
5 MISTAKES PEOPLE MAKE WHEN PLANNING A MAJOR HOME REMODEL

...and how you can avoid them



BLUE RIBBON
EXTERIORS & CONSTRUCTION



Mistake #1

NOT PLANNING YOUR BUDGET

Before you speak to anybody, you need to know your budget. Know what you can afford and what you would like to spend. Keep in mind that these two numbers are never the same, so decide on your limit for the redesign & construction of your existing home. Once you have decided on a budget, it's in your best interest to share this information with everyone involved in the design process.

The single biggest mistake consumers make when remodeling their home is when they either understate their budget or refuse to set one.

A professional will make sure they design your home to suit your lifestyle and fit in with your budget. Contrary to popular belief, you will not pay more for a home just because you disclose a larger budget.

You are not negotiating the price at this stage of the process!

By discussing your budget openly with the designer at the beginning of the project, you'll be able to find out if what you're after is achievable. If it's not and the size of the remodel is not within your budget, a professional designer can make recommendations on where to cut back based on your priorities.

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It's important to establish the fundamentals before the design work commences otherwise you will find yourself constantly redesigning your home and struggling to hit the target budget.

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If you are in the fortunate position of not being restricted by a limited budget the design brief should focus on lifestyle and quality of finishes.

However, if budget is your #1 priority, capping the overall size of the remodel along with the architectural flare of the design will be important aspects to take control of early.

Mistake #2

NOT PLANNING YOUR REMODELING TEAM

It may surprise you to learn that over 80% of designs never get built.

Why?

They came in way over budget.

The reason for this is simple. Architects design major remodels that meet a consumer's brief rather than their budget.

While budgets are generally discussed with architects at the briefing stage, building designers and architects have little knowledge of building costs and generally underestimate the cost to complete a major remodel by 50-300%.

That is a huge amount of money for you to find which is why these designs never see the light of day.

The solution to this problem is quite simple, involve your builder at the design stage.

By involving a builder at the design stage, you can design your home's new look to be both practical and within your budget.

Only a professional & custom remodeling specialist has the experience to foresee the potential cost implications of a difficult site or architectural features.

Whilst you may be paying \$10,000-\$50,000 for an architect to design the remodel, most professional builders will consult on a project for as little as a few thousand dollars.

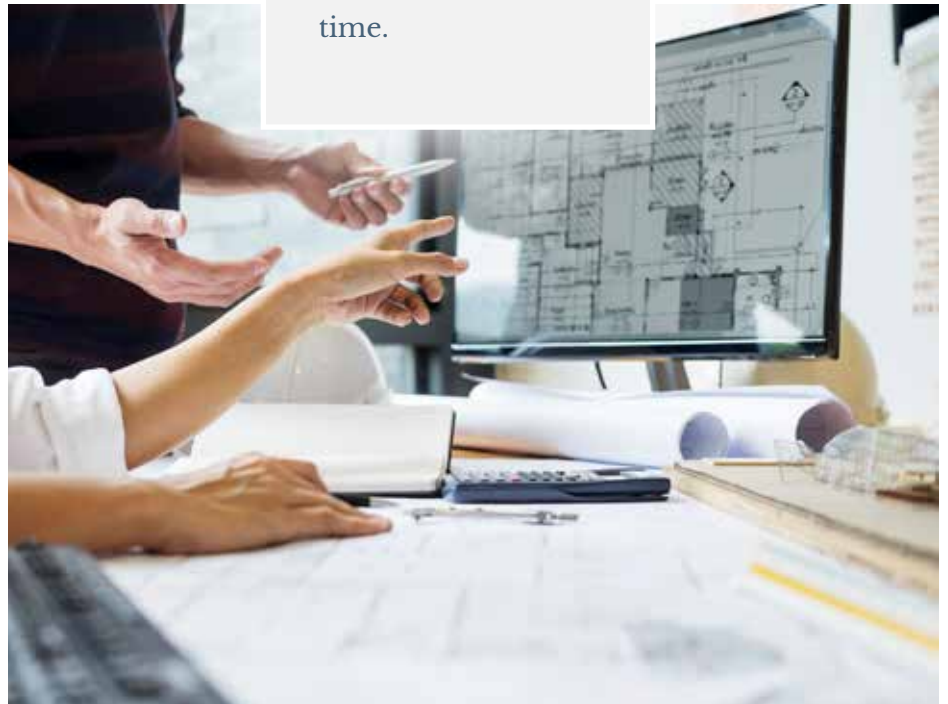
Most remodeling specialists

provide a design and build service which means the consultation service is generally included free of charge.

A professional will also have the right team in place to handle the more complex side of your project. It often takes a team including your builder, their designer, certifier and town planner to scope out legal requirements and any permits required to make sure what you want can actually be built.

Getting your design and specifications right in the beginning will save you thousands of dollars in potential redesign fees and months of wasted time.

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Mistake #3

NOT PLANNING YOUR DEADLINE

Do you have an immovable hard and fast deadline for handover?

Do you need to have your major remodel completely finished by Christmas or before a new family member arrives?

If you have a fixed deadline then it's a good idea to share this with your builder before you start the design process.

The entire design process can take between 3-12 months to complete depending on the complexities of the design and the approvals required.

A professional builder will be able to provide a scheduled timeline once the initial design has been completed. This will enable you to visualize how long all the different processes such as construction drawings, engineering and quoting take.

You'll also see the impact they will have on the start date and ultimately the completion date of your remodel.

Another important thing to keep in mind is how complex a major remodel actually is.

Builders that specialize in remodeling only take on a limited number of projects a year due to the high level of supervision required.

This results in limited start dates becoming available for your remodel.

Delaying the decisions that a builder needs in order to finalize a contract proposal could result in you missing the next available construction slot, which could lead to a 3 month delay to your project starting.

Communicate with your builder regularly to check on the upcoming available start times.

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Mistake #4

NOT PLANNING YOUR LIVING SITUATION DURING CONSTRUCTION

Depending on the size and complexity of your remodel, you may have to partially or completely move out of your home for the construction work to take place.

If you are able to just live in a section of your house during work, be prepared for construction noise during the day.

For a lot of consumers, this can start taking a toll after the first few weeks and the initial excitement has worn off. Discuss options with your builder and consider what is best for your family and situation.

Areas under construction need to be completely cleared out. It will become a construction site with access being strictly controlled by your builder.

Agree in advance the frequency and times when you will be permitted to enter the site.

This is for your own protection as construction sites are dangerous places.

Under no circumstances should anyone enter the construction site unaccompanied or without explicit permission from the builder.



Mistake #5

NOT PLANNING YOUR SELECTIONS

While it may appear there is no rush to decide on the color and style of your bathroom tiles before you sign a building contract it's important to realize every selection decision has the potential to delay your project.

Tiles for instance may have to be ordered up to four months in advance so it's important to make all of your selection choices during the design stage of your remodel.

Once a building contract is signed a builder will place hundreds of orders with subcontractors and suppliers in order to lock in pricing. If you go to contract with Prime Cost (PC's) or Provisional Sum (PS's) allowances, it's quite likely that prices will rise between contract signing and orders being placed.

Keep a record of your selection choices in a spreadsheet to avoid blowing your budget

unexpectedly. Faced with endless opportunities to add more and more features to your home it's easy to get carried away and over capitalize.

Making changes to your selections after signing a building contract can incur delays as new orders

have to be placed and delivery times may impact the construction schedule.

If a selection choice delays construction this will lead to a variation and an Extension of Time (EOT) added to your completion date.

Keep a record of your selection choices in a spreadsheet to avoid blowing your budget unexpectedly.

Bonus

HOW TO FIND A REMODELING SPECIALIST

Start by doing your initial research online.

Check out builders' websites and Facebook pages. Look at their reviews, customer testimonials, the information they are providing and the organizations they belong to.

Narrow it down to a list of no more than 3 custom builders who specialize in major remodels.

Make contact via their website contact us form and by calling their office number and leaving a message.

Use a different name for each inquiry you make so that you can check that they respond both by email and phone in a timely manner.

Builders who have poor communication with their clients also tend to have poor communication with their suppliers and subcontractors which tends to lead to delays on site.

At this stage you are looking for reasons to disqualify a builder from your shortlist if they don't get back to you in a reasonable time frame either by phone or email.

For the builders that do respond, invest 15-20 minutes into an initial phone conversation.

Expect a professional builder to be asking you a lot more questions than you ask them at this stage, so they can understand your desired end result.

If you feel comfortable the next ideal step will be to progress to an on-site meeting.





READY TO SPEAK TO A PROFESSIONAL REMODELER?

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