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At Home in the Modern World

Home Security:
A New Series on
Protecting
Your Residence

The History of Audio
from Analog to Digital

Today's Smart House Everything You Need to Know About Home Automation



A wired home near
Washington D.C.

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Our Favorite Gadgets,
Apps, and Systems
on the Market

my house

When Steve and Alexi Conine first sat down with architect Brad Hoyt to talk about the design of their vacation home in Jackson, Wyoming, they had an unusual feature in mind: an interior slide. “It was their idea from the word go,” Hoyt says. “Usually, we’re the ones pushing the design, but the Conines were a lot of fun.”

In addition to the slide, the couple had a list of whimsical requests: flat-screen panels inlaid into the entryway floor for displaying videos and photos, a room for housing and heating sports

gear, a living roof complete with solar panels, a triple-stacked bunk bed in one of the kids’ bedrooms, and a Picard steam-injection oven for baking the perfect baguette and making pizza with their three children.

“We decided to try to do things you might not do when designing a functional home,” says Steve, who is a software engineer as well as the chief technology officer and cofounder of an e-commerce home-decor site. “Early on we went into mindset of ‘take advantage of what we’re doing here and try >



TEXT BY
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PROJECT
Conine Residence
ARCHITECT
Brad Hoyt/CTA Architects
ctaarchitectsengineers.com
LOCATION
Jackson, Wyoming

The Conine family’s Jackson Hole hideaway is completely wired. Steve Conine, a software engineer, installed and programmed many of the details himself, like the Dell UltraSharp flat-screen panels inlaid into the entryway of the home.

World of Wonder

A young family builds a Wyoming vacation home filled with playful details from top to bottom.

When building their dream retreat in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Steve and Alexi Conine worked with architect Brad Hoyt to create a smart house that fused technology and design. Like the rest of the home, the living-room furnishings blend high design,

comfort, and kid-friendliness, including a table by Isamu Noguchi for Herman Miller, a leather sectional sofa from Four Hands, a cashmere cable-knit-covered elk mount by Rachel Denny, and a custom, multicolored cowhide patchwork rug by Linie Design.

“We love all the open common space and innovative features in our home. It reflects our active, fun-loving, and creative family.”
—Alexi Conine, resident

things that haven't been tried before.”

The first design challenge was that the double-sloped lot was subject to height restrictions: 37.5 feet from the highest point of the roof to the lowest point of grade. So Hoyt stacked the home's three levels, raising the kitchen and dining area to accommodate a family room and guest suite underneath and bedrooms above. To ease the transition between spaces, he suggested heated concrete ramps instead of stairs, a “more seamless and unique” solution.

Hoyt's firm also worked to lay out the slope and geometry of the slide. General contractor Chris Mommsen of Stewart Construction Services found a craftsman from Idaho Falls who tented off the area and spent two weeks shaping the fiberglass gel-coat material into the structure. The Conines then bought a \$400 Philips LED lighting kit to illuminate the slide's interior; their 11-year-old daughter used the kit's accompanying app to create multiple settings, manipulating the infinite palette of colors into themes for different holidays. “It's been so much fun,” Alexi says. “We really don't regret it.”

When it came to the techy details, it helped that Steve could program and build some of the features himself. In the foyer, the five high-definition computer monitors in the cement floor are controlled by an app he coded. The family can pick which photos or videos to display—everything from molten lava to mud to a video of the kids playing on the foundation of the house as it was being built. “Depending on who shows up, it can be fires of hell or a nice flash of light,” Steve says. He wrote a second app to control the family photos that cycle on the two monitors on the wall >



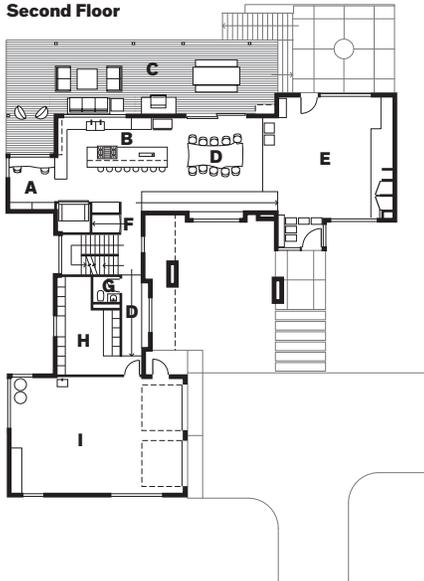
my house



Beams extending from the kitchen floor give the impression of an oversize butcher-block stage for a custom walnut-slab table and a dozen Molded Plastic

chairs by Charles and Ray Eames for Herman Miller (above). An interior slide was the first of the unexpected amenities the homeowners requested (right).

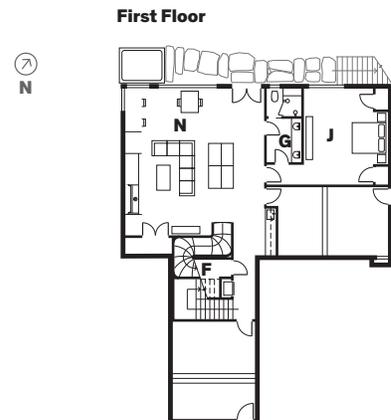
Second Floor



Third Floor



First Floor



Conine Residence Floor Plan

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| A Office | H Gear Room |
| B Kitchen | I Garage |
| C Deck | J Bedroom |
| D Dining Room | K Master Bedroom |
| E Living Room | L Master Bathroom |
| F Slide | M Laundry Room |
| G Bathroom | N Media Room |

between the living and dining areas, and posted the codes for both apps on GitHub. A computer cabinet that he set up in the basement controls all of the screens in the house, plus features ranging from security to heating.

The Conines also devised a solution for the blazing late afternoon sun on the west side of the house. They knew they wanted some sort of system that could provide more shade than umbrellas and awnings, so they decided to experiment with screens that would run along the outside edge of the house. The first thought was to use magnets to hold fabric onto railings, but Jackson's strong winds made that impractical. Eventually, they started looking at the heavy trolley systems used by meat packers, mocked up their own version using sheets, and figured out the best material for the job: stainless-steel chain-mail mesh, which would be sturdy enough to handle the wind, yet transparent enough that the family could still enjoy the mountain view. It took the architect and builder four days of experimenting to make it work, but in the end, it was the perfect solution.

Of all the custom features in the house, though, it's the slide that's still the family's favorite. "It's totally the top of the list," Steve says. "The architect and the builder really worked on it to make it perfect," adds Alexi. "It's so much easier than taking the stairs. Everyone takes the slide." >



It took a craftsman two weeks to shape the fiberglass gel-coat material into the shape of the slide, which connects a hallway off of the kitchen to the first-floor media room. >



Make It Yours



Command Center ▲

The LED lighting in the slide is just one of the high-tech elements in the house that can be adjusted from a smartphone or tablet. A computer system in the basement controls the screens in the house as well as the security and heating systems.



Made in the Shade ▲

The Conine family engineered the stainless-steel chain-mail mesh curtain system themselves using bedsheets to mock up the design. In the final version, a sunscreen with grommets from Whiting & Davis blocks the blazing sun while standing up to the strong winds of the Jackson Hole valley.



◀ Triple Decker

Compact bedrooms mean more space for communal areas. The room designed for the Conine's daughter boasts a custom three-level bunkbed for sleepovers. The wool rug is by Chandra, the bedding is by Coyuchi, the desk is by Misewell, and the chair is by Jonathan Adler.



◀ Charging Station

Rooftop Sunpower X-Series solar panels installed by Creative Energies of Victor, Idaho, generate about a third of the energy for the house over the course of the year. On clear, sunny summer days, they can provide energy for the entire house. Another green feature, the planted roof, was inspired by a trip to Norway. □