

3 Ways to Use Your Attic: Bedroom, Study or Storage

By [DirectHome Editorial](#)

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8 min read

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A bedroom, study and storage area need different amounts of usable attic space. A bedroom must work for standing, dressing and getting to a bathroom; a study may use lower edges for furniture; storage can occupy spaces you would not sit in. Compare those three daily routines before choosing the layout that looks most attractive on a floor plan.

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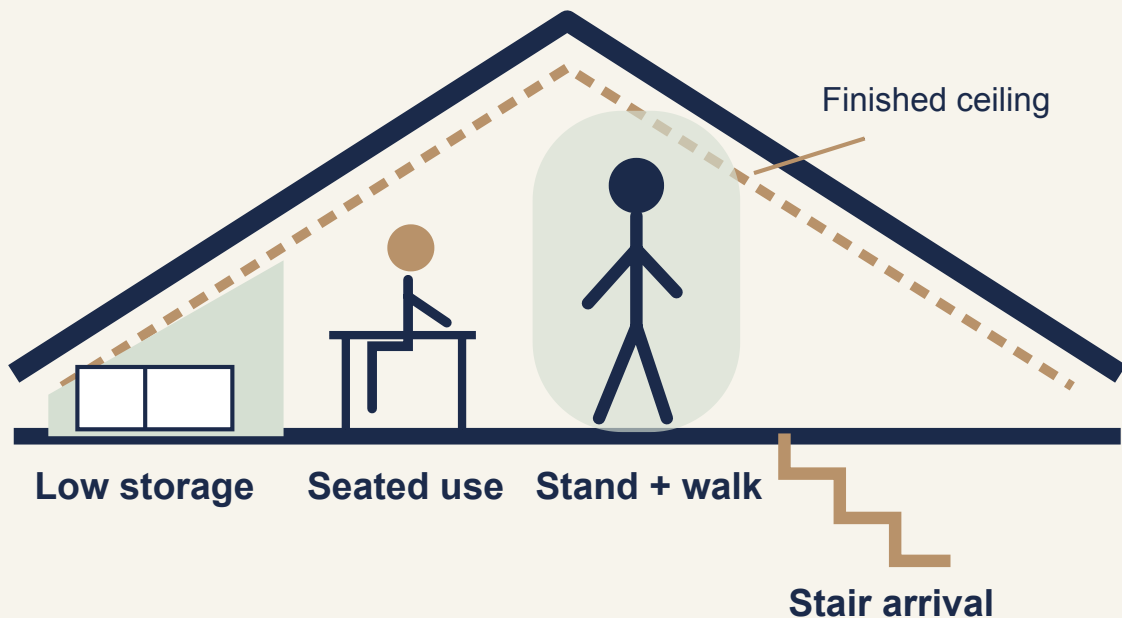


If you are planning an [attic conversion](#), begin with the person who will use the room and the route they will take through the house. The largest area drawn inside the roof is rarely the same as the most useful area. A generous-looking outline can contain a narrow walking zone, a stair opening and deep corners that are difficult to reach.

Read the room from the side before arranging it from above

Use the finished room section

The floor outline does not show where you can stand.



Concept only · no scale, dimensions or approval implied

Different activities need different parts of the section. This is a spatial explanation, not a dimensioned design or an approved attic layout.

A floor plan shows the bed, desk and cupboards fitting between walls. A section shows whether someone can stand beside them. Both are needed because a sloping ceiling changes the available height as you move across the floor. The comfortable route through the room may be much narrower than its widest dimension.

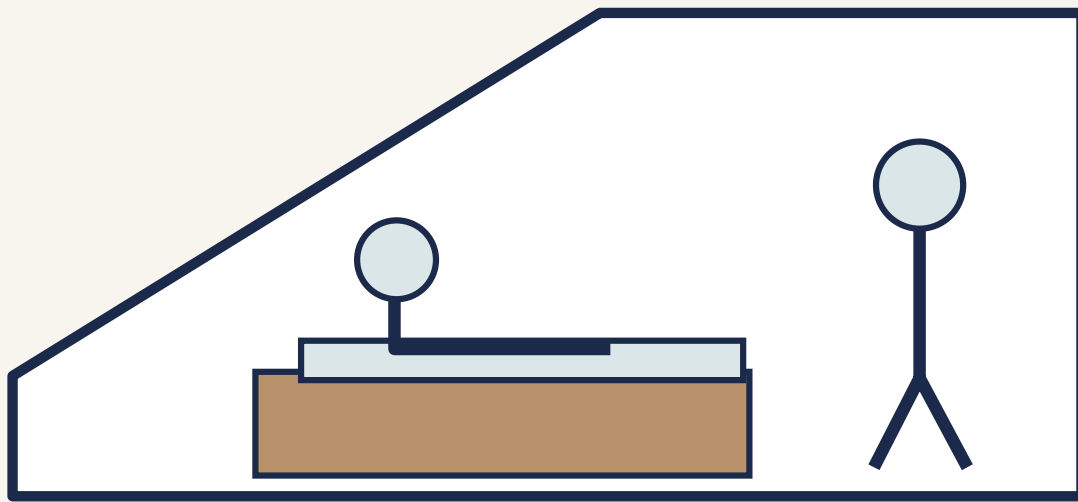
Use the proposed finished floor and finished ceiling in that section. Roof structure, insulation, service routes and linings all need space; their effect must be coordinated by the project team. Measuring to the underside of the existing roof and then treating that as the finished ceiling can make a layout look more generous than it will feel.

The diagram gives the central height to movement and places lower activities toward the slope. That is a useful starting arrangement, not a rule that furniture must follow. A desk still needs enough space to stand up from its chair, and a low cupboard needs room for a person to kneel, reach and withdraw what is inside. Draw those movements as well as the furniture.

An attic is incidental space within the permissible landed-house envelope. Calling a proposed upper room an attic does not establish that its form is allowed. The appointed qualified person needs to confirm the envelope and other conditions for the property before an extra-room promise becomes a design commitment.

A bedroom needs more than a place for the mattress

Test sitting up and getting out



The mattress is only one position

Check sitting up, getting out and walking beside the bed under the finished slope.

The most revealing bedroom test is the route from the stair to the bed, wardrobe and bathroom. A person should be able to arrive, turn, put something down and move around the bed without the layout depending on habitual ducking. Think about getting up in the dark, carrying a laundry basket and changing bed linen as well as the room in a daytime photograph.

A bed can sometimes sit beneath a slope, but the position of its headboard matters. Someone sitting upright, getting out at the side or reaching a bedside light uses a different height from someone lying down. The design should show these positions. A low ceiling that is acceptable over the foot of a bed may be inconvenient above the place where its occupant sits up.

A bedroom also brings clothes, luggage and cleaning equipment upstairs. If full-height storage occupies the only comfortable walking zone, the room can become difficult to use even when every item technically fits. Keep the route clear first, then work out how much storage remains. Where an attic bathroom is proposed, its service routes and access for maintenance need their own feasibility check.

If an older family member would use the room every day, repeated stair journeys may decide the issue before furniture does. The same roof space might work better as a study, releasing an existing bedroom on a more accessible floor. That is a useful gain from a conversion even though the new upper room is not itself the bedroom.

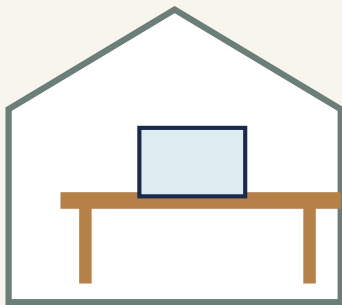
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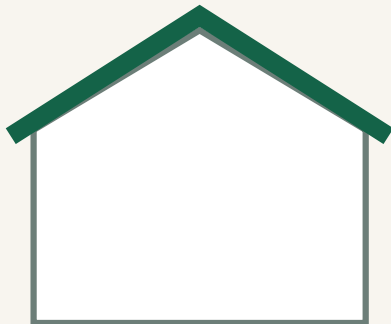
A study can use a slope well if the working position is right

A desk needs two body positions



While seated

Check screen, daylight and working position.



When standing up

Keep headroom and chair travel in the section.

While seated: Check screen, daylight and working position. When standing up: Keep headroom and chair travel in the section. Schematic only; no dimensions or site-specific approval are implied.

A seated activity can occupy a part of the section that would be awkward for standing storage. This gives a study some flexibility, but it does not make any low corner a good desk position. The chair must pull back, the user must stand up, and another person may need to pass behind it without

stepping into the stair arrival.

Start with the real work setup. A laptop used occasionally needs a different arrangement from two monitors, reference books and a full day of video calls. The latter makes the position of daylight, screen reflections, sockets and cooling more consequential. A desk beneath a roof window can look inviting while placing glare directly on the screen or bright sky behind the person on a call.

Keep the work surface in the drawing together with the seated eye position, chair travel and route to the door. A wall-facing desk may make the low edge useful, while a desk across the room may protect the headroom needed to rise. Neither arrangement is inherently better; the section and the actual equipment should decide.

Noise separation matters too. An open stair can make the attic feel connected to the house, which may suit shared family space. If the room is intended for confidential calls or concentrated work, the brief should explain the need for separation. A room that works beautifully as a reading corner may not work as a full-time office without changes to its enclosure and air arrangement.

Plan storage access and have the floor's loading checked

Compare each use against the finished room; these questions do not establish that a particular attic is suitable.

Proposed use	Space that earns priority	A tradeoff to resolve
Bedroom	Standing beside the bed, dressing and the night route	Whether the bathroom and everyday storage are convenient to reach
Study	Desk position, chair movement and a clear exit route	Whether light, calls and cooling work through the intended working day
Storage	Retrieval space and a suitable access route	Whether heavier contents and future service access have been allowed for

Low eaves can suit drawers, pull-out trays or occasional storage, provided the contents can be retrieved from the accessible side. Very deep cupboards often create a front row that is used and a back row that is forgotten. A shallow arrangement with a clear opening can be more useful than claiming every pocket under the roof.

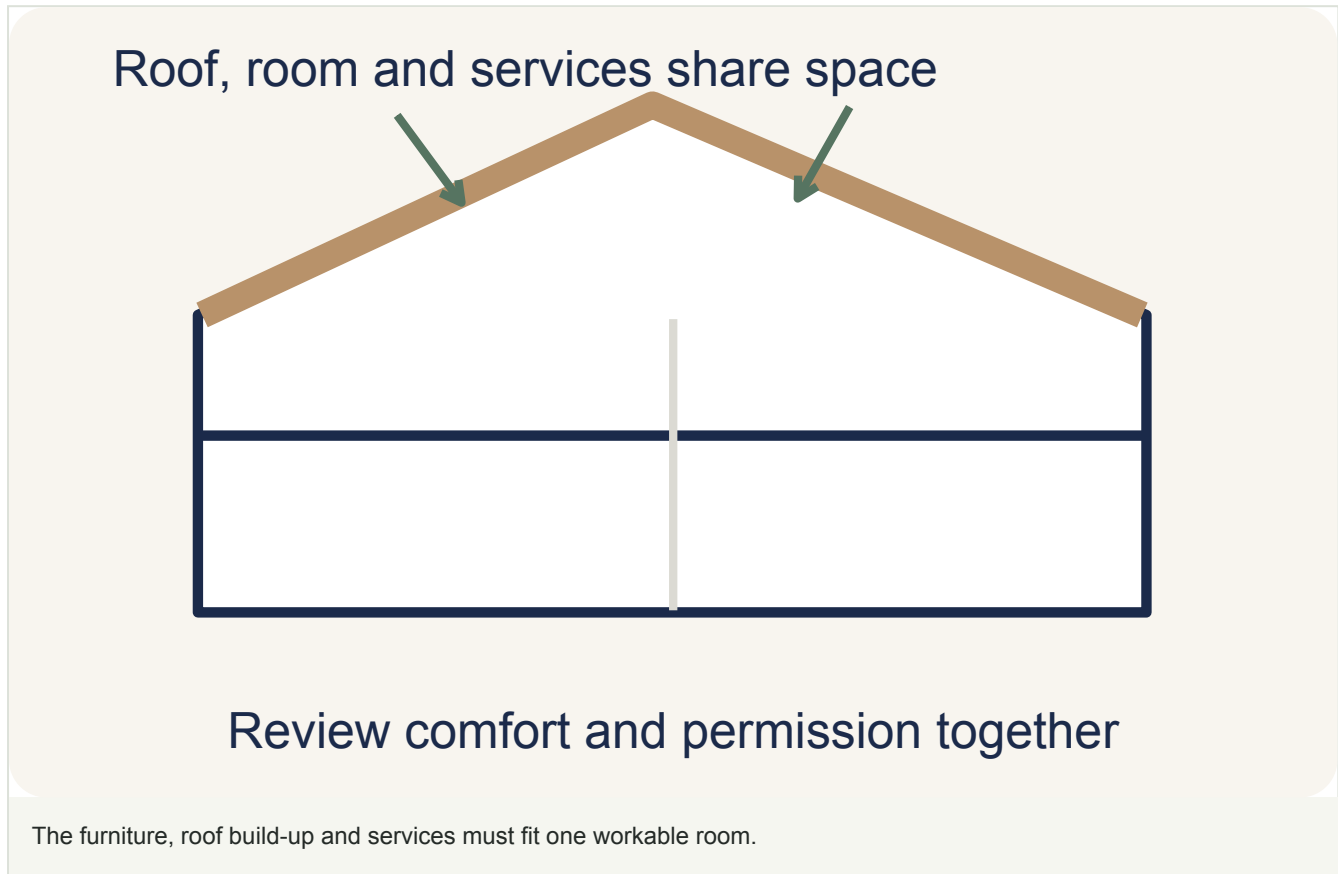
Decide what will be stored before the floor design is final. Suitcases, boxed books and bulky seasonal items place different demands on access and space. A former storage void is not automatically suitable for an occupied room, and an occupied room is not automatically a store for dense collections. The project team must assess the intended floor loading and the structural work it requires.

Leave roof and building-service access visible in the storage design. A removable panel buried behind a fixed cupboard is not conveniently accessible. Where equipment or a junction needs inspection, its working space belongs in the room plan from the beginning, even if leaving it clear reduces the

advertised storage volume.

Check whether the proposed room can stay comfortable for its intended use. [How to keep an attic cooler: roof, windows, ventilation and aircon →](#)

Resolve comfort and permission alongside the furniture



The attractive use should survive a second drawing with roof build-up, windows, air equipment and drainage routes added. Otherwise the room may lose the height or wall space on which the first layout depended. Establish where blinds operate, where filters can be reached and where water from cooling equipment goes before those areas become fitted furniture.

An owner-occupied landed house is not exempt from every building requirement. [The stated attic headroom exemption has specific conditions](#), including an attic area no greater than 10 square metres and a house built for the owner's own use. That is an exemption from the stated headroom and ceiling-height provisions; it does not settle planning permission or structural approval for the conversion. Have the appointed professional establish what applies to the actual proposal, and still judge whether the finished room is comfortable to use.

Keep a simple room-use brief: who uses it, at what times, with which furniture, and how often they move between floors. Place that beside the existing plans and the finished section. If the preferred use fails a key movement or comfort test, change the layout or the use before adding more fitted work.

The [attic-conversion buying guide](#) covers the wider roof, stair, structure and project decisions. For the first assessment, bring the available floor plan, safe photographs of the existing space and the room use you want to achieve. [DirectHome](#) can discuss the roof-space and staircase scope from that brief, including whether a different use would make the new space more valuable to everyday life.

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