

Southern Living

Are Open Floor Plans Going Out Of Style? Designers Share Their Take

By [Sarah Lyon](#) | Published on September 1, 2025



Credit: KATIE CHARLOTTE; STYLING: TAYLOR HILL

Wondering whether or not [open floor plans](#) are still in style? It turns out that Southern interior designers are divided in terms of how they feel about open floor plans—some greatly appreciate them, while others are strongly averse. Below, we're sharing insights from both sides. Reviewing these perspectives will be crucial as you determine the setup that's best for your own household.

Why Open Floor Plans Are In

Some designers, such as Gray Walker, feel that open floor plans "will always be in style." The founder of [Gray Walker Interiors](#) in Charlotte, North Carolina, appreciates this type of layout for many reasons. "They create ease for living that promotes relaxation and togetherness," she says.

Tracy Morris, the founder of [Tracy Morris Design](#) in McLean, Virginia, also cites the benefits of open floor plans. "Open floor plans continue to hold appeal for their airy feel, natural light, and seamless flow between living areas, which is especially valuable in homes made for entertaining or casual family life," she says.

At the same time, Morris also recognizes that many people desire a bit more privacy and has witnessed some creative design innovations.

"Designers are using partial walls, archways, and strategic furniture placement to create subtle separation while still maintaining a sense of connection," she says. "Open floor plans are not disappearing, they are evolving to be more flexible, thoughtful, and aligned with the way we live today."

Why Open Floor Plans Are Out

While the aforementioned designers sing the praises of open floor plans, there are other Southern designers who are tired of this layout. Below, these individuals cite a few different reasons as to why they'd be happy to see open floor plans go.

There's Too Much Shared Space

Some of the designers with whom we spoke feel that open floor plans are no longer in vogue, and they attribute that to lots of time spent together as a family during the pandemic. "After the Covid years—when families were pressed into a single shared space—many homeowners now want environments that offer a sense of separation and breathing room," explains Jess Ebert, the founder of [Four Story Interiors](#) in Charlotte.

Her clients are asking for distinct rooms, but everything flowing together nicely is still important. From a design perspective, Ebert is all for satisfying this request. "This shift not only creates more livable, versatile homes, but also gives us the freedom to design each room with its own character and personality," she comments.

Rachel Cannon, the founder of [Rachel Cannon Limited](#) in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, feels similarly about the lack of breathing room that open floor plans create. "As an introvert, I am not a fan of open floor plans," she says. "They have created a culture where people think they have to be 100% together 100% of the time, which often means introverts are sacrificing precious energy in order to avoid being thought of as 'antisocial' when they want to retreat."

Whether one is introverted or not, there's also the issue of having to hear every sound going on throughout the house. "The cacophony that an open floor plan creates—between kitchen noises, television noises, device noises, plus just the regular conversation between people—can be a major irritant," Cannon adds. "Walls are actually a great thing for offering sound buffering and privacy."

They Make the Design Process Difficult

Alexis Warren, the founder of [Alexis Warren Designs](#) in Charlotte, admits that she was never a fan of open floor plans from the beginning. "From a design standpoint, it's extremely limiting: without walls or natural divisions, it's difficult to create flow or warmth," she says.

For example, open floor plans make it difficult to apply wallpaper, something many of Warren's clients ask for in their homes. "In an open plan, there are no logical start-and-stop points," the designer explains. "Personally, I need walls—for art, for texture, for character. In an open concept, you lose all of that."

Cate Gutter, the founder of [CWG Design](#) in Charlotte, also appreciates the many design possibilities at her disposal when she's working outside of an open floor plan. "I love it when each room has its own purpose and mood," she says. "Defined spaces give a home character, and they create little moments of retreat that balance out the livelier, communal areas."