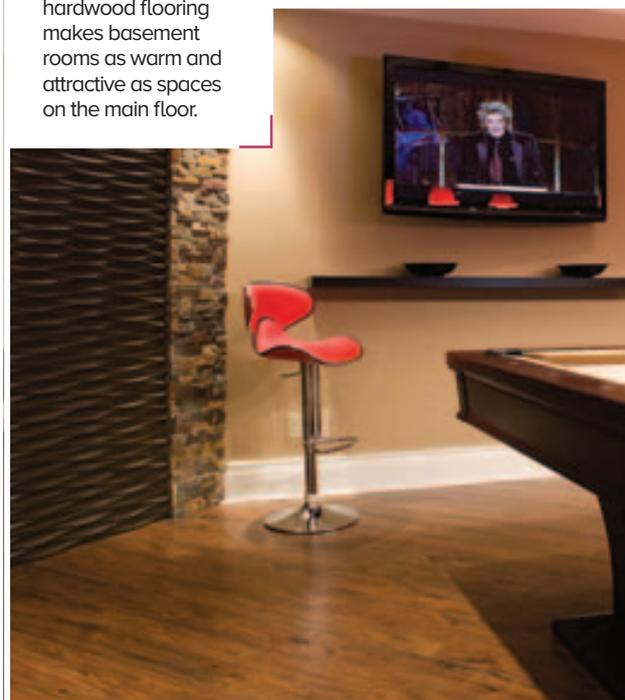
The basement is now a bright space for the children to colour and do crafts.

**ABOVE**

The soft grey colour choice for the walls and plenty of potlights keep the basement bright.

**BELOW**

Engineered hardwood flooring makes basement rooms as warm and attractive as spaces on the main floor.





Embrace your basement and all it has to offer to enhance your family's lifestyle.



Whether you own a newer or older home, style and design are important factors in any renovation, including a basement project. Hiring a designer or a design-build firm is now commonplace for lower level renovations. If you want to create a space that feels like part of your home, functions well and does not look like a basement, then a solid design is necessary.

New finishes and interior amenities are also fueling the new wave of stylish basement renovation. A natural gas fireplace can be one of the best investments in your basement. They are attractive and offer additional heat, which is sometimes in short supply downstairs. Thin stone veneer systems create stunning fireplace mantels and add texture, colour and flair to areas such as bar backsplashes, niches and feature walls as well.

New flooring products for the basement such as engineered hardwood add sophistication and create continuity throughout both levels of the home. Pot lighting, basement-friendly ceiling lights and wall sconces allow for lighting designs that your father would have never considered.

Appliances, electronics and furnishings are all available for great basement renovations. Home theatres with big screens and projectors offer great family entertainment, but are difficult to work into main floor spaces.

Even traditional family room furniture such as sectional sofas and TV cabinets are becoming more flexible to allow for layouts in a variety of configurations to fit any space.

Embrace your basement and all it can offer your family. It's space worth developing to enhance your lifestyle, as well as adding value to your home. **HC**