

As part of the remodel of their 1960s California ranch house, architects Kurt Lavenson and Lesly Avedisian converted an existing freestanding garage into a workplace for their design business. The old garage, which was used primarily as a toolshed, occupied the prime spot on their property under the sweeping canopy of a 300-year-old oak tree. They needed an office at home that was removed from the

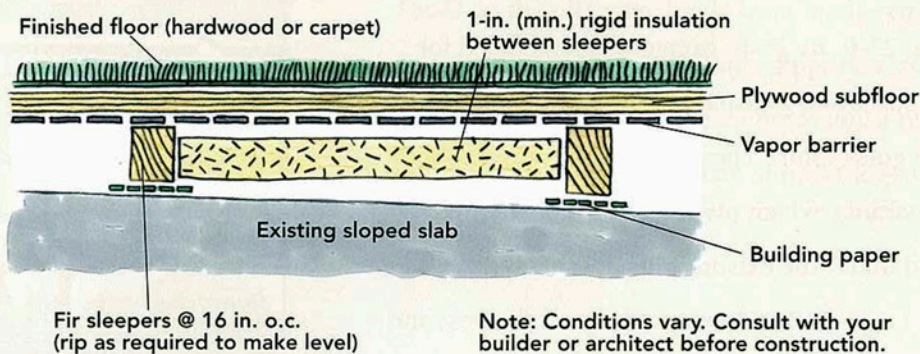
Garage Comfort

Converting a garage to office space typically involves a considerable amount of construction. The garage floor is most likely an uninsulated concrete slab (which can be extremely cold during the winter) that slopes slightly toward the overhead door. You can solve the insulation and leveling problems at the same time by constructing a

level wood frame over the existing slab and insulating the cavities below the new wood deck surface.

Also consider insulating the walls and roof of the garage and adding a heating system, which may simply bridge off your existing system or be an independent unit.

Leveling and Insulating a Sloped Slab



Note: Conditions vary. Consult with your builder or architect before construction.



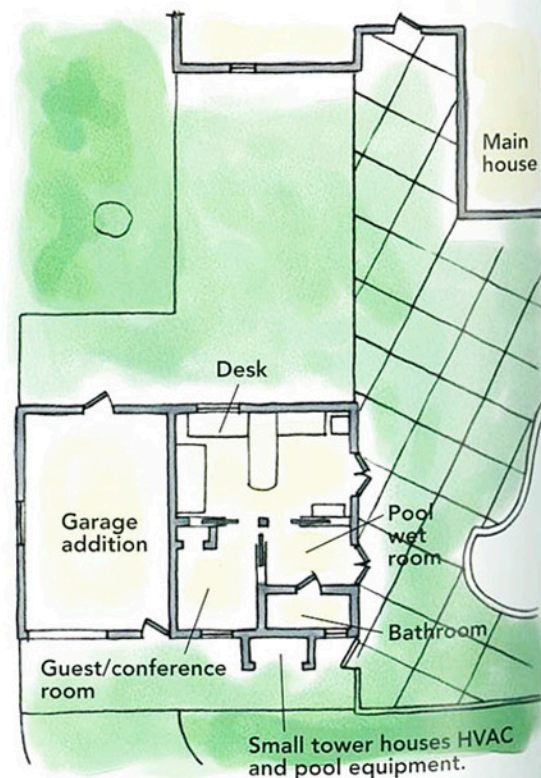
◀The renovated garage features two sets of double doors, which open 180 degrees, turning the office (at right) and the pool wet room (at left) into extensions of the pool deck and garden. A stunning, 300-year-old oak tree shades much of the property.

house for privacy but at the same time maintained good visual connections and easy access to it.

Kurt and Lesly gutted the building and reconfigured the overhead garage doors for wood-framed glass doors. They constructed a small tower at one end to contain equipment for the nearby pool and the air-tempering equipment for the new workplace, and built a garage addition onto the back of the old one.

The original 25-ft. by 25-ft. garage was remodeled for flexible office space and a casual conference area that doubles as a small guest room. The square plan is divided into four equal quadrants, which pivot around a central 6x6 post that was added under the existing ridge beam (see the floor plan at right). Large pocket doors converge at the post and can be opened to create one large space or closed for privacy

Garage Conversion





▲The arrangement of pocket doors around a center post allows for a variety of space configurations to accommodate changing work situations, visitors, and guests.

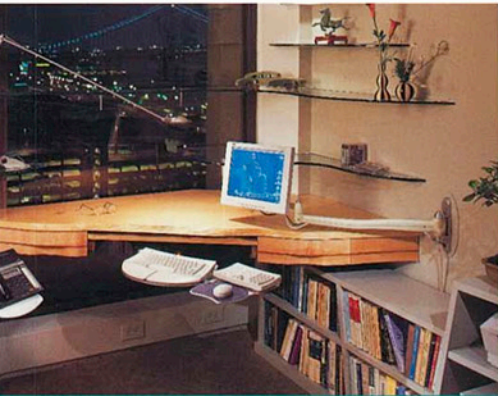
as necessary. The bathroom, located in the foyer, can be used for the pool, the guest room, or the office.

Desks in the office are made from birch-veneer door slabs, edged with Douglas fir and supported on file cabinets and flat files. The couple also incorporated a piece of galvanized culvert piping as the main support leg for the middle, shared desktop. ■

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