

SKY'S THE LIMIT

If you've been considering installing an elevator in your abode, here's why making the leap could take your home to new heights

Words Alexandra Longstaff



WHY INSTALL A HOME ELEVATOR?

Without a doubt, a home elevator could be considered a bit of a luxury. Installing a home elevator has many benefits — it makes life at home easier, smoother and downright functional. A home elevator gives homeowners options. And long-term ones at that.

First and foremost, a home elevator offers mobility around the home that could benefit many different household members. These homeowners might be families with young children who find tackling stairs tricky with prams and little ones, or elderly homeowners who find access via the stairs is no longer possible. It's very appealing to know that as we get older, leaving a beloved family home might not have to happen. A home elevator ensures that a home is kept in the family for life. "Everyone benefits from having a lift in their home," explains Dean Nesbitt, director of Infinity Lifts. "This includes people with disabilities or deteriorating conditions such as arthritis as well as nursing mothers who have been shopping with the baby and need to get to the second- or third-storey kitchen. Installing a lift can provide easy access to the home and enhance its enjoyment."

"A home elevator enables people to live in their own homes longer without having to worry about navigating stairs or moving out," adds Bradley Wood, marketing co-ordinator for Lift Shop. "In addition to this, lifts are also seen as a high-end item, which adds to the home's resale value."

"Initially associated with the ageing population, residential elevators are fast becoming a lifestyle inclusion for all multi-level homes," says Peter van Emmerik of The Residential Lift Company. "As soaring land prices force developers upwards, elevators prove a safer alternative to stairs. Residential lifts are now replacing the dumb waiters being installed to take groceries from the garage to the pantry and laundry chutes previously included in luxury homes. Many people use their elevators for commuting items that are difficult on stairs such as luggage and furniture. Some use them for their sick/older pets. Many people do not want to purchase double-storey homes but, with land prices where they are, cannot afford a [large enough] single-storey home, so installing an elevator resolves that problem."

"Other appealing features of a home lift include security and functionality," says Liarne Peek, national sales manager at Homelift by Cranetec. "For most, carrying bulky and heavy objects up and down the stairs, especially in a three-storey house, is tiresome. However, with the installation of an elevator, the risk of falling is reduced, along with wasted time." As a byproduct of this, a home elevator increases the value of a home, giving homeowners a return for their investment, whether this is reaping the benefits over a lifetime or selling their home.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

Installing a home elevator is a much more cost-effective alternative to moving house and, as with any expense for the home, prices vary depending on many aspects. "Home elevators can vary in price quite significantly depending on the type of doors chosen and what sort of shaft structure the lift is housed in," explains Dean. "There are cost-effective finishes such as stainless steel and laminate, or you can fit out your lift car with local custom selections. You can have a lift installed in your home with Infinity Lifts for as little as \$38,000 plus GST, all the way up to \$80,000 plus GST, subject to lift type, finishes etc."

TOP Image courtesy of Homelift by Cranetec. homelift.net.au

MIDDLE Image courtesy of Lift Shop. liftshop.com.au

BOTTOM Image courtesy of Infinity Lifts. infinitylifts.com.au

TOP TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

If you are considering installing a home elevator in your home, it's highly recommended you speak with an expert to get as much information before you begin installation. Here are some words of wisdom from those in the know.

Peter van Emmerik, director of The Residential Lift Company

"A home elevator is a significant investment. Make sure you test drive the one you want before purchasing it." residentiallift.com.au

Bradley Wood, marketing co-ordinator at Lift Shop

"Do your research. Look around and find a lift that is right for you and your budget. And try before you buy, experience the lift and the ride quality. And decide how much space you have available." liftshop.com.au

Dean Nesbitt, director of Infinity Lifts

"In the case of elevators, bigger is better. So if space allows, go for a larger car size with a higher weight capacity. This has real benefits should the homeowner need to be in a wheelchair in the future as it will allow more space for wheelchair and carer etc. A larger lift car only fractionally increases the price." infinitylifts.com.au

Liarne Peek, national sales manager at Homelift by Cranetec

"For those planning a new home build, it's never too early to decide on the lift that you wish to install. Ensure that your lift company liaises with your builder and architect from the outset to ensure that all measurements are correct. Likewise, always establish the lead time on a lift so that one element doesn't affect the rest of the build." homelift.net.au

CASE STUDY

This recent project in Mosman showcases an impressive home elevator installation. The homeowners of this project are retired and had to make the tough decision on whether to move house or stay in their much-loved abode. Steep steps meant moving around would be challenging as they got older. Choosing to stay in their home rather

than leaving it, the couple excavated 500 tonnes of sandstone so that they could install a much-needed lift. "Robert and Wendy are now able to stay in their home for many years to come, as they can use the lift instead of climbing the stairs," explains Dean Nesbitt, director of Infinity Lifts. "They have also added value to their home." infinitylifts.com.au

