

The Ultimate Remodeling

PLANNING GUIDE



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Get Your Project Done Right the First Time!

If you want to be sure that your next remodeling project is “the perfect experience,” then you’re going to love this handy little guide.

But I’ll start by telling you that this was not written to sell you anything or to promote a certain company or contractor.

Instead, this was written specifically for you, the homeowner, to help make sure you get exactly what you want,

no matter how knowledgeable you are and no matter how “slick” a company’s presentation is.


This guide is meant to give you an overview so you can be better prepared to see through the “fluff” and get down to the solution you truly need. It’s also not meant to be a hidden “sales pitch” by us...just helpful information to get you up to speed!

Enjoy!


10 Steps to a Perfect Remodeling Project

There certainly are things that you want to do when you remodel your bathroom, kitchen, or anything else. We've started with that at the beginning of our guide because we wanted to start off positive!


But on the other side of the coin, there are things you want to be sure that you DO NOT DO...any of which could lead to a bad experience. So to help you, here are some common mistakes that you'll want to be sure to avoid!

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1
FIXTURES

Fixtures can add a lot to a kitchen or bathroom. They can take your bathroom or kitchen from farmhouse to luxurious or anywhere in between. If you want to spend extra money somewhere, this is where it can make the biggest difference in appearance.
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2
ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

You need to ensure there are plenty of outlets in your kitchen or bathroom for any type of grooming or cooking appliances you may need to plug in. Think about how many people will use the bathroom or kitchen at a time and what they may need to plug in. Do you plug in anything such as an electric heater in the winter or a fan in the summer? If so, maybe have a few extra outlets to be safe.
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3
AIR-FLOW

Being able to properly ventilate and air is pretty important. Do you already have a ventilation system in place or a window that can be opened when necessary? If not, you will want to consider adding one or both of these features, not just for air flow but also to prevent mold and mildew. You will also want to be able to ventilate your kitchen for those occasions when you forget to take dinner out of the oven and set off the smoke detector (whoops!). If you do install a new vent, be sure it goes to the outside and not into an attic.

4

SPACE

Are you working with a large area or a small, tight space? This is a key thing to think about when beginning a bathroom or a kitchen remodel...both for costs and storage. If you are working with a smaller space, you may want to consider things such as a wall-mounted toilet, recessed lighting, smaller appliances or a floating vanity.

If you have a larger space, you need to consider that this will affect the cost, so choose materials that will be within your budget. Space saving ideas for small bathrooms can also look great in a larger bathroom, but you also have room for larger more luxurious features, such as a free-standing bathtub, a bathtub with an elegant spa-like surround, a large double vanity, or a more traditional style toilet. For kitchens, a large kitchen can accommodate a large island, breakfast bar seating, large appliances, a double-sink, and more, but you need to choose the features that are best for you and your budget.

5

TILE

You'll want to choose tile that is long-lasting, functional, and beautiful to really have a polished remodel. Some of the best material choices are porcelain, glass, natural stone, cement, and subway tile, which is an extremely popular type of ceramic tile. This will help you narrow down your choices of materials, so that you can get down to choosing the right size, style, and colors for your bathroom or kitchen.

Keep in mind, that smaller tiles are easier to slope in your shower floor, and you'll also need to decide if you want your grout to stand out or blend in with the tiles you choose.

6

COST

Be aware of how much you can afford, as well as how much the remodel will realistically cost. As mentioned previously, the size of your bathroom or kitchen will affect the cost, as well as the type of features, fixtures, and materials you want to incorporate.

Remember, not all materials are created equally and price usually comes from quality when it comes to building materials, so consult with a professional to ensure the materials you choose will last.

7

PLUMBING

This may seem kind of obvious, but you should consider your plumbing when remodeling a kitchen or bathroom. Think about all of the gunk that makes it down your drains (ewww)! Do you really want to have to deal with unclogging it every time you turn around?

Thankfully there is an easy fix. Most plumbing is 1½ inches, and it costs almost nothing to upgrade this to a 2 inch pipe, thus preventing clogs and saving you a lot of time and hassle.

8

LIGHTING

Lighting is an essential part of any remodeled space. You can get beautiful light in your bathroom or kitchen through the right type of lighting as well as the perfect placement. For example, do you want to be able to see great up close in the mirror or would you rather have a perfect aesthetic in your bathroom?

You can also use windows to add light. A window in the shower is a great way to enhance your bathroom and add natural light, and a window above your sink will add great natural light to your kitchen. Adding dimmer switches to your lights can also be a great way to allow you to have total control over your lights and allow you to change them to the perfect brightness when you need it.

9

STORAGE

This may be the most important part of a remodel. Have you thought about where you are going to store your pots, pans, spices, towels, makeup, hair supplies, etc? Be sure you choose a vanity with plenty of storage for your needs, and for smaller bathrooms get clever with storage ideas, such as floating fixtures and shelving, and even a recessed medicine cabinet to save space and add storage. If you are lucky enough to have a bathroom closet, make sure you choose great shelving to give you places to store everything neatly and easily accessible. Also, keep in mind that drawers offer better storage than cabinets when choosing a vanity.

For the kitchen, make sure your pantry and storage are sufficient for your needs. If you are working with a smaller space, get clever with your storage. You can even use things such as hooks on the insides of cabinets to hang measuring cups or oven mitts to save space. Even if you have a larger kitchen, you can hang things like this simply for convenience.

10

PLACEMENT

This one can be easily overlooked, but look at where you have placed things in your design and ask yourself “What will people see when they walk by/first walk in?” If the answer for the bathroom is the toilet, you may want to consider altering your design. Make your shower, free-standing tub, or beautiful vanity the first thing people see, and you will definitely impress. For your kitchen, you want to see a beautiful welcoming space, not the backside of overhead cabinets or large obstructions blocking that beautiful new kitchen island.



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Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

There certainly are things that you want to do when you remodel your bathroom, kitchen, or anything else. We've started with that at the beginning of our guide because we wanted to start off positive!

But on the other side of the coin, there are things you want to be sure that you **DO NOT DO**...any of which could lead to a bad experience. So to help you, here are some common mistakes that you'll want to be sure to avoid!



NOT HAVING A PROPER PLAN

Not having a plan in place when starting your remodel could end in disaster. What happens if you get halfway through the remodel and didn't plan for costs and you run out of money? Or you install a toilet just to realize you needed to move it over 2 more feet to make room for your vanity? Or you install kitchen cabinets in the wrong place and now none of your appliances will fit? Have a clear plan, including a budget, from the beginning to avoid these tragic mistakes.



CHOOSING IMPROPER MATERIALS

The bathroom is a unique space because it experiences very high amounts of moisture. You don't want to invest in materials that can't handle the stresses of being in the bathroom, because they will deteriorate quickly. Same goes for the kitchen, which will experience a lot of wear and tear, as well as high temperatures from stovetops and ovens. Make sure all the materials you select are designed for the area that they are being installed so that they last for years to come.



NOT HAVING A CONTINGENCY

Anytime you remodel, unexpected expenses will most likely arise. To avoid cutting corners, plan ahead and set aside a portion of your budget to account for these expenses. If you are lucky and don't use your contingency, use it for some fancy finishing touches at the end of your remodel.

11

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them



IMPROPER SPACING

This may be a bigger issue if you are working with a smaller space. You want to make sure you have room to open all of your doors, drawers, and cabinets without hitting anything, such as the toilet or another appliance. A clever way to save space is to use sliding doors instead of normal doors on your cabinets. This will ensure you can completely open your cabinets without hitting anything.



OVERLOOKING MISTAKES

During your remodel, you will want to be certain that you look for and fix any mistakes, no matter how small. Don't wait until the project is finished to look for them, you'll want to check as often as possible because the earlier you catch the mistake the easier it will be to correct. Any mistakes you miss could become real problems or eyesores down the line, so be very thorough when you look for them.



CHOOSING DESIGN OVER FUNCTION

While design is important, function always comes first. When choosing your design, be sure you don't overlook what you need out of your kitchen or bathroom, such as how many people will use it, storage, outlets, etc. This will also help you if you decide to sell your home down the road. The new homebuyer will care about functionality and it could make them decide to buy another home if they would have to do major changes just for the bathroom or kitchen to function properly.



EXPOSING THE PLUMBING

This is something you need to avoid in your kitchen and bathroom. Not only is it an eye-sore, but it can be hazardous for children. Even if you want an industrial style bathroom or kitchen, you will still want to cover all plumbing, especially if you think you might sell the home later on. Exposed plumbing can be a big deterrent for future homebuyers.

11

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

8

MISMATCHING YOUR FIXTURES

This is a design flaw that you want to avoid. When choosing your features and fixtures, keep in mind that they need to be cohesive, so you'll want to decide on a specific metal, such as silver, nickel, or bronze, and use it throughout the kitchen or bathroom. This will ensure your remodel doesn't look mismatched and that it is cohesive throughout.

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NOT PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Eventually, you will need to do repairs to your kitchen and bathroom. How easily will you be able to access your plumbing? Will you be able to take out a few screws or will you have to rip up the entire floor or wall to get to your plumbing? While some plumbing will need to go behind the wall, the immediate plumbing can and should be easily accessible. Try to make sure this won't be a future issue when designing your bathroom or kitchen to avoid costly expenses.

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CHOOSING INCOMPATIBLE FIXTURES

Yes, that rain shower head or power shower head is nice, but can your plumbing handle it? If not, you may have to make some major upgrades, such as upgrading your boiler, water tank, or water pump. What if you also want a gas stove in your kitchen but there's no gas line previously installed? You'll want to find out about this before deciding on these finishes, so speak to a professional before making any of these decisions.

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TRYING TO DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF

While you may be a super handy person, there are certain things such as plumbing and electrical work that need to be handled by a professional. If you are a professional, have at it! But if not, get quotes from multiple professionals and choose the person that is right for the job to ensure you have a safe home for your family.

10

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SELECTING YOUR REMODELING CONTRACTOR

A staple of most companies is to provide a Frequently Asked Questions page to go through some of the most common questions. The problem is...from company to company, these FAQ's might be pretty much the same.

So...we wanted to provide you with a bunch of FAQ's...and even a few SAQ's... or SHOULD ask questions...to help you save some time and energy. There's no sense in reading the same thing over and over...so here is a great list for you to help you while you search for the right company!

10

Questions to ask Before Selecting Your Remodeling Contractor

1. How much experience do you have?

This is something you will want to know about your contractor before beginning a project. You'll also want to get more specific about their experience and ask for details, such as if and how they were formally trained, what was the largest project they did, and how many remodels have they done.

2. Can I see examples of your work?

This is a must before choosing a contractor. References should be something you ask for as well so you can not only see their work but speak to previous homeowners who have hired your contractor. If they refuse, then that's a sign they probably have upset homeowners in the past or have done poor quality work and you probably shouldn't choose them for your project.

3. Are you licensed, bonded, and insured?

This is necessary for a professional contractor to protect not only themselves but you as well. You don't want a worker getting injured in your home just to find out your contractor doesn't have insurance, or that they aren't bonded and haven't paid their workers. Do your research and ask for documentation to prove that your contractor is telling you the truth.

4. How long will this project take?

You will want to know a timeframe before the project begins so that you can plan for workers being in and out of your home. Time will also affect the cost, but not allocating enough time could mean sloppy work.



5. What days and times will workers be in my home?

You will want to know when to expect workers in your home and also when not to expect them. This will help you plan around their schedule during the remodel to keep things running smoothly, and give you an idea of what to expect during the renovation. It is also a good idea to ask how many workers will be working at a time.

6. What permits will my project need and will you get them?

If your contractor says they will not obtain the permits needed for your project, this could be a big red flag. Specifically, it could mean they aren't licensed. You will want to also ask to see the permits before the project starts to ensure that everything is up to code and also that your insurance will cover the work once it is completed.

10 Questions to ask Before Selecting Your Remodeling Contractor

7. What is your expected payment schedule and estimate?

You will want to know not only the estimated cost of the project, but when the contractor expects to be paid so that you can plan accordingly. This will help prevent any discrepancies down the road during your renovation.

8. Do you offer bulk contract pricing?

Yes, and it is based off of the square footage of the product that you choose for your project.

9. Will you provide material choices?

See if your contractor will have preselected materials for you to choose from, so that you are aware of whether or not you need to go and select all of the materials yourself or if your contractor will narrow down the decision for you. Ask questions about the pricing, quality, and longevity of any materials presented to you and make sure they match the final look you want to achieve in your kitchen or bathroom.

10. How have you handled disputes in the past?

You want to know that your contractor is going to work with you if you disagree on something. If they immediately start to blame the person who hired them for everything, then they will probably do the same to you. If they display a need to make sure their customers are happy, then you will probably have a good experience working with them.

COMMON MYTHS

As with every industry, product, or service...there can be a lot of incorrect information out there, especially if you're doing some research on the internet. As we all know, there's no shortage of mis-information which can lead to you spending a lot of time trying to figure out what's true and what isn't!

You want to know what's real, what's made up, and you DON'T want to spend a lot of time trying to figure it out, right?

With that in mind, we wanted to provide you with some common myths about remodels that you might find during your searching...and what the reality of those myths are!



GRANITE
TRANSFORMATIONS
For Kitchens & Baths

COMMON MYTHS

MYTH:

You should always go with the latest trends

Trends can look nice in the moment, but they may not fit your space or your own style. You also want to ensure functionality first and foremost, so keep trends in mind and if you decide you like them feel free to incorporate them, but not at the expense of the function of your space.

MYTH:

It won't add value to the home

Pretty much every remodel will add value to your home. While you may not recoup the entire cost of the investment if you are selling the home immediately, it will increase interest and increase your chances of selling the home to begin with. Additionally, if a potential buyer sees that they will need to do the remodel, they will take that into consideration when making an offer to buy your home. This is if they are even willing to take on a remodel to begin with.

MYTH:

It will make your bathroom or kitchen larger in size

Unless you plan on taking space away from another room and paying to move or remove walls, a remodel will not make your bathroom or kitchen larger. It can however, make your room feel larger by using space saving ideas, lighter colors, and a smarter overall design. If your home isn't open concept in the main living area, you may be able to take out a wall to open up the space without spending much money. This is the best way to increase the size and feel of the kitchen. to take on a remodel to begin with.



MYTH:

You can't save money or be eco-friendly when remodeling

There are plenty of energy saving ideas to implement that can save you substantially on your utilities and also prevent wasted water and electricity. Consider a more modern faucet that regulates the amount of water used, eco-friendly light fixtures, an updated toilet, and even ask your contractor about eco-friendly construction materials that you can use.

MYTH:

Cheaper products are just as good as high priced ones

While there are more affordable alternatives to certain materials that can be as good as some high priced materials, certain materials cost more simply because they are better. Your contractor should be able to help guide you in where to save costs versus where to invest for high-end finishes to give you great quality and stay within your budget.