

## First Steps to Home Remodeling

Home remodeling has become a national pastime, a passion and sometimes an obsession. We all want our homes to look better and feel more comfortable. Home remodeling magazines and television programs are everywhere, and the home improvement industry is booming. Almost everyone is in the middle of a project or about to embark on a new way of updating the home. It can be easy to do and extremely rewarding. If you are thinking about taking on a remodeling project, following a few basic steps will make the process more enjoyable.

The first step to be considered when planning your remodeling project is the basic design of your home. Most people begin a project by thinking ways to make their homes look better, and considering possible design options to improve the look, feel and aura of the place. This is where the concept of design for home remodeling comes into play. To plan your design, decide whether you want to hire a design expert, an architect or another home remodeling professional to come in and visualize your ideas. It will be necessary to create a design that you can afford, and will really love. You want to create a rapport with the professional you hire, to get them as excited about the project as you are. Sit down with your architect or design, come to an agreed plan, determine how much you can afford, and be sure to stick to your budget.

The second consideration for home remodeling is the project implementation. Plan and review your home remodeling design with your contractor, and consider any suggestions that he or she may have about the progress or the costs of the project. Choose the materials and products that you will need to successfully complete your home remodeling project. If possible, first purchase the materials you'll need right away, then later you can pick up additional products you'll need to complete the job. Make sure you consider the required time allotment and ask your architect, designer or contractor to come up with a detailed construction schedule. There will be steps to follow for each job and crews to schedule, so it's important that you don't overlook this important step in planning your project.

A conference is necessary to ensure that your home remodeling project is completed successfully. Insist that you meet with your home remodeling contractor, architect or designer, job-site supervisor and any other construction crewmembers involved in your project. Consider this a brainstorming session in which you can make note of important matters, consider new ideas and prepare for any possible changes from the original plan. Everyone involved in every step of the home renovation must be made aware of any changes to the original plan. It is also important that you set ground rules for your home remodeling project. Express these rules to your contractor and jobsite supervisor, and prepare a communication plan that will ensure your direction will be passed along to everyone working on the project. In such case, the primary contact person will generally be the job-site supervisor. A home remodeling project is a huge investment, so be serious about the entire process. Pay attention to every detail, and feel free to make comments or ask questions regarding the progress.

Finally, make the area easy for the crew to get the job done. Remove furniture and personal belongings from the work area. Try to put up a temporary kitchen area and have toilet facilities available for the crew to use. Make trash bins accessible and ask if construction fencing is required. If large quantities of supplies will be delivered, such as lumber or flooring, be sure that there is ample and accessible storage room. This area should be secure and protected from the elements, as the materials may not be installed on the same day they're delivered.

Remodeling your home is a rewarding experience. Hiring a contractor, architect or home designer can help ensure that the job is done properly. The expense will fully pay for itself in the satisfaction and enjoyment you'll receive from your newly remodeled home.