

Creating a Steam Shower

Reference Number: **KB-02820**

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The information in this article applies to:



QUESTION

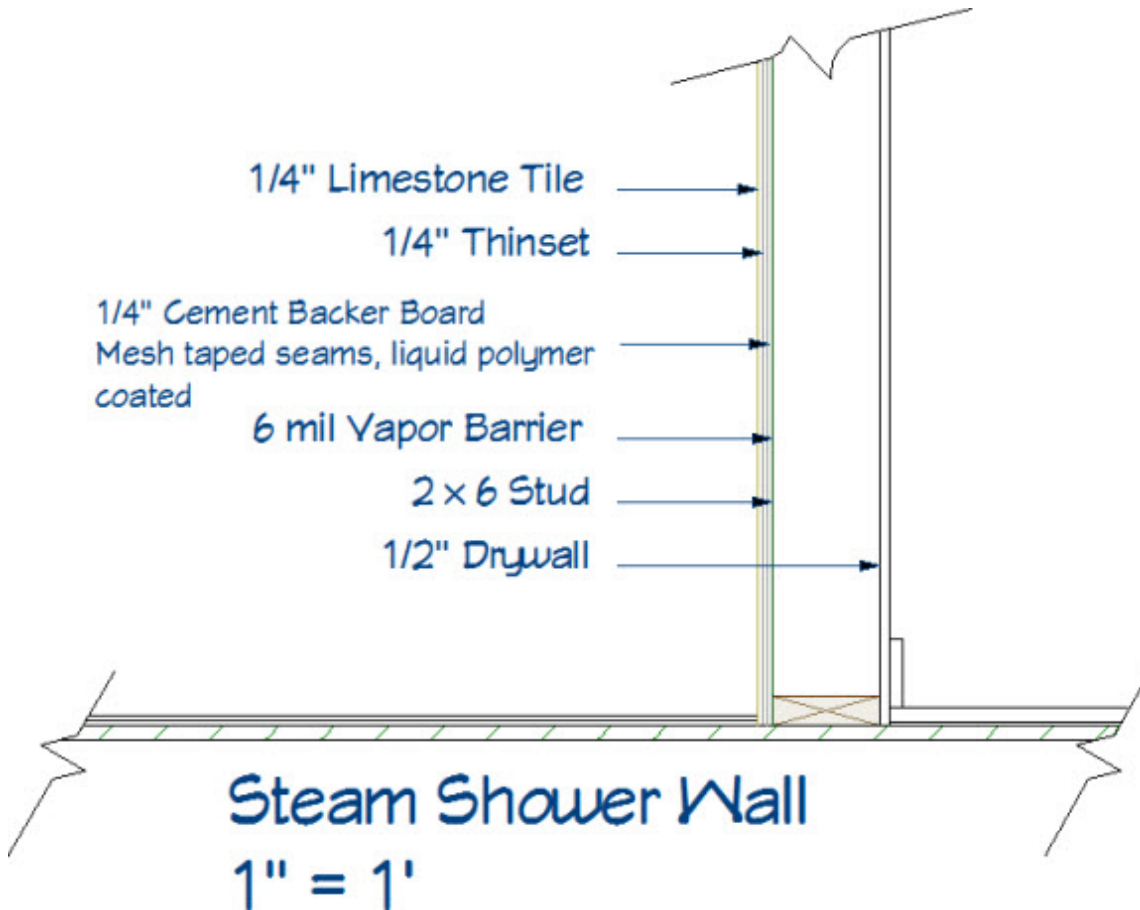
I need to create a steam shower in a bathroom and I need to make the walls vapor-resistant. How do I design this in my software?



ANSWER

In Chief Architect, it's easy to setup a custom wall type for rooms such as a steam shower. In this article we will show you how to define a vapor-resistant wall type, and how to design this style of shower.


To define the wall types

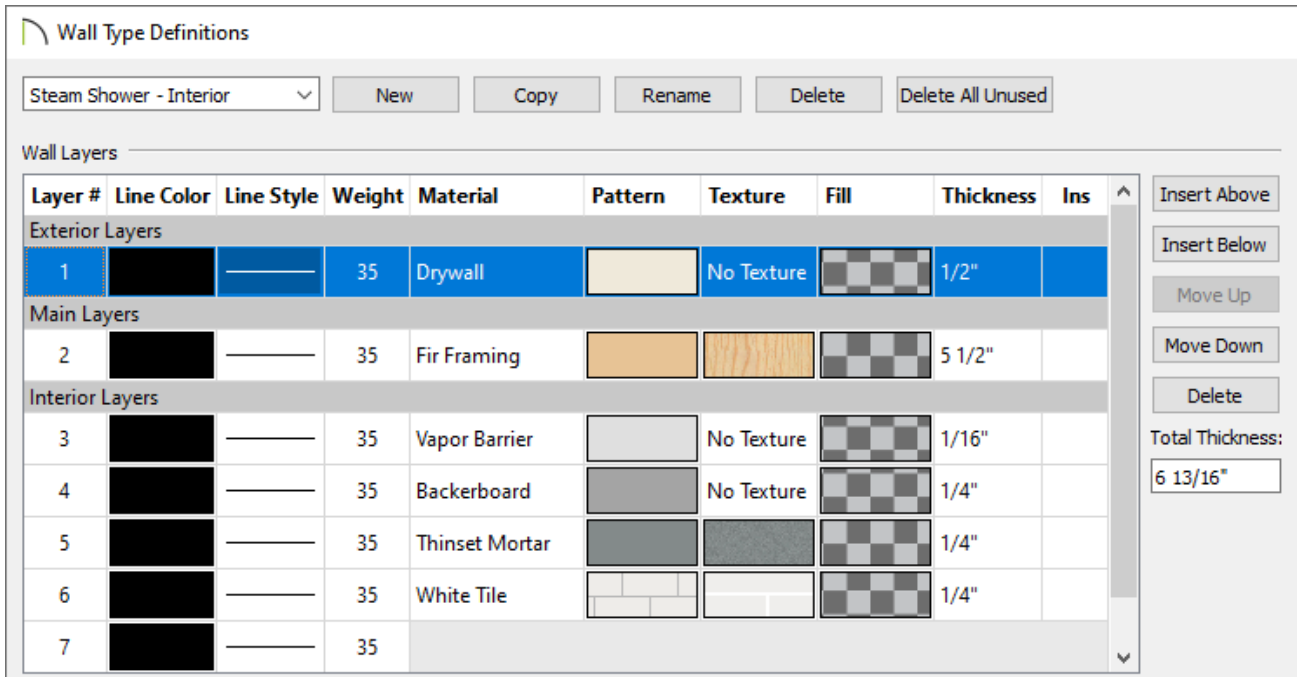


A vapor-resistant wall needs to at least meet the following criteria in the most common cases;

- A surface layer of tile.
- A layer of thinset mortar.
- Cement Backer Board with mesh taped seams.
- Vapor barrier.
- Stud framing.
- Drywall.

The wall type shown in this article is based on the common structure for a wall of this type. It is always best to refer to the building codes in your area for the correct structure of a vapor-resistant wall.

1. Navigate to **Build> Wall> Define Wall Types**  from the menu.
2. In the **Wall Type Definitions** dialog that displays, click the **New** button to create a new wall type.
3. Name this wall **Steam Shower - Interior**, add five additional layers by selecting the **Insert Below** button, and define the wall as follows:



The screenshot shows the 'Wall Type Definitions' dialog box for a wall type named 'Steam Shower - Interior'. The dialog includes a table of wall layers and a 'Total Thickness' field. The layers are categorized into Exterior, Main, and Interior layers.

Layer #	Line Color	Line Style	Weight	Material	Pattern	Texture	Fill	Thickness	Ins
Exterior Layers									
1			35	Drywall		No Texture		1/2"	
Main Layers									
2			35	Fir Framing				5 1/2"	
Interior Layers									
3			35	Vapor Barrier		No Texture		1/16"	
4			35	Backerboard		No Texture		1/4"	
5			35	Thinset Mortar				1/4"	
6			35	White Tile				1/4"	
7			35						

Buttons: Insert Above, Insert Below, Move Up, Move Down, Delete, Total Thickness: 6 13/16"

- **Exterior Layers**
 - **Layer 1:** Drywall - 1/2".
- **Main Layers**
 - **Layer 2:** Fir Framing - 5 1/2"
- **Interior Layers**
 - **Layer 3:** Vapor Barrier - 1/16"
 - **Layer 4:** Backerboard - 1/4"

- **Layer 5:** Thinset Mortar - 1/4"
 - **Layer 6:** Tile of your choosing - 1/4"
4. Repeat the process to create a second wall type. This wall type however, will be called **Steam Shower - Exterior** and the Exterior Layers section will have a siding material layer, along with an OSB layer, instead of drywall.

You are now ready to draw your bathroom and steam shower. In this example, we will start with the standard default wall tools, then change the bathroom walls to use the new vapor-resistant wall type(s) mentioned above.

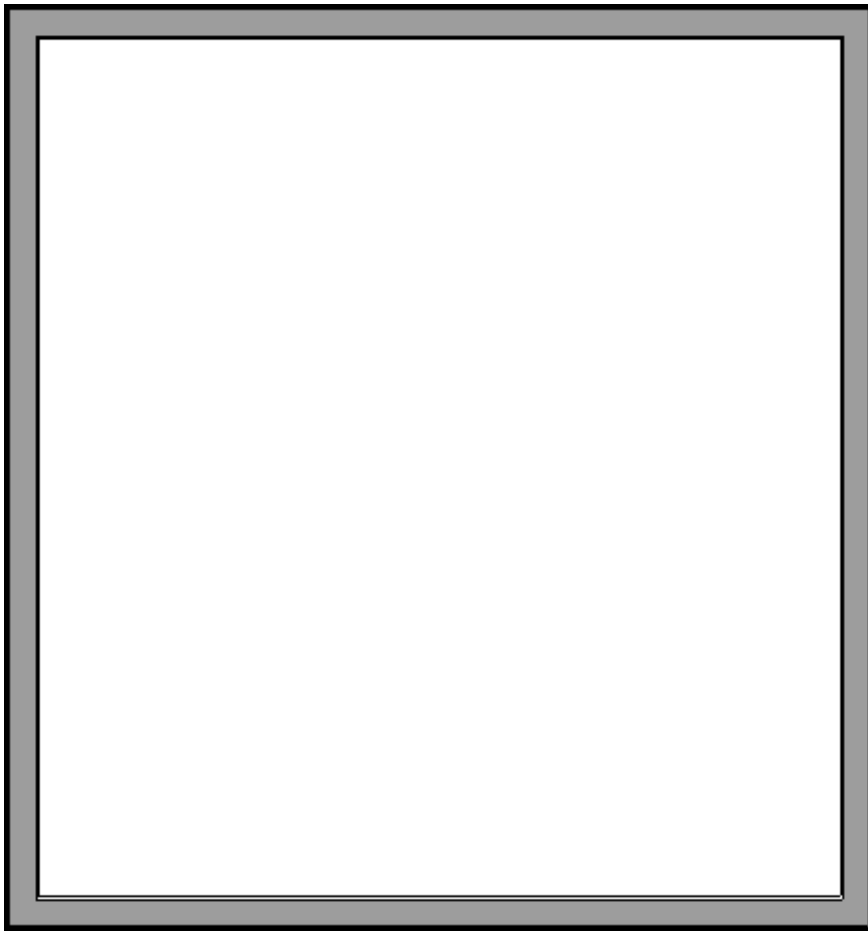
Note: You may receive the following warning for the Steam Shower - Interior wall type:



"The wall layers just defined have drywall on the exterior of what appears to be an exterior wall. Are these layers defined correctly? The exterior layer should be at the top of the diagram."

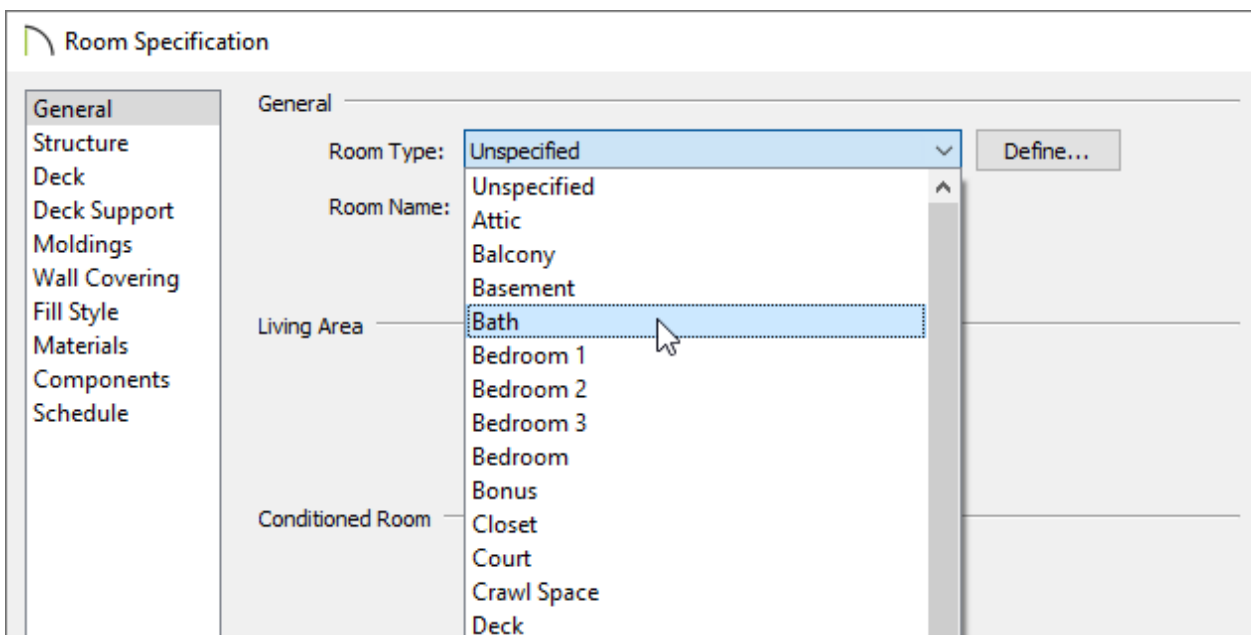
This simply means that the program sees the wall type created contains characteristics of an exterior wall, which would not typically have the exterior layer to be made of drywall. You can safely click OK and continue with the rest of this article.



To draw a steam shower

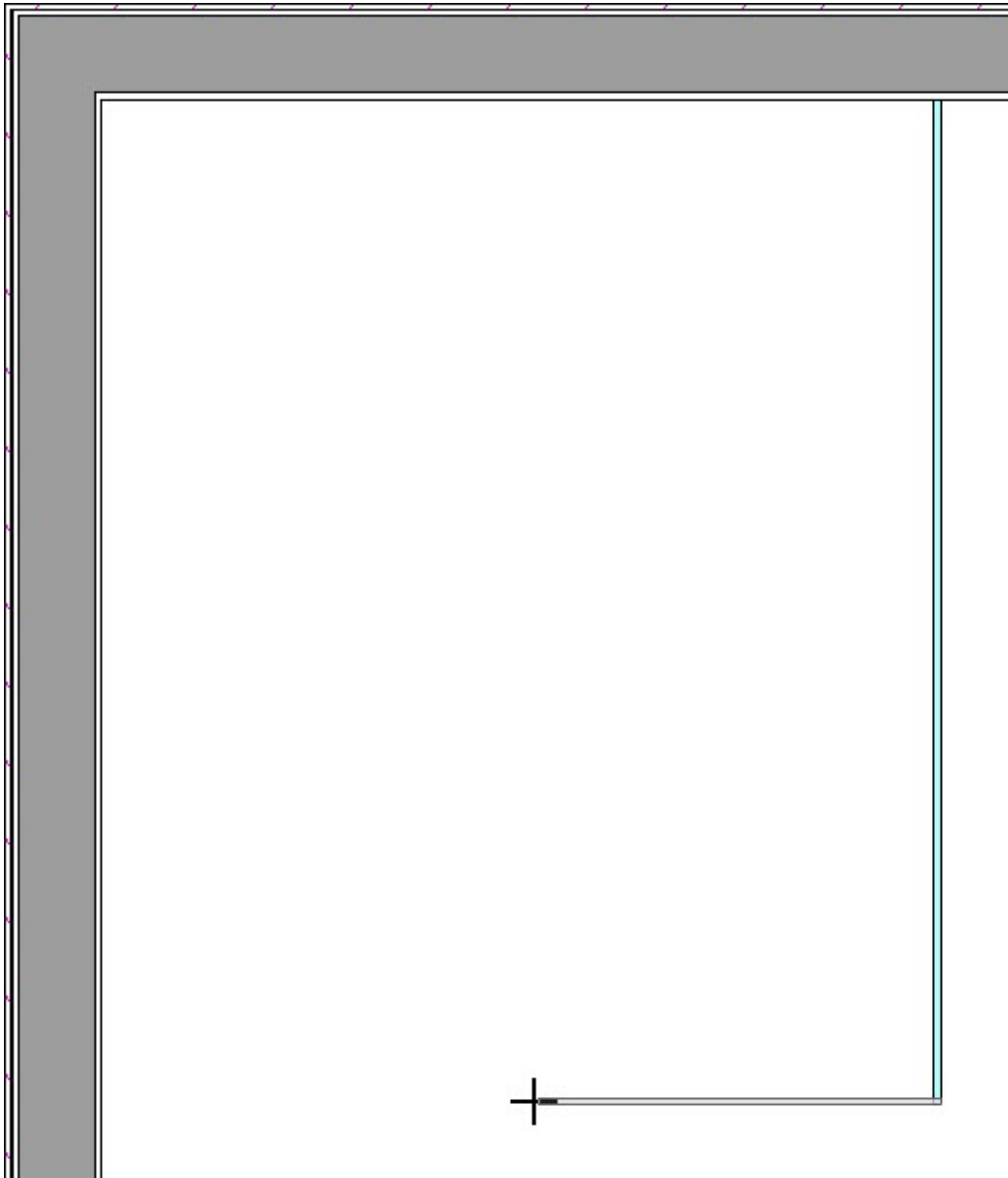
1. Select **Build> Wall> Straight Exterior Wall**  and/or **Straight Interior Wall**  from the menu, then draw an area to represent the bathroom.



- Using the **Select Objects**  tool, select the room and click the **Open Object**  edit tool.
- On the **GENERAL** panel of the **Room Specification** dialog that displays, change the **Room Type** to **Bath**, then click **OK**.



4. Next, navigate to **Build> Wall> Straight Glass Wall**  or **Straight Glass Pony Wall**  from the menu, and add two additional walls in the corner to form the area that will serve as the steam shower.

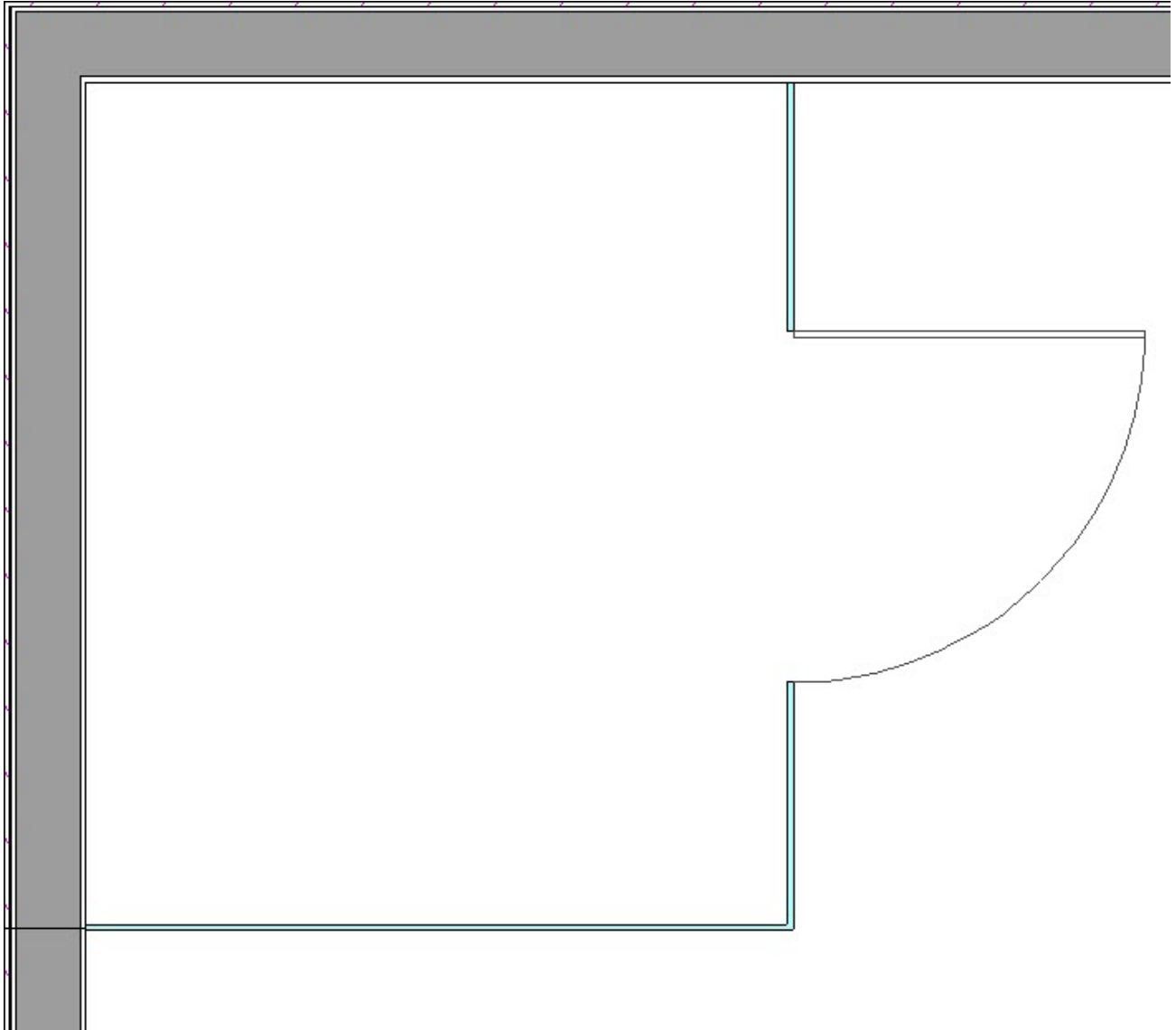


5. Navigate to **Build> Door> Shower Door**  and click along one of the glass shower walls to place a shower door.


Select and open the Glass Shower Door to specification to make size modifications, change the applied hardware, adjust arch properties, or to alter other characteristics such as the type of glass that is used.

6. Select the left, vertical wall using the **Select Objects**  tool, click on the **Break** 

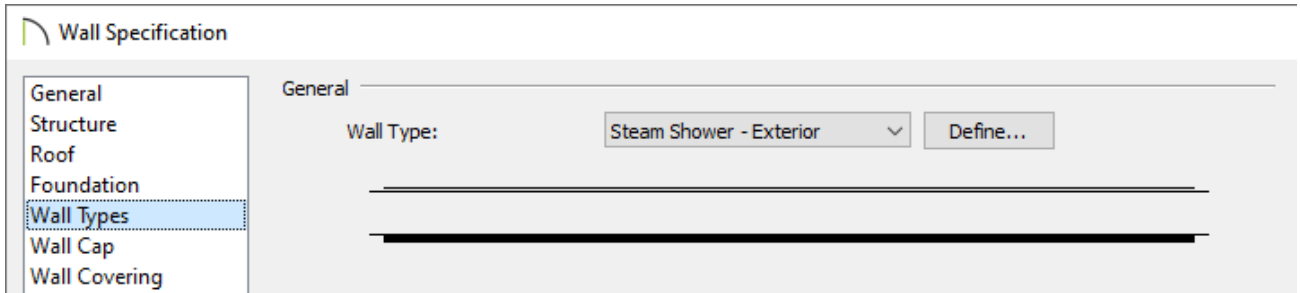
edit button, then click once where the glass shower wall intersects the exterior wall. A break line will be created separating the wall in to two separate segments.



Note: Please see [Training Video 303: Using the Break Tool](https://www.chiefarchitect.com/videos/watch/303/using-the-break-tool.html) (<https://www.chiefarchitect.com/videos/watch/303/using-the-break-tool.html>) and/or the "Changing the Color or Material of a Single Wall" resource in the [Related Articles](#) section for more information on breaks.

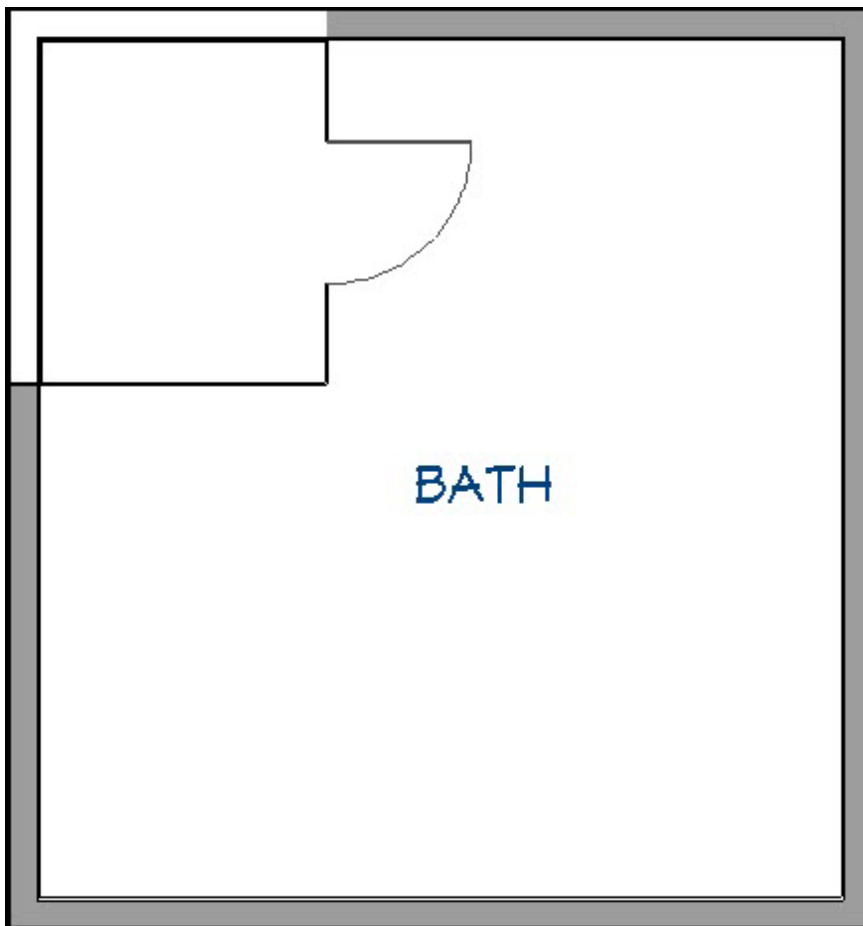
7. Place an additional break point on the top horizontal wall where the glass shower wall intersects.
8. Next, select the left, vertical wall segment that is part of the shower, **Open**  it to specification, and on the **WALL TYPES** panel of the **Wall Specification** dialog, change the **Wall Type** to the **Steam Shower - Exterior** wall type that was created earlier in this

article.





9. Perform the same procedure to change the top horizontal wall that's part of the shower to use the **Steam Shower - Interior** wall type. Do this only for walls that will be shared with other rooms in the structure.

Your plan may now look similar to the image below.

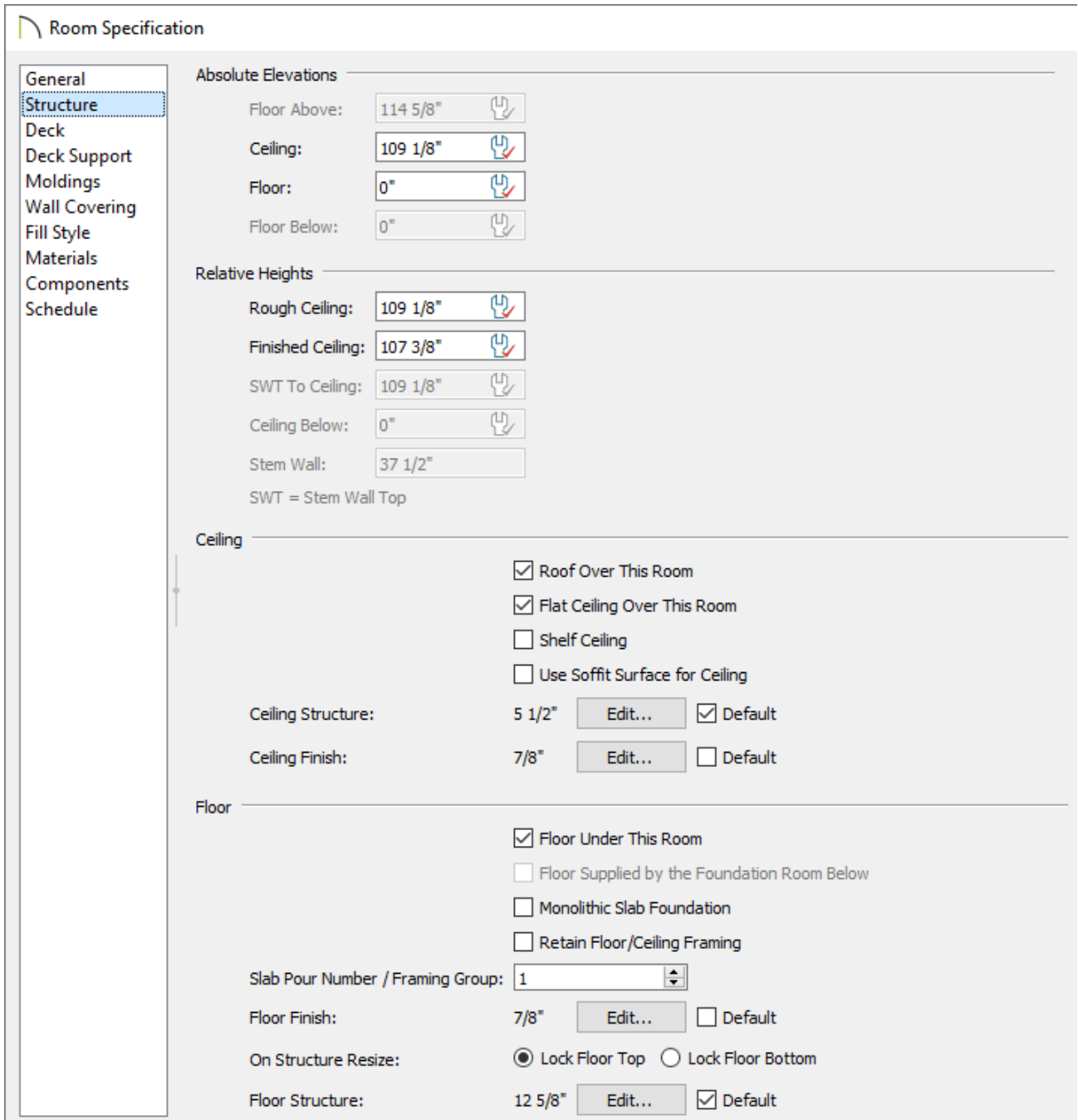


We are now ready to adjust the floor and ceiling properties of the steam shower.

To define the floor and ceiling

1. Using the **Select Objects**  tool, select the steam shower room and click the **Open Object**  edit tool.

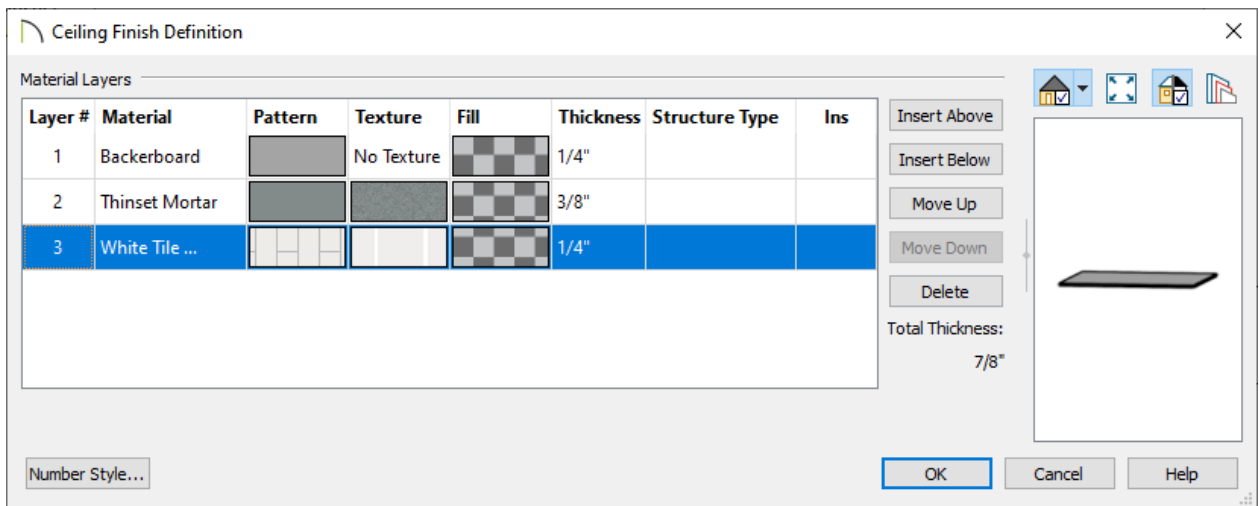
2. On the **STRUCTURE** panel of the **Room Specification** dialog that displays:



The screenshot shows the 'Room Specification' dialog box with the 'Structure' panel selected in the left-hand navigation menu. The main area is divided into several sections:


- Absolute Elevations:** Includes input fields for 'Floor Above' (114 5/8"), 'Ceiling' (109 1/8"), 'Floor' (0"), and 'Floor Below' (0"). Each field has a hand cursor icon.
- Relative Heights:** Includes input fields for 'Rough Ceiling' (109 1/8"), 'Finished Ceiling' (107 3/8"), 'SWT To Ceiling' (109 1/8"), 'Ceiling Below' (0"), and 'Stem Wall' (37 1/2"). Each field has a hand cursor icon. A note below states 'SWT = Stem Wall Top'.
- Ceiling:** Contains several checkboxes: 'Roof Over This Room' (checked), 'Flat Ceiling Over This Room' (checked), 'Shelf Ceiling' (unchecked), and 'Use Soffit Surface for Ceiling' (unchecked). Below these are 'Ceiling Structure' (5 1/2") and 'Ceiling Finish' (7/8"), each with an 'Edit...' button and a 'Default' checkbox (checked for structure, unchecked for finish).
- Floor:** Contains several checkboxes: 'Floor Under This Room' (checked), 'Floor Supplied by the Foundation Room Below' (unchecked), 'Monolithic Slab Foundation' (unchecked), and 'Retain Floor/Ceiling Framing' (unchecked). Below these are 'Slab Pour Number / Framing Group' (dropdown set to 1), 'Floor Finish' (7/8") with an 'Edit...' button and 'Default' checkbox (unchecked), 'On Structure Resize' (radio buttons for 'Lock Floor Top' selected and 'Lock Floor Bottom' unselected), and 'Floor Structure' (12 5/8") with an 'Edit...' button and 'Default' checkbox (checked).

- Adjust the **Ceiling** height of the steam shower to your liking.
- Click the **Edit** button next to **Ceiling Finish** to open the **Ceiling Finish Definition** dialog, modify the layers until the ceiling finish of the steam shower is to your liking, then click **OK**.



- Do the same thing with the floor by selecting the **Edit** button next to **Floor Finish**, modifying the floor finish layers to your liking, then clicking **OK**.
- In some cases, a sloped ceiling is generated for steam showers to prevent dripping in unwanted areas due to condensation. If you would like to have a sloped ceiling above the steam shower, uncheck the **Flat Ceiling Over This Room** checkbox and the ceiling will follow the pitch that is specified for the roof.

Note: If additional ceiling plane modification is desired, please see our [Ceiling Videos Playlist](https://www.chiefarchitect.com/videos/playlists/96/ceilings.html) (<https://www.chiefarchitect.com/videos/playlists/96/ceilings.html>) to learn how to create and modify custom ceiling planes.

3. On the **MOLDINGS** panel, add or remove any moldings to the shower, then click **OK** to confirm the changes and close the dialog.
4. Add any additional **Library**  accessories to the shower such as faucets, drains, and shower heads.
 - Faucets can be located at **Chief Architect Core Catalogs> Architectural> Fixtures> Faucets**, while drains can be located at **Chief Architect Core Catalogs> Architectural> Fixtures> Drains and Fittings**.
 - Shower pans can be located at **Chief Architect Core Catalogs> Architectural> Fixtures> Showers> Shower Pans**.

- Steam shower components such as steam heads, ports, glass wall components, and control panels can be located in the [Bathroom Fixtures No.4 Shower Hardware \(https://www.chiefarchitect.com/3d-library/index.php?r=site/detail/953\)](https://www.chiefarchitect.com/3d-library/index.php?r=site/detail/953) bonus catalog located in the 3D Library.
- Additional sauna accessories such as benches and other seating components can be located in the [Poolside and Sauna \(https://www.chiefarchitect.com/3d-library/index.php?r=site/detail/937\)](https://www.chiefarchitect.com/3d-library/index.php?r=site/detail/937) bonus catalog located in the 3D Library.

5. Lastly, create a **Camera**  view to see the results.

Related Articles

[Changing the Color or Material of a Single Wall](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00071/changing-the-color-or-material-of-a-single-wall.html)

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[Removing Moldings from a Single Wall \(/support/article/KB-01959/removing-moldings-from-a-single-wall.html\)](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01959/removing-moldings-from-a-single-wall.html)



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