Creating a Split Level Entry

The information in this article applies to:

![Software Versions](image)

**QUESTION**

I need to design a split level entry for my plan. How do I do this?
A split-level entry consists of a landing with a floor height between the first floor and the basement and can be created by controlling the floor and ceiling heights in your plan.

To create each floor level

1. Open a plan in which you would like to create a split level, or create a new plan by selecting File> New Plan from the menu.
In this example a simple, rectangular structure that measures 30' x 20' is used.

2. Select **Build** > **Floor** > **Build Foundation** from the menu. In the **Foundation Defaults** dialog:

- Turn off **Automatically Rebuild Foundation**.

  **Note:** The Auto Rebuild Foundation checkbox is not available in the Essentials version.

- Select **Walls with Footings**.

- Specify a **Wall Height** sufficient for a full height basement. In this example, 100"
is used.

- Choose to derive the foundation plan from the first floor plan.

3. Your foundation should now look like this:

To create the landing

1. While Floor 0 is the active floor, select Build > Stairs > Landing from the menu, then click and drag to draw a rectangular landing.

- In this example, the landing is 6’ 6” wide and 3’ 6” deep.
2. With the landing in place, we are ready to alter the foundation wall for the doorway that will be placed later on. Select **Build> Wall> Break Wall** and place two wall breaks where the landing meets the foundation wall.

3. With the **Select Objects** tool select the center wall piece that we sectioned off using the Break Wall tool, choose the **Open Object** edit button, and in the **Foundation Wall Specification** dialog that opens next:
• Change the Wall Type from 8" Concrete Stem Wall to Siding-6

• Hit **OK** to close the **Foundation Wall Specification** dialog.

4. Now, select the landing and move it so it meets up with the Siding-6 Wall section.

5. Our split entry should now look like the following image:

Home Designer Pro has the ability to create Pony Wall giving the user the option to define two separate wall types for a single wall.
To create the stairs

1. Select **Build> Stairs> Straight Stairs** from the menu, then click and drag a stair section toward the landing.

   - The number of treads and risers that the stair section has will determine the height of the landing.
   - In this example, the stairs have six treads and seven risers, which puts the landing at a height of -47 1/4".
   - You can check the height of the landing by creating a **Cross Section/Elevation** view of the side of the stairs and landing and then clicking on the landing to select it and display temporary dimensions.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Note: Only Home Designer Suite, Architectural and Pro have a Cross Section/Elevation camera. Home Designer Interiors and Essentials have an Elevation camera.</th>
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   - Additionally, you can **Open** the landing to specification and change the **Top Height** to a reasonable value.
2. In an empty space near the stair section and landing, click and drag a second stair section going the opposite direction as the first set of stairs. Do not snap the new stair section to the landing at this time.

3. With the second stair section still selected, click and drag the Move edit handle to slide the stairs until they meet the edge of the landing.

- To make the stairs snap to the landing and build upward from it, click and drag the resize handle at the end of the stairs so that it extends into the landing. Release it, then click and drag it back to the edge of the landing.

- You can confirm that the stairs are snapped to the landing by either looking at them in a 3D view or by opening the Staircase Specification dialog. Two stair sections will be listed on the General panel.

- You can also adjust the lengths of the stair sections with precision in the Staircase Specification dialog.

4. You may encounter a message that says "Only one stair section can connect to a single landing edge" and recommends using the Break Line edit tool. To do this:
• Click on the landing to select it, then click the **Break Line** edit button.

• Click on an edge of the landing at a point where you would like to divide the landing into separate edges.

• In this example, the break was placed on the edge that is connecting to the stair sections right in the middle. You can see that it’s represented by a gray diamond edit handle.

5. Next, select **Build> Wall> Interior Wall** and place interiors walls on either side of the landing along with one in the center while remaining on the foundation level. This will enclose the entryway.
By default, the interior wall that was placed in the middle of the two stair sections will be in the background.

6. To make this wall easy to see for positioning purposes, change the fill style of the stairs. Start out by Opening a stair section to specification and on the Fill Style panel:

- Change the Fill Pattern to **None (Transparent)**
- Click OK to close out of the Staircase Specification dialog.
Your stairs should now look like the following image.

7. The railings now need to be adjusted to accompany the enclosed entryway. Double click on one of the stair sections to **Open** the **Staircase Specification** dialog and on the **RAILING** panel, or the **STYLE** panel if you are using Home Designer Essentials:

   ![Staircase Specification Dialog](image)

   - In the **Railing On** category, remove the checkmark from the **Right** checkbox.
   - In the **Railing At Wall** category, remove the checkmark from the **Left** checkbox.
   - If you are using Home Designer Essentials, on the **STYLE** panel under **Railing**, you can uncheck Left Railing and/or Right Railing to remove the railing from the corresponding side of your stairs.
8. You may have railings that are still on the landing. Click on an edge of the landing, choose the Open Object edit button to open the Stair Landing Specification dialog, and add a checkmark in the No Rail on Selected Edge checkbox.

9. Now, select one of the stair sections and click the Auto Stairwell edit button to generate the open below cutout on the 1st floor.

10. Lastly, select Build> Door> Hinged Door and place a door on the exterior wall section. Once placed, Open it to specification and adjust the Floor to Bottom value so it lines up with the landing.

11. Take a Camera view to see the results.