

## Should You Envy People With Soaking Tubs?

Not all designers think so, for reasons both aesthetic and practical, given the athleticism required to simply climb in and out. Here, arguments both pro and con



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21 COMMENTS

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### Yes

While the built-in tub, a bathroom standard since Kohler introduced it in 1911, is arguably more sensible, many designers believe a soaking tub's sensuous, sculptural curves trump practicality—assuming you have the square footage. “A free-standing tub defines the space and adds a focal point,” said San Francisco designer Grant Gibson, who has installed 12 for clients. “The tub creates an optical illusion...as if it is floating.” To ensure that tub and bather remain afloat, be certain the bathroom floor can bear the load. “I’ve installed a big fat steel beam where my tub will be in my new house,” said New York interior designer Sheila Bridges, who noted that much lighter acrylic models exist. Since free-standing tubs lack ledges for soaps and sundries, design pros often suggest bath racks that stretch across the tub to cradle such accouterments. “It’s like a breakfast tray in a bed,” said London designer Veere Grenney, who nevertheless personally uses a separate piece of furniture. “I have a two-tiered, wooden table for oils and towels, with a large dish to keep things in when wet.”

