

DreamMaker[®] Bath & Kitchen

HOME REMODELING GUIDE

5 COMMON REMODELING MISTAKES

and how to avoid them



WWW.DREAMMAKER-REMODEL.COM

5 COMMON REMODELING MISTAKES

and how to avoid them

TO HELP YOU AVOID COMMON PITFALLS, WE WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU FIVE COMMON MISTAKES WE'VE SEEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN. REMODELING IS AN INVESTMENT, AND THE RESULTS ARE SOMETHING YOU WILL LIVE WITH FOR YEARS TO COME. YOU WANT TO MAKE THE MOST OF BOTH YOUR TIME AND MONEY.

If you are considering a big home remodeling project, you're definitely not alone. American Homeowners spent over \$340 billion on remodeling projects in 2019, according to The Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University. These projects range from entry door replacement to room additions, to kitchen and bathroom remodeling. Few things are more exciting than a successful home remodeling project that adds beauty and useful new features to your home. Conversely, few things can cause more frustration, embarrassment or anger than a remodeling project that's gone wrong.

"Most people experience a major remodel only once or twice in their lifetime, so there isn't much room for trial and error," design experts Ann Robinson and Annie V. Schwemmer recently told the Deseret Morning News. "You want to get it right the first time."

When remodeling, you want to make sure you pay attention to the details in order to have the best experience and achieve the best results. Otherwise, the consequences may come back to haunt you.





MISTAKE #1

GOING IT ALONE

“UNLESS YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS, TRAINING AND CONNECTIONS, YOU COULD ACTUALLY CAUSE MORE PROBLEMS DOWN THE LINE – INCLUDING DOUBLING YOUR BUDGET.”



There's no shortage of how-to books, television shows, videos and books focused on home renovation and design — and they almost always make remodeling projects seem deceptively easy. Many people are tempted to tackle a remodeling project on their own, thinking it will save money. It's true that, if done right, a do-it-yourself project can save you money. Done wrong, though, it can cost you much, much more.

Botched home renovation projects are a major source of business for remodeling professionals. The bottom line: Think carefully before you start a project by yourself. You just might be starting a job you can't finish — and mistakes can require pricey remediation. “Unless you have the right tools, training and connections, you could actually cause more problems down the line – including doubling your budget when you have to call a professional to come in and fix your mistakes,” said Amanda Pallay, author of Quicken Loan's popular “Zing” blog. “Remember, when hiring a contractor, don't try to cheap it out by hiring the contractor who simply offers the lowest bid,” Pallay said. “It's easy to find someone who will charge less just to get the job. It's harder to find one who not only fits within your budget and your personality, but also is licensed, insured and comes with a list of great references.” Of course, a home remodeler who tears out the tub and shower only to realize he doesn't have the expertise to replace the studs, plumbing and backer board, is likely to be desperate for a solution — and that desperation can make them vulnerable to unqualified remodelers and to price gouging. You don't want to be that kind of victim.

If you are absolutely certain you have the skills and the time to tackle a job (and if you are an occasional weekend warrior, you should probably set aside three times as much time as you think the job will take), then you might be able to save money by going the DIY route. Just in case, though, it's still a good idea to talk to a reputable remodeling firm to see how they can help bring your project to life. They'll not only have great skills, but they will have ideas and advice that may help you get even more out of the remodel than you envision.



MISTAKE #2

BEING TOO TRENDY

One of the biggest mistakes a homeowner can make is decorating a home with all the latest trends in mind, believing this will increase the home's value or dazzle a potential buyer.

How do we know it's a mistake to choose styles based on trends? Let us introduce you to the 1970s, an era of avocado green refrigerators and neon orange bathrooms. If you try to make your home too trendy today, in 20 years, it could look like a set piece for an Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery reboot. Today's trendy is often tomorrow's tacky, so think twice before you invest too much into today's equivalent of shag carpeting and lava lamps. Doesn't this photo make you want a diner burger and milkshake though? Let's keep going.

"TODAY'S STYLES WON'T NECESSARILY BE TOMORROW'S."
– BILL BRADFORD (FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS)

You want your remodeling project to stand the test of time. A trendy flair here and there can work well in small doses, but it's not usually something you want to over-do unless your desire for today's style outweighs your goal of increasing the value of your home. "Purchasing items and styles that fit into trends dates the entire house incredibly," says Amy Wright, editor of Remodeling Central. "Prospective buyers will be less interested in purchasing anything with these trends. It's better to choose something that's proven to be tried and true instead of investing in the latest alternative.

“There are situations where dealing with trends can be more acceptable,” Wright adds. “For example, if the individual is planning on staying in their house and living there for an extended period of time instead of selling their house or remodeling it for resale value, then it would be more acceptable to do something a little trendier. This is because the remodeling project is essentially going to be done for their own interest and their own enjoyment.”

WRIGHT ADVISES HOMEOWNERS WHO AREN'T CERTAIN ABOUT WHAT IS OR ISN'T TRENDY TO DISCUSS THEIR OPTIONS WITH A PROFESSIONAL.

DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen franchisees remodel hundreds of homes every year nationwide, and we listen carefully to our clients to bring their ideas to reality while also offering practical advice. If you want your kitchen or bathroom to be somewhere Austin Powers would feel at home, that's groovy. We can deliver it. But if you want something that is ageless, we can deliver that, too.





MISTAKE #3

CHANGING YOUR MIND

One of the most maddening (and often one of the worst) remodeling mistakes a homeowner can make is to start changing their mind after the construction process has begun. Suddenly the homeowner loses confidence and wants a different design or product. They may even come up with an entirely new idea for the project at the last minute. Such changes can be very, very costly, and invariably lead to wasted time and materials.

THE BEST TIME TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES AND MAKE CHANGES IS DURING THE PLANNING STAGE OF YOUR PROJECT.

The best remodelers can introduce you to a wide variety of styles and materials long before the project begins, and also can produce renderings to show you how everything will look in your home when the job is complete. You should also receive guidance about the prices of various options, which will help you determine the choice of styles, materials and options that will create the best value to match your desires and needs. Spending money upfront to consult with a professional remodeler or designer is money well-spent that can save you money in the long run and help you understand possibilities so you're not second-guessing yourself mid-construction. By finalizing all decisions for placement, materials, patterns and colors before you start construction, you reduce the risk that something won't look or feel the way you expected. If you decide you want to make a small change, the smaller the change, the smaller the financial impact. As much as pre-planning pays in terms of savings, it pays even bigger dividends over the long-term. DreamMaker designers are our clients' advocates; going through the design one step at a time so you feel confident in your design decisions. And yes, they provide computer renderings.



MISTAKE #4

UNREALISTIC BUDGET

IT'S BETTER TO SPEND A LITTLE MORE FOR SOMEONE WHO CAN DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP AND OUTSTANDING SERVICE.



Remodeling is a substantial investment for homeowners, and usually it's a once-or twice-in-a-lifetime event. Unfortunately, the price tags associated with remodeling can lead to sticker shock — and that can lead to penny-pinching and cost-slashing that has a tendency to backfire.

Skittish homeowners can convince themselves they don't need or want things that they really do. Some give up distinctive features that they crave — the extra storage space they've always dreamed of, or that top-of-the-line walk-in bathtub that was supposed to make getting older easier, or the hearth abutting the kitchen and the living room, providing a cozy gathering spot for friends and family.

Often, there's a cause-and-effect principle at work when you remodel on the cheap. Shoddy sinks and shower fixtures will need to be replaced in a just few years. Cheap cabinets will have doors that don't fit properly and will always be a source of frustration. Eliminating helpful storage or good lighting could cause you to resent your remodeling decisions later on. If you don't have the money to really get what you want, sometimes it's better to put off a remodel for a little while. Use the time to save up for the things you'll truly appreciate. Another option is to finance some of your remodel.

"Most homeowners underestimate their budget by at least 25 percent, " said lifestyle and home improvement author and blogger Amanda Palley. "As you can imagine, not having enough money to complete a project cannot only stress you out, but can also force you to live with a half-finished project for a lot longer than you expected. Most experts suggest calculating your budget and then increasing it by 20 percent. It will help provide a financial buffer zone for when you run into unexpected costs — like finding out your kitchen pipes had a leak when all you budgeted for was a new countertop and sink."

Don't start a budget with a price in mind, because that's how people often nickel and dime themselves into costly mistakes. Instead, find out what you truly want, and then learn what you'll need to spend to get the quality remodel you desire. DreamMaker strives to work within our client's budgets and present multiple options.

DREAMMAKER BATH & KITCHEN DESIGN CENTERS GIVE YOU A PLACE TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS, AND HAVE CONSULTANTS TO HELP.

Remember, too, that just like cheap versus quality parts, there can be a huge difference between a "cheap" remodeler and a "good" remodeler. The person who gives you the lowest quote may not be the best person for the job. Check what people have to say about the quality of their work, and pay attention to what your gut tells you about their level of professionalism. It's better to spend a little more for someone who can deliver exceptional craftsmanship and outstanding service.

Quality materials are available at a range of price points, but it's important to seek out quality — not just the lowest price. Low quality parts and finishes can wear out very quickly, leaving you with a room that quickly loses its sheen and functionality. DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen franchisees have developed deep relationships with suppliers who have a proven track record of delivering quality parts and materials — and that allows our craftsmanship to shine for a long time.



MISTAKE #5

POOR PLANNING



You don't have to talk to too many people to hear a remodeling horror story. One of the most common ones involves a remodeler who completes the tear-out phase of a project, then disappears for days or weeks because they failed to order materials in a timely manner, leaving you with a torn-up house until a shipment arrives. Less awful, but also annoying, is when a remodeler fails to coordinate with subcontractors. Halfway through the remodeling process, everything grinds to a halt for a day or two until a plumber or electrician can come out to re-route pipes or run new wiring. These kinds of delays aren't just annoying — they're unprofessional. A professional remodeler should have a strong timeline for how they will tackle your project. Ask them when they will order materials, how long they will need to remove old fixtures and cabinets, when subcontractors are scheduled to arrive, and what work can be done on one part of the project while a subcontractor works on another.

WHAT IS OUTSTANDING SERVICE?

WE THINK A BIG PART OF IT IS RESPECTING OUR CUSTOMERS' TIME AND DOING THINGS WHEN WE SAY THEY WILL BE DONE.

If a remodeler doesn't account for all the phases of a remodeling project, they won't be able to coordinate effectively. That's why the best remodelers have a big picture mentality. They know what needs to be done one Day 1, Day 2, Day 3, and Day 4 on a project, and if unforeseen challenges arise — like the need to move a wall stud — they can appraise the homeowner of the issue and update the schedule to keep all the pieces of the remodeling project moving forward.

Proper planning also can allow a remodeler to coordinate all aspects of a project, relieving the homeowner of the need to hunt for subcontractors and coordinate their efforts on their own. DreamMaker franchisees operate as full-service remodelers, handling all aspects of the job, which reduces stress for clients. If you don't have a DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen location near you already, look for a remodeler who can handle a similarly high level of service.

ABOVE ALL, BEFORE TACKLING A REMODELING PROJECT ON YOUR OWN, WE ADVISE YOU TO SEEK OUT ADVICE AND TALK TO A PROFESSIONAL REMODELER.

DREAMMAKER® HAS LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES. VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO SEE IF THERE IS A DREAMMAKER BATH & KITCHEN LOCATION NEAR YOU.

WWW.DREAMMAKER-REMODEL.COM

Each DreamMaker location is independently owned and locally operated.

