

THINKING ABOUT REMODELING? START HERE

If you own a home, no matter what its age, sooner or later you may join the millions of people who remodel their homes each year. Perhaps it was that moment when you realized that avocado green and harvest gold are no longer the "in" colors for today's trendy kitchens. Or maybe you had an epiphany one day as you stood in line to use your own bathroom. Whatever the impetus, the thought has crossed your mind: Maybe it's time to remodel. The reasons for remodeling are as varied as the projects we undertake.

Some of these include:

- Adding more space
- Upgrading cabinets, counters, appliances, and fixtures. Creating a floor plan that's customized for your lifestyle
- Improving energy efficiency with new windows, doors, insulation, and climate control systems
- Increasing the resale value of your home

Where to Begin

The first step is to develop an idea of what you want to do. Write a prioritized list of your needs and wants. Look at magazines and Web sites and collect pictures of what you like. The more clearly you can envision the project and describe it on paper, the better prepared you'll be in making your decision.

Think about traffic patterns, furniture size and placement, colors, lighting and how you expect to use the remodeled space. If your decision to remodel involves creating better access for someone with limited mobility, you may want to consider contacting a [Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist](#).

Figure out how much money you have to spend on the remodeling job, furnishings, landscaping or any other cost you might incur.

Choose Your Options

Once you have created a list of what you would like out of your home, the next step is deciding how to accomplish your vision.

Hire a Professional. The best way to ensure your home dreams become reality is through the work of a professional. These remodelers are of the highest integrity and standards in the industry.

Can you do it yourself? For the handyman or woman, a do-it-yourself project is both rewarding and cost-effective. However, more than 30% of all jobs remodelers perform come from failed do-it-yourselfers. Go [here](#) for a thorough checklist to make sure you are ready for the job.

Should you move instead? Your needs may exceed what you can or want to do with your existing home. Learn more about the [costs involved with moving](#) versus remodeling.

If you've decided you want to hire a remodeler, learn [how to choose a professional](#), avoid contractor fraud, and make your dream home reality.